



WHITE ROCK  
CONCERTS

2021-2022  
OUR 65<sup>TH</sup> SEASON

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**CHOR LEONI**

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Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022



## About the Artists

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## Chor Leoni

Praised for their excellent intonation and wide palette of vocal colour and described as “one of the best male choirs on the continent” by Oregon Artswatch, Chor Leoni is one of the most active amateur ensembles in North America and performs more than 35 concerts a season to over 15,000 patrons.

The choir is fortunate and privileged to sing on the unceded traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

Chor Leoni has been honoured with many awards at the national and international levels including five 1st place awards in the CBC National Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs. In 2020 the ensemble received a JUNO nomination for their album *When There Is Peace: An Armistice Oratorio* by composer-in-residence Zachary Wadsworth, and in 2019 received the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence from the professional choral organization, Chorus America. Chor Leoni prides itself on its musical ambassadorship for Vancouver and Canada and has also shared its music in Singapore, Indonesia, Italy, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, and the Czech Republic.

Chor Leoni champions new music and has commissioned hundreds of pieces for male choir, ranging from pop and folksong arrangements to modern works. The ensemble has commissioned works by notable composers such as Jocelyn Morlock, Ēriks Ešenvalds, Bob Chilcott, Imant Raminsh, R. Murray Schafer, Stephen Chatman, Malcolm Forsyth, Bruce Sled, Steven Smith, and Zachary Wadsworth, among others.

## About the Artists *(continued)*

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### **Erick Lichte**

Enjoying a diverse career as a conductor, composer and record producer, Erick Lichte has been hailed by Washington Post for the “audacity” of his programming and noted by the Chicago Tribune for the “meticulous preparation” of his choirs. The New York Times recently called his direction and composing “thrilling” and said of his work that the “sensation is tremendous and the musical chill effect engulfing.”

As a founding member, singer and Artistic Director of the male vocal ensemble Cantus, Lichte created and sustained one of only two full-time vocal ensembles in the United States. From 2000-2009, Lichte’s programming and artistic direction were heard in over 60 concerts a year and he has collaborated with artists such as Bobby McFerrin, the Boston Pops, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Doc Severinsen, and Minnesota Orchestra.

In January 2013, he began his tenure as Artistic Director of Vancouver, Canada’s Chor Leoni Men’s Choir. His first recording with Chor Leoni, *Wandering Heart*, received a perfect five-star review from the UK’s prestigious *Choir and Organ Magazine*, and *Oregon Arts Watch* has declared that, under his leadership, Chor Leoni is now “one of the best male choirs on the continent.” In the summer of 2018, he led Chor Leoni to multiple awards and Grand Prix appearances at the both the Singapore and Bali International Choral Competitions.

As a record producer, Lichte has made over 30 albums. His recent release for Naxos of the choral music of Eriks Esenvalds spent multiple weeks as the number one classical album on the Billboard charts. He is also an active composer and arranger, especially known for co-creating *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* which has toured North American annually and been performed on three continents.

About the Artists *(continued)*

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## Don Macdonald

### Chor Leoni Composer in Residence

Don Macdonald is an award-winning composer of film and concert music. His composition credits include music for theatre and dance, published choral works, and forays into everything from rock and jazz to world and folk music.

A multiple Canadian Film Awards nominee and three-time Leo Award winner, he has over 50 film music credits and has worked with many of the major studios including 20th Century Fox and Lions Gate Films.

Don has been active as a choral singer since a very young age and as a result, many of his works use voice in some way. His choral works have been performed and recorded by many fine ensembles all over the world including Rajaton (Finland), the University of Johannesburg Choir (South Africa), the Luther College Nordic Choir (USA), , Cantus (USA), and Chor Leoni Men's Choir (CAN).

Don was appointed Chor Leoni's Composer in Residence in 2021 for a three-year term. He lives in Nelson, BC, and teaches at the Selkirk College Contemporary Music and Technology Program.

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# Land Acknowledgement

White Rock Concerts acknowledges that tonight's concert is being held on the unceded traditional and ancestral territory of the Semiahmoo First Nation.

We are grateful for their stewardship of the land for thousands of years before us and for the Elders' teachings that remind us we are all connected.



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## Programme

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Linda Lee & Jens Henriksen and Elaine Godwin

# CHOR LEONI

Molytva za Ukrainu (Prayer for Ukraine)

Mykola Lysenko  
Arr. Walter Bohonos, Bill Solomon

My Heart Be Brave

Marques L. A. Garrett

Bell Tower

Katerina Gimon

The Grace of Light

Don Macdonald

Lux Aurumque

Eric Whitacre

The Midnight Sea

Robert Rival

She is The River

Don Macdonald

Bridge Over Troubled Water

Paul Simon  
Arr. Miles Ramsay

Loch Lomond

Jonathan Quick

Turlutte acadienne montréalaise

Marie-Claire Saindon

Leron, Leron Sinta

Saunder Choi

## Programme Notes

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### **Molytva za Ukrainu (Prayer for Ukraine)**

Mykola Lysenko

Arr. Walter Bohonos, Bill Solomon

Prayer for Ukraine (Ukrainian: Молитва за Україну, romanized: Molytva za Ukrayinu) is a patriotic Ukrainian hymn published in 1885, which became a spiritual anthem of Ukraine. The text was written by Oleksandr Konysky, and the music was composed by Mykola Lysenko, first with a children's choir in mind. The song became the regular closing hymn in services of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and other churches. It gained national significance when it was performed by mass choirs during the Ukrainian War of Independence in 1917–1920. The hymn was intended to be an official spiritual anthem of Ukraine. It has closed sessions of oblast councils, and has been performed at major national functions. [Source: Wikipedia]

#### **Translated Text:**

Lord, oh the Great and Almighty,  
Protect our beloved Ukraine,  
Bless her with freedom and light  
Of your holy rays.

We pray, oh Lord Almighty,  
Protect our beloved Ukraine,  
Grant our people and country  
All your kindness and grace.

With learning and knowledge enlighten  
Us, your children small,  
In love pure and everlasting  
Let us, oh Lord, grow.

Bless us with freedom, bless us with wisdom,  
Guide into kind world,  
Bless us, oh Lord, with good fortune  
For ever and evermore.

### **My Heart Be Brave**

Marques L. A. Garrett

Inspired by the words of James Weldon Johnson, this work is poignant and stirring, encouraging singers and listeners to reflect on the challenges of present times and to address issues of social injustice and to move forward with courage and strength towards a brighter future. The choral writing beautifully reflects the powerful text, leading us towards a climactic reminder that "Tho' thick the battle and tho' fierce the fight, there is power in making for the right."

### **Bell Tower**

Katerina Gimon

## Programme Notes *(continued)*

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### **The Grace of Light**

Don Macdonald

### **Lux Aurumque**

Eric Whitacre

“After deciding upon the poem by Edward Esch (I was immediately struck by its genuine, elegant simplicity), I had it translated into Latin by the celebrated American poet Charles Anthony Silvestri. A simple approach was essential to the success of the work, and I waited patiently for the tight harmonies to shimmer and glow.

Lux Aurumque was commissioned by the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, and is dedicated with love to my great friend Dr. Jo Michael Scheibe.” - Eric Whitacre

Lux,  
Calida gravisque pura velut aurum  
Et canunt angeli molliter  
modo natum.

Light,  
warm and heavy as pure gold  
and angels sing softly  
to the new-born babe.  
*Edward Esch, b.1970*

### **The Midnight Sea**

Robert Rival

### **She is The River**

Don Macdonald

### **Bridge Over Troubled Water**

Paul Simon  
Arr. Miles Ramsay

### **Loch Lomond**

Jonathan Quick

### **Turlutte acadienne montréalaise**

Marie-Claire Saindon

Turlutte acadienne montréalaise is an original melody hailing from the traditional Acadian musical practice of the mouthreel. The composer recognises her Acadian roots, but also the cultural influences of her current hometown, Montréal, in the title. The French-Canadian mouthreel is the art of imitating an instrumental reel or a jig with one’s voice, using a specific set of syllables - not unlike jazz scat singers. Though mouthreels can be found in many other cultures around the globe, a little sound is featured in the Acadian and Québécois mouthreel, which is the “ts” sound, like a mini drum-kit high-hat hit.



## Programme Notes *(continued)*

### Leron, Leron Sinta

Saunder Choi

Leron, Leron Sinta or “My Dear, Little Leron,” is a popular Filipino folk song from the Tagalog region. It is traditionally a work song, representing those who are in the fields harvesting fruits, though the origin is unclear due to the lack of scholarly literature that examines Philippine folk music. It is often presented as a children’s song, though some parts of the text may have been meant for a more mature audience. Some sources also refer to it as a courtship song.

#### Tagalog Text

Leron, Leron sinta,  
buko ng papaya.  
Dala-dala’y buslo,  
sisidlan ng bunga.  
Pagdating sa dulo’y,  
nabali ang sanga.  
Kapos kapalaran,  
humanap ng iba.  
Gumising ka, neneng;  
tayo’y manampalok.  
Dalhin mo ang buslong,  
sisidlan ng hinog.  
Pagdating sa dulo’y,  
lalamba-lambayog.  
Kumapit ka, neneng;  
baka ka mahulog.  
Ang iibigin ko’y  
lalaking matapang.  
Baril niya a pito;  
sundang niya ay siyam.  
Ang lalakaran niya’y  
parte ng dinulang.  
Isang pinggang pansit  
ang kanyang kalaban

#### Translated English Text

Leron, Leron, my dear,  
blossoms of the papaya tree,  
with a bamboo basket,  
he’d gather some fruits.  
But when he reached the top  
(of the tree),  
the branch broke.  
Oh, what a trick of fate,  
he had to search for another.  
Wake up, neneng\*;  
let’s pick some tamarind fruits.  
Take the bamboo baskets,  
to put the ripe ones in.  
Upon reaching the top (of the tree),  
the branches swayed heavily.  
Hold on tight, neneng\*;  
As you might fall.  
The one I will love  
is a fearless man.  
He has seven guns  
and nine knives.  
The journey he will take  
is the distance of a table.  
A plate of noodles is his foe!

## George's Blog

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Hello, White Rock Concerts subscribers:

For the first time in many, many years, I shall not have the pleasure of being present for today's concert. Erika and I are across the Salish Sea in Victoria. It's a trip that was planned many months ago and, although it will not quite be on the same scale as the Danube, the Rhone, the Rhine or the Elbe, it will have to serve as our ocean cruise for post-pandemic times.

I am still basking in the pleasure of the Young Beethoven double performances in White Rock earlier this month. Immediately afterwards, we played in Coquitlam, on Pender Island, in Abbotsford and in Chilliwack.

It is hard to describe the incredible excitement of playing for live human beings again. And I know that audiences are also enjoying a similar exhilaration. I sometimes feel that we are discovering a brand new experience, as - together - we re-explore the boundlessness of the concert adventure.

Don't neglect your own role in this epiphany. Energy feeds in both directions. We certainly play with more intensity because of your response. But the audience also thrives and flourishes on the vividness and gaiety that bounces back from the stage.

With that in mind, what more can I say than to exhort you to enjoy Chor Leoni to the fullest?

And meantime, with the Young Beethoven project now completed, I suddenly find myself without an immediate project to occupy my time.

It was 1992 when the Government of Canada provided my first opportunity to retire. Since then, I suppose, I have become something of an expert on the subject. Each subsequent retirement has opened up a new career.

If I get going again on something exciting and new, it will be my sixth time around, so I must be getting pretty good at it. Maybe I should write a book with hints on how to keep busy and engaged in the face of impending withdrawal from the maelstrom of daily human activity?

***GZ, Apr 2022***



## WHITE ROCK CONCERTS

**Our Next Concert**  
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