

2024-25 Concert Season

CANTILENA

Women's Voices

Elinor A. Armsby, Artistic Director



DEEPLY ROOTED



Featuring compositions by guest conductor &
Music Director Emeritus, Kenneth H. Seitz
the fall concert reprises a few favorites from
Cantilena's past performances.

Sunday, December 8th at 4 pm
First Parish Unitarian Universalist
630 Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476
cantilena.org



ABOUT US

Cantilena, a chorus of women's voices, is dedicated to encouraging and promoting the composition, study, and performance of choral music with an emphasis on music composed specifically for women's voices. Cantilena strives to introduce both its members and an increasingly wider audience to unique works by composers they are unlikely to encounter elsewhere.

Founded in 1968, the **Cambridge Chorale**, an ensemble of mixed (SATB) voices, began performing as a chorus of women's voices in 1980 and re-named itself **Cantilena** in 2000.

The chorus looks forward to celebrating its 25th year as Cantilena in 2025.

CANTILENA SINGERS

Sopranos

Erdmute Benoit
Angela Carroll
Alysia Chang
Isabella Feierberg
Jennifer Joslyn-Siemiatkoski*
Chris Lull
Erin Maloney
Cindy Mapes
Raphaela Mueller
E.B. Saunter
April Sun

* *Section leader*

Altos

Janice Darling
Meg DiMaggio
Stephanie Everett
Joanie Goodman
Beverly Hjorth
Mara Moldwin*
Karen Nichols
Marytha Paffrath
Rebecca Sacks
JoyEllen Snellgrove
Gina Sonder
Jeanne Sparrow

Cantilena Board of Directors

Gina Sonder, president
Beverly Hjorth, treasurer
Jeanne Sparrow, clerk
Janice Darling, member-at-large
Stephanie Everett, member-at-large
Rebecca Sacks, member-at-large

Past Directors

Kenneth Seitz, Director Emeritus
Allegra Martin
Jennifer Kane

More Information at: www.cantilena.org

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Cantilena Fall Concert — Deeply Rooted — December 8, 2024

Artistic Director Elinor A. Armsby
Collaborative Pianist Allyson Cahill
Cantilena Women's Voices



Deeply Rooted

GUEST CONDUCTOR – Kenneth H. Seitz
FALL 2024 CONCERT PROGRAM

Selections from Ceremony of Carols - Benjamin Britten

✦ Wolcum Yule

✦ This Little Babe

✦ Deo Gracias

Longest Shadow of the Year - Ellen Gilson Voth

Silent Night - Kenneth Seitz

Dona Nobis Pacem - Kenneth Seitz

Jerusalem Luminosa - Abbie Bettinis

O Sing of a King Who Was Tall and Brown - Margaret Bonds

The Queens Came Late - Daniel Pinkham

◆INTERMISSION◆

Velvet Shoes - Kenneth Seitz

Some Keep the Sabbath - Kenneth Seitz

The Grass - Kenneth Seitz

Alleluia in D - Kenneth Seitz (*conducting*)

The Lake Isle of Innisfree - Eleanor Daley

The Peace of Wild Things - Joan Szymko

Let Evening Come - Brian Holmes

Rise Up - Jake Runestad

PROGRAM NOTES

On the eve of Cantilena's anniversary year - 2025 will be Cantilena's 45th year as a women's ensemble and our 25th year under the name Cantilena - we take a moment to look back at where we've been and specifically at memorable music from our past. We also take this opportunity to pay homage to our long-time director, Ken Seitz. Ken was the music director of Cantilena between 1978 and 2009. In addition to his pivotal role as music director for over 30 years, Ken also composed many works for Cantilena during his tenure. We are pleased to highlight a few of those as part of our retrospective this afternoon. Ken will share a few thoughts on these pieces from the stage.

The genesis of this program was quite different from my typical programming process. Generally, I start with a topic or theme and then work from pieces we hold in our library as well as other repertoire outside the library to find a selection of music that speaks to the theme while also creating a varied and interesting audience listening experience. However, with this program, I wanted to engage with current and past singers about music they performed with Cantilena that was particularly meaningful. After surveying the singers, I compiled the results and looked for works that were identified by multiple singers as important to their Cantilena experience. Deeply Rooted is the result of this process.

As you experience this program, you will no doubt notice some commonalities among the works selected by the singers: thought-provoking texts, challenging music and well-constructed music and compositions that evoke a particular mood or a call to action.

Typically our December performance is not themed around the Christmas holiday but, as I compiled the survey results, I was surprised to find a number of pieces appropriate for the winter season and holidays. Thus, the first half of the program has decidedly Christmas overtones opening with three movements from Benjamin Britten's beloved **Ceremony of Carols** and concluding with two unusual reflections on the Magi (Three Kings). In the first, Margaret Bonds sets a text by Langston Hughes focused on the African king, Balthazar, as a way to "reinforce the image of African participation in the Nativity story." In the second by Daniel Pinkham, we imagine other "Magi" who might have traveled to see the newly born Christ - Queens who perhaps had a more practical approach to visiting a new mother and child.

The second half of the program continues the exploration of favorite repertoire from the past on a less seasonal theme. To conclude the program, I chose a piece new to the ensemble. After devoting the bulk of the program to looking back at where we've been, I wanted to find a piece that points to Cantilena's future. With its rhythmic energy and text by Susan B. Anthony, Jake Runestad's **Rise Up** seemed like the perfect fit to conclude our program and look to another 25 years of singing with Cantilena!

—Elinor A. Armsby, Artistic Director

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audio recording of the performance.

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TEXTS

Selections from Ceremony of Carols

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Wolcom Yole

Text by Anon. 14th Century

Wolcum! Wolcum!
Wolcum be thou hevenè king,
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum, born in one morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!
Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon,
Wolcum, Innocentes every one,
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,
Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere,
Wolcum, Twelfth Day both in fere,
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!
Candelmesse, Quene of bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum! Wolcum!
Wolcum be ye that are here,
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum alle and make good cheer,
Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole!

This Little Babe

Text by Robert Southwell (1561? - 1595)

This little Babe so few days old,
is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake,
though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmed wise
the gates of hell he will surprise.
With tears he fights and wins the field,
His naked breast stands for a shield;
His battering shot are babish cries,

His arrows looks of weeping eyes,
His martial ensigns Cold and Need,
and feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.
His camp is pitched in a stall,
His bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his
stakes;
of shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound,
the angels' trumps alarum sound.
My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
stick to the tents that he hath pight.
Within his crib is surest ward;
this little Babe will be thy guard.
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy,
then flit not from this heavenly Boy.

Deo Gracias

Text by Anon. 15th Century

Deo gracias!
Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a
bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not to
long.
Deo gracias!
And all was for an appil, an appil that
he tok,
As clerkes finden written in their book.
Deo gracias!
Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil
takè ben,
Ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè
quene.
Blessèd be the time that appil takè
was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias!

Longest Shadow of the Year

Ellen Gilson Voth (b. 1972)

Text by Sylvia Ross

With inky blackness
This night stretches long and deep
Into the darkness of Midwinter void
Where the Earth sleeps.
The old Sun god is dying
Almost standing still
Fading fast, his light casts
The longest shadow of the year
For this day is brief, short,
And the moon weeps at
The passing of her consort
But she is an ancient goddess
Wise to the unending fight
And struggle of darkness over light
For she will become full once more
To bring forth a new Sun
And Light to the world
The cycle repeats
Death, Rebirth, Life unfurled — Light.

Silent Night

Kenneth Seitz

Text by Josef Mohr, ca.1817

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace (x2)
Silent night, holy night
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia
Christ the Savior is born (x2)
Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth (x2)

Dona Nobis Pacem

Kenneth Seitz

Jerusalem Luminosa

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980)

Text by Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471)

Alleluia.
Jerusalem luminosa,
Verae pacis visio.
Alleluia.
Totum sanctum, totum mundum,
In te quidquid cernitur.
Alleluia.
*Jerusalem, city of light,
Vision of true peace.*
Alleluia.
*All holy, all elegant,
Is that which shows itself in thee.*

Oh, Sing of the King Who Was Tall and Brown

Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

Text by Langston Hughes (1901-1967)

Oh, sing of the king who was tall and brown
Crossing the desert from a distant town,
Crossing the desert on a caravan
His gifts to bring from a distant land,
His gifts to bring from a palm-tree land
Across the sand by caravan,
With a single star to guide his way to
Bethlehem where the Christ-child lay.
Oh, sing of the king who was tall and brown
And the other kings that this king
found,
Who came to put their presents down,
In a lowly manger in Bethlehem town
Where the King of Kings a Babe was found;
Three kings who came to the King of
Kings,
And one was tall and brown.
Oh, sing of the king who was tall and brown.

The Queens Came Late

Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006)

Text by Norma Farber (1909-1984)

The Queens came late, but the Queens
were there
with gifts in their hands and crowns on
their hair.
They'd come, these three, like the Kings,
from far,
following, yes, that guiding star.
They'd left their ladles, linens, looms,
their children playing in nursery rooms,
and told their sitters: "Take charge! For
this
is a marvelous sight we must not miss!"
The Queens came late, but not too late
to see the animals small and great,
feathered and furred, domestic and wild,
gathered to gaze at a mother and child.
And rather than frankincense and myrrh
and gold for the babe, they brought for he
who held him, a homespun gown of blue,
and chicken soup—with noodles, too—
and a lingering, lasting cradle song.
The Queens came late and stayed not
long,
for their thoughts already were straining
far—
past manger and mother and guiding star
and child a-glow as a morning sun---
toward home and children
and chores undone.

Velvet Shoes

Kenneth Seitz

Text by Elinor Wylie (1885-1928)

Let us walk in the white snow
In a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,

At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace.
I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull.
We shall walk through the still town
In a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these.
We shall walk in velvet shoes:
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
On white silence below.
We shall walk in the snow.

Some Keep the Sabbath

Kenneth Seitz

Text by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Some keep the Sabbath going to
Church –
I keep it, staying at Home –
With a Bobolink for a Chorister –
And an Orchard, for a Dome –
Some keep the Sabbath in Surplice –
I, just wear my Wings –
And instead of tolling the Bell, for
Church,
Our little Sexton – sings.
God preaches, a noted Clergyman –
And the sermon is never long,
So instead of getting to Heaven,
at last –
I'm going, all along.

The Grass

Kenneth Seitz

Text by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

The Grass so little has to do –
A Sphere of simple Green –
With only Butterflies to brood
And Bees to entertain –
And stir all day to pretty Tunes
The Breezes fetch along –
And hold the Sunshine in its lap
And bow to everything –
And thread the Dews, all night, like
Pearls –
And make itself so fine
A Duchess were too common
For such a noticing –
And even when it dies – to pass
In Odors so divine –
Like Lowly spices, lain to sleep –
Or Spikenards, perishing –
And then, in Sovereign Barns to dwell
–
And dream the Days away,
The Grass so little has to do
I wish I were a Hay –

Alleluia in D

Kenneth Seitz

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

Eleanor Daley (b. 1955)

Text by W.B. Yeats (1865-1939)

I will arise and go now, and go to
Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there,
of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there,
a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there,
for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning
to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer,
and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.
I will arise and go now, for always
night and day
I hear lake water lapping
with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway,
or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

The Peace of Wild Things

Joan Szymko (b. 1957)

Text by Wendell Berry (1957-1982)

When despair for the world grows in
me
and I wake in the night at the least
sound
in fear of what my life and my children's
lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood
drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and
the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with
forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still
water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am
free.

Let Evening Come

Brian Holmes (b. 1946)

Text by Jane Kenyon (1947-1995)

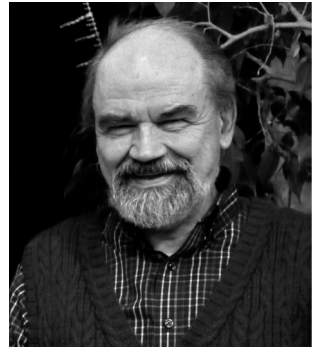
Let the light of late afternoon
shine through chinks in the barn,
moving
up the bales as the sun moves down.
Let the cricket take up chafing
as a woman takes up her needles
and her yarn. Let evening come.
Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned
in long grass. Let the stars appear
and the moon disclose her silver horn.
Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.
To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop
in the oats, to air in the lung
let evening come.
Let it come, as it will, and don't
be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

Rise Up

Jake Runestad (b.1986)

From writings of Susan B. Anthony.

Rise up!
There shall never be another season of
silence.
Deepen your sympathy then convert it
to action.
Pray every single second of your life,
not on your knees but with your work.
Think your best thoughts,
speak your best words,
do your best work.
There is so much yet to be done.
Rise up!



BIOGRAPHIES

Composer, pianist, Director Emeritus Kenneth H. Seitz devoted all three talents as Cantilena's artistic director from 1978 - 2009.

During his tenure, Mr. Seitz wrote a large number of works specifically for Cantilena. The chorus commissioned and premiered Three Heartfelt Songs, a setting of texts by three women poets. He gave much of his music to the chorus to perform: Velvet Shoes, Vocalise, Alleluia, Some Keep the Sabbath, Sing We Noel, The Coventry Carol, The Golden Carol, The Grass, There is No Rose, and many others. As a composer and arranger Mr. Seitz has provided Cantilena with some of the most popular music in its repertoire

From 1984 to 2002, Mr. Seitz served as Music Director of First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington and was named Director Emeritus in 2008. Since 2018-19 Mr. Seitz has been staff accompanist at First Parish. For more about Mr. Seitz's and his extensive biography please see:

<https://cantilena.org/past-directors>



Elinor A. Armsby - Artistic Director comes to Cantilena with over twenty years of experience as a choral director in New England and beyond, working with choirs of varying ages and abilities, including college and high school students, church choirs, and community choruses. In addition to serving as Cantilena's Artistic Director, she is currently the Director of the Senior Choir at Acton Congregational Church. She holds a Bachelor's degree in music from Indiana University and a Master's degree from Temple University. Ms. Armsby has also been involved in music publishing for many years, working for Theodore Presser Company from 1994 to 2005. Since 2007, Ellie has held the office of president of the Hildegard Publishing Company, expanding its catalogue of music by women composers. Ellie is a native of Newton, Massachusetts.



Allyson Cahill - Collaborative Pianist has been an accompanist of choirs for over 10 years, and is thrilled to be working with Cantilena again for their 2024-2025 season. Allyson is a recent graduate of UMass Lowell with a degree in Sound Recording Technology. While at UML, she studied jazz and classical piano, and accompanied many fellow students in juries and recitals. Currently, Allyson serves as an accompanist on piano and organ at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Cambridge and with the Chelmsford Children's Chorus.

Would you like to sing with us?

Cantilena auditions treble voices in January 2025.

To find out more about the audition process and how to contact us with your questions visit the **Join Us** page on our website.

Simply scan the QR-code on this page!





Jason Iannuzzi
Artistic Director

CANTEMUS

SMALL CHORUS. GRAND SOUND.

2024-2025 Season

The Peace of Wild Things

Inspired by the Animal Kingdom, this concert preserves some seasonal traditions, and goes beyond. The repertoire ranges from des Prez and Mendelssohn to Eric Whitacre and Craig Hella Johnson. Some pieces reflect on the grace and beauty of the natural world; some involve animals being personified or used as poetic symbols; and some mimic actual animal sounds!

December 6, 8 & 15, 2024

I Hear America Singing

With words by Whitman, Frost, Sandburg and other American poets and lyricists, and music by Copland, Ives, Dylan and more, this concert explores what it means to be American.

Who gets to decide? What is patriotism's place in our society? Repertoire explores The American Dream, The American Diaspora, Songs of Protest, and finally asks: The American Dream Restored? Guest artists include a classical guitarist and an oboist.

May 10 & 11, 2025

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2024-2025 Concert Season

A Harper's Song: Ceremony of Carols

Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 4:00 pm

Still Heard Round the World:

A Celebration of Music Written by and for Women

Saturday, May 3, 2025 at 4:00 pm

Trinity Episcopal Church
81 Elm Street, Concord, MA

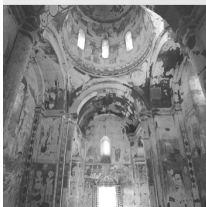
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2024-2025: MANIFESTATIONS OF LIGHT



ETERNAL VOICES & SACRED LANDSCAPES

SATURDAY
November 9, 8 pm
in West Roxbury

SUNDAY
November 10, 3 pm
in Cambridge



LIGHT FROM DEEPEST HEAVEN

SATURDAY
December 21, 8 pm
in West Roxbury

SUNDAY
December 22, 3 pm
in Newton Centre



ASPECTS OF LIGHT

SATURDAY
March 8, 8 pm
in West Roxbury

SUNDAY
March 9, 3 pm
in Cambridge



LIGHT IN THE TREASURE TROVE

SATURDAY
May 3, 8 pm
in West Roxbury

SUNDAY
May 4, 3 pm
in Cambridge

FOR DETAILS AND TICKETING VISIT WWW.SERAPHIMSINGERS.ORG

The Spectrum Singers 2024 - 2025 Season



NOVEMBER 23, 2024
Chantez, Poètes!
Adam Kerry Boyles
Guest Conductor



MARCH 15, 2025
Requiem for the Living
Katherine Chan
Guest Conductor



MAY 17, 2025
See, Hear, Speak [No Evil]
Max Holman
Guest Conductor

All concerts Saturday evenings, 7:30 PM
First Church Congregational, 11 Garden St., Cambridge
Tickets and more information: www.spectrumsingers.org

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Special events are in the works for 2025,
including premieres
of New Music & a Fall Gala.

Maternal Figures: Reflections on Mothering and Being Mothered

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington
630 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476

**7:00 pm Concert
Mother's Day Weekend
Saturday, May 10, 2025**

We invite you to the premiere of a newly
commissioned work by three composers,
marking 25 years since our name was changed
to

Cantilena women's chorus.

We take a fresh look at motherhood
in our May 2025 concert.



Tickets & details: cantilena.org/concerts

A Visit with Anne Bernays, A Founding Member of Cantilena

On a delightful fall day, Gina Sonder and I had the pleasure of visiting Anne Bernays at her home in Cambridge. Anne is a multifaceted individual: an accomplished author, engaging blogger, devoted mother and grandmother, and an inspiring teacher of writing. In the 1970s, she helped form a vibrant singing group, known as the Cambridge Chorale, which would gather in various spaces, including Anne's own living room. Early directors included Scott Wheeler, who composed a piece for us in 2012 and then Kenneth Seitz!

The Journey of Cantilena

The chorus eventually relocated to its current space in Arlington where Ken was Music Director of First Parish. Under Anne's leadership as president, the group transitioned into a women's chorus and renamed itself Cantilena. The focus shifted to rarely performed music written for treble voices, many of which were composed by Ken. Anne fondly recalled the annual end-of-season parties hosted by Ken and Carol, their home filled with delicious food, lively conversation, and, of course, plenty of singing.

An Everlasting Legacy

Over the years, the membership of the chorus flourished, and while Anne eventually retired from the chorus, she continues to sing with us in spirit. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on Cantilena, allowing it to bring joy to both its members and audiences through the years.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Anne for her vision and voice, which have been instrumental in Cantilena's journey. Her legacy continues to resonate, echoing the harmonious spirit she helped nurture.

- Karen Nichols, Cantilena Chorus Member

Reception floral arrangements courtesy of

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Thank you for your ongoing support!

Individual Donors 2024

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Elinor Armsby	Mara Moldwin
Rachel Berger	Susan Monserud
Alysia Chang	Raphaela Mueller
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Madeline Donheiser	Karen Nichols
Stephanie Everett	Jane Rossett
Jean Flanagan	Rebecca Sacks
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