The German Society of Pennsylvania

proudly presents

The Ephrata Cloister Chorus

Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 3:00pm

The German Society of Pennsylvania
www.germansociety.org

611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123
Calendar of Events

January 2020
Sat. Jan. 11   Buchclub, 1:30pm
Fri. Jan. 17  Friday Film Fest: Die Unsichtbaren, 6:30pm

February 2020
Sat. Feb. 8    Buchclub, 1:30pm
Wed. Feb. 12  Konversationsabend: Glühwein Dreams, 6:00pm
Fri. Feb. 21  Friday Film Fest: Transit, 6:30pm
Sat. Feb. 29  9th Annual Bierfest, 2:00pm

March 2020
Wed. Mar. 11 Konversationsabend: The Bauhaus - 100 Years, 6:00pm
Sat. Mar. 14  Buchclub, 1:30pm
Fri. Mar. 20  Friday Film Fest: Der Vorname, 6:30pm
Tue. Mar. 31  German Script Course, 10:00am

Save the dates for our next “Wister and More!” concerts:

Sun. Jan. 5   Xiaopei Xu, piano
Ms. Xu’s program will include favorite pieces by Beethoven, Bizet, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schubert, Liszt, and Musto.

Sun. Mar. 8   New World Recorders
This up-and-coming baroque recorder quartet will perform J.S. Bach’s “Art of the Fugue”, Orchestral Suite No. 1 in C Major, and Capriccio in Bb Major.

Sun. Apr. 19  Duo Parisienne
Nancy Bean (violin) and Anne Sullivan (harp) will present pieces by Debussy, Piazzolla, Marais, Massenet, and Corelli.

Sun. May 10  Academy of Vocal Arts
Current AVA students and alumni will perform selections from Broadway musicals and German operettas from their vast repertoire of songs.

All of our events are open to the public.
We welcome members and non-members alike.
Most events require tickets. Please call or email the office to inquire about purchasing:
215.627.2332 | info@germansociety.org
The Ephrata Cloister Chorus

PROGRAM

Music of Ephrata

Nun walle ich im Frieden fort
Transcribed by Russell P. Getz

Jesu, rufe mich
Transcribed by Lucy Carroll

Excerpts from the Rose-Lilie-Blume sequence
Der Herr is hoch im seinen Thron erhaben
Durch seine Herrschaft muß es uns gelingen
Transcribed by Christopher Herbert

Music of the Pennsylvania Dutch

An dem scheenen glesernen meer
Gottes liewe, O wie gross!

Music using a Pennsylvania Dutch text

Ein Blülein wenn’s die Sonne spüret
Jean Berger

Music of the American Shakers

Simple Gifts

Love, Love, Love

Early American Music

When Jesus Wept
William Billings

America
William Billings

Christmas Selections

Candlelight Carol
John Rutter

An Advent Processional
Donald Pearson

Jesus, Jesus, rest Your head
Collected by John Niles
Arr. Arthur Warrell

In dulci jubilo
14th Century Carol, Setting by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)
Ed. by Richard Proulx

Behold That Star
Traditional Christmas Spiritual
Arr. Philip Kern

The Best of Rooms
Randall Thompson
Christmas Carol Sing

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As those of old have sung.
It came a floweret bright
Amid the cold of winter
When half spent was the night.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

The chorus will sing an alternate melody for the first verse. Please join the chorus in singing the second verse using the traditional melody.

For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

What Child Is This

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
the Babe, the Son of Mary!

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

The chorus will sing an alternate melody for the first verse. Please join the chorus in singing the second verse using the traditional melody.

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold Him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.  

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”  

Stille Nacht  

1. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht  
   Alles schläft; einsam wacht  
   Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.  
   Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,  
   Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!  
   Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!  

2. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,  
   Hirten erst kind gemacht  
   Durch der Engel Halleluja,  
   Tönt es laut von fern und nah:  
   Christ, der Retter ist da!  
   Christ, der Retter ist da!  

3. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,  
   Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht  
   Lieb′ aus deinem göttlichen Mund,  
   Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund′.  
   Christ, in deiner Geburt!  
   Christ, in deiner Geburt!  

There will be one 15-minute intermission. We offer refreshments from our bar during that time.  
Your ticket to our concert also invites you to a complimentary reception with the artists in the  
Ratskeller (downstairs) following the performance.  

The Ephrata Cloister Chorus  

Martin Hinkley, Director  
Becky Degan, Accompanist  
Michael S. Showalter, Museum Educator, Narrator  

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<th>Soprano</th>
<th>Alto</th>
<th>Tenor</th>
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<td>Lanie Buckwalter</td>
<td>Dave Eller</td>
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<td>Debbie Foote</td>
<td>Michelle Caron</td>
<td>Frank Root</td>
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About the Artists

The music had little or no air or melody, but consisted of simple, long notes, combined with the richest harmony. It is impossible to describe my feelings upon this occasion. I almost began to think myself in the world of spirits...

~Reverend Jacob Duché, 1771

By the time Jacob Duché heard the Sisters of Ephrata singing, music and other elements of the once vibrant community were on a decline. Having lost their founder and teacher, Conrad Beissel, in 1768, discipline in the society was growing lax and few new members were coming to join the monastic group. Even so, Reverend Duché spoke of the music in the most glowing of terms. The sound of Ephrata’s original compositions, however, remained silent for nearly two centuries until the formation of the Ephrata Cloister Chorus in 1959. This group of dedicated volunteers brings to life the music of the Ephrata Cloister as a special educational program sponsored by the Ephrata Cloister Associates. Wearing white robes patterned after those worn by the Brothers and Sisters of Ephrata in the mid-eighteenth century, the modern Chorus performs at the historic site and throughout the region. In addition to works from Ephrata’s past, the group performs compositions from other early American communities including works from the Shakers, the Moravians, the Harmonists, the Kelpius Community, the First New England School, and African American spirituals.

The Ephrata Cloister

One of America’s earliest communal societies, the Ephrata Cloister was founded in 1732 by German settlers seeking spiritual goals rather than earthly rewards. Gathered in unique European style buildings, the community consisted of celibate Brothers and Sisters, and a married congregation of families. At the zenith of the community in the 1740s and 1750s, about 300 members worked and worshiped at the Cloister.

The lifestyle of the celibate members was characterized by strict discipline and self-denial. The community members became known for their music, calligraphy, and printing. Following the death of the last celibate member in 1813, the married congregation formed the German Seventh-Day Baptist Church.

Members continued to live and worship at the Cloister until 1934. In 1941 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania acquired the historic site and began a program of restoration and interpretation. Today, nine original buildings are part of a 28-acre complex open for visitors.
Music of the Ephrata Cloister

Music played an important role in life at the Ephrata Cloister. In 1747, Conrad Beissel published the first American treatise on harmony in the preface to his hymnal Das Gesäng Der einsamen und verlassenen Turtle-Taube (Songs of the Lonely and Forsaken Turtledove). Beissel wrote music with his own rules for composition in which he used “master notes” and “servant notes” to create harmony. Using Beissel’s rules for composition, the members wrote over one thousand a cappella hymns and anthems. The texts of these hymns often describe difficulties on earth and the promise of entrance to Heaven. Many are filled with floral imagery or speak of the pilgrim’s life. The sound of Ephrata’s music, performed with heads bowed and mouths almost closed, seems to have made the strongest impression on early visitors. Special care was taken to preserve the voice for singing, including a diet prescribed by Beissel for singers devoid of meat and milk products. Rehearsals were conducted nightly, and singers were required to use two books simultaneously, one with words, the other with musical notation. Using Beissel’s system of composition, some of Ephrata’s Sisters became the first female composers in America.

The Ephrata Cloister Chorus

The Ephrata Cloister Chorus was formed in 1959 under the leadership of Dr. Russell Getz, a professor at Lebanon Valley College. Dr. Getz worked to transcribe a selection of early Cloister music into a modern notation that could be performed by the group. A dozen of Dr. Getz’s transcriptions were published in 1971, and his pioneering work continues to serve as the core of the Chorus’ repertoire. In recent years, Dr. Lucy Carroll has worked to continue the transcription of Ephrata’s music, adding nearly a dozen pieces to the modern repertoire. In recent years scholars have continued to investigate Ephrata’s music, and more original Cloister music has been transcribed, which offers more insight into the rich musical heritage of the community. Currently, Dr. Christopher Dylan Herbert is working with Ephrata’s music, already having transcribed the major Rose, Lily, Bloom Sequence and recorded it with professional musicians in the original 1741 Saal (Meetinghous) at the Cloister. To place Ephrata’s music in context, the Chorus also performs works by other early American composers.

Today the Ephrata Cloister Chorus operates on an annual schedule from September through late May. The performance year is divided into two seasons, Fall (September through December) and Spring (January through May or early June). The Chorus is part of a day-long presentation on the Sunday of Columbus Day weekend in October, and the Charter Day celebrations in mid-March. In December the group presents the annual Christmas at the Cloister program on two evenings. In May the Chorus offers an annual Spring Concert that features a major classical work. The group usually performs one or two additional concerts in the region in the fall and spring.
Benefactors of the 2019 / 2020 Classical Concert Series

Nancy Bean and Lloyd Smith
Dr. Edmund D. Cohen
Frank and Renate Genieser
Reinhard and Sue Kruse
Monica Kulaski
Michael Rissinger
Doris H. E. Simon
Karl Spaeth
Hardy von Auenmueller
Bette and Bill Young

Patrons of the 2019 / 2020 Classical Concert Series

Fredericka L. Heinze in loving memory of Lois Kunkel
Ruth Quinn

We also wish to acknowledge with thanks the generous support received from The Philadelphia Cultural Fund for this season of our music program.