



Back Bay Chorale
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Back Bay Chorale Presents *Elijah*

Music Director Scott Allen Jarrett conducts the Back Bay Chorale in its final concert of the 2007-2008 season, featuring Mendelssohn's celebrated oratorio *Elijah*, on May 30, 8:00 pm, at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge. Second in popularity only to Handel's *Messiah*, the oratorio premiered in England in 1846, with Mendelssohn himself conducting, and was praised by critics and audience alike. In the intervening 150 years, *Elijah* has become a significant part of the choral canon, though infrequently performed in Boston.

With great dramatic sweep, the oratorio tells the story of the Old Testament prophet Elijah, who summons the people to righteousness, performs miracles, and struggles against idol-worshipping. The music, filled with contrasts of serenity and storminess, of calm and tumult, resounds with the passion of the Romantic Age.

Joining the Back Bay Chorale is a distinguished group of soloists. Baritone Richard Zeller, who last sang with the Chorale in the 2006 performance of *Missa Solemnis*, sings the title role. One of the country's leading baritones, Zeller

is internationally acclaimed for his concert and opera roles. He is known for his beautiful dramatic voice and presence as well as his outstanding musicianship. Zeller is joined by prominent soprano Dominique Labelle, lauded for her "irreproachable accuracy, grace and ease." Mezzo-soprano Gigi Mitchell-Velasco returns to perform with the Chorale. She has been called "an intense interpreter; an extremely communicative singer whose artistic talent goes beyond the use of her voice." Finally, tenor Yeghishe Manucharyan, a frequent soloist with the Back Bay Chorale, completes the roster of soloists. A native of Yerevan, Armenia, Manucharyan has been praised for his musical intelligence and for the purity, power, and flexibility of his voice.

Concert Details

Mendelssohn, *Elijah*

Performed by the Back Bay Chorale
Scott Allen Jarrett, Music Director

Soloists:

Richard Zeller, Elijah
Dominique Labelle, Soprano
Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, Mezzo-Soprano
Yeghishe Manucharyan, Tenor

Friday, May 30, 8:00 P.M., Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

Pre-Concert Lecture: 7:00 P.M. by Ann Howard Jones, Professor of Music, Boston University

Tickets: \$45, 35, 25 (\$5 student/senior discount) online at www.bbcoston.org or calling 617-648-3885.

About Scott Allen Jarrett

In addition to his appointment as Music Director of the Back Bay Chorale, Scott Allen Jarrett is Musical Director and Conductor of the Oratorio Singers of Charlotte and Director of Music and University Organist and Choirmaster at Boston University's Marsh Chapel. As Director of Music at Marsh Chapel, Jarrett leads the Chapel Choir and Collegium in weekly worship services broadcast on the internet and National Public Radio. At Boston University, Jarrett holds adjunct faculty posts in both the School of Theology as a Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music and in the College of Fine Arts as Teaching Associate in Choral Conducting. Jarrett serves as the Assistant Conductor of Choirs at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute where he assists Dr. Ann Howard Jones. Also at Tanglewood, Jarrett teaches advanced music theory and history to the students in the Young Artist Vocal Program. In August each year, Jarrett serves as Resident Conductor for New Hampshire's White Mountain Musical Arts Bach Festival, leading the festival's orchestra and chorus in performances of the great orchestral and choral masterworks of Bach.

As a pianist, Mr. Jarrett frequently serves as rehearsal pianist and assistant for Ann Howard Jones. He also accompanied rehearsals for the late Robert Shaw during his Boston visits. As the rehearsal pianist for the Carnegie Hall Choral Workshop, Jarrett played rehearsals for Charles Dutoit. As a baritone, Jarrett has been a member of the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, the Boston Bach Ensemble, and Schola Cantorum of Boston.

Jarrett is a graduate of Furman University and received a Ph.D. from Boston University.

About the Back Bay Chorale

The Back Bay Chorale is a 90-member chorus with a diverse membership drawn from communities throughout the Greater Boston area. Performing a repertoire of classical and contemporary choral music, the Back Bay Chorale strives to build community through musicality - fostering connection between choral and audience members.

Since its founding in 1973 by Larry Hill, the Back Bay Chorale has performed over a hundred concerts in such venues as Symphony Hall, Sanders Theatre at Harvard University, Emmanuel Church, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Church of the Covenant, the Hatch Shell on the Charles River Esplanade, New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and Providence's Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul. In addition to performances with its past music directors, Larry Hill, Beverly Taylor, Julian Wachner, and James Olesen, the Chorale has appeared with the Boston Pops under John Williams and Keith Lockhart, the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra under Gunther Schuller and Gisele Ben-Dor, the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra under David Commanday, and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project under Gil Rose. The Chorale has also collaborated with the Providence Singers, the Charles Street A.M.E. Church, and the National Center of Afro-American Artists.

The Back Bay Chorale's repertoire spans the full range of choral literature, from the masterworks of the Renaissance, baroque, classical, and modern periods to the most contemporary of compositions. In recent years, the Chorale has premiered several works written especially for it, including Marjorie Merryman's *Three Ballads*, James Russell Smith's *Canto V: The Second Circle*, Robert Kyr's *Unseen Rain* and *Passion According to Four Evangelists*, and Stephen Paulus's *Voices*.

The Chorale's discography includes recordings of John Knowles Paine's *St. Peter Oratorio* with Gunther Schuller conducting; James Yannatos's *Trinity Mass* with the Harvard Glee Club, the Radcliffe Choral Society, the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, and the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, under the direction of the composer; and, with conductor emerita Beverly Taylor, Robert Kyr's *Unseen Rain* and *Passion*. New recordings include Benjamin Britten's *Company of Heaven*, featuring the Chorale under the direction of Julian Wachner (2002), and Lukas Foss's *Griffelkin* with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project.