

A banner for Lincoln Center's white light festival. The background is dark with abstract, glowing white light patterns that resemble light rays or fiber optics. The text is white and positioned in the upper left corner.

Lincoln Center's

# white light festival

October 18–November 15, 2017

**Sunday, November 5, 2017, at 5:00 pm**

## *The Psalms Experience*

CONCERT 4

# Powerlessness and Redemption

The Choir of Trinity Wall Street

Julian Wachner, *Conductor*

Introduction by Rev. Phillip A. Jackson, Vicar, Trinity Church Wall Street

*This program is approximately one hour long and will be performed without intermission.*

*Please join the artists for a White Light Lounge following the performance.*

*(Program continued)*

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The White Light Festival presentation of *The Psalms Experience* is supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

This program is supported as part of the Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York.

**This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.**

St. Paul's Chapel

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Artist Catering provided by Zabar's and Zabars.com

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*The Psalms Experience* was created and first produced by Tido Visser, managing director of the Netherlands Chamber Choir.

The Netherlands Chamber Choir was supported by the Netherlands-America Foundation for the development of this project.

## UPCOMING WHITE LIGHT FESTIVAL EVENTS:

*Thursday, November 9, at 6:30 pm at the New York Society for Ethical Culture*

**The Psalms Experience**  
**Concert 5: State of Humankind**  
**Netherlands Chamber Choir**  
**Peter Dijkstra**, conductor

Visit [PsalmsExperience.org](http://PsalmsExperience.org) for full concert schedule.

*Thursday, November 9, at 8:30 pm at the New York Society for Ethical Culture*

**The Psalms Experience**  
**Concert 6: Gratitude**  
**Tallis Scholars**  
**Peter Phillips**, conductor

Visit [PsalmsExperience.org](http://PsalmsExperience.org) for full concert schedule.

*Friday, November 10, at 6:30 pm at the New York Society for Ethical Culture*

**The Psalms Experience**  
**Concert 7: Abandonment**  
**Norwegian Soloists' Choir** (New York debut)  
**Grete Pedersen**, conductor

Visit [PsalmsExperience.org](http://PsalmsExperience.org) for full concert schedule.

*Friday, November 10, at 8:30 pm at the New York Society for Ethical Culture*

**The Psalms Experience**  
**Concert 8: Lamentation**  
**Netherlands Chamber Choir**  
**Peter Dijkstra**, conductor

Visit [PsalmsExperience.org](http://PsalmsExperience.org) for full concert schedule.

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit [WhiteLightFestival.org](http://WhiteLightFestival.org). Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 to learn about program cancellations or to request a White Light Festival brochure.

**Visit [WhiteLightFestival.org](http://WhiteLightFestival.org) for full festival listings.**

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*We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.*

*In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.*

# Powerlessness and Redemption

JOHANNES OCKEGHEM  
(c. 1410–1497)

**Sicut cervus, from the Missa pro defunctis:  
Tractus** (Psalm 42)

JOHN EVERET (ed. William East)  
(18th century)

**I'll trust God's word** (Psalm 56)

ROBERT PARSONS  
(1535–1572)

**Deliver me from mine enemies** (Psalm 59)

CHARLES IVES  
(1874–1954)

**Save me, O God** (Psalm 54)

FRANÇOIS REGNARD  
(c. 1535–c. 1595)

**Domine exaudi orationem meam, cum  
deprecor** (Psalm 64)

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU  
(1683–1764)

**Laboravi clamans** (Psalm 69)

BENJAMIN BRITTEN  
(1913–1976)

**Deus in adjutorium meum** (Psalm 70)

SIGISMONDO D'INDIA  
(1582–1629)

**Timor et tremor** (Psalm 55)

CHRISTOPH BUEL  
(1574–1631)

**Domine Deus, salutis meae** (Psalm 88)

ORLANDE DE LASSUS  
(1532–1594)

**Custodi me, Domine** (Psalm 140)

SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM  
(b. 1942)

**Hear my prayer, O Lord** (Psalm 102)

WILLIAM KNYVETT  
(1779–1856)

**O God, my heart is fixed** (Psalm 108)

JOSQUIN DES PREZ  
(c. 1450–1521)

**Domine, ne in furore** (Psalm 38)

*Please hold applause until the end of the performance.*

# The Book of Psalms and Its Musical Interpretations

By Neil W. Levin

Common to the liturgies, histories, and spirit of Judaism and Christianity, the Book of Psalms is one of the most widely familiar and frequently quoted books of the Hebrew Bible. The Psalms are also basic to Western culture as literature. Their expression in musical notation spans more than ten centuries. Their unnotated musical traditions predate Christianity, extending to Jewish antiquity and the Temple eras when the Psalter served in effect as the Temple music manual and prayer book.

## **LITERARY and RELIGIOUS CONTENT.**

Most current biblical scholarship places the Psalms' composition as well as unified canonization substantially prior to the 2nd century BCE, by which time their popularity was well established. Their common attribution to King David as a popular post-biblical tradition notwithstanding, it is impossible to know the identity of the Psalms' author(s) or compiler(s). But we can celebrate their uninterrupted endurance through their embrace of a broad spectrum of human experience and their perceived manifestations of a respectable form of popular theology.

Taken together, the Psalms express human thirst for moral, ethical, and spiritual grounding as well as the common search for a guiding faith. Viewed from theological or even deist perspectives, they encapsulate human pursuit of the Divine essence. "In the Torah and the Prophets," wrote biblical scholar Nahum Sarna, "God reaches out to man. In the Psalms, human beings reach out to God. The language is human." Indeed, in their singular blend of majestic grandeur, lofty sentiments, and poignant simplicity, the Psalms address nearly every human emotion and mood. Judaic origin and Judeo-Christian association

aside, their ageless attraction abides in the universality of their appeal and teachings, transcending religious orientation, time, and geography.

## **MUSICAL RECONSTRUCTION.**

From musicological scholarship and Judaic sources, we understand something about psalmody—the manner of musical Psalm rendition—in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, including probable vocal range and predominance of particular tones; syllabic versus melismatic articulation; embellishment; type of choirs and performance formats (responsorial, antiphonal, etc.); and instrumental accompaniment. But this knowledge is academic and theoretical rather than aesthetic or artistic. It cannot effectuate authentic Temple-era reproductions of Psalms vis-a-vis modalities, pitches, melodic progressions, timbres, or precise rhythm. Similar limitations apply to reasonable suppositions concerning early Church psalmody, in which some musical practices may have been borrowed from Hebrew psalmody. Despite various irresponsible claims over the years to have deciphered imagined encoded systems of musical information, all attempts to replicate Temple psalmody aurally are at best naively romantic exercises in fantasy.

Although ancient psalmody has not survived intact in any synagogue music tradition, one hears presumed echoes in certain Sephardi and Near Eastern repertoires. In some of those, however, as in Ashkenazi practice inherited from Europe or expanded elsewhere, Psalm renditions have also acquired artificial meter through superimposed syllabic patterns or adaptations to secular tunes. Rarely have modern composers employed perceived psalmodic features.

## **THE PSALMS IN HEBREW and CHRISTIAN LITURGIES.**

The development of Hebrew liturgy relied heavily on the Psalms, which provided an obvious foundation. They permeate the traditional prayer books of every rite, and they infuse Reform

worship as well. No other biblical book is so directly, richly, or consistently represented. Outside formally designated services, societies of “Psalm reciters” are features of many fervently pious communities, such as one in contemporary Jerusalem whose two distinct subgroups divide between them the daily recitation of the entire Psalter at the Western Wall.

The Psalter also offered a wellspring of liturgical material for the nascent Church. Latin translations are thought to have predominated its earliest services; eventually, usage differed between Eastern and Western rites. Aside from a few extant fragments, their musical notation survives only from the ninth century on.

In the Roman, or Western Church, the continuum of unabridged Psalm singing is most conspicuous in the Office of Vespers, though not exclusive to it. In the Mass and other liturgies, however, Psalms became abbreviated or partially quoted. Many polyphonic settings for Roman Catholic liturgy continued even past the Renaissance to reflect or incorporate elements of psalmody. But in the various Protestant movements, Psalm composition followed the course of art music in which those historical references were largely abandoned: Bach motets, for example. The Reformation also led to emphasis on Psalm singing in the vernacular: German, English, etc. To encourage congregational singing, metrical—even superficially rhymed—versions and paraphrases were created, often only approximating the original Hebrew loosely if at all. These were set to hymn-like strophic tunes with simple chordal accompaniments. Communal singing in 19th- and early 20th-century classical Reform Jewish worship exhibited a similar fashion.

**PSALMS IN THE WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSICAL TRADITION.** Original Psalm settings proliferated in Europe from the 15th century on as sacred music from Western

artistic perspectives, and eventually also outside religious contexts altogether. Psalm composition in the 17th and 18th centuries is intertwined with contemporaneous paths of motet and anthem genres; English and American anthems of that time both display abundant reliance on Psalm texts. During the 19th century, throughout the modern era, and into the 21st century in both sacred and secular worlds, composers of nearly every stripe and orientation have engaged the Psalms in expressions ranging from large-scale choral and orchestral works to art songs and a cappella choral settings—even in exclusively instrumental inspirations such as solo organ sonatas or Krzysztof Penderecki’s electronic *Psalmus* (1961). There is no stylistic approach or treatment, no technical procedure (including 12-tone serialization), no melodic, contrapuntal or harmonic language—in short, no aspect of Western musical development—from which the Psalms have escaped.

The unrelenting appeal of the Psalms for mainstream and avant-garde composers alike in each generation lies not only in their poetic religious spirit, but in their transcendent humanistic content. They continue to invite musical engagement both from Judaic or Judeo-Christian sensibilities and from basic Western literary-cultural worldviews. And some works communicate on intersecting planes. Thus, the Psalms may be understood not only as an ecumenical bridge between two faiths—which is no new observation—but as *artistic* mediators between sacred and secular music in the evolving, expanding Western canon.

*Neil W. Levin is artistic director and editor-in-chief of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, an emeritus professor of Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and professor-in-residence at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York.*

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# Notes on the Program

By James M. Keller

Examine a well-used Bible and you will find that one of its most heavily thumbled sections is the Book of Psalms. It is easy to understand why. Whereas much of the Old Testament is given over to tribal histories, prophetic pronouncements, and declarations of rules for society (often with threats of divine retribution against those who don't toe the line), the Psalms are utterances of the human heart. They are not unique in that regard. We encounter personalized expression of specific human aspects elsewhere in the Old Testament, particularly in several of the Psalms' immediate neighbors—desolation in The Book of Job, sagacity in the Book of Proverbs, cynicism in Ecclesiastes, eroticism in The Songs of Songs. The Psalms, however, give voice to an exceptional breadth of the human spirit. In the 150 psalms, man is searching for his *condition humaine*, his right to exist, his country and culture, guided by his faith and his doubts, bemoaning his fate and dancing with joy. The Psalms are about him and belong to him.

Created as songs, these prose poems have appealed greatly to composers through the centuries, yielding a repertoire of many thousands of compositions. For this project, a team of Dutch scholars—Tido Visser, managing director of the Netherlands Chamber Choir, musicologist Leo Samama, and theologian Gerard Swüste—divided the corpus of Psalms into 12 groups by subject and then selected settings that would form musically balanced and satisfying programs out of each of those chapters. They established some ground rules: The settings would be for a *cappella* chorus (allowing very occasional organ accompaniments); each psalm might be represented through either its complete or partial text; and each composer, whether renowned or obscure, would figure exactly once throughout the entire project.

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This fourth program in *The Psalms Experience* presents settings of 13 psalms that focus on the topic of "Powerless and Redemption." The fight against evil people has been waged throughout history. But who decides what is good and what is evil? In the Psalms, God is often portrayed as the supreme judge, as a figure always available to help apparently powerless people triumph. "The Psalms," says Swüste, "sometimes portray Man in distress. In the Psalms, this can mean almost dead, with one foot in the grave. There is nonetheless often trust that things will turn out fine. ... There is the conviction that you can always turn to God with what has befallen you—both with your sadness and your anger, even though the latter is not always reasonable. There is absolutely no question of 'love your enemy.' ... Man clamors, shouts out what troubles him. To God you can say or shout anything." The Psalmic position is not inviolable, though. Psalm 88, for example, stops short of redemption; instead, it is a Job-like lament by a singer who experiences only rejection. In this concert, we hear it through the prism of an eight-voice motet published in 1615 by Christoph Buel, a little-known but highly accomplished Nuremberg composer.

This program is full of bemoaning and clamoring. Somewhere, the psalm singers seem to feel, there must be a listening ear. On the other hand, many composers, up until the 20th century, knew that a genuine lament did not belong in the liturgy, which tended not to permit the overt expression of so much emotion. Many a composer who did yield to the temptation of hyper-expressive composition was called to account by the powers that be. Still, the tiniest nuance can conceal a great deal of emotion. Such Renaissance and Baroque composers as Johannes Ockeghem, Josquin des Prez, Robert Parsons,

François Regnard, Orlande de Lassus, and Sigismondo d'India, in addition to Buel, were all masters of that art. They abided by the rules of polyphony and modality, while at the same time managing to remain true to themselves and to the uniqueness of their musical expression.

Jean-Philippe Rameau is also remarkably reflective in his five-part lamentation "Laboravi clamans," likely extracted from a larger "grand motet" that has been lost. This expanse, rich in fugal writing, survives because Rameau included it as a musical example in his groundbreaking *Treatise on Harmony*, published in 1722.

On the other hand, Charles Ives, Benjamin Britten, and Sven-David Sandström take a bolder approach. Ives was repeatedly drawn to psalm texts, setting at least ten of them as a choral works, often with his trademark clashing harmonies and stacked chords. His "Save me, O God" (Psalm 54) dates from about 1902, when he was working as organist at New York's Central Presbyterian Church. Britten opted for a varied rendering of the words of Psalm 70, based on unison singing and punctilious in its text-setting. And Sandström took another well-known psalm setting as his starting point, namely "Hear my prayer" by Henry Purcell, and allowed it to burst its banks.

*Adapted from essays by Leo Samama*

*James M. Keller is program annotator of the New York Philharmonic (The Leni and Peter May Chair) and of the San Francisco Symphony. He also serves as critic-at-large for The Santa Fe New Mexican, the oldest newspaper west of the Mississippi.*

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*Please turn to page 22 for an article on the enduring resonance of the Psalms.*

# Meet the Artists

PETER ADAMIK



**Julian Wachner**

As director of music at New York's historic Trinity Church Wall Street, Julian Wachner oversees an annual season of hundreds of events, conducting Trinity's flagship weekly series *Bach at One*, which canvasses the entire choral-orchestral output of J.S. Bach, and leading *Compline by Candlelight*, Trinity's innovative and fully improvised variation on this ancient monastic ritual. He also curates the *Concerts at One* series, an eclectic program of weekly concerts for lower Manhattan and beyond through its HD live and on-demand webcasting. In addition to serving as principal conductor of Trinity's resident contemporary-music orchestra NOVUS NY, The Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and The Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Mr. Wachner is also music director of the Grammy Award-winning Washington Chorus, with whom he won Chorus America/ASCAP's Alice Parker Award for adventurous programming and Chorus America's Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence.

Mr. Wachner also enjoys an active schedule as a guest conductor. Orchestral engagements have included performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Pacific Symphony, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, in addition to Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale, Seraphic Fire, Bang on a Can All-Stars, and Apollo's Fire. He has also conducted the San Francisco, Glimmerglass, New York City, and Juilliard Operas, Hawaii Opera Theatre, as well as

for Carnegie Hall Presents, National Sawdust, and Lincoln Center Festival.

With multiple Grammy nominations to his credit, Mr. Wachner has recorded for Chandos, Naxos, ATMA Classique, Erato, Cantaloupe Music, Arsis, Dorian Recordings, Acis, and Musica Omnia. He also has an extensive catalogue of highly acclaimed original compositions. He is published exclusively by E.C. Schirmer Publishing and represented worldwide by Opus 3 Artists.

## The Choir of Trinity Wall Street

Grammy-nominated interpreters of both early and new music, The Choir of Trinity Wall Street has changed the realm of 21st-century vocal music and continues to break new ground with its profound artistry. Under the direction of Julian Wachner, this premier ensemble can be heard in superb performances in New York City and around the world. The choir leads the liturgical music on Sundays at Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel, performing in *Bach at One* and *Compline by Candlelight*, alongside many other concerts and festivals throughout the year, often with the Trinity Baroque Orchestra, NOVUS NY, and the Trinity Youth Chorus. Critically acclaimed annual performances of Handel's *Messiah* are part of the choir's long and storied tradition; for many New Yorkers, the choir's performances at Trinity's annual Twelfth Night and Time's Arrow Festivals have also become a tradition.

The choir has toured extensively throughout the U.S., making appearances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Berkeley Festival & Exhibition, BAM's Next Wave Festival, and at the Prototype Festival. Recent seasons have seen performances abroad, with appearances at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and the Barbican Centre in London. The choir has been featured with the Bang on a Can All-Stars, the New York Philharmonic, and with the Rolling Stones on their 50th anniversary tour.



In addition to its Grammy-nominated CD *Israel in Egypt*, The Choir of Trinity Wall Street has released several recordings on Naxos, Musica Omnia, VIA Recordings, Arsis, and Avie Records. The ensemble's long-term commitment to new music is further underscored by collaborations with such composers as Du Yun, winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in music for her opera *Angel's Bone*; Paola Prestini; Ralf Yusef Gawlick; Elena Ruehr; and Julia Wolfe, whose 2015 Pulitzer Prize-winning and Grammy-nominated work *Anthracite Fields* was recorded by the choir. The choir collaborated with Du Yun on *Angel's Bone*, presenting a fully staged production under the baton of Wachner at the Prototype Festival in 2016.

### Rev. Phillip A. Jackson

The Rev. Phillip A. Jackson became the Vicar of Trinity Church Wall Street in February 2015. He leads ministry programs that touch upon every aspect of parish life, including liturgies, music, education programming, the Trinity Preschool, membership, and stewardship.

Prior to Trinity Church, Fr. Jackson was the rector of Christ Church of the Ascension in Paradise Valley, Arizona, leading reconciliation programs, congregational growth, and community engagement. During his tenure, he grew the children's Christian education program twentyfold. He developed and taught parish formation classes including Women's Bible Study, a men's reading group, and contemplative Christian spirituality, also initiating a lecture series featuring prominent members of the Phoenix community.

Fr. Jackson has served parishes in Houston and Detroit, and was an attorney in Honolulu. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from Amherst College, a JD from

Yale Law School, and an MDiv from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

### White Light Festival

*I could compare my music to white light, which contains all colors. Only a prism can divide the colors and make them appear; this prism could be the spirit of the listener.* —Arvo Pärt. Now in its eighth year, the White Light Festival is Lincoln Center's annual exploration of music and art's power to reveal the many dimensions of our interior lives. International in scope, the multidisciplinary festival offers a broad spectrum of the world's leading instrumentalists, vocalists, ensembles, choreographers, dance companies, and directors, complemented by conversations with artists and scholars and post-performance White Light Lounges.

### Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of more than 3,000 free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers 15 programs, series, and festivals including American Songbook, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Midsummer Night Swing, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and the White Light Festival, as well as the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations. In addition, LCPA led a \$1.2 billion campus renovation, completed in October 2012.



## The Choir of Trinity Wall Street

Julian Wachner, *Director of Music*

### **Soprano**

Megan Chartrand  
Madeline Healey  
Linda Lee Jones  
Molly Netter  
Nola Richardson  
Melanie Russell  
Amaranta Viera  
Elena Williamson

### **Alto**

Melissa Attebury  
Clifton Massey  
Daniel Moody  
Timothy Parsons  
Pamela Terry

### **Tenor**

Andrew Fuchs  
Brian Giebler  
Tim Hodges  
Scott Mello  
Stephen Sands

### **Bass**

Paul An  
Christopher Herbert  
Steven Hrycelak  
Richard Lippold  
Thomas McCargar  
Edmund Milly

### **Organ**

Avi Stein

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Karissa Krenz, *Project Manager, The Psalms Experience*

Megan Young, *Supertitles*