

# California Bach Society Press Release

May 5 – 7, 2023

## **Biber *Requiem* & Steffani *Stabat Mater***

Friday, May 5, 2023, 8:00 p.m.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell, San Francisco

Saturday, May 6, 2023, 8:00 p.m.

All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley, Palo Alto

Sunday, May 7, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 2300 Bancroft, Berkeley

Tickets: \$40 (discounts for advance purchase, seniors, students, and under 30). For discounts and to facilitate social distancing, please purchase tickets in advance at [www.calbach.org](http://www.calbach.org). For COVID-19 protocols, consult [www.calbach.org/covid](http://www.calbach.org/covid). Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance.

650-485-1097 | <http://www.calbach.org> | [info@calbach.org](mailto:info@calbach.org)

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The final concert of the California Bach Society's 51st season showcases the "sublime" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) sound of CBS in two rarely performed choral gems of the High Baroque. Agostino Steffani's 1727 *Stabat Mater*, his crowning masterpiece, weaves vocal solos, duets, trios, and choral interludes into a tapestry of exquisite polyphony, charting the spiritual journey from grief to divine redemption. The concert also includes the richly expressive *Requiem in F minor* composed in 1692 by Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber. Scored for five-part choir and a quartet of vocal soloists, this work has been recognized as one of the most impressive requiem settings of the 17th century.

Soloists for the forthcoming CBS performances include sopranos Rita Lilly and Caroline Jou Armitage, countertenor Kyle Sanchez Tingzon, tenor Corey Head, and bass Curtis Streetman. The choir and soloists will be accompanied by a Baroque string orchestra and organ.

"The listener had the uncanny, elevating sense of hearing every voice devoted to a single purpose. It was, in the broadest sense of the term, a musically spiritual experience." — *SF Classical Voice*, 2017 (reviewing the CBS *St. Matthew Passion*)

## **Biographies:**

To download photos, please go to <http://www.calbach.org/press/>.

The California Bach Society, a 30-voice chamber chorus, was awarded "Best Choral Group" and "Best Early Music/Baroque Ensemble" for 2017-2018 by *San Francisco Classical Voice*, following a dazzling performance at the Berkeley Early Music Festival. Founded in 1971, CBS has specialized in historically

informed performances since 1998 and has established a reputation for its interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque choral music. Leon Chisholm of *San Francisco Classical Voice* wrote: "In recent years, **the California Bach Society has become a prospector of Baroque gold**. Its concerts have brought forth exquisite, rarely heard works by forgotten masters from the lost frontier, to the delight of its audiences."

Artistic director **Dr. Paul Flight**—a noted choral conductor, teacher, and singer—is in his seventeenth season with the California Bach Society. A former member of the Waverly Consort, Theatre of Voices, Pomerium Musices, and the New York Collegium, he has brought a wealth of expertise to CBS. Critics have praised Dr. Flight's conducting acumen, stating: "**Flight has made of the choral group a professional ensemble capable of every expressive nuance and glorious ensemble sound.**"

Soprano **Rita Lilly** has been lauded by *The New York Times* for "possessing a voice of strength, clarity, and virtuosity." As a specialist of Baroque and early music, Rita has been a featured artist with the American Classical Orchestra, Artek, Clarion Music Society, Concert Royal, Rebel, the Folger Consort, Sacabuche, and the New York Consort of Viols, among others. As the soprano of the Waverly Consort, she toured throughout the U.S. and abroad, including performances at Alice Tully Hall and Town Hall.

Proud CBS chorister from 2011-2017, soprano **Caroline Jou Armitage** is known to Bay Area audiences for her "absolutely beautiful" performances sung with "pitch-perfect clarity and affecting intensity" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). As a frequent soloist with the California Bach Society, she has performed Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Bach's Cantatas BWV 21 and 198, Bach's Mass in G Major, Bach's Mass in A Major, and most recently in last fall's *Plaisirs Baroques* concerts.

Filipino countertenor **Kyle Sanchez Tingzon** has been praised for his "lovely, plummy voice" (*Opera Today*). His current season includes work with American Bach Soloists, California Bach Society, Philharmonia Baroque Chorale, his soloist debut with Pacific Opera Project in the US premiere of Vivaldi's *Ercole su'l Termodonte*, his debut with Tacoma Opera in the world premiere of *Tacoma Method*, and his first summer with the Glimmerglass Festival and debut in Handel's *Rinaldo*.

Tenor **Corey Head** specializes in early music with a special affinity to J.S. Bach. His solo concert performances include The Evangelist in Bach's St. John Passion, as well as tenor soloist in his Magnificat, Christmas Oratorio, B-Minor Mass, and many cantatas. Other oratorio roles include Uriel in Haydn's *Creation*, "The Evening" in Telemann's *Die Tageszeiten*, and tenor soloist in Handel's *Messiah*. He performs regularly in the chorale with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale.

Bass **Curtis Streetman** is an artist who strives to perform a rich and excitingly varied repertoire. He has appeared in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Figaro), *Die Zauberflöte* (Sarastro), *La Bohème* (Colline), *Don Giovanni* (Leporello), and *Rigoletto* (Sparafucile), as well as leads in other Verdi, Handel, and Rossini operas. Curtis toured Canada with Bernard LaBadie and *Les Violons du Roi* in performances of Bach's St. John Passion, and toured the United States with the chamber ensembles Aulos and Rebel.

**Press Contact:** Stephanie Rosenbaum, 650-400-5509, [stephanie@teced.com](mailto:stephanie@teced.com)