

MUSIC AT ST. PHILIP  2018-2019 SEASON

PRESENTS

GIAN CARLO MENOTTI



Amahl and the Night Visitors

**Greenbriar Consortium**

SUNDAY | JANUARY 6, 2019 | 6:00 p.m.

St. Philip Presbyterian Church ♦ 4807 San Felipe Street ♦ Houston, Texas

## About Greenbriar Consortium

Greenbriar Consortium is a chamber music group dedicated to presenting theme programs of classical, modern, pop and folk music. We are comprised of Houston Symphony players and the best singers and pianists in the Houston area. Our concerts are our gift to the greater Houston public.

**Our Motto** Great themes, world-class players, and if it ain't fun, we don't do it!

**Our Mission** Perform chamber music at the highest level. Introduce lesser-known repertoire and mix with popular repertoire. Inspire and educate.

**Our Vision** Connect to new audiences by putting music into different contexts.

### Tonight's Performers

**ORCHESTRA** — Rebecca Powell, flute ♦ Anne Leek and Colin Gatwood, oboes ♦ Christian Schubert, clarinet ♦ Larissa Potiomkin, bassoon  
Jesse Clevenger, horn ♦ John Parker, trumpet ♦ Tianje Lu and Marina Brubaker, violins ♦ Daniel Strba, viola ♦ Benjamin Stoehr, cello  
Michael Gorman, bass ♦ Terry McKinney and Aaron Guillery, percussion ♦ Naomi Hoffmeyer, harp ♦ Paul Boyd, piano/celesta

**SINGERS** — **Amahl:** Clara Haymon ♦ **Amahl's Mother:** Sonja Bruzauskas

**King Kaspar:** Jeffrey Ragsdale ♦ **King Melchior:** Marvin Havard ♦ **King Balthazar:** Tony Martinez ♦ **The Page:** Nathan Lerner

**Chorus of shepherds and villagers:** Julia Fox, Kathleen Ruhleder, Eduardo Tercero, and Nathan Lerner



## Tonight's Program

**Trittico Botticelliano** (1927)

I. *La Primavera*

II. *L'adorazione dei Magi*

Ottorino Respighi

1879–1936

Greenbriar Consortium ♦ Dave Kirk, director

Although Respighi is best known for his glittering, even garish, suites of tone poems for large orchestra, many feel that some of his best work may be found in his more restrained and modestly scaled efforts. One such example is the **Three Botticelli Pictures** (1927) for chamber orchestra, a three-movement suite based on famous paintings by the Renaissance master Botticelli. Despite the work's economical scoring, it is fully as colorful and beguiling as the fulsome and flashy **Pines of Rome** (1924) or **Fountains of Rome** (1916).

Commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation and premiered in Vienna in 1927, the Pictures demonstrate not only Respighi's ear for fresh and beautiful sonorities, but also his interest in the history of art in his native Italy. **La Primavera** (Spring) unfolds as a pastorale, with rustlings of nature, bird songs, and "antique" dance rhythms. **L'adorazione dei Magi** (Adoration of the Magi) evokes a mood of medieval devotion through its employment of old church modes and Gregorian chant-influenced melodies.

— notes © Joseph Stevenson



#### Primavera

Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510)  
created late 1470s or early 1480s  
tempora on panel | 80" x 124"  
Uffizi Gallery, Florence



#### Adoration of the Magi

Sandro Botticelli  
created c. 1475  
tempora on panel | 44" x 53"  
Uffizi Gallery, Florence

## Amahl and the Night Visitors (1951)

Gian Carlo Menotti

1911–2007

Greenbriar Consortium ♦ Keith Weber, director

Pulitzer Prize winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti created both the music and the libretto (words) for **Amahl and the Night Visitors**, the first opera written especially for television. **Amahl** premiered on December 24, 1951 in a live broadcast on NBC Television, introduced by the composer. Following its first stage performance in 1952, it has become part of the standard repertoire, with performances at opera houses, schools and churches. It is thought that **Amahl** has been seen by more people than any other opera.

The story is set around the hills of Bethlehem, just after the birth of Christ. Amahl, a young, poor shepherd boy, lives with his widowed mother in a small hut. As the opera begins, Amahl tries to tell his mother about what he has seen in the night sky: an enormous star with a long tail! His mother, tired of his wild imagination and tall tales, grows angry. She is even angrier when Amahl tells her that a knock at the door is from three kings who have come to visit them. The kings enter and tell Amahl and his mother that they are following a large star in the sky, on their way to find a new-born king. The Three Kings show Amahl and his mother the rich gifts they have brought for this king.

While Amahl's mother is out gathering wood for the fire, Amahl asks the kings questions, and explains that he used to be a shepherd, but his sheep were sold. One of the kings, Kaspar, shows Amahl his fancy box, full of magic stones, beads, and candy. Amahl goes out and gathers the neighbors, who are all shepherds. The shepherds greet each other and catch up on the local news. They present their gifts of special foods to the kings and perform a dance.

Later that night, Amahl's mother is tempted to steal some of the kings' gold since she and Amahl are very poor. She is caught, but the kings offer to let her keep the gold, explaining that the king they seek will need nothing but love to rule his kingdom. The mother declines their offer, returning the gold. Amahl then offers his crutch, which is his only possession, as an additional gift. Suddenly, he finds that he can walk. He leaves with the kings to pay homage to the child who has healed him.

Menotti said his inspiration for **Amahl and the Night Visitors** was the **Adoration of the Magi** triptych by Hieronymus Bosch, painted in 1494. This painting reminded him of happy childhood memories from the holiday season. Menotti also said that part of the inspiration for Amahl was his own experience with temporary lameness as a child.

— notes courtesy of the Minnesota Orchestra,  
the Chattanooga Symphony, and Opera North, New Hampshire

**Adoration of the Magi Triptych**  
Hieronymus Bosch (c. 1450–1516)  
created c. 1494  
oil on wood panel | 54" x 57"  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



**Please join us for refreshments in the Gathering Area following the program.**

**A freewill offering in support of the Music at St Philip Concert Series  
and tonight's concert will be received at the Sanctuary exits.**

**Your presence and generosity are welcome.**

**Donations may be made by cash, check or credit card.**

**This program is sponsored in part by Rice Boniuk Institute's Arts of Tolerance.**





# MUSIC AT ST. PHILIP 2018-2019 SEASON

Join us for these upcoming programs — **FREE** (contributions welcome)



## Texas Guitar Quartet

SATURDAY | FEBRUARY 9, 2019 | 7:30 p.m.

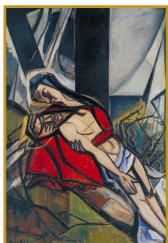
The **Texas Guitar Quartet** has been embraced by audiences throughout the world for their daring programs, dazzling virtuosity and joyful music making. Join us as TxGQ members **Isaac Bustos, Joseph Palmer, Alejandro Montiel** and **Jay Kacherski** perform brilliant acoustic works by **Gerónimo Giménez, Isaac Albéniz, Maurice Ravel, Matthew Dunne** and **Astor Piazzolla**.



## Child Piano Prodigies

SUNDAY | MARCH 24, 2019 | 3:00 p.m.

Truly not-to-be missed, we are excited to present the winners of **Houston Tuesday Musical Club's 2019 Rochelle Liebling Kahan Memorial Fund Competition for Child Piano Prodigies**, open to Houston area children between the ages of six and nine. You simply won't believe how amazing these kids are! Be prepared to be wowed. Join us for free ice cream afterwards too.



## A Musical Meditation for Holy Saturday

SATURDAY | APRIL 20, 2019 | 5:00 p.m.

Gather with us in the stillness of Holy Saturday as **Matthew Dirst, Cecilia Duarte, Randall Swanson and friends** present music of meditation on the mysteries of the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ. This one-hour program of peace, quiet, and contemplative music features chamber works for voice and instruments, plus organ music from the German, English, and Italian Baroque.



## Jazz Communion

SUNDAY | APRIL 28, 2019 | 11:00 a.m.

Join us the week after Easter for our annual **Jazz Communion Service**, followed by a picnic on the St. Philip grounds (outdoors we hope, weather permitting). Celebrate spring and the Easter season with the uplifting music of jazz pianist **Paul English** and his excellent ensemble of acoustic musicians and singers, featuring original works interspersed with familiar hymns.



## Louis Vierne: *Messe solennelle*

SUNDAY | MAY 5, 2019 | 11:00 a.m.

On the first Sunday in May the **St. Philip Choir** presents the great ***Messe solennelle* (Solemn Mass)** by **Louis Vierne**, who was organist at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris from 1900 until his death in 1937. Composed in 1899 and first performed in 1901, the *Messe solennelle* features great majesty and triumph balanced with quiet introspection and serenity.

St. Philip Presbyterian Church ♦ 4807 San Felipe Street ♦ Houston, Texas 77056



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