

ST. MATTHEW'S MUSIC GUILD

# Music at St. Matthew's

2021 - 2022 Season

THE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA AT ST. MATTHEW'S  
DWAYNE S. MILBURN, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR  
BORIS ALLEKHVERDYAN, CLARINET



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 8:00 PM  
ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH  
1031 BIENVENEDA AVENUE  
PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA

## PROGRAM

### RUMANIAN FOLK DANCES

BELA BARTOK

1881 - 1945

Bot tánc (Stick Dance)

Brâul (Sash Dance)

Topogó (In One Spot)

Bucsumí tánc (Dance from Bucsum)

Román polka (Romanian Polka)

Aprózó (Fast Dance)

### SIMPLE SYMPHONY

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

1913 - 1976

Boisterous Bourrée

Playful Pizzicato

Sentimental Sarabande

Frolicksome Finale

## INTERMISSION

### ELEGY

HERBERT HOWELLS

1893 - 1982

David Sage, viola

### CLARINET CONCERTO

AARON COPLAND

1900 - 1990

Boris Allekhverdyan, clarinet

Mr. Allekhverdyan's appearance at tonight's concert is funded in part by the St. Matthew's Music Guildt Endowment Fund.  
For information on the fund, please refer to the back of the program.

*"Liner Notes with Tom Neenan" resumes at 7:10pm in the church on November 12.*

*Follow St. Matthew's Music Guild on Facebook and other social media platforms.*

*Receiving our e-newsletter with interesting listening notes and announcements? Sign up at [MusicGuildOnline.org](http://MusicGuildOnline.org).*

*Recording (audio or video) and photography during the concert are not allowed.*

*We ask that you do your best to maintain a quiet environment in the church by stifiling coughs and making sure watch alarms and cell phones are silenced. If you wear a hearing aid, please make sure the volume is adjusted so as to avoid feedback that may disturb others in the audience.*

## About the Performers

**B**oris Allakhverdyan was appointed Principal Clarinet of the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2016. He previously served as Principal Clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Associate Principal Clarinet of the Kansas City Symphony. Allakhverdyan is a founding member of the Prima Trio, the Grand Prize and Gold Medal winner of the prestigious 2007 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition.

Boris Allakhverdyan has appeared as a soloist with the Seattle, Bakersfield, and Springfield symphony orchestras. He has participated in the Lucerne Festival Academy in Switzerland, the Mecklenburg- Vorpommern Festival in Germany, and the Emilia Romagna Music Festival in Italy. Allakhverdyan is a winner of the Rimsky- Korsakov International Woodwind Competition, the Rozanov International Clarinet Competition, the Hellam Concerto Competition, and the Tuesday Musical and the Oberlin Concerto competitions.

An active educator, Allakhverdyan served on faculty at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, Interlochen Clarinet Institute in Michigan, and Philadelphia International Music Festival. He has given master classes at Manhattan and Mannes Schools of Music, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oregon University, University Missouri-Kansas City, Truman State University, Latin American Clarinet Academy in Caracas, Venezuela and Shenzhen International Music Festival in Shenzhen, China. As a chamber musician, Boris Allakhverdyan has performed throughout the United States and Europe on such series as Chicago Chamber Music Society, La Jolla Athenaeum, Dumbarton Oaks, the Dayton Art Institute, CityMusic Columbus, Da Camera Society, Fontana Chamber Arts, and Cleveland Chamber Music Society, to name a few.

As a Buffet Group Artist and Vandoren Performing Artist, Mr. Allakhverdyan performs exclusively on Buffet Crampon clarinets and Vandoren reeds. [www.borisallakhverdyan.com](http://www.borisallakhverdyan.com)

**D**wayne S. Milburn was born in Baltimore and came to Los Angeles in 1983 where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Composition and Music Education at UCLA.

After graduation from UCLA, he was Director of Cadet Music at West Point and starting in 1990 attended the Cleveland Institute of Music, earning a degree in Orchestral Conducting. In 1993 he joined the U.S. Army,

serving as Associate Bandmaster of the Continental Army Band and the U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own." In 1999 he was named Director of the U.S. Army Europe Soldier's Chorus in Heidelberg, Germany, and later, Commander and Conductor of the Army Ground Forces Band at Fort McPherson, Georgia.

From 2004–2009, while on leave from the Army, he completed a Ph.D. in Music Composition at UCLA, during which time he was Assistant Conductor of The Choir of St. Matthew's Parish and Composer-in-Residence for St. Matthew's Music Guild. His composition, *Water Scenes for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra*, may be heard on the orchestra's CD, *Music from the Left Coast* (Available from [MusicGuildOnline.org](http://MusicGuildOnline.org) or [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com))

Upon reentering the Armed Forces in 2010, he directed the U.S. Army Field Band and was Army Bands Liaison Officer to U.S. Army Central Command in the Middle East. Having achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, he recently retired as Commander and Conductor of the U.S. Army Europe Band and Chorus in Sembach, Germany. Upon his retirement he was awarded the prestigious Legion of Merit – an award that is given by Presidential Proclamation for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

Units under his direction have performed at the 2016 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and D-Day commemorations at Normandy, have toured in France, Italy, and the Netherlands, and have appeared at hundreds of Army-sponsored events throughout Central Europe, the Balkans, Baltic States, and Turkey.

Milburn is active as a composer, conductor, and adjudicator. He has received commissions from the instrumental programs at UCLA, University of North Texas, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His choral and wind ensemble works are published by Alfred, Kjos and Ludwig Masters.

**T**he Chamber Orchestra at St. Matthew's was established in 1985 by a group of professional musicians whose desire it was to rehearse and perform a broad spectrum of music for chamber orchestra in an intimate and acoustically vibrant setting. Bringing fellow musician friends in to rehearse and perform, largely for recreational purposes, the orchestra's first several seasons led to the realization that those in the parish, neighborhood, town and larger community would support a subscription season of challenging and interesting music played by a professional ensemble in Pacific Palisades.

Thirty-six years and some 300 concerts later, the orchestra's

parent organization, the St. Matthew's Music Guild, has become one of Los Angeles' musical success stories, with more than 150 subscribing households, an impressive season of subscription concerts, and an extensive music outreach program. The critically acclaimed orchestra counts as its regular and long-term members some of the finest freelance musicians in Los Angeles, who regularly appear in film and television, Grammy award-winning recordings, and with other top-level orchestras in the city.

The orchestra's second CD, "Music from the Left Coast," brought together four world-premiere recordings of music commissioned by St. Matthew's Music Guild and premiered by the Chamber Orchestra at St. Matthew's. The album includes music of Ross Wright, Dwayne S. Milburn, Ola Gjeilo and Grammy Award winner Christopher Tin and is available at [MusicGuildOnline.org](http://MusicGuildOnline.org)

A testament to the level of commitment by our subscribers to the orchestra and the Music Guild is the fact that when the Covid-19 pandemic decimated the arts community in early 2020, subscribers whole-heartedly endorsed the Music Guild Board's decision to pay the musicians for the remaining contracted concerts. Further, our loyal subscribers enthusiastically subscribed to the series in the fall of 2020 knowing full well that live concerts were unlikely. The Music Guild hosted monthly "Second Friday" virtual concerts on Zoom featuring members of the orchestra and other professionals from the area and these events were attended by an average of 75 households each month, September 2020 through June 2021. As a result, and with deep gratitude, the Music Guild begins the 2021 - 2022 season in a strong financial position and welcomes back virtually every member of the orchestra who was on the roster at the beginning of the shutdown.

**H**ungarian composer **Béla Bartók** (1881-1945) remains one of the most influential composers of the 20th century, with works from solo piano to full orchestra assuring his presence on concert stages indefinitely. Born in the Hungarian city of Nagyszentmiklós, now Sânnicolau Mare in Romania, Bartók displayed prodigious musical talent early in his life; according to his mother, he was able to play 40 piano pieces by the age of four. In 1899, he began studying piano at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest where he met fellow composer Zoltán Kodály, with whom he would establish a lifetime professional and personal friendship. Beginning in 1908, Bartók taught piano at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest where his roster of students reads like a veritable Who's Who of twentieth-century musicians, including conductors Fritz Reiner and Sir Georg Solti.

Although Bartók's large orchestral compositions during this period demonstrated the disparate influences of Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy, he and Kodály increasingly cultivated interest in folk music native to Hungary and other Balkan states. The two composers travelled the region, painstakingly preserving peasant melodies through notation or use of an early Edison recording machine. The *Romanian Folk Dances* (1915-1917) arose out of these efforts. Originally written for piano, Bartók later orchestrated seven Romanian fiddle tunes into six movements for string orchestra: Jocol Cu Bâta (Stick Dance), Brâul (Sash Dance), Pe Loc (In One Spot), Buciumeana (Horn Dance), Poarga Românesca (Romanian Polka), Maruntele (Two Fast Dances). Together, Bartók and Kodály transcribed over 3,500 tunes, the spirit of which became a hallmark of their compositional styles. In the process, they received credit for laying the groundwork for ethnomusicology, a vibrant field of study that preserves the music of different world cultures.

**L**ike Béla Bartók, British composer **Benjamin Britten** (1913-1976) was a child prodigy. Born in Lowestoft, England, Britten's father was a dentist and his mother was a civil service clerk in the government's Home Office. His mother was also an amateur musician and it was she who gave the five-year-old Britten piano lessons after he made his first attempts at composition. At age seven, he began studying at a school run Ethel Astle and her sister. After he transferred to a local prep school that had no musical tradition, he continued to study piano with Astle and later began to study viola with a friend of his mother, Audrey Alston. A bright student, Britten stayed largely clear of the harsh discipline administered by the headmaster, Thomas Sewell, and spent most of his spare time composing. Of that time, Britten later wrote: "Once upon a time there was a prep school boy...he was quite an ordinary little boy...he behaved fairly well...so that his contacts with the cane or the slipper were happily rare; he

## About the Music

worked his way up the school slowly and steadily, until at the age of thirteen he reached that pinnacle of importance and grandeur, never to be quite equaled in later days. But – there was one curious thing about this boy: he wrote music. His friends bore with it, his enemies kicked a bit but not for long (he was quite tough), the staff couldn't object if his work and games didn't suffer. He wrote lots of it, reams and reams of it."

The four movements of *Simple Symphony* (1934), Boisterous Bourrée, Playful Pizzicato, Sentimental Sarabande, and Frolicsome Finale, come from the "reams and reams" of "material I wrote between the ages of nine and twelve." Dedicated to Audrey Alston, Britten made the conscious choice to forego the post-WWI avant-garde compositional trends and created a work of fun and good spirit that helped place him in league with Ralph Vaughan Williams as a much-admired national composer.

Over one hundred years after the fact, it remains difficult to comprehend the devastation of World War I on the European continent. No corner of life remained untouched by the conflict, the aftermath of which continues to affect the world to this day. In music, many composers used their craft to shed the last vestiges of failed cultures, while others mourned great personal losses. British composer **Herbert Howells** (1892-1983), was among the latter. His *Elegy* (1917) is dedicated to the memory of Francis Purcell Warren, a colleague from Howells' early days at the Royal College of Music. Warren was a violin student at the RCM who early on demonstrated an affinity for violin and composition. In 1914 he enlisted as a private in the British Army and died in 1916, shortly after obtaining a commission as a second lieutenant.

Howells had previously included a tribute to Warren and other close friends in an early orchestral work, *The B's* (1914). Upon confirmation of his death in WWI, Howells composed his mournful *Elegy*, using the solo viola as the emblem of his lost friend. Sadly, this was not the last instance in which Howells would use music to grieve. Subsequent works commemorated his son Michael who died in adolescence of spiral meningitis, and composer Edward Elgar, to name but two.

Lauded by composers and critics as "The Dean of American Composers," **Aaron Copland** (1900-1990) began his career in much the same way as his colleagues on this evening's concert. Born in Brooklyn, NY to a conservative Jewish family headed by Harris and Sarah Copland, his early music education came from his mother, who taught her son the Western folk songs from her childhood in Texas, and one of his older sisters, Laurine, who gave him his first piano lessons. Copland began writing songs at age 8 and decided to become a composer at age 15. Harris Copland had no interest in music; upon hearing his son's decision, he asked, "Where did you ever get such an idea?"

Still, Copland's music education was marked by incredible

diversity in teachers and location, studying composition with noted American pedagogue Rubin Goldmark in New York and Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Accordingly, his circle of friends and supporters included such luminaries as Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Pablo Picasso, and Jean-Paul Satre. Traveling in Italy, Austria, and Germany further expanded his knowledge of his chosen art and cemented his unique approach to it. Upon returning to the United States in 1925, Copland sought to create music that would "affirm America," with compositions that would reflect the ideals of American Democracy. While his own music was often more abstract, he took great and ongoing interest in jazz as a uniquely American art form, an interest that drew the interest of two mainstays in popular music, Woody Herman and Benny Goodman.

Both artists approached Copland in 1947 with commission offers. Unable to accept both, Copland accepted Goodman's. Not only did he admire Goodman's phenomenal technique and his success in bringing jazz to Carnegie Hall in 1938, the proposed concerto placed him alongside Béla Bartók and Paul Hindemith, from whom Goodman had previously commissioned new classical works. Copland completed the two movement Concerto for Clarinet in 1948. Mirroring the form of his earlier Piano Concerto, the first movement is a tender waltz, while the energetic second movement rests on elements of traditional and Latin jazz; a playful cadenza connects the two sections. Goodman had this to say about the work:

"With a little editing, I know we will have a good piece...I made no demands on what Copland should write...except that I should have a two-year exclusivity on playing the work...I paid two thousand dollars and that's real money..."

Goodman premiered the work on a November 1950 radio broadcast with Fritz Reiner conducting the NBC Symphony of the Air. The first public performance took place later that same month with Eugene Ormandy conducting soloist Ralph McLane and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Initial response to the Concerto for Clarinet was not enthusiastic, but clarinetists gravitated to the concerto and quickly guaranteed the continued popularity of this engaging piece.

Dwayne S. Milburn

# The Chamber Orchestra at St. Matthew's Dwayne S. Milburn, Music Director and Conductor

## VIOLIN

YI-HUAN ZHAO

CONCERTMASTER

ALEXANDER KALMAN

ASSISTANT CONCERTMASTER

YU-EUN KIM, PRINCIPAL

NANCY BREMNER

CRISTIAN FATU

LISA GREGORY

ELLEN JUNG

ANNA KOSTYUCHEK

SAMANTHA LEE

SHELLY REN

JENNIFER TAKAMATSU

AMY TANG

## VIOLA

DAVID SAGE, PRINCIPAL

ILONA GELLER

LAURA JESSON

MATTHEW WITMER

## CELLO

ROBIN GUYETT NEENAN,  
PRINCIPAL

RACHEL COOSAIA

DAVID MERGEN

KEVAN TORFEH

## BASS

WILL "BJ" JOHNSON, PRIN-  
CIPAL

JULIAN LAMPERT

## HARP

MARIA CASALE, PRINCIPAL

## PIANO AND ORGAN

HAESUNG PARK, PRINCIPAL

## St. Matthew's Music Guild

### Endowment Fund

The St. Matthew's Music Guild Endowment Fund supports funding concerts, guest artists, and outreach projects within approved budgets. Gifts to the Endowment Fund may be directed to specific purposes or to the general fund.

Faithful and responsible stewardship requires that Endowment Fund investments be managed in a manner that will assist the Music Guild in meeting both short- and long-term objectives. The primary goal for fund investments is total return through capital appreciation, interest and dividends with acceptable risk. The Finance Committee of the Board of Directors performs regular reviews of the fund's performance relative to investment guidelines established by the board.

A gift intended to establish a "named endowment" may be funded with a minimum of \$25,000. A "named endowment" allows the grantor to specify that the endowment honor a particular person or organization, and that it be used for a specific purpose. Programs and publicity for events sponsored by a "named endowment" will acknowledge the grantor as appropriate. Gifts under \$25,000 are designated as part of the general Endowment Fund.

The distribution policy for the Endowment Fund calls for annual distribution to the Music Guild of 4% of the Endowment Fund's running-average of total asset value.

Distributions from the Endowment Fund are used to make a recognizable contribution toward a Music Guild concert or outreach event, as approved by the board.

The fund, established in 1995 with a generous gift from an anonymous donor, was enhanced in 2013 through a bequest from former orchestra member Jim Lathers and supported by many others. The Fund provides for the long-term sustainability of the Music Guild and funding for performances by world-class artists.

A copy of the complete, detailed Music Guild endowment management policy is available. Feel free to contact us at any time to discuss making a tax-deductible gift to the Endowment Fund or naming the fund in your estate plan. Your lasting-legacy gift of an endowment to the St. Matthew's Music Guild will help ensure that this local treasure will continue to serve the community well into the future.

For additional information or to establish an endowment, please contact:

Mr. Thomas Neenan,  
President, Board of Directors  
tneenan@MusicGuildOnline.org