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Schola Cantorum Announces New Artistic Director

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA - (February 7, 2019) - Schola Cantorum Silicon Valley will welcome Buddy James as Artistic Director for the 75-voice choir beginning July 1st, when Music Director Gregory Wait retires after 30 seasons.

“Buddy James is an accomplished musician and consummate educator with all the requisite skills you need as an Artistic Director, and a particularly good fit for Schola because he’s all about fostering and building community,” said Wait. When asked how he feels about handing over the baton, he said, “I’m totally fine with the idea that time moves on, and there are people in this world who are capable and eager and willing to do the things I’ve been doing all these years.”

Buddy James is Professor of Music at California State University, East Bay where he serves as Chair of the Department of Music and the Director of Choral and Vocal Studies, and was the Founding Director of the School of Arts and Media. He earned the “Outstanding Professor” award at two Universities where he taught.

“As Schola’s Artistic Director, I hope I can carry on the tradition of success set by my predecessors, particularly Gregory Wait,” he said. “I hope to bring new ideas about repertoire and how to reach the community, and my enthusiasm of choral music as a vehicle to bring people together.”

He first heard about Schola after moving to the Bay Area in 2005. “It’s known as one of the great historic groups of the area,” he said. “It’s a trailblazer in the sense that it was one of the first community chorus to take root here and put out a high quality product. Over the years, the success of many other groups that have popped up can be attributed to Schola’s success.”

James cites Schola’s ability to perform major works with full orchestra, as well as serving as a concert choir, as “a range that is unique among community choruses.” He sees Schola as a place where people can grow musically and personally. “I look forward to welcoming new singers who want to be a part of this great tradition as we enter the next season.”

As for what choral fans can look forward to under his artistic direction, James said, “They can expect to continue hearing performances of great masterworks, but also performances of works never heard by Schola audiences, in genres that will be very exciting for any audience member.”

“Buddy has enough ideas for ten seasons, including collaborations with other arts groups that Schola hasn’t done before,” said Catherine Lyman, Chair of the Board.

James said he feels honored to take on the new role at Schola but feels the burden of pressure to follow Gregory Wait. “Greg is a consummate musician, conductor and voice teacher. He’s been

very generous to me with his time and his knowledge. I hope to model that behavior and energy going forward.”

Schola Cantorum Silicon Valley is an auditioned 75-voice chorus, currently under the baton of Gregory Wait. Its mission is to connect the Silicon Valley community with the wonders of choral music through outstanding live performances, educational outreach programs, and collaborations with local artists.

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