

# ***An Evening of Sacred Songs and Spirituals from J.S. Bach to Harry Burleigh***

***A concert dedicated to the victims of 9/11  
and Hurricane Harvey***



**September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017**  
**Good Shepherd-Faith Presbyterian Church**  
**New York, NY**



*Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?*

*We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.*

--from "To A Skylark" by Percy Bysshe Shelley

# PROGRAM

## Welcome

Dennis Speed, Schiller Institute



### **No Ways Tired**      **Hall Johnson**

Everett Suttle, tenor

### **Every Time I Feel the Spirit**      **William Dawson**

Frank Mathis, baritone

### **When I Was Sinkin' Down**      **Hall Johnson**

### **Ain' a That Good News**      **William Dawson**

Schiller Institute NYC Chorus; Diane Sare, Director



### **Ave Maria**      **Bach/Gounod**

Indira Mahajan, soprano

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Misero o Sogno**      **W.A. Mozart**

Everett Suttle, tenor

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Weepin' Mary**      **H.T. Burleigh**

Everett Suttle, tenor

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Litanei**      **Franz Schubert**

Michelle Fuchs, soprano; Linda Childs, mezzo-soprano;

Everett Suttle, tenor; Frank Mathis, baritone

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Ave Verum**      **W.A. Mozart**

Indira Mahajan, soprano

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Kyrie from Mass in C Major**      **Ludwig V. Beethoven**

Michelle Fuchs, soprano; Linda Childs, mezzo-soprano;

Everett Suttle, tenor; Frank Mathis, baritone

Robert Wilson, piano

### **Gloria, Chorale from Wacht auf**      **J.S. Bach**



*Please join us for a reception downstairs following the program*

# ***Beauty, Music and Immortality: Remembering 9/11***

Each September 11th, the United States has an opportunity and duty to honor those whose lives were taken through unjustified violence and terror perpetrated that day, in 2001, in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania. “9/11” has become an extension of, and as important to contemporary America as is Memorial Day. How will September 11, 2001 be remembered as we move a farther and farther distance away in time from those events? Fifty years from those original events, memory will have faded, as it has with respect to other tragedies and crimes. Something more than horror, rage or retribution must be invoked by our remembrances; they must be simultaneously solemn, and celebratory.

This year, we must to add to this, the tragedy of August's hurricane disaster in Houston, the unfolding tragedy in Puerto Rico, and the impending tragedy in Florida and other American states—events occurring as this Schiller Institute concert takes place. Poet Friedrich Schiller's requirement for art, whether in the form of drama or otherwise, is that it must transport the viewer or listener from mundane and immediate circumstances, to the realm of the universal and eternal, the actual domain in which the human mind exists, and human morality is forged. In the most dire of circumstances, and the most unbearable of tragedies, it is art which lifts us above ourselves to “conquer our fear, that we may conquer death.”

It is precisely in answer to this requirement that the indispensable role of what is often referred to as Classical musical composition makes itself most clear. The need to live life in the “day to day,” means that our minds are pressured and discouraged from reflection upon the short time of our mortal existence. Whatever may be said about the greatness of Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, or Chopin, the brevity of their lives—they all died before the age of 40 years—makes some speculate, if not lament, “what they could have done.” Lives suddenly taken in violence, whether that violence is perpetrated by man, or by the impersonal forces of nature, provoke that “What if?” speculation even more so.

What is life, that it should demand, and deserve, lament at its termination? One writer has said of

music: “music is a transcendental exploration of human emotion and experience, the very fabric of life in its purest form. And the Ninth [Symphony of Beethoven], [is] our greatest musical achievement.” In his essay “The Poetic Principle,” Edgar Poe stated: “It is in music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty.” Life, Beauty, and Music are not the same, but when all three are joined in a single place, time, society or individual, there we confidently proclaim the nobility, grace and integrity of mankind to be portrayed and upheld in the highest degree.

Tonight's concert program provides a crucible for the joining together of these three elements: Beauty, Music and Life. The artists, and their songs, allow us to not merely recall those taken so violently from us, but to also renew our vow for all future mankind to “put an end to war, before war puts an end to mankind.” They permit us to not merely mourn, but to also mobilize the better angels of our, and of mankind's nature.

The singing will strengthen us, not merely to remember, but to commit our fallen friends and family to a living, potent Memory, rather than merely to the grave. Our love, following in the footsteps of our remembrance, is, through great art, extended beyond us and our time, to all people and all time, and changes how we commemorate tragedy, as Lincoln so proposed in America's finest poem, the Gettysburg Address.

Schubert's “Litanei” (Litany for the Dead on All Souls Day) implores: “Allen Seele ruhn in Frieden! All Souls, may they Rest In Peace!” It is for us, the living, through art, and especially music, to fight to attain that peace, through the pursuit of a continuous human progress toward a more perfect union of mankind with itself. September 11th need not be a sad precursor of the coming fall; it can be an auger of a new rising of a spirit of unity in the United States. Schiller Institute leader and chorus member, Keshia Rogers, whose father and stepmother were killed in the recent Houston flood, has said, “We have to continue. I have a mission. We all have a mission.” It must be in our dedication to that mission, that our souls find rest, of which Schubert's song sings.

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