



## Con Brio Celebrates 20 years!

**Con Brio's Gala 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Spring Concert will be held on Sunday, April 23, at 4 pm, at Christ the King Church in Old Lyme, CT.**

The acclaimed shoreline chorus, directed by Dr. Stephen Bruce, will be joined by soloists Patricia Schuman, soprano, Clea Huston, mezzo-soprano, Steven Humes, tenor, Matthew Cossack, bass and Associate Music Director Susan Saltus, organ, with the recently augmented Con Brio Festival Orchestra. Con Brio will offer the "best of the best," — the most beloved pieces from its twenty-year repertoire. Don't miss this one!

Beethoven's *Mass in C*, sung by Con Brio at Carnegie Hall during its very first year, opens the program. Composed in 1807, Beethoven was already suffering hearing problems. And yet he produced a masterpiece, fresh, innovative. Robert Schumann wrote that this Mass:

*"...still exercises its power over all ages, just as those great phenomena of nature that, no matter how often they occur, fill us with awe and wonder. This will go on centuries hence, as long as the world, and the world's music, endures."*

Opening the second part of the program is a piece that will stun with its majesty: the Coronation Anthem of Handel, *Zadok the Priest*. Then, in a more reflective style, Con Brio presents Brahms' *Tröste mich wieder* —one of the most beloved a cappella pieces of all time, showcasing Brahms' mastery of choral writing.

Mendelssohn's *Heilig* and Lotti's *Crucifixus*, other well-known motets, will be performed in the round, as has become Con Brio's custom in the wonderful sanctuary of Christ the King Church. *Et in Saecula Saeculorum*, from Vivaldi's *Dixit Dominus*, is an exemplary fugue, even more amazing for having been discovered only in 2005.

Mascagni's *Easter Hymn*, the renowned chorus from the *Cavalleria Rusticana*, is a world-wide, as well as a Con Brio, favorite; internationally acclaimed soprano Patricia Schuman will perform in the magnificent role of *Santuzza*.

In a lighter vein, Con Brio offers the Ward Swingle arrangement of Bach's G minor organ fugue, as well as Arlen's version of *Over the Rainbow* —an audience favorite since 1939, and *When I Fall in Love*, by Victor Young, made famous by Doris Day and Natalie Cole recordings.

Bernstein's *Make Our Garden Grow*, the radiant finale from the operetta *Candide*, is one of his great ensemble numbers, scored for soprano (*Cunegonde*) and tenor (*Candide*) soloists, chorus and orchestra. Celebrating imperfect people who try to do the best they know, the piece has been sung by performers such as June Anderson, Renée Fleming, Jerry Hadley, Barbra Streisand and Judy Collins.

Over two decades, virtually every Con Brio concert has featured audience participation. Maintaining this tradition, Dr. Bruce will ask the audience to join with Con Brio, in Hairston's arrangement of the great African-American spiritual, *In Dat Great Gittin' Up Mornin'*. Dr. Bruce has taught this to audiences all over Europe; with Con Brio featuring this ever-popular piece in all its six concert tours to Europe — and doubtless again, in its 2018 concert tour to Croatia and Slovenia.

Tickets, \$30 adult, \$15 student: online at [www.conbrio.org](http://www.conbrio.org), from any Con Brio member, or by calling 860 526-5399. Christ the King Church, 1 McCurdy Road, Old Lyme, CT. 4 pm April 23, 2017