

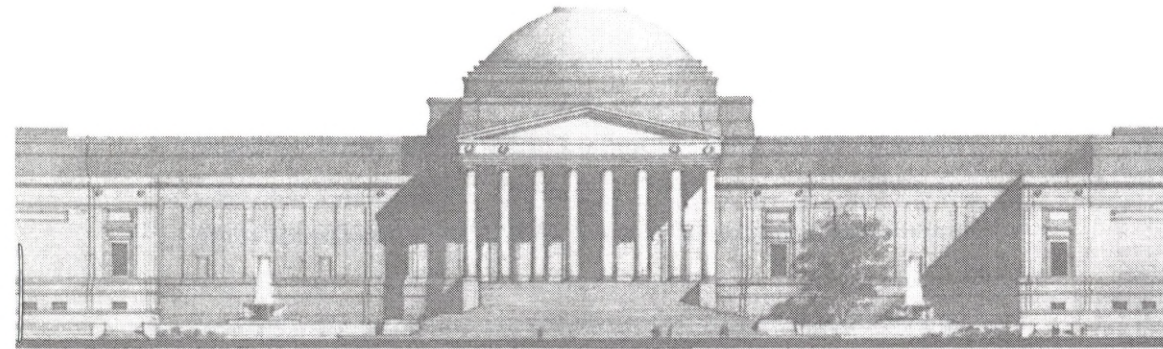
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Music Department  
National Gallery of Art  
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC

[www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov)



The Seventieth Season of  
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin  
**Concerts**

National Gallery of Art  
2,865th Concert

**Thomas Mark Fallon, countertenor**

With

Angela Uperti-Hite, *flutist*

Jorge Orozco and Pablo Saelzer, *violinists*

Maria Montano, *violist*

Vasily Popov, *cellist*

Katerina Zaitseva, *pianist*

December 18, 2011

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission free*

Program

“A Countertenor Christmas”

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713)

*Pastorale*

From *Concerto Grosso*, op. 6, no. 8 (“Christmas Concerto”) (1690)

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

*O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion*

From *Messiah*, HMV 56 (1741)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

*Et misericordia*

From *Magnificat in D Major*, BWV 243 (1733)

Handel

*Pifa* and Four Recitatives

From *Messiah*

Traditional French Carol

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Arranged by Robert J. Powell (b. 1932)

Handel

*He Shall Feed His Flock*

From *Messiah*

César Auguste Franck (1822–1890)

*Sweet Child of Bethlehem*

Arranged from *Panis angelicus* by Joel Raney

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854–1921)

*Evening Prayer*

From *Hansel and Gretel* (1893)

James H. Murray (1841–1905)

William Kirkpatrick (1838–1921)

*Away in a Manger*

Arranged by Robert J. Powell

Donald Fraser (b. 1947)

*This Christmastide* (1990)

**INTERMISSION**

Franz Xavier Gruber (1787–1863)

*Silent Night*

Arranged by Robert J. Powell

James Cavanaugh/John Redmond/Frank Weldon

*Christmas in Killarney* (1950)

Adolphe Adam (1803–1856)

*O Holy Night*

English setting of *Cantique de Noel* (1847)

Arranged by James Biery and Eric Liu



## The Musicians

### THOMAS MARK FALLON

A native of Scranton, Pennsylvania, countertenor Thomas Mark Fallon is a recipient of the F. Lammot Belin Arts Scholarship. He has won awards, scholarships, and performance grants from the Liederkranz, Puccini, Rosa Ponselle, United Nations, and William Sullivan musical foundations as well as the 1992 Luciano Pavarotti Competition, the 1994 Alfredo Kraus Competition, and the 1995 Maria Callas Competition. Fallon's repertoire encompasses five centuries of music, from Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (1607) to the world premiere of Hugo Weisgall's *Esther* (1993), which also marked Fallon's New York City Opera debut. Recent career highlights include his Carnegie Hall debut in "Salute to the Irish," with the New York Pops Orchestra under maestro Skitch Henderson, and vocal recitals in Detroit, Key West, Louisville, and Tampa. Performances of Handel's *Messiah*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, and the settings of the *Magnificat* by J. S. Bach and Pergolesi have taken Fallon to Italy, Portugal, South Africa, and Spain. This past season he appeared as a guest artist on Austrian and Spanish television, accompanied by the Bratislava National Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Principality of Andorra.

During his European debut in France, he sang the tenor role in *Carmina Burana* in Carcassone, Marseille, and Toulouse. His career as an opera singer has taken him to Verona, Italy, for Vivaldi's *Tamerlano* and Teatro Reggio in Turin for Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In the United States, he has sung Alessandro Scarlatti's *La caduta de Decemviri* with Opera Antica in Palm Beach, Florida; Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Knoxville Opera Company; and in concert with the Little Orchestra Society at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. Fallon has made the role of Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* an operatic specialty, having received critical acclaim for his performances of that role with the West Virginia Symphony and the opera companies of Baden, Austria; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Toledo, Ohio.

Awarded the F. Lammot Belin Art Scholarship in 1976, Thomas Mark Fallon became the youngest recipient in the history of the prize. Established in 1964 by Captain Peter Belin in memory of his father, the scholarship aids students who live or have lived in the northeast region of Pennsylvania and who have exceptional ability in painting, sculpture, photography, music, drama, dance, literature, or architecture. Also in memory of F. Lammot Belin, the Belin family has provided a significant portion of the endowment that continues to support these concerts at the National Gallery of Art.

### KATERINA ZAITSEVA

Hailed by *Fanfare* magazine as a pianist with an "imaginative and colorful interpretive approach," Katerina Zaitseva has performed in France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, and the United States, at major venues that have included the Kennedy Center, Moscow State Conservatory Hall, Steinway Hall in Dallas, and Yamaha Hall in New York, as well as the opening of the Meadows Museum of Art in Dallas, with Juan Carlos II of Spain in attendance. She has played at the Nancyphonies Music Festival in France and the Madeira Music Festival in Portugal, and has performed as a soloist with the Corvallis (Oregon) Symphony, the Dallas Chamber Orchestra, Lewisville Lake Symphony (Texas), Meadows Symphony Orchestra (Texas), Rapides Symphony Orchestra (Louisiana), and the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra (Moscow).

A winner of national competitions and awards including the Music Teachers National Association Competition, the Southern Methodist University Concerto Competition, and the Von Mickwitz Prize in Piano, Zaitseva is currently a faculty member of the International School of Music in Washington, DC, and executive director of the Washington International Piano Festival. A recipient of the master of music degree from Southern Methodist University, the bachelor of music from the University of North Texas, and the diploma from the Moscow State Conservatory Music School, she studied under Joaquín Achúcarro, Pamela Mia Paul, and Marina Prozorova.



**ANGELA UPERTI-HITE**

A versatile orchestral and chamber musician who performs with numerous ensembles throughout the Washington metropolitan area, flutist Angela Uperiti-Hite has performed with the Alexandria Symphony, Amadeus, Kennedy Center Opera, National Gallery of Art, National Philharmonic, National Symphony, Washington Concert Opera, and Virginia Chamber orchestras. Noted conductors with whom she has worked include Ivan Fischer, Christopher Hogwood, Lorin Maazel, and Leonard Slatkin. Uperiti-Hite is principal flutist of the Manassas Ballet Theatre Orchestra and the Dominion Symphony, an orchestra she cofounded in 1999 with her husband, conductor and clarinetist Christopher Hite. A graduate of the Catholic University of America, she studied with Bernard Goldberg, Toshiko Kohno, and Kazuo Tokito, principal flutists of the Pittsburgh, National, and Philadelphia orchestras, respectively.

**JORGE OROZCO**

Concertmaster of the Metropolitan Orchestra at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland, violinist Jorge Orozco is a faculty member at the Levine School of Music and the Georgetown Visitation School. He is also conductor of chamber strings and preparatory strings for the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras, which have performed at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Music Center at Strathmore. An active chamber musician, performing with pianist Carlos Rodríguez and violist Maria Montano, Orozco holds a master's degree in music performance from the University of Southern Mississippi and a bachelor's degree in music performance from the Instituto Superior de Artes in Havana, Cuba. He has participated in numerous festivals and workshops, including the Havana Contemporary Music Festival, the Juilliard Conducting Workshop, the Sterling-Delay Seminar, the Texas Music Festival, the Victoria Bach Festival, and the Vicksburg Chamber Music Festival.

**PABLO SAELZER**

A faculty member at the Levine School of Music, violinist Pablo Saelzer has shifted his career in recent years toward orchestral conducting. Currently the conductor of Avanti (the orchestra of the Friday Morning Music Club), the Metropolitan Orchestra at Montgomery College, and the Chamber Orchestra of the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras, he conducted the latter group in its Carnegie Hall debut in May 2011. In demand as a guest conductor, Saelzer appears regularly with Orquesta Clásica in Santiago and the orchestra at Chile's Conservatorio Nacional. He also conducted at the 2011 Festival Internacional de Cuerdas Ibaguë in Colombia; Festival de Poços de Caldas in Brazil; Festival South in Hattiesburg, Mississippi; and Music on the Mountain in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. A graduate of the Music Conservatory in Valdivia, Chile, and the Kantorei Sankt Martini in Bremen, Germany, Saelzer holds a bachelor of music degree from the Universidad Austral de Chile and a master of music degree from Columbus State University in Georgia.

**MARIA MONTANO**

Venezuelan violist Maria Montano started her musical training in El Sistema, the unique music program developed in her home country. Currently a violin and viola instructor at the Levine School of Music and the Landon School, she also works with the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras and the Youth Orchestra of the Americas. Now playing regularly in the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, the Sur String Quartet, and the Vox Amadeus Ensemble, she was formerly a member of the Mobile and Pensacola symphony orchestras. Having earned the bachelor of music degree in viola performance from the University of Southern Mississippi, she is currently finishing her master of music degree at the University of Maryland.



## VASILY POPOV

Born into a musical family in Saint Petersburg, Russia, cellist Vasily Popov keeps an active concert schedule performing both classical music and jazz in concert halls in Europe, Japan, and the United States. The recipient of prizes and diplomas from a number of national and international competitions, he has recorded for Arte Nova Records, BMR, Excelsior, Intercount Music, Madacy Records, and Melodia. A dedicated student of the cello from age seven, Popov studied under Natalia Gutman, Anatoly Nikitin, Walter Nothas, and Daniil Shafran. A member of the music faculties of the Levine School of Music and Georgetown University, he is also the artistic director and conductor of the Levine Chamber Orchestra. He performs on a French cello from 1850 presented to him by Stephen and Susan Low.

## Program Notes

The vocal designation “countertenor” is applied to a male voice that approximates the female alto. Sometimes, however, a countertenor can sing as high as the soprano register, usually by using a technique known as falsetto, vibrating only a portion of the vocal chords. During the medieval and Renaissance periods and much of the baroque, women were banned from singing in churches and other public venues. Composers and choir directors depended on boys and men with high voices to sing the alto and treble choral parts. The prominence of countertenors dwindled in the classical and romantic periods, and female altos took over the parts that had been written for countertenors in earlier music. Thanks in large part to a revival of historical performance practice by countertenor Alfred Deller (1912–1979), male singers have reclaimed these roles to some extent. Contemporary composers often write specifically for the countertenor voice and expect a male singer to perform.

This evening’s program begins with instrumental music—a pastorale by one of the most influential Italian baroque composers, Arcangelo Corelli. The tradition of lilting Christmas pieces in 6/8 or 12/8 meter comes from the association of these rhythms with the music that shepherds played in the fields on their flutes and pipes, and the further association of Jesus’ birth with shepherds. Handel and other baroque composers used the term *Pifa* to identify their pastorales, recalling the popularity of the Italian *pifferari* (players of bagpipes and other reed instruments), whose presence was much in demand at Christmastide.

Handel’s *Messiah* is without question the most popular baroque choral work today, sung in churches and concert halls throughout the world, especially at Christmas. Using the King James translation of the bible, librettist Charles Jennens provided the composer with texts from the *Book of Isaiah*, *The Gospel according to Luke*, and *The Gospel according to Matthew* for the first third of the oratorio, which deals with the prophecy of Jesus’ coming and his birth. *O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion* sets the prophet Isaiah’s words of admonition as a gentle dance in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time.



In 1723 Johann Sebastian Bach was in his first year as director of music for Saint Thomas' Church and School in Leipzig. For his first Advent music, he composed a twelve-movement setting of the canticle of Mary, the *Magnificat*. The sixth movement, *Et misericordia* (And his mercy is on those who fear him), scored by Bach for countertenor, tenor, flutes, muted strings and continuo, uses a sweet progression of parallel thirds and a gently undulating 12/8 rhythm to evoke the spirit of mercy.

The Pastoral *Pifa* from *Messiah* is juxtaposed with four accompanied recitatives, in which the birth of Christ is announced to the shepherds by angels. In a performance of the full oratorio, the chorus sings the *Glory to God* as a response to those recitatives. Thomas Mark Fallon replaces the chorus with Robert J. Powell's setting of the well-known carol *Angels We Have Heard on High*. Known first in France as *Les Anges dans nos campagnes* (Angels in our countryside), it is typical of medieval hymns in that it mixes the vernacular with Latin—in this case, *Gloria in excelsis Deo* at the end of each verse.

Turning to another familiar movement from *Messiah*, Fallon sings *He Shall Feed His Flock*, which is performed as a double aria in the full oratorio, first by the countertenor in F major and then a fourth higher, in B-flat major, by the soprano. Some scholars believe Handel may have based this aria on *Canzone di zampognari*, one of the seventeenth-century carols he would most likely have heard during his time in Italy (1704–1707).

In the world of classical music, the word “parody” does not have pejorative connotations—the term simply means that an arranger has set different words to a familiar tune. For *Sweet Child of Bethlehem*, the tune is César Franck's *Panis angelicus* (Bread of Angels), a movement from his *Messe a trois voix* (Mass in Three Voices), opus 12.

In act two, scene two, of the opera *Hansel and Gretel*, the protagonists, lost in the forest, kneel to sing their evening prayers (*Abendsegen*). While the sandman sprinkles sand in the children's eyes to help them sleep, fourteen angels descend to guard and protect them. Premiered in Weimar, Germany, on December 23, 1893, under the baton of Richard Strauss, the opera continues to be associated with the Christmas season. In this arrangement, the countertenor sings the role of Hansel, and the flutist plays the harmonic line of his sister Gretel.

Arranger Robert J. Powell has creatively woven together two melodies associated with the text *Away in a Manger*. The familiar hymn was composed in 1885 in Philadelphia by James Murray. A second tune was written by William J. Kirkpatrick for a musical that came to the stage in 1895—*Around the World with Christmas*.

Written by lyricist Jane McCulloch and composer Donald Fraser in honor of soprano Jessye Norman, *This Christmastide* is also known as *Jessye's Carol*. Incorporating bold and gentle musical touches in close juxtaposition, the piece reflects on the full meaning of Christmastide.

Sung in every corner of the world and translated into forty-four languages, *Silent Night* is the most international of all Christmas carols. It was first performed at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria, on Christmas Eve, 1818. Fallon dedicates tonight's performance of this carol to his mother, Pauline Mayer Fallon, who is of Austro-Hungarian descent. The melody can be heard to contain a hint of the unique Austrian vocal art of yodeling. Although the Church of Saint Nicholas was destroyed by a flood in the early 1900s, the site of the original church now houses the Silent Night Memorial Chapel and Museum, a highly popular tourist destination during the month of December.

In celebration of his Irish heritage, Fallon includes the popular Irish American Christmas song *Christmas in Killarney*. Like many songs of Irish origin, it has been adopted and recorded by singers of many backgrounds, including Bing Crosby, Dennis Day, Bobby Vinton, Anne Murray, and the Irish Rovers.

Adolphe Adam's moving *O Holy Night*, based on the poem *Minuit, chrétiens* (Midnight, Christians) by Placide Cappeau (1808–1877), follows the strong French tradition of celebrating midnight mass on Christmas Eve. Eric Liu, a Taiwanese pianist and composer, presents both the French original and the English version in this arrangement. Liu has masterfully arranged the song for the extensive range and varied vocal colors of his friend Thomas Mark Fallon's unique countertenor voice.

*Program notes based on materials provided by Thomas Mark Fallon*