

THE  
**DESSOFF CHOIRS**  
MALCOLM J. MERRIWEATHER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Dessoff Dialogue:  
*Dessoff Strong - The Song Continues*

The Dessoff Choirs  
Monday, May 24, 2021  
7PM





Monday, May 24, 2021 • 7:00 pm

The Dessoiff Choirs  
Malcolm J. Merriweather, *Music Director*  
Steven Ryan, *piano & organ*

***Dessoiff Strong: The Song Continues***

*Dies Irae* from Requiem W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Sopranos: Kathy Wolf, Kirsten Gorsak, Julie Siegmund  
Altos: Carol Shapiro, Barbara Scharf Schamest, Lisa Grow, Christina Peter, Paola Nuñez  
Tenors: Steve Brautigam, Andy Willett, Christopher Ebert  
Bass: Steve Kass, Michael Prachthausen, Buddy Menton, Christopher Platt

*Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr* Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Sopranos: Kathy Wolf, Julie Siegmund, Tina Fairweather  
Altos: Amanda Kelly

*Dona nobis pacem* from the Mass in B minor J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Sopranos: Kathy Wolf, Julie Siegmund,  
Altos: Carol Shapiro, Barbara Scharf Schamest, Christina Peter, Paola Nuñez, Martha Hollander  
Tenors: Steve Brautigam, Christopher Ebert, Steve Kass  
Bass: Steve Winn, Ryan Mesina, Dick Hadsell

*In memoriam:*

*Erika Rohrbach, Eric Hansen, Steven Lanser*

*Oseh Shalom* Nurit Hirsh, arr. Elaine Ginsburg

Sopranos: Kathy Wolf, Julie Siegmund  
Altos: Barbara Scharf Schamest, Lisa Grow, Martha Hollander, Liz Hollander  
Tenors: Jon Lowy, Steve Kass  
Bass: Steve Winn, Richard Hadsell, Michael Prachthausen

*The Negro Speaks of Rivers* Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

Sopranos: Jen Crawford, Tina Fairweather, Jessie Barbour, Kathryn Singleton  
Altos: Amanda Kelly, Kirsten Gorsak, Liz Hollander, JC Jarbi  
Tenors: Jon Lowy, Christopher Ebert  
Bass: Christopher Platt, Michael Prachthausen, John Stolen

*Hold Fast To Dreams* Florence Price (1887-1953)

Malcolm J. Merriweather, *baritone*



*You'll Never Walk Alone*

Richard Rogers, arr. Mark Hayes

Sopranos: Jen Crawford, Tina Fairweather, Jessie Barbour, Kathryn Singleton

Altos: Amanda Kelly, Kirsten Gorsak, Liz Hollander, Martha Hollander

Tenors: Jon Lowy, Christopher Ebert

Bass: Christopher Platt, Michael Prachthausen

Steven Ryan, piano & organ

Video Production:

Sekou Luke, director

Devon Howard, sound engineer

Joshua Wells Broaden, camera

Managing Director

Mic Herring



**Council on  
the Arts**

The Dessoff season is made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

**NYC Cultural  
Affairs**

This program is sponsored in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



## Texts

### **Dies Irae** from Requiem

W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Dies irae, dies illa  
Solvat saeculum in favilla,  
Teste David cum Sibylla.  
Quantus tremor est futurus  
Quando iudex est venturus  
Cuncta stricte discussurus.

Day of wrath, that day  
Will dissolve the earth in ashes  
As David and the Sibyl bear witness.  
What dread there will be  
When the Judge shall come  
To judge all things strictly.

### **Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr**

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr.  
Ich bitt, wollst sein von mir nicht fern  
Mit deiner Hülff und Gnaden.  
Die ganze Welt erfreut mich nicht,  
Nach Himmel und Erd frag ich nicht,  
Wenn ich dich nur, Herr, habe.  
Und wenn mir gleich mein Herz zerbricht,  
So bist du doch mein Zuversicht,  
Mein Teil und meines Herzens Trost,  
Der mich durch sein Blut hat erlöst.  
Herr Jesu Christ,  
Mein Gott und Herr, mein Gott und Herr,  
In Schanden laß mich nimmermehr!

I love you tenderly, o Lord.  
I pray, be not far from me  
With thy help and grace.  
The whole world does not delight me,  
I do not ask for heaven or earth,  
If I can only have you.  
And even if my heart should break,  
Yet you are still my confidence,  
My portion and my heart's comfort,  
Who has redeemed me through his blood.  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
My God and Lord, my God and Lord,  
Let me never more be put to shame!

### **Dona nobis pacem** from the Mass in B minor

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Dona nobis pacem

Give us peace

### **Oseh Shalom**

Nurit Hirsh, arr. by Elaine Broad-Ginsburg

Oseh shalom bimromav  
Hu ya'aseh shalomaleyenu  
Ve'al kol Yisrael  
Ve'imru Amen

He who makes peace in his high places  
He shall make peace upon us  
And upon all of Israel  
And say Amen



### **Hold Fast To Dreams**

Florence Price (1887-1953)

Hold fast to dreams  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

### **The Negro Speaks of Rivers**

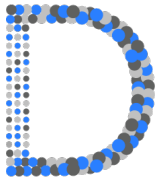
Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

I've known rivers:  
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the  
flow of human blood in human veins.  
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.  
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.  
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.  
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln  
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy  
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:  
Ancient, dusky rivers.  
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)



THE  
**DESSOFF CHOIRS**  
MALCOLM J. MERRIWEATHER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**You'll Never Walk Alone (with Climb Every Mountain)**

Richard Rogers (1902–1979)

Oscar Hammerstein II (1895 – 1960)

When you walk through a storm  
Hold your head up high  
And don't be afraid of the dark.  
At the end of the storm  
Is a golden sky  
And the sweet silver song of a lark.

Walk on through the wind,  
Walk on through the rain,  
Tho' your dreams be tossed and blown.  
Walk on, walk on  
With hope in your heart  
And you'll never walk alone,  
You'll never walk alone.

Climb every mountain,  
Search high and low,  
Follow every highway,  
Every path you know.

Climb every mountain,  
Ford every stream.  
Follow every rainbow  
'Till you find your dream!

A dream that will need  
All the love you can give,  
Every day of your life,  
For as long as you live.

Climb every mountain,  
Ford every stream.  
Follow every rainbow  
'Till you find your dream!

## Meet the Artists



**The Dessoff Choirs**, one of the leading choruses in New York City, is an independent chorus with an established reputation for pioneering performances of choral works from the Renaissance era through the 21st century. Since its founding in 1924, Dessoff's mission is to

enrich the lives of its audiences and members through the performance of choral music.

Its concerts, professional collaborations, community outreach, and educational initiatives are dedicated to stimulating public interest in and appreciation of choral music as an art form that enhances the culture and life of our times. With repertoire ranging over a wide variety of eras and styles, Dessoff's musical acumen and flexibility has been recognized with invitations from major orchestras for oratorios and orchestral works.

Past performances include Britten's *War Requiem* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with Lorin Maazel in his final performances as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic. Over the course of its 97-year history, Dessoff has presented numerous world premieres, including works by Virgil Thomson, George Perle, Paul Moravec, and Ricky Ian Gordon; the first American performance in nearly 100 years of Montemezzi's opera *La Nave*, with Teatro Grattacielo; and the American premieres of Philip Glass's *Symphony No. 5*, and Sir John Tavener's all-night vigil, *The Veil of the Temple*.

Dessoff's recent discography includes three CDs: *MARGARET BONDS: The Ballad of the Brown King & Selected Songs*, released in November 2019; *Reflections* (1997), featuring music by Convery, Corigliano, Moravec, and Rorem; and *Glories on Glories* (2009), a collection of American song featuring composers from Billings to Ives.

The Dessoff Choirs is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Dessoff's season is made possible in part by funds from The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Please visit [dessoff.org](http://dessoff.org) for more information.



Conductor **Malcolm J. Merriweather** is Music Director of The Dessoff Choirs, founded in 1924, and known for pathbreaking performances of choral works from the pre-Baroque era through the 21st century. Merriweather enjoys a versatile career with performances ranging from the songs of Margaret Bonds to gems of the symphonic choral repertoire. The baritone can be heard on the GRAMMY nominated recording of Paul Moravec’s *Sanctuary Road* (NAXOS). Hailed by Opera News as “moving...expertly interpreted,” Margaret Bonds: *The Ballad of the Brown King & Selected Songs* (AVIE) has earned considerable praise around the world.

An Associate Professor, he is Director of Choral Studies and Voice Department Coordinator at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, and the Artistic Director of “Voices of Haiti,” a 60-member children’s choir in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, operated by the Andrea Bocelli Foundation.

Merriweather is excited to resume in-person rehearsals and concerts. Highlights of his 2021-2022 season include the world premiere performance and recording of *Credo* and *Simon Bore the Cross* by Margaret Bonds; a performance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art entitled, *The Beauty of Holiness*; and performances with Syracuse Opera, North Carolina Opera, and the Columbus Symphony Orchestra. During the pandemic, Merriweather’s 2020-2021 season has been enriched with guest lectures and virtual appearances around the world, most notably at Yale University and Columbia University. He has inaugurated a series of virtual events entitled “Dessoff Dialogues.” These conversations emphasize matters of social justice, equity, and inclusion as they relate to classical music and the choral art.

Merriweather’s 2019-2020 season included Fauré’s *Requiem*; Rutter’s *The Sprig of Thyme*; and Gregg Smith’s *Continental Harmonist* with The Dessoff Choirs. He was engaged by the Columbus Symphony Orchestra for Paul Moravec’s *Sanctuary Road*, and at the Eastman School of Music for the American Choral Directors Association Eastern Division Conference in Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*. The COVID-19 global pandemic forced cancellations with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic.

Merriweather holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting from the studio of Kent Tritle at the Manhattan School of Music, where his doctoral dissertation “Now I walk in Beauty, Gregg Smith: A Biography and Complete Works Catalog” constituted the first complete works list for the



composer and conductor. He received Master of Music degrees in Choral Conducting and in Vocal Performance from the studio of Rita Shane at the Eastman School of Music, as well as his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from Syracuse University, summa cum laude. His professional affiliations include membership in Pi Kappa Lambda, the American Choral Directors Association, and Chorus America. Connect with him on Twitter and Instagram @maestroweather.



**Steven Ryan**, *piano*, has been Dessoff’s accompanist and keyboard soloist since 1997, including featured performances in all of Dessoff’s Midwinter Festivals. In February 2017, Dessoff’s “French Fête” concert was a celebration of his 20th anniversary with the group. In recent years, Mr. Ryan has performed in Russia, Austria, France, and Italy. In 2014, he was featured in the Voices Across the Pacific festival in Sydney, Australia, playing a solo concert and working with choirs. He has performed several solos with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and the Greater Trenton Symphony Orchestra.

Ryan has played celesta with the Berlin Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall; piano, harpsichord, and organ with Dessoff; and synthesizer with the Moody Blues. Conductors he has collaborated with include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Charles Dutoit, Neeme Järvi, Sir Neville Mariner, Gerard Schwartz, and Maxim Shostakovich.

Ryan is a regular accompanist at Montclair State University, working with the choirs and in both the voice and string studios. He participated in Montclair’s 2015 concerts at Sadler’s Wells Theatre in London and at the Isaac Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall. In 2000, he won second prize at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition for Outstanding Amateurs, and in 2001 he took first place in the Concours des Grand Amateurs de Piano in France.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Want to join us in song all season long?*  
 We’ll be looking for a few good singers to join Dessoff  
 starting in September 2021.  
 Watch for our Audition announcement in  
 August 2021



## Contributing Membership

*We thank each and every one of you for your generous contributions  
which has helped keep us afloat during this last year!*

### Government, Foundation & Corporate Support

Amazon Smile	New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
The Amphion Foundation	New York State Council on the Arts
Arthur & Alice Adams Charitable Trust	Prudential Foundation
The Golden Rule Foundation	The Rea Charitable Trust
IBM International Foundation	Salesforce.com Foundation
New Music USA	

### Golden Benefactor (\$2,500 +)

Anonymous (3)	Catherine Douglass & Bruce Dohrenwend
---------------	---------------------------------------

### Silver Benefactor (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Laurie and Sheldon Dosik	Christopher and Karen Platt
*Brian Bartholomew and James Garnett	Barbara and Howard Schamest
MEL	Cyndee and Elliott Socci

### Benefactor (\$500 - \$999)

Peter and Christina Fairweather	Rosalie Erekson Stone
*David Hauslaib and Rade Radakovich	Diana Young
Patrick Socci and Mary Ellen Guarini	#David Zapolsky
Sowarby and Grosscup Family	

### Patron (\$250 - \$499)

Dr. and Mrs. James M. Crawford	*Richard Pace
Jeness Crawford	*Forrest and Frances Rohrbach
Catherine Curry	*Mary Rohrbach
Karen Geer	Stevie Ryan
Deborah Lanser	Carol Shapiro
*Suzanne McGillicuddy	Laurie Yorr & Stephen Shefsky
*Marie Mekari	

### Sponsor (\$100 - \$249)

*Stephanie Amici and Neil Kivlin	*Romaine A Macomb/Ruth Feldman
*Val & Lou Amici	Rita Markey and Dennis Johnson
William Bodenlos	Jean McCarroll
Stephen Bonime	Christopher R. Miller
Susan R Bradley	Linda Mule & Peter Wolf
Charlotte Brown	*Johnna and Allen Neugent



\*Brooke Carlson  
Regina Conn  
Christopher Ebert  
\*Diane Farrell  
\*Madeline Farrell  
\*Fish & Sarah  
Laura Fox  
\*The Francis Family  
Donna Frankel  
\*Rosemary Gaffney  
\*Nadine Hamilton  
Jane M Hanson & Patrick Shrout  
\*Linda Harry  
Rada Hastings  
\*Kristin Hauslaib, Anthony Pratt  
\*Seth E Hauslaib  
William E. Higgins  
Elizabeth Hollander  
JohnClark Jarbi  
Arpad Jaromy  
Gail Job  
\*Tardis Johnson  
Amanda & J-V Jones  
Dennis Keene  
\*Sandra Kaszer  
Tony and Cynthia Lamport

**Friend (Up to \$99)**

\*Alexis Akagawa  
\*Sandra and Richard Amici  
Jessica Barbour  
Robin Beckhard and Bryan Shelby  
Geri Blagden  
\*Sherry Brabham  
Maria Bradley-Moore  
\*Sally Campbell  
\*Carolyn Comiskey  
\*Philip and Sallie Cremer  
\*Danni Dong  
#Virginia and David Donovan  
\*Pamela Ellsworth  
\*Jennifer Fantozzi  
\*Linda Faucett

Paola Nunez del Prado  
\*Clare Nystrom  
Gary Pai  
Christina Peter  
\*Christine Pomeranz  
\*Julie Reust  
\*Mor Rozental Sharon  
Lisa Sbrana  
Lisa Scarpati, Maria Scarpati  
Julie Siegmund & Steve Friedman  
\*Marjorie Silverman  
Ellen Sleeter  
Darcy Smith  
\*Judith E. Smullen  
\*Beverly Solochek  
Steven and Jeanne Stellman  
Anna Suessbrick  
Laura & Andrew Swain  
Nancy M Tooney  
\*Kaori Uchisaka  
Matthew D. Walker  
Cathy Webster  
\*Sally White  
Steven A Winn  
#Kenny and Kathryn Young

Benjamin Martin  
John and Trudy Martin  
Elizabeth Mathewson  
\*Jennifer McNabb  
#Lisa Mednick Owen and Steve Owen  
\*Susan and Scott Meiser  
Lynnette Mesina  
Ryan Mesina  
Ian Milliken  
Myrna Nachman  
Barbara Pedley  
#Katharine Perko  
\*Sonja Phongsavanh  
Anick Pleven  
\*RoseMarie Rossi



Robin Feldman  
Vera Finkemeier  
\*Douglas Geers  
#Gil  
Lucille Grey  
Saundra Hampton  
Michael Hegedus  
\*Keith Heron  
Martha Hess  
\*Scott and Kristina Howlett  
Andre Hurni and Deborah Kempe  
Steve Kass  
Terri Kass  
Marcia Kelly  
\*Marianne Klimchuk  
Lynn Koch  
Richard Koo  
David Lebson  
Doris Lindbergh  
Thomas and Beth Lowy  
Glenn Lunden and Frank Meola  
\*Jeff Lunden  
\*Liane Lunden  
\*In Memory of Erika Rohrbach

\*Shadia Sachedina  
\*June Sadowski-Devarez  
\*Kazumi Sakamoto  
Verna Saunders  
Patricia Scharf  
Michelle Sharkey  
\*Ellen Simpao  
Kathryne and Richard Singleton  
\*Judy Smith  
\*Sara and Warren Smith  
Elizabeth Socci  
Margie Staker  
#Christopher Stansfield  
Steve Stelman  
\*Marissa Stephani  
\*Mary Tsujimoto  
\*Ayesha Wahid  
Kathleen Wallace-Deering  
Edward Washington  
Albert Watson  
\*Janet Weiss  
\*Nan Xiao  
#In Memory of Eric Hansen

**Now, more than ever, your support is instrumental!**

Your [gift](#) to The Dessooff Choirs today will help us continue to make extraordinary music for music lovers like you throughout the year.

Donate at [dessoff.org](https://dessoff.org) today!

The Dessooff Choirs  
P.O. Box 1337  
New York, NY 10028

*All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*



## Next Season

*Join us next season as we return to the Stage with live performances!*

### Considering Matthew Shepard – New York Premiere

**Saturday November 6, 2021, 4pm**

The New York Society for Ethical Culture Concert Hall  
2 W. 64<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10023

The Dessoff Choirs is proud to present the New York premiere of Craig Hella Johnson's three-part fusion oratorio, *Considering Matthew Shepard*. Grappling with the brutal 1998 murder of a young gay man who has become an American icon and a symbol for hope and empowerment, this moving work weaves together musical styles that include country and western, gospel, and chant with lyrics taken from Matt Shepard's personal journal, writings from his parents, newspaper reports, and poetic texts.

Joined by the Dessoff Orchestra, guest soloists, and the Brooklyn College Conservatory Singers, Dessoff will give a lightly staged performance under the baton of Music Director Malcolm J. Merriweather and co-directed by WQXR's Elliott Forrest (Peabody-winning broadcaster, producer, and director) and Rod Caspers.

### MESSIAH SING

**Friday December 3, 2021, 7pm**

Union Theological Seminary  
3041 Broadway at 121<sup>st</sup> Street, New York, NY 10027

Join the chorus for our annual Messiah Sing.

### The Beauty of Holiness

**DESSOFF at the Metropolitan Museum**

**Sunday, December 19, 2021, 3pm**

1000 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028

The Dessoff Choirs and Orchestra ushers in the winter solstice with Margaret Bonds' Christmas cantata, *The Ballad of the Brown King*, along with shimmering choral works by Mary Lou Williams featuring *Black Christ of the Andes* as the centerpiece. In these works, we witness the bittersweet intersection of music, poetry, religion, and the Civil Rights movement in America. The Dessoff Choirs and Orchestra is joined by internationally recognized soloists Laquita Mitchell, Noah Stewart, and Lucia Bradford with Malcolm J. Merriweather at the podium.

### CREDO

**Thursday, April 28, 2022, 7:30pm**

Location: TBD

Dessoff continues its mission to perform rarely heard choral masterpieces with the world premieres of Margaret Bonds' *Credo* and *Simon Bore the Cross*.