

The Salisbury Chorale and University Chorale with guest artists from  
the American Spiritual Ensemble present

# *A Spiritual Messiah*

Conceived by John Wesley Wright



**Sunday, November 17, 2013 • 5 p.m.**  
**Holloway Hall Auditorium**



**ASE Soloists:**

Karen Slack, soprano  
Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano  
John Wesley Wright, tenor  
Michael Preacely, baritone

**Dr. William Folger, Musical Director**  
**Susan Zimmer, Pianist**

*Sponsored by The Peter and Judy Jackson Music Performance Fund  
and the Fulton School of Liberal Arts*

**Salisbury**  
UNIVERSITY

# PROGRAM

## I

(Prophecy, Birth, Life of Christ)

- Over My Head .....arr. Osby Hodges,  
Rev. Todd O'Neal and John Wesley Wright; Intro transcribed by Jitsuko Tanaka  
John Wesley Wright, tenor and Ensemble
- De Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy .....arr. Vaughan Meakins  
Michael Preacely, baritone and Ensemble\*\*
- Rockin' Jerusalem .....arr. John W. Work  
Karen Slack, soprano and Ensemble
- Sister Mary .....arr. Roland Hayes  
Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano
- Lil' Boy .....arr. Roland Hayes  
Michael Preacely, baritone
- Mary Had a Baby .....arr. Roland Carter  
John Wesley Wright, tenor and Ensemble
- Sweet Little Jesus Boy .....Robert MacGimsey  
Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano
- Ride On, Jesus .....arr. R.Nathaniel Dett  
Karen Slack, soprano
- Glory Hallelujah to Duh Newbo'n King .....adapted by Rosephanye Powell  
ASE Soloists and Ensemble

## II

(Christ's Passion, Teachings, the Judgment, Ultimate Victory)

- Spirituals Medley .....arr. Rev. Todd O'Neal  
and transcribed by Steve Milloy  
ASE Soloists and Ensemble
- Were You There? .....arr. Harry T. Burleigh  
Michael Preacely, baritone
- Calvary .....arr. Steven Sametz  
John Wesley Wright, tenor and Small Ensemble †
- Take My Mother Home .....arr. Hall Johnson  
Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano

Wade in the Water (Spiritual Quodlibet) .....	arr. Ysaye M. Barnwell Ensemble
Ain't Got Time To Die .....	arr. Hall Johnson Karen Slack, soprano and Ensemble
Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel? .....	arr. Leonard Van Camp John Wesley Wright, tenor and Michael Preacely, baritone
Live-a-Humble .....	arr. Marvin Mills Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano and Ensemble
I Got to Lie Down .....	arr. Hall Johnson Michael Preacely, baritone
Hallelujah .....	G. F. Handel arr. Mervyn Warren, Michael O. Jackson and Mark Kibble adapted by John Higgins John Wesley Wright, tenor and Ensemble

### III

(Eternal Life, Victory over Death, Glorification of the Messiah)

Oh, Glory! .....	arr. Joseph Joubert Karen Slack, soprano and Ensemble
I Wanna Be Ready .....	arr. Rosephanye Powell Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano and Ensemble
O Redeemed! .....	arr. Uzee Brown, Jr. Michael Preacely, baritone
Ain't No Grave .....	arr. Ysaye M. Barnwell John Wesley Wright, tenor and Small Ensemble*
He's Got the Whole World in His Hands .....	arr. Margaret Bonds Karen Slack, soprano
Amazing Grace .....	arr. Benjamin Harlan Cherry Duke, mezzo-soprano and John Wesley Wright, tenor
Free at Last (Big River) .....	Roger Miller Michael Preacely, baritone and Ensemble
Amen .....	Joseph Crawford arr. Robert De Cormier ASE Soloists and Ensemble

# UNIVERSITY CHORALE

William M. Folger, Conductor  
Susan Zimmer, Pianist

## Sopranos

†\*Miesha C. Burley  
†\*Sarah Burrall  
Hannah B. Cohan  
Breanna C. Courville  
Veronica T. Fallon  
†Kelsey R. Gahan  
†Miranda J. Haney  
†\*Kassidy D. Korb  
†Marisa S. Lacey  
Adwoa Asieduwaa-Birag Nyame  
Brittany M. Passon  
Jennifer A. Reeves  
Julie M. Seechuk  
Lauren E. Shockley  
Ana I. Vintimilla  
†Taylor Wentworth  
Amy C. Wigglesworth

## Altos

Shannon E. Buckley  
†Amanda N. Bysheim  
Aimee S. Faulkner  
†\*Jessica E. Huber  
Jordan G. Lumpkin  
†\*Megan T. Outten  
†Caitlin E. Ratzlaff  
Marissa L. Shervin  
Justine E. Szeles  
†\*Janelle R. Thomas

## Tenors

†\*Tyler B. Brunner  
†Calvin O. Collins  
†Zachary R. Davis  
†\*Edgar Isaacs  
†\*Syed G. Jaffery  
†Jacob R. Shatuck  
†\*John L. Wixted

## Basses

†\*\*Conner P. Bailey, Guiro  
†Daniel W. Bishop  
\*\*Joshua D. Easter, Claves  
\*Kyle M. Failla  
Michael A. Goldsmith  
\*\*Berent Kilian, Maracas  
†\*Michael W. Lewallen  
Jesse B. McSweeney  
†\*Devin M. Osborne  
Elias H. Page  
Michael J. Pistorio  
†\*Garret E. Roe  
Daniel P. Schnackenberg  
Alan F. Van Wormer  
†Ian Young

# SALISBURY CHORALE

William M. Folger, Conductor  
Susan Zimmer, Pianist

## Sopranos

June Barlage  
Sharon Clark  
Rhonda Dausman  
Therese Hamilton  
Kathleen Hayne  
Judy Jackson  
Kate Manizade  
Kathleen Shannon  
†Arlene White

## Altos

Barbara Coalter  
Brooke Coalter  
Ev Cook  
†Karen Gabrieszeski  
Katherine Harting  
Darlene Horseman  
†Nancy Mace  
Patti Mannion  
Cara Rozaieski  
Heather Sullivan  
†\*Mary-Tyler Upshaw  
Joana Weaver

## Tenors

Gregory Arment  
†\*Ed Isaacs  
†Laura Masucci  
†David Pollock  
Alan Van Wormer

## Basses

Al Budnichuk  
Scott Duncan  
William Horne  
Richard Hunter  
Jim Junker  
†Maarten Pereboom  
Al Rayne  
Mark Williams  
†William A. V. Willis

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## PROGRAM NOTES

George Frideric Handel's *Messiah* is one of the most beloved, famous and studied oratorios in all of classical music literature. Having performed it in Switzerland, Japan and throughout the United States, it has been an important career work for me as it has for myriad musicians. Unlike the historic 132<sup>nd</sup> Messiah Festival of the Arts in Lindsborg, Kansas where *A Spiritual Messiah*<sup>TM</sup> was premiered, I have lost count of the number of *Messiah* performances I have performed. What is not lost, however, is the undeniable reach and universal spirit of Handel's *Messiah*. The same can be said about the African-American spiritual.

To put things in perspective, while Handel and his librettist Charles Jennens were composing and conceiving the uniquely meditative oratorio on the different aspects of the Christian Messiah in the mid-1700s, the American Negro slaves were hearing the Christian messianic message and formulating their own meditations and melodies on the subject in secret camp meetings. *A Spiritual Messiah* also pays homage to all the slaves who made a messiah-like sacrifice and whose corn ditties, field hollers and shouts evolved into the spirituals, gospels and theatre songs that are part of the *Spiritual Messiah* program.

The program reflects a diversity of spiritual arrangers (African-American, Caucasian, male, female, living and past composers) and the diversity of spiritual arrangements from the traditional choral *a cappella* style arrangements of John W. Work and Marvin Mills, to the gospel-style arrangements of Roland Carter and Rev. Todd O'Neal, to the more contemporary styles of Rosephanyne Powell and Joseph Joubert. The solo, duo and ensemble spiritual arrangements also capture a wide range of styles with the simple chordal accompaniment found in "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" to the soothing berceuse in "Sister Mary" and the distinct ragtime elements heard in Uzee Brown, Jr.'s "O Redeemed."

Like Handel's work, *A Spiritual Messiah* is in three parts, requires four skilled soloists (SATB) and a concert choir, and follows the basic liturgical year scenes or themes: Advent, Christmas, the Life of Jesus (Part I); Lent, Easter, Christ's Ministry (Part II); Redemption, Victory over Death, Glorification of the Messiah (Part III). There are other purposeful parallels to Handel's work such as opening *A Spiritual Messiah* with the slow, declamatory spiritual "Over My Head" (set in a gospel style), sung by the tenor soloist and leading into a more lively section just as Handel's opening arioso "Comfort Ye, My People" transitions into the florid tenor air, "Every Valley Shall Be Exalted." Culminating *A Spiritual Messiah* with an arrangement of the spiritual "Amen" also mirrors Handel's closing his work with the famous "Amen" fugue.

Lastly, *A Spiritual Messiah* was conceived to offer a professional, collaborative, accessible, communal and educational experience as well as a spiritual one to any willing choir – amateur, semi-professional or otherwise. Tonight's performance is a worthy sequel to Salisbury University's performance of Handel's *Messiah* with members of the Harlem Festival Orchestra spring 2011. We hope you enjoy the East Coast/Salisbury University premiere of *A Spiritual Messiah*.

*John Wesley Wright*

Instructor of Voice, Salisbury University

Member of the American Spiritual Ensemble since 2006

## AMERICAN SPIRITUAL ENSEMBLE SOLOISTS

The American Spiritual Ensemble is a critically acclaimed professional group composed of some of the finest singers in the classical music world. The vocalists have thrilled audiences around the world with their dynamic renditions of classic spirituals and Broadway numbers. Tenor Dr. Everett McCorvey founded the group in 1995, and many of its members have performed in such venues as the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, San Francisco Opera, Boston Opera and the Atlanta Civic Opera. They have also performed abroad in Europe, Asia and South America.

### **Karen Slack**

American soprano Karen Slack, hailed by critics for possessing a lustrous voice of extraordinary beauty and dramatic depth, has sung with noted conductors, leading opera companies and symphony orchestras around the world.

Slack is the featured opera soloist in Lionsgate and Tyler Perry Studios' major motion picture and soundtrack *For Colored Girls* released in November 2010. Recent and upcoming engagements include Arizona Opera and Messiah Festival of the Arts in 2013 and Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2014.

Slack made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2006 in the title role of Luisa Miller' and quickly followed that with performances at San Francisco Opera, Carnegie Hall, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia and Melbourne Symphony (Australia). *The New York Times* described her singing as "warmly expressive, especially in her brilliant top." *The Financial Times* labeled her "a radiant spinto soprano."

While a student at Curtis Institute, she was noticed by Santa Fe Opera and given a coveted place in their apprentice program. San Francisco Opera rewarded her with an invitation to participate in the Merola Opera Program and followed that with an Adler Fellowship.

Recent engagements include the role of Cilla in the American opera *Margaret Garner* for Michigan Opera Theater, soprano soloist for Verdi's *Requiem* with Madison Symphony Orchestra, Serena in *Porgy and Bess* for San Francisco Opera and Washington National Opera, Violetta in *La traviata* for Sacramento Opera and West Bay Opera, soloist with the Cincinnati Pops and May Festival Chorus.

The American Spiritual Ensemble is represented in the United States by  
Alkahest Artists & Attractions, Inc.  
888-728-8989

info@Alkahestartists.net or www.Alkahestartists.net  
The American Spiritual Ensemble is managed by Global Creative Connections  
www.globalcreativeconnections.com

VISIT THE AMERICAN SPIRITUAL ENSEMBLE WEB SITE  
www.americanspiritualensemble.com



## Cherry Duke

Hailed by the press as a “radiant and confident” performer, American mezzo-soprano Cherry Duke is a singer who communicates both the music and the text impeccably.” Her “striking voice-acting and stage movement” is especially evident in her performances of leading operatic roles such as Carmen, Nerone in *The Coronation of Poppea*, Jo March in Adamo’s *Little Women* and Lucretia in *The Rape of Lucretia*. Additionally, she has sung the title characters in *Giasone*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Der Rosenkavalier* as well as principal mezzo-soprano roles in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Falstaff*, *Rigoletto*, *The Mikado*, *La Traviata*, *L’enfant et les sortilèges* and *The Love for Three Oranges*, to name a few. Duke has performed often with New York City Opera and traveled with them to Japan for *Little Women* and *Madama Butterfly*.

Duke is frequently involved in crossover and brand-new works. Her growing list of world premieres includes Dellaira’s *The Secret Agent*, Salerni’s *The Life and Love of Joe Coogan* and Little and Vavrek’s acclaimed *Dog Days*. She is also active in musical theatre, having performed most recently with Indiana Repertory Theater in *A Little Night Music*.

As an orchestral concert soloist, Duke has performed at major venues such as Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall in New York City. Duke has been a featured soloist in Falla’s *El Amor Brujo*, Bach’s *B-Minor Mass*, *St. John’s* and *St. Matthew Passions* and *Weihnachts-Oratorium*, Beethoven’s *Mass in C* and *Choral Fantasy*, Duruflé’s *Requiem*, several Haydn masses, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Mozart’s *Vesperes Solennes*, Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*, Vaughan-Williams’ *Magnificat*, Saint-Saëns’ *Christmas Oratorio* and many performances of Händel’s *Messiah*, as well as orchestral “Pops” concerts. Additionally, she has toured with the American Spiritual Ensemble since 2011.

This summer, Miss Duke joins the voice faculty of Bay View Music Festival in Michigan. She is also an active leader of master classes and workshops on vocal production, stage deportment and personal marketing for artists.

Duke, a Texas native, graduated *summa cum laude* from Texas Woman’s University where she studied with prolific vocal textbook author Joan Wall. She received her graduate degree in opera performance from The Hartt School at the University of Hartford. She currently resides in New York City.



## John Wesley Wright

Tenor John Wesley Wright is known for his artistic and soulful interpretations of music from baroque to Broadway. Holding degrees from Maryville College and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, his diversity as an artist has afforded him, among other things, a nationally televised concert for the Belgian Royal Family as well as tours as a soloist and with professional ensembles throughout the United States, Europe and Japan.

With a host of opera and oratorio roles, art songs, spirituals and cabaret music in his repertoire, Wright is a member of the internationally acclaimed American Spiritual Ensemble. His signature rendition of “Here’s One” is highlighted in the PBS documentary *The Spirituals: Featuring the American Spiritual Ensemble*, released nationally in 2007. Most recently, Wright was guest artist at the 131st and 132nd Messiah Festival of the Arts in Lindsborg, KS, performing Handel’s *Messiah* and the title role in Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. Wright returns to revive the *St. Matthew* Evangelist for the Bach Society of Dayton, the latter with whom he has made dozens of appearances over the last two decades.

Having worked with such conductors as Nicolas McGegan, Ton Koopman and Robert Page, many of Wright’s concert career experiences have been collaborations with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Neal Gittleman. With Gittleman and the DPO, he has sung the title roles of Bach’s *St. John’s* and *St. Matthew Passions*, Britten’s *War Requiem*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Einhorn’s *Voices of Light* and Monteverdi’s *Vespers* of 1610. In May 2011, Wright returned to Ohio and was critically acclaimed for his interpretation of the Celebrant role in Bernstein’s *Mass: A Theater Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers*, with reviews praising his “mastery of the oratorio genre” and “impressive acting range and voice.”

Wright is the gold medalist and top prize winner of the American Traditions Vocal Competition 2000 and has claimed top prizes from the National Federation of Music Clubs, Metropolitan Opera National Council, Bel Canto Regional Artists, Ohio’s Vocal Resource Network Art Song Competition and the International Schubert Competition in Vienna, Austria.

A native of Rome, GA, Wright is coordinator of the Voice and Opera Workshop programs at Salisbury University and co-director of the Broadway program at the Maryland Summer Center of the Arts. Wright is an active clinician, consultant and leader of workshops on voice production, song interpretation and African-American song tradition.

## Michael Preacely

Michael Preacely hails from Chicago and recently completed his master’s degree from the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

Last November, Preacely made his Kentucky Opera debut singing the role of Scarpia in *Tosca* and his Cincinnati Opera debut singing the role of Jake in its 2012 production of *Porgy and Bess*. Other recent roles include Phantom in *Phantom of the Opera*, Ford in *Falstaff*, The High Priest of Dagon in *Samson and Delilah*, Mercutio in *Romeo et Juliette*, Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* and Marcello in *La Bohème*.

Preacely recently made debuts as guest soloist with the Cincinnati Pops and the Hamilton-Fairfield Symphony Orchestra in Hamilton, OH, as well as at the 132nd Messiah Festival of the Arts. Upcoming engagements include the *Porgy and Bess* Suite with Memphis Symphony.

Preacely lives in Lexington, KY, with his wife and two children.

## **Dr. Everett McCorvey**

Everett McCorvey, a native of Montgomery, AL, received his degrees from the University of Alabama. Dr. McCorvey holds the rank of Professor of Voice and the Lexington Opera Society Endowed Chair in Opera Studies, and he is the director and executive producer of University of Kentucky Opera Theatre.

As a tenor soloist, he has enjoyed critical acclaim and has performed in many prestigious venues around the globe, including the Kennedy Center, Radio City Music Hall, the Metropolitan Opera and Italy's Teatro Comunale. He established and directs the American Spiritual Ensemble, a group of 24 professional singers who tour annually throughout the United States and abroad.

McCorvey is also vice chairman of the Kentucky Arts Council for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He serves on the board of the National Association of State Arts Agencies and the Alltech World Equestrian Games Federation Board, which will produce the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in 2010, the largest equestrian event in the history of the United States. He was elected as a faculty representative to the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees and awarded the Kentucky Star for Literary Arts in recognition of his myriad accomplishments in the field of vocal performance.

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in the Chorale who gave  
their time & talents to  
make this show a success.*

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*on tonight's performance!*



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## ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

### **Dr. William M. Folger**

William M. Folger, associate professor of music, appointed to the Salisbury University Department of Music faculty in 2003, is a conductor, pianist, collaborative singer and vocal coach. As chair of the Department of Music and director of choral studies, he conducts the award-winning Madrigal Choir, University Chorale, the Salisbury Chorale, and the musical theatre and opera productions. Dr. Folger performs with the Bel Canto Company, Inc., a professional vocal ensemble based in North Carolina, each summer.

Folger is in demand as a clinician, adjudicator and guest conductor throughout the region, and he locally was honored to direct the All-Shore High School Chorus in Easton and the Worcester County Senior High Chorus. He has directed a number of professional and amateur musical theatre productions in New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina, West Virginia and Maryland. In March 2005, Dr. Folger's ensembles performed at Carnegie Hall, New York City.

As a collaborative pianist, who has performed in England, Hungary and the Czech Republic and has accompanied for professional instrumentalists including Dale Underwood, lead saxophonist for the U.S. Navy Band, and for vocal artists, faculty and student recitals in New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland and in Budapest, Hungary.

Dr. Folger earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in conducting from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). He has taught on the faculties of Concord College, WV; UNCG, NC; Ithaca College; Hobart and William Smith Colleges; and Finger Lakes Community College, NY.

### **Susan Zimmer**

Susan Zimmer holds a Master of Music from Yale University School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, a Bachelor of Music from Texas Tech University, and she is currently studying for a Doctor of Music Education at Boston University. She moved to Salisbury in 1989 to become director of music at Wicomico Presbyterian Church. In 1993, she joined the faculty of the Department of Music at Salisbury University as an adjunct instructor and staff accompanist.

She has performed with the Salisbury Chorale, University Chorale, Chamber Choir, Vocal Jazz, Opera Workshop, Musical Theatre Workshop, Salisbury Symphony Orchestra, and hundreds of junior and senior recitalists at Salisbury University; the community-based Salisbury Chamber Singers; and numerous middle and high school choirs during festivals and concerts.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Dr. Janet Dudley-Eshbach**, *President*

**Dr. Diane D. Allen**, *Provost & Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs*

**Mrs. Martha N. Fulton & the late Charles R. Fulton**

**Dr. Maarten Pereboom**, *Dean, Fulton School of Liberal Arts*

**Dr. William M. Folger**, *Chair, Department of Music*

**David Pollock**, *Manager, Salisbury Chorale*

**Kathleen Hayne**, *Librarian, Salisbury Chorale*

**Mary-Tyler Upshaw**, *Promotion*

**Brooke Church**, *Administrative Assistant II, Department of Music*

**Martha Mancuso**, *Office Assistant, Department of Music*

**Tom Mace and John Raley**, *Tickets*

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