



# *Longing...*

*A Concert About Spring Love*

*The Brasiles Ensemble*

*Saturday, May 13, 2017 ~ 7:00pm*

*The Chapel Restoration*

*Gold Spring, NY*

# *The Brasiles Ensemble*

*~ Longing ~*

*A Concert About Spring Love*

## *Program*

*Frühlingsrauschen, Op. 32, No. 3 - Rustle of Spring*

Christian Sinding

Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*'Tis Women*

Henry Purcell

*Now is the Month of Maying*

Thomas Morley

*Pase el Agoa, ma Julieta Dama*

Anonymous

*Fair Phyllis*

John Farmer

*April is in my Mistress' Face*

Thomas Morley

*Baci Soavi e Cari*

Claudio Monteverdi

*I Attempt From Love's Sickness*

Henry Purcell

Paul Philips ~ tenor

Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Sebben Crudele* from the opera *La costanza in amor vince l'inganno*

Antonio Caldara

Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Ostinato*

Lowell Liebermann  
Madeleine DeNitto ~ flute  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Moonfall* - from the musical *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

Rupert Holmes  
Laura Danilov ~ mezzo soprano  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Waiting*

Carl Deis  
Kimberly Hiss ~ soprano  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Sull' aria Che soave zeffiretto* from the opera *Le nozze di Figaro*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Madeleine DeNitto & Kimberly Hiss ~ sopranos  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Deh! Vieni Alla Finestra* from the opera *Don Giovanni*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Paul Phillips ~ tenor  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*L a fiancée perdue* - from *Trois Melodies*

Olivier Messiaen  
Madeleine DeNitto ~ soprano  
Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

*Adieu. Sweet Amaryllis*

John Wilbye

*Weep, O Mine Eyes*

John Bennet

*Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!* from *Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans*

Claude Debussy



As the first question people often ask is about where the name of the group originated, here is a bit of background. It was on July 4th in 1921, that Salvatore and Madeleine DeNitto arrived in the harbor of New York City with the Statue of Liberty being the very first thing that Madeleine saw from the bow of her ship from Algeria. With her, Madeleine brought a very ill baby, a wealth of education and appreciation for the fine arts. She left Old Algiers and parents she would never see again in hopes of great opportunities in a new world. She later bore three more children who all recall her singing opera in her kitchen while baking her famous French loaves. Madeleine had left behind her native country, her beloved family and her maiden name; Brasiles. It is in her honor that I lend my grandmother's given name to a group of fine musicians for whom she would certainly have adored.

Due to the great success of the formal *Nocturnal* concert in November of 2013 at *St. Philip's Church in the Highlands*, I am very happy to invite you all to future performances from *The Brasiles Ensemble*. As the mission of this group is to provide audiences with unique concerts, we are thrilled to have several opportunities already in the works for 2017, beginning with this evening's concert. Please like our official Facebook page and/or check our website for future performances.

~Madeleine DeNitto, Founder

*Pronunciation guide for Brasiles = "BRAH-zee-lez"*

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## ***Performer Bios***

### ***Laura Danilov ~ mezzo soprano***

Laura Danilov has been singing since she was a little girl. She enjoys singing all sorts of styles including musical theatre (see acting roles) & rock (Formerly with the Roy Orbison band, The Lonely.) Acting roles include: Annas in Jesus Christ Super Star (Depot Theatre); Linda in No Privacy (Aery 20/20 Festival); Weather Lady in Gasping (Drones Theatre Company); Charles Thomson in 1776 (Depot Theatre); Beggars Opera (Philipstown Depot Theatre), Much Ado About Nothing (Princeton Rep Shakespeare Festival), Violet (Putnam County Theatre), The Gift (Terry Schreiber Studio), Hidden Voices (Pillars: An Utopian Ensemble), Godspell (Oasis Theatre Co.) Besides co-directing youngsters in Shakespeare Situation & Stories for the Stage summer camp, past teaching jobs include private singing coach and movement specialist in the Williamson Technique for Actors at the Actors Movement Studio in NYC. In addition to performing, Laura is a Life Coach, working with Actors, Singers & Moms Making a Difference. She lives in Cold Spring with her husband and her famous son, Alex.

### ***Madeleine DeNitto ~ founder, soprano, flute***

During her decade of performance with a professional opera company, Madeleine was on stages regularly in major productions, including such great operas as Suor Angelica, Don Pasquale and The Merry Wives of Windsor. She was also very honored to have been chosen to perform in rare works, including Riders to the Sea, as well as special opportunities to perform in honor of Queen Anne and Princess Sophie of Romania. Proficient in sacred and early music, Madeleine was also one of eight members of an elite madrigal group for several years. In late 2012, Madeleine had a role in The Beggar's Opera performed at The Philipstown Depot Theatre, which marked her return to the music world after a ten year hiatus. For nearly 18 years, Madeleine has been a professional organizer and is proud owner of Garrison Concierge. She is a member of the choir at St. Philip's in the Highlands Episcopal Church and the Philipstown Garden Club. She and her husband, Clayton, relocated to the Hudson Valley permanently where they are able to be close to their two adult children in New York City; one daughter, a wife and new mother, working in corporate HR for a major bank and a son, finishing his final year of law school at Georgetown Law in DC.

### ***Kimberly Hiss ~ soprano***

Kimberly Hiss, soprano, studied English and Vocal Performance at Penn State University then moved to Manhattan, where she enjoyed singing with groups including the Young People's Chorus of New York City, which toured Eastern Europe, and the Russian Chamber Chorus of New York, which prided itself on a repertoire of ancient liturgical chants and new works from contemporary composers. As a soloist she has recorded television commercials and performed on acoustic guitar both while living in Prague in the Czech Republic, and more recently throughout New York's Hudson River Valley. Currently, she is pleased to sing with The Brasiles Ensemble and the St. Philip's Choir. Beyond music, Kimberly is a writer and editor who has contributed pieces to a range of titles from Reader's Digest and O the Oprah Magazine to The Prague Post. She lives in Peekskill, NY, with her husband and son.

### ***Paul Philips ~ tenor***

Paul grew up singing with family and friends. After some initial music training in the Atlanta Boy Choir, he sang in various choirs and groups throughout a somewhat nomadic childhood. In college, he was an original member of the Oberlin Obertones, who continue a cappella men's singing at Oberlin College and Conservatory to this day. He performed many major and new chorale works over the years with The New York Chamber Symphony Chorus, The Judith Clurman Chorale, The Juilliard Choral Union, and the Oxford University Press Choir. Paul has sung with ensembles ranging from The American Composers Orchestra and The Juilliard Orchestra to The New York Pops, They Might Be Giants, and The Chieftains. With the Juilliard Opera, he performed in choruses for Igor Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex and Francis Poulenc's Dialogue of the Carmelites. He has sung on stage with the New York City Ballet's Chichester Psalms as well as in the orchestra pit for Mark Morris Dance Group's Gloria. In his "other" career, Paul works in the world of educational publishing, helping create English language teaching materials for children, teens, and adults. He's found great fun working with composers and arrangers to develop songs programs for teaching English. In addition to The Brasiles Ensemble, Paul currently sings with the St. Philip's Church Choir in Garrison as well as the Newburgh Symphonic Chorale.

***Ed Robinson ~ bass***

Born in post-WWII Germany to a military family, Ed's childhood was split between Germany and New York City. He has spent much of his time singing with various choirs, including the Manhattan Borough-Wide Chorus, the All-City High School Chorus, the Saint Augustine Chapel Choir with Trinity Parish and presently, the Saint Philip's Church Choir since 1980. Currently retired, Ed earned a degree in mechanical engineering from The City College of New York and not only had an extensive career in control and automation system design and construction for electrical power facilities, water, and wastewater treatment plants, but is also a Vietnam Veteran and retired military NCO, a Master Sergeant with the USAF and NYANG for 22 years. Ed is also an active member of the New York Paleontological Society. He has been married to Louise Squitieri for 12 years and along with Louise's children and grandchildren, they have five children and five grandchildren.

***Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano***

Hailed as a "real virtuoso" by the late Ruth Laredo, pianist and conductor Michael Shane Wittenburg made his professional opera conducting debut with Amore Opera's recent production of *Faust* and has served with multiple opera companies including in Nashville, Orlando and Sarasota. As an Assistant Professor of music at Lee University, he was Music Director of both the Chamber Orchestra and Opera Theatre. He has made solo appearances as pianist with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, The Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Eastman Wind Ensemble and the Ocala Symphony as both pianist and conductor. He has also appeared in collaborative recital with such artists as Metropolitan Opera soprano Stell Zambalist and concert violinist Livia Sohn.



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## *Special Acknowledgements*

As founder of *The Brasiles Ensemble*, I would like to thank the original group of musicians from the 2013 *Nocturnal* concert, which became the foundation of formalizing an ensemble group. I would first like to acknowledge that *Laura Danilov* and *Michael Shane Wittenburg* are returning from the *Nocturnal* concert, which greatly pleases everyone. *Julie Heckert* and her husband *Paul Heckert* were wonderfully complementary to the efforts of that first event and we certainly appreciated the time and talents that *André Herzegovitch* and *Linda Speziale* offered to further polish our collective efforts to shine. I would also like to thank my son, *Speare Hodges*, who provided piano solos and accompaniment for me, even though he was preparing to enter law school at that time. I can now report that he is graduating from law school next week and hopes that he can perform with us in future concerts, if time allows. I would love to have each of these *Nocturnal* concert members spotlighted in future concerts and hope that they will have interest when called upon. Thank you all for your encouragement over the years and please know that you will all remain in my directory of fine artists.

A big thank you to *Frank Geer* for his enthusiasm about our most recent accomplishments and for allowing us to hold rehearsals, photo shoots and recording sessions in *St. Philip's Church in the Highlands*, located in Garrison.

Another big thank you goes to *Kassie Chapman* for her amazing sewing skills for selective pieces of our classic attire and Dickensian costuming.

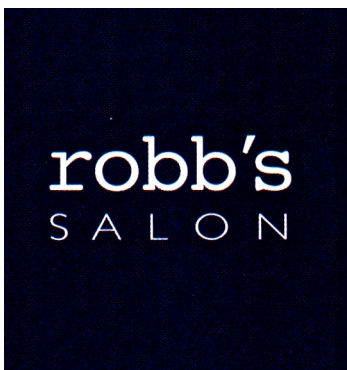
Continued thank yous always flow over to *Durward Entekin* for his inspiring work with the choir of *St. Philip's Church in the Highlands* and for his blessing upon us to succeed.

Special thanks goes to musicologist, *Dr. Malena Kuss*, who gives us highly positive critiques and to my father, professor and pianist, *Dr. John DeNitto* for music consulting of tonight's program and forever nodding his head to ensure that we are on the right track as he listens to our many rehearsals. Also, to my husband, *Clayton Scales*, for his camera skills during our photo shoots in various locations for which everyone compliments us.

Also, we would like to give a special nod to *Barbara DeSilva* for honoring our desire to perform in this wonderful space tonight as well as for the time she offered in helping us with scheduling and advice. To *Donna Blaney*, formally of *Boscobel* and to *Tessa Dean* of the *Cold Spring Farmers' Market*, we would also like to extend our appreciation to them for giving us chances to perform.

It is our desire to also mention that we try to be as green of a group as possible and that most of our costuming has come from the *That Nothing Be Lost Thrift Store at St. Christopher's Inn at Graymoor* in Garrison.

Thank you to *Archipelago at Home*, *Highlands Baskets at The Country Goose*, *Journeyman Bakery*, *Nice & Neat Dry Cleaning and Alterations* and *Robb's Salon* for the wonderful program ads in support of our printing costs. Please shop locally with these great businesses!



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## ***Program Notes***

### ***Anonymous (16th century)***

Anonymous chose to shy away from public praise and/or scrutiny, though seemingly becoming the most famous of all composers with a wide range of work spanning over the centuries. Anonymous may actually be the oldest and most versatile master of music ever known to mankind. The piece from Anonymous featured tonight, ***Pasa el Agoa, ma Julieta Dama***, is but one of many pieces sharing the joys of beckoning a lovely woman over to be loved by a smitten admirer. It is believed that this piece is written with a mix of Galician-Portuguese and French, however, since Anonymous has not truly verified this, we are not entirely certain of this being the case. If it is the case, we would like for you to know that Galician is a Romance language which was spoken by about 3 million people in Galicia, which in the north-west corner of Spain, just above Portugal. Galician is more or less mutually intelligible with Portuguese but uses Spanish spelling conventions.

### ***John Bennet (1575)***

John Bennet was a composer of the *English Madrigal School*. Bennet's lovely madrigal ***Weep, O Mine Eyes*** is an homage to fellow Renaissance composer, John Dowland, using part of Dowland's most famous piece, ***Flow My Tears***. Bennet's main inspiration for composition style comes from Thomas Morley, also of the school.

### ***Antonio Caldara (1670)***

Born in Venice, Italian Baroque composer Caldara was a multi-instrumentalist who also lived in France and Spain before settling in Rome. It was in 1710 that he wrote the opera ***La costanza in amor vince l'inganno***, from which comes the aria ***Sebben, Crudete***. In 2000, Butler University music professor, Henry Leck set Caldara's aria to a simple harmony for children to perform during the summer *Jubilee 2000* at The Uffizzi in Florence and at St. Peter's in Rome by a mass choir formed by children from around the world at the *Musica Mundi Tuscany Children's Choir Festival*. It is Leck's arrangement that you hear tonight, though we have taken further liberties in adding our own arrangements of voices.

### ***Claude Debussy (1862)***

As a Prix de Rome winner at the mere age of 22, Debussy was able to finance his way to further instruction in Italy for two years. By the turn of the century he had established himself as one of the leading composers of French music. Along with Maurice Ravel, Debussy changed the sound of classical music forever. Tonight we pull the first movement, ***Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!*** from his collection entitled ***Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans***. Charles, Duke of Orleans, was an accomplished medieval poet who wrote hundreds of poems during his nearly 25 years as a prisoner of war. This first movement is poetic, indeed, as it describes the vision of the beauty and grace of a woman one would never tire of.

### ***Carl Deis (1883)***

There is relatively no information to be found on this composer, other than that he may have been an ensemble artist on Broadway and that he has been a music editor over the years. There are no known recordings for his art piece entitled ***Waiting***, keeping Deis as a truly rare composer to be heard in spite of the piece being so lovely. Through deep research, it appears that Deis had also composed music set to an Oscar Wilde poem known as ***The Flight of the Moon***, which carries a copyright of 1942 by a New York publisher. Also found was that Deis was known as a great accompanist for other musicians, but was most notably known as a prolific arranger. Deis worked for the famed G. Schirmer music publisher up until 1953. It seems that he is most remembered today as an arranger for various choral combinations and piano, including a piano arrangement for the poem '***Trees***' by Joyce Kilme. Deis died in 1960.



### ***John Farmer (1570)***

Farmer was another composer from the *English Madrigal School*. By 1595, he was both appointed as organist and Master of Children at Christ Church Cathedral and organist of St Patrick's Cathedral, both in Dublin. His wonderfully cheerful madrigal, ***Fair Phyllis I Saw*** paints a picture of a story where someone saw a young shepherdess sitting alone feeding her sheep near a mountain. The other shepherds did not know where she was. Her lover, Amyntas, goes looking for her and wanders through the hills playing hide and seek. Eventually he finds her, and when he does, they fall down and start kissing.

### ***Rupert Holmes (1948)***

Though born in the United Kingdom, Rupert Holmes grew up in Nanuet, NY. He is best known for his 1979 Billboard hit, *Escape*, known as the *Pina Colada* song. He was later acknowledged for a Tony Award for ***The Mystery of Edwin Drood***, from which tonight's ***Moonfall*** piece comes, showing his versatility as a composer. It has since come to our attention that Rupert Holmes actually lives in Cold Spring!

### ***Lowell Liebermann (1961)***

Lowell Liebermann was commissioned by the Juilliard School to celebrate its 100th anniversary with his second opera *Miss Lonelyhearts*, to a libretto by JD McClatchy after the novel by Nathanael West. He was the first composer to win the Composers' Invitational Award of the Van Cliburn Piano Competition for his *Three Impromptus, Op.68*. Performed this evening is ***Ostinato*** from his ***Album for the Young***, which is set for piano, but has also been set with harp and flute.

Currently, he is found on the composition faculty of Mannes College The New School for Music where he is the conductor of the Mannes American Composers Ensemble, a large ensemble dedicated to the works of living American composers.

### ***Olivier Messiaen (1908)***

Known as a prolific composer, Messiaen was also an ornithologist. Like that of famous French pianist, Hélène Grimaud, he, too, experienced synesthesia, in which he would see colors during certain chords. *Trois Mélodies* was written when the composer was only 22. It is said that he wrote it in response to his mother's death. *La fiancée perdue* is the third piece from this work. In 1940, around age 32, Messiaen became a prisoner of war, yet was still able to write music and perform his work for other prisoners and the guards. From his fascination with birds, he is known to have incorporated birdsong transcriptions into some of his work. We have Messiaen to thank for having Quincy Jones as a pupil when Jones came to Paris in 1957 to study composition and theory.

### ***Claudio Monteverdi (1567)***

Italian composer, Monteverdi married a court singer in 1599 and had children. However, following her death, he became a priest. He was quite crucial in transitioning from the Renaissance period to the Baroque. Of the nine books of madrigals that he wrote, tonight's ***Baci soavi e cari*** is a haunting setting of a suggestive Battista Guarini poem about the ravishing effects of kisses. We felt that it was this piece that was the most challenging for us to learn in tonight's program. Like that of the other five-part piece by John Morley, this one was far more intricately woven while also including sustained notes, slower tempo and sung in Italian, rather than English.

### ***Thomas Morley (1557)***

Morley was an English composer, theorist, singer and organist of the Renaissance. He was one of the foremost members of the *English Madrigal School*. He wrote many, many madrigal pieces and we are singing three of his tonight being that of ***Now is the Month of Maying, April is in my Mistress' Face and Sing We and Chant it***.

### ***Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756)***

What is there to know about Mozart that isn't already known? It happens that the two pieces featured in this program come from his two most important operas and happen to center around love tricks. Composed in 1787, ***Deh! Vieni Alla Finestra*** comes from the opera, ***Don Giovanni***. Wanting to serenade Elvira's his past lover's maid, Giovanni disguises Leporello, as himself to lead Elvira away. After this trick is successful, he sings beneath the window of the beautiful maid. In, ***Sull'aria...che soave zeffiretto***, the duettino from act three of his opera ***The Marriage of Figaro***, the Countess Almaviva dictates an invitation to Susanna to be addressed to the countess' husband in effort to expose his infidelity. This aria was used in the movie *Shawshank Redemption*. As for Mozart, who was left handed could write music before he could write words. He seemed to have such a powerful effect on composers who followed his life, that is is believed that Gustav Mahler's last word before he died was "*Mozart*".

### ***Henry Purcell (1659)***

Our second piece of the evening, ***'Tis Women*** is one of many *catches* composed in the 17th century by the famous Henry Purcell during the Baroque era. In early collections the terms *catch* and *round* were interchangeable, though differing from *canons*. Taken from Purcell's semi-opera called ***The Indian Queen***, is another of tonight's pieces, ***I Attempt From Love's Sickness***. Purcell actually passed away before this work could be completed. This particular piece is the somewhat well-known soprano rondeau air, set for a soprano and sung tonight by a tenor.

### ***Christian Sinding (1856)***

Born in Oslo, Sinding was recognized as one of the important Norwegian composers, next to Edvard Grieg and Johan Svendsen. From 1920-1921, he was appointed professor of composition at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. In 1924 was the first to be granted permanent honorary residency of Grotten (The Grotto) in the city center of Oslo on the grounds of the Royal Palace by the King of Norway. His studies took him to Germany early in his career to study at the Leipzig Conservatory, and remained for some 40 years, but received regular grants from the Norwegian government, and over his lifetime received some of Norway's highest honors for a civilian. Upon returning to Oslo for the rest of his life, he maintained great popularity in both Germany and Norway, and it was after suffering from senile dementia that he was coerced to join the Norway's Nazi Party only eight weeks before his death at the age of 75. Because of this, his music was boycotted by the Norwegian national radio after the war, and he has slipped into obscurity, in spite of actually having spoken out against German occupation and having fought for the rights of Jewish musicians in the 1930's. He actually didn't compose much work for the piano and his ***Frühlingsrauschen, Op. 32, No. 3 - Rustle of Spring***, is his most famous piece, written in 1896. He died in Oslo on December 3, 1941.

### ***John Wilbye (1574)***

Wilbye, yet another member of the famed *English Madrigal School*, may be one of the most famous of all the English madrigalists. Though never married, it is clear in tonight's piece that his heart was full of love to have created such a dreamy masterwork entitled ***Adieu, Sweet Amaryllis***. Unlike his fellow school members, he only wrote sixty-six madrigals.



Congratulations to the Brasiles Ensemble!

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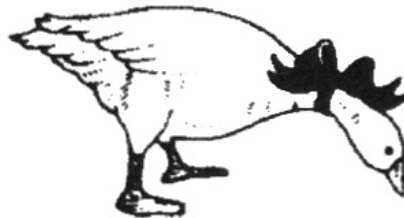
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