



Radiant Voices

Cynthia Powell, Artistic Director and Conductor
Jenny Clarke, Founder and Executive Director

Janet Sora Chung, piano & organ

No flash photography. Please set cell phones to silent. This performance is being video recorded.

Regina Caeli	Anonymous, arr. Caroline Lesemann-Elliot (b. 1996)
Soloists: Nicole Owen and Chiara Pierangelo	
Lift Thine Eyes	Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
Ave Maria	Gustav Holst (1874–1934)
Ave Verum Corpus	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), arr. Brian Trant
Our Endless Day	Hilary Campbell (b. 1983)
Ave Generosa	Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)
Soloists: Ruston Ropac	
Fear Thou Not	Mårten Jansson (b. 1965)
Ubi Caritas	Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)
Chant de Paix (Song of Peace)	Jean Langlais (1907–1991)
Janet Sora Chung, Organ	
Wir Eilen Mit Schwachen (Cantata 78)	J.S. Bach, (1685-1750)
Soloists: Ruston Ropac and Hilary Baboukis	
Psalms 23	Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Psalms 23	Rollo Dilworth (b. 1970)

Melodia Singers

Soprano	Marlene Moore	Cara Brownell
Ginny Bartolone	Ashley Paskalis	Jenny Clarke
Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya	Chiara Pierangelo	Rebecca Hart
Sally Burgos	Alethia Ruddy	Erika Hauschild
Kate Fiala	Mia Breckenridge Scott	Sofia Licir
Alexis Hedvat	Tulasi Sundares	Lulu Lin
Deb Howard	Sarah Woodruff	Tara Mulvaney
Kristina Jacobs		Ruston Ropac
Lucy Janovitz	Alto	Tina Rosenberg
Nicole Owens	Hilary Baboukis	Jeanne Ruskin
Birgit Matzareth	Marisa Paley Brown	Zarina Vildanova

Melodia Women's Choir History

Founded in 2003, Melodia explores and performs rarely heard music for women's voices in many different styles, and nurtures emerging women composers through commissions and performances. Under the leadership of Jenny Clarke, Executive Director, and Cynthia Powell, Artistic Director, Melodia has performed at Symphony Space, Merkin Concert Hall, DiMenna Center for Classical Music, the Church of Saint Ignatius Loyola in collaboration with Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, and others. Melodia has been heard on WQXR and WNYC radio, including as part of "Her Music: 24 Hours of Emerging Women Composers," in 2014 and again in 2015 and 2016, and seen on NBC television.

Melodia released their first commercial recording in 2014, *Lullaby*, a collection of soothing pieces selected from among the many rare and special works Melodia has performed over the first twelve years of music-making.

Melodia was selected to participate in the WNYC/WQXR Radio's Salute the ARTS Initiative (STAR) 2013 – our second STAR award. Melodia was honored to receive a special proclamation from the New York City Council in April 2018 for "delighting listeners with high quality musical performances and for fostering greater harmony throughout our community and beyond." Melodia was honored by New City Council Member Erik Bottcher in 2023 in celebration of Melodia's 20th Anniversary and for "raising women's voices and fostering greater harmony in New York City."

***Radiant Voices* is dedicated to the memory of Susan Xenarios, a dedicated Melodia Board Member, and to Tranisha (Nene) Thomas, a former Melodia soprano.**

Notes on the Program

Radiant Voices weaves together a program of timeless sacred music from classic interpretations to contemporary reflections, offering a radiant tapestry of faith, love, and endless light.

Our next song, the second piece by Ola Gjeilo, is a setting of *Ubi Caritas*, an ancient prayer that offers the sentiment that where there is caring and love, God is there. Inspired by Duruflé, it is one of the most frequently performed choral pieces of our time.

Our next work, *Our Endless Day* by British composer Hilary Campbell, is set to a text by 14th century visionary Julian of Norwich. Campbell describes the text as “grief turned into joy and certainty through faith and light.”

Our program features two works by Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo. The first is *Ave Generosa*, composed in 2017 to text by 12th century German abbess Hildegard von Bingen as a tribute to Mary. It is followed by a contemporary work by Swedish composer, Märten Jansson. *Fear Thou Not* provides comfort in the form of a biblical text by the prophet Isaiah.

Our next song, the second piece by Ola Gjeilo, is a setting of *Ubi Caritas*, an ancient prayer that offers the sentiment that where there is caring and love, God is there. Inspired by Duruflé, it is one of the most frequently performed choral pieces of our time.

Our program continues with *Wir Eilen Mit Schwachen (Cantata 78)* by J.S. Bach, a radiant duet expressing the believer’s eager yet humble journey toward faith and perseverance.

To close our concert, we offer two settings of *Psalms 23*. The first is by Franz Schubert, a masterpiece of word painting of the most beloved of all the psalms, “*The Lord is My Shepherd*.” The second interpretation is by Rollo Dilworth, reimagined through a gospel lens, using a text by poet Marilyn Nelson based on Psalm 23. The text embeds a call for justice, a message to us all as we leave this performance with newfound peace and reflection.

By Cynthia Powell

Text

Regina Caeli

Marian Antiphon for Eastertide

Regina coeli, laetare, alleluia.
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia.
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia.

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For he, whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.
Has risen as he said, alleluia.

Lift Thine Eyes

Psalms 121

Lift thine eyes, O lift thine eyes to the mountains,
whence cometh help.
Thy help cometh from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
He hath said, thy foot shall not be moved.
Thy Keeper will never slumber.

Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum;
Benedicta tu in mulieribus
Et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei
Ora pro nobis peccatoribus
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee;
Blessed art thou amongst women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Ave Verum Corpus

14th Century Eucharistic Hymn

Ave, verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine, Vere
passum immolatum in Cruce pro homine, Cujus
latus perforatum unda fluxit et sanguine, Esto nobis
praegustatum in mortis examine.

Hail, true body born of the Virgin Mary, Who
truly suffered, sacrificed on the Cross for man,
Whose pierced side overflowed with water and
blood, Be for us a foretaste In the test of death.

Our Endless Day

Julian of Norwich (1342-c.1416)

from Revelations of Divine Love

Translated by Alison Daniell

And at the end of sorrow, suddenly shall our eyes be
opened,
And in that moment of light our sight shall be clear;
And that light is God our maker.
Our faith is our light in the darkness;
And that light, the light which is God,
Our endless day.

Ave Generosa

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

Ave, generosa,
gloriosa et intacta puella
tu pupilla castitatis,
tu materia sanctitatis,
que Deo placuit.

Hail, girl of a noble house
shimmering and unpolluted,
you pupil in the eye of chastity
you essence of sanctity
which was pleasing to God.

Fear Thou Not

Isiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I
am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I
will uphold you with my righteous right hand

Ubi Carits

Antiphon from the liturgy for Maundy Thursday

English translation from St Luke's Daily Missal

(1975)

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsulemus, et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur:
Ne nos mente dividamur, caveamus.

Where charity and love are, God is there.
Love of Christ has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice in Him and be glad.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And from a sincere heart let us love one.
Where charity and love are, God is there.
At the same time, therefore, are gathered into one:
Lest we be divided in mind, let us beware.

Cessent iurgia maligna, cessent lites.
Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Simul quoque cum beatis videamus,
Glorianter vultum tuum, Christe Deus:
Gaudium quod est immensum, atque probum,
Saecula per infinita saeculorum. Amen.

Let evil impulses stop, let controversy cease.
And in the midst of us be Christ our God.
Where charity and love are, God is there.
At the same time we see that with the saints also,
Thy face in glory, O Christ our God:
The joy that is immense and good, Unto the
World without end. Amen.

Wir Eilen Mit Schwachen

*Based on the twelve-verse hymn of 1641 by Johann
Rist*

Wir eilen mit schwachen, doch emsigen Schritten,
O Jesu, o Meister, zu helfen zu Dir.
Du suchest die Kranken und Irrenden treulich.
Ach höre, wie wir
Die Stimmen erheben, um Hülfe zu bitten!
Es sei uns dein gnädiges Antlitz erfreulich!

We hasten with weak, yet eager steps,
O Jesus, o Master, to You to help.
You faithfully seek the ill and erring.
Ah, hear, how we
lift up our voices to beg for help!
Your gracious countenance be joyful to us!

Psalm 23

Gott ist mein Hirt, mir wird nichts mangeln,
er lagert mich auf grüne Weide,
er leitet mich an stillen Bächen,
er labt mein schmachthendes Gemüth,
er führt mich auf rechtem Steige
zu seines Namens Ruhm.
Und wall' ich auch im Todesschatten-Tale,
so wall' ich ohne Furcht,
denn du beschüttest mich;
dein Stab und deine Stütze
sind mir immerdar mein Trost.
Du richtest mir ein Freudenmahl
im Angesicht der Feinde zu,
du salbst mein Haupt mit Öle
und schenkst mir volle, volle Becher ein,
mir folget Heil und Seligkeit in diesem Leben
nach, einst ruh' ich ew'ge Zeit
dort in des Ew'gen Haus.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He maketh me to rest in green pastures;
he leadeth me beside still waters;
he giveth peace unto my soul.
He leadeth me in paths of goodness
for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through valley of the shadow
of death I will fear no evil,
for thou art with me.
Thy rod and staff,
they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table for me
in the presence of mine enemies;
my head with oil thou anointest;
my cup runneth over.
Yea, surely peace and mercy all my life
shall follow me, and I will dwell
in the house of the Lord for evermore.

Psalm 23

Marylyn Nelson

Adonai, my shepherd:
I know no need.
In lush meadows
you invite my soul to rest and recline; together
we walk beside the dance of light on quiet waters.
You give me back myself,
point me to the road toward justice,
one of your sacred names.
Even when I walk in a valley
dark as the shadow of death,
I know no fear, for you are near me
with your staff and crook, and I am safe.
You spread out a feast before me
with those who were my enemies.
You touch my head with fragrant oil;
my thanks overflows.
May goodness and mercy
follow me all the days of my life,
and may I make my home
in the house of the Lord forever

Meet the Directors



Jenny Clarke, Founder and Executive Director of Melodia, combined her lifelong love of choral music and her career as an arts administrator to form Melodia in 2003. She has a B.A. in music and English from Leeds University, England, and an M.A. in arts management from New York University. In addition to singing with Melodia – her true passion – Jenny has sung with the Royal Choral Society in England, and Riverside Choral Society in New York, performing at venues including Avery Fisher Hall (Mostly Mozart Festival), Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space, and Merkin Concert Hall. Jenny has worked extensively in arts administration in music, theater, and dance in London including the South Bank Concert Halls, the Royal Court Theatre and London Sinfonietta, and – for the past 33 years – in New York, including Symphony Space, the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable, and Chamber Music America. Jenny is the Executive Director of the National Flute Association.



Cynthia Powell, Conductor and Artistic Director, celebrates her 23rd season with Melodia. A graduate of Westminster Choir College, she has worked with many musical groups in the NY metropolitan area and has conducted major works for chorus and orchestra. She has served on the guest faculty at Sarah Lawrence College, led the St. George's Choral Society in NYC, and was a guest conductor at the International Choral Festival in Havana, Cuba. She is also the Artistic Director of the Stonewall Chorale, and Organist/Choirmaster of Temple Sinai in Tenafly, NJ. Her passion for music and commitment to the choral art is coupled with a desire to generate awareness and funds for timely causes, and she has produced recitals, oratorios and concerts to benefit Bailey House, a homeless residence for people with AIDS, for Doctors Without Borders, the Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan, and Water is Life, Kenya. At home as both a conductor and an organist, she freelances in a number of area churches, including Holy Apostles, Riverside, St. Luke in the Fields, and Church of the Ascension.



Dr. Janet Sora Chung is an organist, pianist and violinist in New York City where she is the co-artistic director of the [Christopher Street Collegium](#), an ensemble that vivifies the sacred works of Bach, Buxtehude and Couperin among others. Chung's interpretations of Messiaen and Bach have met with acclaim. She has performed at St. Mary the Virgin, St. Ignatius of Loyola Church, SUNY Purchase Performing Arts Center, the University of Scranton, Winspear Centre and Riverside Church. She earned her Doctorate of Musical Arts from the Manhattan School of Music, studying with McNeil Robinson and garnering the Bronson Ragan Award for outstanding ability in organ performance. She loves to arrange pieces for solo organ and for organ and saxophone duo. To expand this repertoire, she and Jay Rattman (saxophone) have commissioned or premiered works by Walter Hilse, Rachel Laurin, James Chirillo and transcribed pieces by Debussy and others. She recently premiered her arrangement of Bach's Goldberg Variations for the 200th anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Church's where she serves as Music Director & Organist. In addition, she is Cantor-Organist of the New York Finnish Lutheran Congregation and Director of the Contemporary Ensemble at Holy Trinity Church.

Meet the Melodia Singers



Hilary Baboukis is thrilled to be singing again with Melodia! Ms. Baboukis is the Associate Director of Music at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in NYC, the Administrator of Great Music under a Byzantine Dome, Programs & Communications Associate at Teatro Grattacielo, and an Adjunct Professor of Voice at Wagner College, Staten Island. As a professional mezzo-soprano, she performs with ensembles and organizations across New York and New Jersey. She lives in Jersey City, where she also teaches voice and piano privately.



Ginny Bartolone has been a member of Melodia since 2020 and is delighted to be back performing with the group for the fifth time. In addition to singing with choirs since childhood, she studied theatre at Drew University where she performed with a variety of choral and a cappella groups. She is now a professional writer and a long-distance hiker, recently completing her fifth trek on the Camino de Santiago.



Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya is thrilled to be singing with Melodia. A member since 2014, she started her vocal training in the Hindustani tradition of India, and later participated in select choirs throughout middle and high school. After a stint in college a cappella at Johns Hopkins University, she worked for UBS in London and joined the bank's Choral Society. Now working in startup marketing in NYC, she is grateful for the support of her family and friends who always encouraged her to continue making music!



Marisa Paley Brown is thrilled to return to choir singing with Melodia Women's Choir. A long-time choir singer, Marisa has been singing from an early age in musical theatre, school choirs, concert choirs, regional choirs, university choirs and close harmony a cappella jazz choirs. This return to singing has brought her such joy after a long time away. Marisa spends her days working west coast hours as a Director of Marketing for a west coast healthcare company but dreams about doing something more creative. She dedicates this return to music to her family and friends who have been so very supportive for so many years.



Cara Brownell joined Melodia in 2013. Choral singing and harmony have been her intercessors from an early age, in church & community choirs, high school (and a folk rock band, of course), SUNY Binghamton University Chorus and Women's Madrigal Ensemble. Cara's guitar-playing soprano sister nourished the pathway! Transplanted from Saratoga Springs in the 1970's, early years in NYC found her accompanying dance classes at NYU, Marymount Manhattan College,

active in the downtown Soho/Lower East Side performance scene (Simone Forti, Douglas Dunn, Collaborative Projects, Inc.) and teaching vocal and movement improvisation in her loft. Cara is a founding member of the Lafayette Inspirational Ensemble, a gospel choir based at historic Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Ft. Greene, Brooklyn and also sings in the classical Lafayette Choir.



Sally Burgos is a proud returning member of the Melodia women's choir. Previously, she sang as a Soprano 1 vocalist with the William Paterson University Chamber Choir in New Jersey. She had the opportunity to go on a European Tour, where she performed at the Pantheon (Rome, Italy), St. Marks Basilica, Basilica di San Marco, (Venice, Italy), Melk Abbey (Melk, Austria), Salzburg Dom (Salzburg, Austria) & St. Peters Dom (Vienna, Austria). She was also a member of the New Jersey Choral Society. Sally holds a Masters in Professional Communication with concentrations in professional writing & digital media. She is a digital marketing consultant.

When she is not assisting businesses with strategic ways to expand their brand presence, she is pursuing her lifelong passion as a singer.



Kate Fiala is happy to be back for her 4th season with Melodia! Kate sang with choirs and musical theatre productions throughout her childhood in Dayton, Ohio, performing all over the Midwest and as far as China with the Kettering Children's Choir. In Chicago, Kate sang with the St. Vincent de Paul parish and was happy to return to singing when she auditioned with Melodia after moving to New York in 2021. Kate is a digital advertising professional, avid Lindy Hop swing dancer, and passionate environmentalist. She is infinitely grateful to Melodia for building such a beautiful community of female voices!



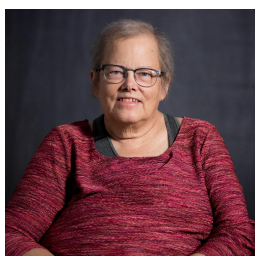
Rebecca Hart - is an actor, singer/songwriter, lyricist/librettist... and part time Tarot card reader. Recent work includes her original solo show *How To Read Tarot Cards* at The Cell NYC (2023), the Woodstock/Byrdcliff Residency (summer 2025), and the Firehouse Theatre in Newport RI (upcoming). Her 2018 album 'The Magician's Daughter' is available on bandcamp.com. Favorite things include: being an aunt, doing yoga, baking, fronting her alt folk band The Wrong Band, and of course, Melodia.



Erika Hauschild is excited to join Melodia for her first season. She has been a musician most of her life-- starting playing piano at the age of 6, starting violin at the age of 8, picking up guitar at 13, and singing in choir starting in elementary school. She wasn't involved in choir in late high school and most of college due to a busy schedule and COVID, but rejoined acapella and choir as a senior in college and has been singing in choirs ever since. She graduated with a degree in Information Science from Cornell University in 2022. Outside of choir, she sings in a band with her friends for fun, does karaoke, takes yoga and dance classes, plays video games, and goes for walks in nature.



Alexis Hedvat is so excited to join Melodia for her second season. She has been involved with music her entire life, both as a pianist and choir singer. She studied with the Mannes School of Music Preparatory Program from ages 6 to 18 and continued her choir journey while pursuing a degree in computer science at Tufts University. A proud lifelong New Yorker, Alexis works as a software engineer and has a deep love for Broadway, show tunes, and all things musicals.



Deb Howard retired from a career in affordable housing and community development and sought to join another choir, which would be both challenging and rewarding. She has been singing in choirs since she was five years old and has sung at Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in both the Inspirational Ensemble and classic choirs for 40 years. After attending several concerts given by Melodia, she knew that this was the choir of which she wanted to be a part as the sound was so beautiful and the repertoire amazing! She is glad to be in this wonderful choir!



Kristina Jacobs sang for over ten years in her Episcopal church choir, as well as in her high school select ensembles and with the Juilliard Choral Union. She's thrilled to join Melodia for her first season after several years away from singing.



Lucy Janovitz Lucy Janovitz is thrilled to be joining Melodia Women's Choir for her first season! A lifelong choral singer, Lucy grew up in Massachusetts singing in school choirs, including a high school ensemble that traveled to China. She went on to sing with the chamber and community choirs at Skidmore College in upstate New York. Lucy now lives in Brooklyn and works as a grantwriter at a nonprofit organization.



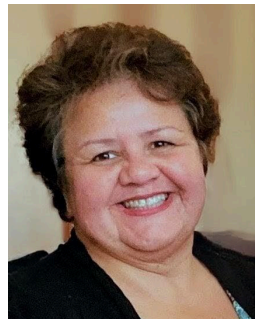
Sofia Licir is joining Melodia Choir for her second season! As an avid choral arts enthusiast, Sofia has dedicated over a decade to music. While in Texas, Sofia partook in the extensive and competitive TMEA All-State and Texas State Solo & Ensemble competitions, and honorably placed in the TMEA Treble Choir in 2017, along with first rank in 2015 & 2016 for TSSEC. Through moving to New York to pursue an academic career in anthropology and media, Sofia joined various choirs to maintain her love for the choral arts - including the Deutsches Haus choir, and the NYU Chorale. The gift of performing within a community of dedicated musicians is one she cherishes deeply. In her professional career, Sofia is an urban planner that works with architects to expedite projects through NYC government agencies - most notably the Department of Buildings.



Lulu Lin started singing in public when she was drafted to the children's choir at church. She has been performing ever since, in musicals, different choirs wherever she happens to land, and even an a capella group. After a long pause due to various life responsibilities, Lulu is eager to be singing again. She is gratified to be harmonizing with the Melodia Women's Choir, and hopes you love the music as much as she does.



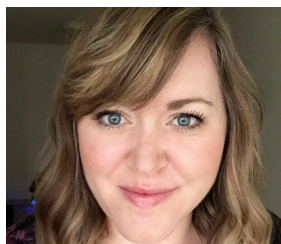
Birgit Matzerath is thrilled to have found Melodia and get a chance to return to singing in choir. She was born and raised in Cologne, Germany, where she acquired a degree in piano, and a degree as a high school teacher for music and English from Hochschule für Musik / Universität Köln. For 20 years she taught piano at community music schools in the Cologne area and performed as a collaborative pianist. In 1997 she began to take lessons with Seymour Bernstein in New York, which led to her relocation to the US in 2002. From 2002-2009 she was a full-time faculty member of the Concord Community Music School in Concord, NH. In 2009 she moved to New Jersey; she maintains a private studio in South Orange. She has held lectures and recitals, frequently about the music of J.S. Bach, for various institutions and organizations in the New York City area and beyond. She writes a blog, "Music, Life and other Challenges" and has published a memoir: "More than the World in Black and White - How music came alive and life became music" about her unusual journey as a musician.



Marlene Moore This is Marlene's first season with Melodia Women's Choir. She has been a music lover and singer her whole life. Growing up in Texas, there wasn't a lot of opera around but that's the music that was calling to her. Marlene moved to NYC in 1995 and began singing in the choruses of The New York City Opera and The Metropolitan Opera, where she sang for over 10 years. As a solo performer she has sung with Sarasota Opera, El Paso Opera, Aspen Music Festival, and with Academic Arrangements sailing the Adriatic Sea around Italy, Croatia, and Greece. Currently Marlene is a Speech & Language Pathologist working with the NYC Department of Education.



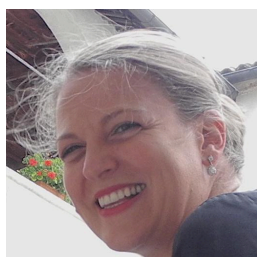
Tara Mulvaney is grateful to have found a place with Melodia since Fall 2023. She was rigorously trained in her youth as a classical vocalist but quit after losing her connection to her voice. In 2022, her love for vocal music was rekindled with the emergence of a burgeoning and mildly notorious Brooklyn-based music arts organization, the Gaia Music Collective. As a special educator, she works alongside Gaia to offer students and their families a creative outlet during field trips or after school activities at places like the MoMA and Lincoln Center. She spends her spare time among butterflies in the Museum of Natural History.



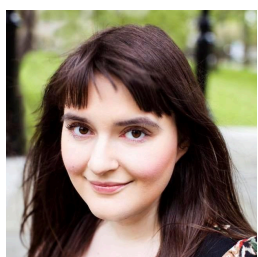
Nicole Owen is thrilled to be singing with Melodia! A lifelong choir nerd, Nicole has been singing since she could talk and makes it a point to join a choir wherever she's lived. Previous choir experience includes: Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra (Santa Fe, NM), Key Chorale & Chamber Singers (Sarasota, FL), Saints Unified Voices (Las Vegas, NV), and many more! She holds a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Florida. Currently working as a Marketing Project Manager for a software company, she enjoys decorating cakes, being outdoors, and spending quality time with family and friends. Nicole's favorite duet partner is her husband, Brian.



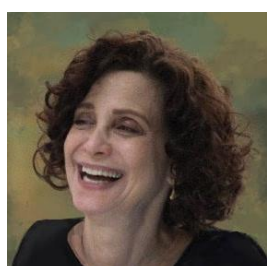
Ashley Paskalis [new photo on file] had been singing with Melodia since fall 2010. Singing since grade school, Ashley studied vocal performance and sang in the Treble Choir at Wagner College, where she graduated in 2006 with a degree in Arts Administration. Currently working in healthcare PR/media relations, she spends her free time playing softball and of course, singing with Melodia. She'd like to thank her NYC family for continuing to support our concerts.



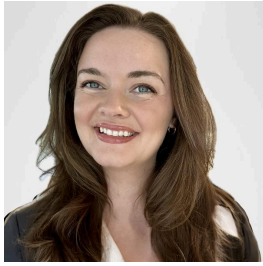
Chiara Pierangelo is excited to be singing with Melodia again this season! Originally from Padova, Italy, she has sung with vocal groups since childhood. Chiara has a deep love for Baroque, Renaissance, and Medieval music; with *Cantus Anthimi*, she recorded three albums of Medieval and Renaissance music, and is a founding member of *SolEnsemble*, a female a cappella group focused on medieval and contemporary repertoire. She holds a Master's in Ancient Greek Literature and studies classical voice with several esteemed teachers (Elisabetta Tiso, Francesco Signor, Rosetta Pizzo, and Sandro Naglia).



Ruston Ropac is a dynamic explorer of eclectic vocal soundscapes. She is the vocalist for the BlackBox Ensemble, a NYC-based chamber music collective, and Four and Twenty Strings, Long Island's premier early music ensemble. She holds a Master of Music degree in Contemporary Vocal Performance from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Redlands. She currently lives in Manhattan and enjoys writing poetry and playing tabletop games in her spare time.



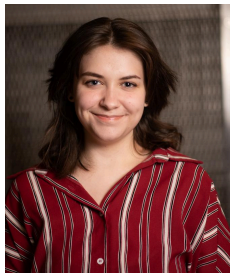
Tina Rosenberg is enjoying her second season as a member of Melodia. She has sung with Voce In Tempore in Mexico City and the Yiddish Philharmonic Chorus in New York City. Singing is a family activity; she and her oldest daughter sing together in the Glass Menagerie Chorus. Her day job is in journalism. She is co-founder of the Solutions Journalism Network.



Alethea Ruddy is excited to be joining Melodia Singers. She is from Boise, Idaho, has a love for music, and grew up heavily involved in school choirs. During her time at The College of Idaho, along with being a member of the chorale, chamber, and jazz choirs, she performed in operas *Dido and Aeneas* as Belinda and *The Magic Flute* as Papagena. She also studied vocal performance and holds a Music minor degree. She recently relocated to NYC and is enjoying exploring everything the city has to offer with her husband and her dog, Jaco.



Jeanne Ruskin has appeared on Broadway, and in many roles for the Roundabout Theatre, regional theaters, summer stock, and television. She has taught acting, voice and speech in colleges and universities and as a private coach. She is founder/artistic director of RFTC, Inc/Red Flute Theatre, and has presented four productions to date, including “Awakenings”, her dramatization of Kate Chopin’s 1899 novel *The Awakening*: <https://bit.ly/3Hj435T>. As a teenager she toured South America with the Michigan Youth Chorale. She toured with the USO during the Vietnam years. She performed as Ma Joad in “The Grapes of Wrath” in Moscow. Her travels changed her life. She is very happy to be singing again with Melodia (of which she has been a member since 2010). Music is truly the international language and we need the arts now more than ever.



Mia Breckenridge Scott is thrilled to join Melodia! Originally from Eagan, Minnesota, Mia moved to Manhattan in October of last year after graduating from the University of Wisconsin. When she’s not in her choir dress, she’s likely at the movie theater. Mia is also the lead singer and co-songwriter of her indie band, *Will They, Won’t They*. You can check out their debut EP “After School Special” on all streaming platforms. Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!



Tulasi Sundaresh is excited to join Melodia for her second season as a Soprano 1. Tulasi is a lifelong musician, studying music theory, vocal performance, viola, violin, and piano throughout her life. She has grown up singing in choir all throughout her schooling in Connecticut. Tulasi attended Boston University and graduated in 2020, moving to NYC in 2021. She is currently a graphic designer and can be found baking, thrift shopping, or searching for the best new pasta spot in the city.



Zarina Vildanova is a professional singer and songwriter, performing in Tatar and dedicated to promoting her cultural heritage. In 2025, she was nominated for the Berlin Music Video Awards and won the London Music Video Awards. She is an artist of the independent Tatar label YummyMusic and has released several singles and albums. A graduate of

GITIS in Moscow and the College of Music in Kazan, Zarina balances her artistic career with motherhood. She joined Melodia Women's Choir in 2024 as an alto 1, marking her fourth season.



Sarah Woodruff is happy to be singing with Melodia! She was a member of multiple choirs during her time at Penn State University, and has been singing most of her life. After ten years in book publishing, she joined a Brooklyn-based environmental nonprofit to work on outreach around NYC's Curbside Composting program (which will be citywide by October 2024!). She can frequently be found writing, hiking, and playing guitar.

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Your fully tax-deductible donation helps us to perform gorgeous, rarely-heard music for women's voices and commission women composers to write new works. Please help by mailing a check to the address below. Make checks payable to Melodia Women's Choir. You can also donate with a credit card at our website: www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org or via Venmo: Melodia Women's Choir NYC @MelodiaWomensChoir. Your support truly makes a difference!

Special Thanks

Special thanks to all those who have helped make this concert possible, including the staff at John's Lutheran Church and Church of the Holy Apostles and the Melodia Board of Directors.

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Audition for Melodia

Do you love to sing? We are a women-powered organization exclusively dedicated to exploring, creating, and performing exemplary music for women's voices. Come and explore this wonderful repertoire with us! We're auditioning experienced choral singers in December/January. Contact JenniferClarke446@gmail.com to schedule an audition.

Melodia Women's Choir of NYC
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New York, NY 10036
212-252-4134
www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org
Jenniferclarke446@gmail.com

Melodia Women's Choir History

2003-04

Salut Printemps ~ Our first season, and a celebration of spring.
Monteverdi to Meredith Monk
Participation in Festival of Women and Girls' Choirs, NYC

2004-05

November Song ~ Rachmaninov, Holst, Elgar and more
Sirens ~ Songs of the Sea, haunting tales of the deep, with piano, harp, flute and bassoon

2005-06

Twilight in the Garden of Dreams ~ celebrating Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's
200th birthday, with piano and strings
Participation in Wall to Wall Igor Stravinsky at Symphony Space
A Thousand Sweet Refrains ~ with four French horns, Brahms to Stravinsky
Participation in Carmina Burana at Merkin Concert Hall

2006-07

Óyeme con los ojos (Hear Me with Your Eyes) ~ world premiere commission
by Allison Sniffin, Merkin Concert Hall, Queens Library
Shout, Sister, Shout! ~ Girl Groups from 12th to 21st Centuries,
Hildegard von Bingen to the Dixie Chicks

2007-08

Sweet Interlude ~ featuring all-female performance of Vivaldi Gloria,
and world premiere commission by Becca Schack
Force of Nature, celebrating the living world, 20th & 21st century works
Participation in Wall to Wall Bach at Symphony Space

Guest artists at Women's History Month Celebration of NYC
Participation in Holst The Planets at Symphony Space

2008-09

Wrapped in Song ~ Britten's Ceremony of Carols and works by
Thompson, Tormis, Holst and Kodály

Guest artists at Women's History Month Celebration of NYC

Visions of Eternity ~ with orchestra, featuring Messiaen Trois Petites Liturgies,
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola/Sacred Music in a Sacred Space

2009-10

Notes Upon the Breeze ~ world premiere commission by
Chris Lastovicka, plus works by Pergolesi, Holst and Raminsh

Songs from the Heart ~ Merkin Concert Hall, works by Schumann, Brahms,
Fanny Hensel Mendelssohn, and US premiere of songs by Tofiq Guliyev

2010-2011

Timeless ~ Britten Missa Brevis, works by Poulenc, Szymko, Casals, Fauré,
plus world premiere commission by Becca Stevens

Mornings with You ~ world premiere commission by Christina Whitten Thomas,
works by Meredith Monk, Ned Rorem, Charles M. Loeffler

2011-2012

Journey ~ Amy Beach, The Chambered Nautilus, world premiere by Cathy Aks,

Colors of the Sun ~ NY premiere by Cecilia McDowall, plus works by Whitacre, Fauré, Holst, Verdi

2012-2013 – 10th Anniversary Season

Questions About Angels ~ world premiere commission by Sally Lamb McCune, plus early American sacred songs and
medieval selections

A Breath of Spring ~ world premiere commission by Nina Siniakova, plus works by Stravinsky, Duruflé, Debussy,
Rutter, and Daley.

2013-2014

Visions of Peace ~ celebrating Britten 100, plus works by Holst and Csonka, and jazz samba selections.

The Poet's Song ~ World premiere commission by Errollyn Wallen, plus American Songbook favorites

2014-2015

Windsong ~ works by Franz Biebl, Gwyneth Walker, Peter Warlock, Ola Gjeilo and more.
Released our first commercial CD – Lullaby

2015-2016

¡Alegría!

Works by Susa, Núñez, Chilcott, Carrillo, and more.

With Vox Nova Girls' Choir

Cassandra. World premiere commission by Hilary Purrington, plus works by Meredith Monk and Emma Lou Diemer.

2016-2017

Autumn Rhapsody

Featuring Vivaldi's Magnificat, works by Ola Gjeilo, Rudi Tas, Tõnu Kõrvits, Eleanor Daley, & arrangement of "Largo"
for NY Philharmonic 175th Anniversary.

Awakening The Spirit

Visions for upper voice choir, harp and strings ~ John Rutter, (US premiere)

The Dancers ~ Grace Williams
Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda ~ Gustav Holst

2017-2018

15th Anniversary Season

Autumn Fire

Works by Fanny & Felix Mendelssohn, Aiblinger, and Rheinberger

The Harmony of Morning

Works by Melodia commissioned composers Christina Whitten Thomas and Sally Lamb McCune; early work by Elliott Carter; U.S. premiere by Paul Halley

2018-2019

Where Shadow Chases Light – world premiere commission by Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian, NY premiere by Deanna Witkowski, works by György Orbán, Eric Whitacre, Gustav Holst, and Elena Kats-Chernin

Gloria - Lifting the Veil on Vivaldi's Masterpiece

2019-2020

Incantations – world premiere commission by Allison Sniffin. U.S. Works by C.V. Stanford, Robin Milford and Mediaeval Baebes.

From **fall 2019-2021**, Melodia's concert programs were on hiatus due to the pandemic. The choir produced a selection of virtual choir video recordings during this time.

2021-2022

Sun, Moon, and Stars

Light of a Brand New Day - Reimagining American roots music for women's voices with the Melodia Bluegrass Band!

2022-2023 - 20th Anniversary Season

A Winter's Welcome - Featuring spoken word performed by a cast of NYC actors including poems by Maggie Dietz, William Shakespeare, and Robert Frost. Musical selections include Mel Bonis, Katerina Gimon, John Rutter, and Barry Manilow.

Always Something Sings - 20th Anniversary concert - stories of courageous women and their achievements. Music by Hildegard von Bingen, Florence B. Price, Margaret Bonds, Abbie Betinis, Ola Gjeilo, and Emma Lou Diemer, excerpts from Melodia-commissioned works by Allison Sniffin and Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian. Spoken word by members of Melodia.

2023-2024

The Circle Never Ends – world premiere commission by Zanaida Stewart Robles, music by Amy Beach, Ron Perera, Dan Forrest and more.

A Tapestry of Song – world premier commission by Emily Mason, works by Josef Rheinberger, Gustav Holst celebrating 150th anniversary of his birth, Sally Lamb McCune and more.

2024-2025

She Sang the Stars - New York premiere by Sarah Quartel plus works by Kim André Arnesen, Hildegard von Bingen and Ethel Smyth.

A Brighter Garden - a potpourri of music from Melodia's garden of favorite repertoire. Music by Fauré, Paul Halley, and folk-oriented favorites.