

QUINTESSENCE
CHORAL ARTISTS OF THE SOUTHWEST

**MATTHEW GREER,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
PRESENTS**

A MUSICAL FEAST

**SATURDAY,
MARCH 5,
7 PM**

**AT IMMANUEL
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
114 CARLISLE BLVD SE**

**SUNDAY,
MARCH 6,
3 PM**

**AT ST. JOHN'S UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH,
2626 ARIZONA ST. NE**

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

My mother made meat loaf.

More correctly, she made meat loaves: two at a time. One was for the normal people in our family, and the other was just for my sister Ann and me, because we abhorred onions. I remember this not because Mom made great meat loaf. In fact, what I remember most is that the outside was slathered with Campbell's tomato soup, which seemed to transform during baking into a sort of gelatinous skin. Not very appetizing, as I look back on it. But thinking of her meat loaf reminds me that she not only made sure that her five children never went hungry; she also went to the trouble to accommodate our obnoxious dietary prejudices.

Planning a concert program has often been compared to planning a menu, and I think choral concerts especially tend to follow this model. They often start off with something appetizing, move on to more serious and hearty fare, and then end with something fun and fluffy. Ideally, they send the audience off feeling pleasantly satisfied, but not uncomfortably full.

This concert, ironically, doesn't really follow that template. All of the music is about food or drink, but the program is more like a smörgåsbord, or a salad bar, or one of those ice cream shops where you can have them shmoosh gummy bears and chocolate shavings and pickled okra into your Rocky Road. The pieces are all wonderful — really wonderful — but the program doesn't necessarily constitute what the Cap'n Crunch commercials used to call "a balanced breakfast."

The centerpiece of our program is Bob Chilcott's *Fragments From His Dish*, a work that features settings of six marvelously disparate texts, including an Ogden Nash poem, a diary entry by Samuel Pepys, and an anonymous 18th century newspaper account of the baking of an enormous pie. Chilcott, a former member of and arranger for The King's Singers, does a splendid job of bringing out the character of each text. The set is gorgeous, and great fun.

This cycle by a British composer is balanced on the second half of the program by an American set. Paul Carey's inventive *Play With Your Food!* is a collection of wonderfully vivid poems about berries, mashed potatoes, Malt-o-Meal, and other delicacies. There's even a song about those disgusting packaged peanut butter and cracker combinations you can buy from a vending machine.

Of course, that particular song isn't really about peanut butter crackers at all; it's about the love between a father and son. And that's the thing about this program: none of this music is really about food. It's about the emotions associated with food, and chief among these is love. The great M.F.K. Fisher wrote, "When I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it, and warmth and the love of it . . . and it is all one."

In that sense, most every piece on this program is about love. There's "If Music Be the Food of Love," of course, in a setting by David Dickau. There's Samuel Barber's *The Coolin*, one of the most unabashedly romantic pieces of choral music of the last century. There's a great arrangement of K. Lang's "Constant Craving." And, speaking of Paul Carey, the fourth song of his set is arguably the sexiest song ever written about a blueberry muffin.

So, we hope you enjoy this program, and we hope that you'll go somewhere afterward and share a drink and a meal with someone dear to you. A meat loaf is rarely just a meat loaf, after all. And sometimes, love is the absence of onions.

MATTHEW GREER

PROGRAM

Fragments From His Dish Bob Chilcott (*b. 1955*)
I. Grace / The Clean Platter
II. The Pie
III. Harvest in My Croft
Soloists: Checky Okun, Tania Hopkins, Lauren Saeger, Bryan Butler, Jonathan Saeger
IV. Christmas Day – 1666
V. Whines From the Wood
VI. Grace (Reprise)

Tafellied, Op. 93b Johannes Brahms (*1833-1897*)

The Coolin (The Fair-Haired One) Samuel Barber (*1910-1981*)
from *Reincarnations*, Op. 16

Sing a Song of Sixpence arr. John Rutter (*b. 1945*)

INTERMISSION

Assorted Drinking Songs Henry Purcell (*1659?-1695*)
‘Tis women
He that drinks is immortal
Care, thou canker of our joys
The glass was just timed
Let us drink and be merry
Slaves are they that heap up mountains

Constant Craving k.d. lang and Ben Mink, arr. Jonathan Miller

Megan Rader, soloist
Wil Gonzales, air guitarist

Play With Your Food! Paul Carey (*b. 1954*)

- I. Summer’s Bounty
- II. Mashed Potato/Love Poem
- III. Fred *Lauren Saeger and Jerry Matthews, soloists*
- IV. After the Muffin
- V. Vending Machine

If Music Be the Food of Love David Dickau (*b. 1953*)

Those whose cell phones ring during the performance will not get any dessert.

Announcements

*We are (always) looking for talented, dedicated, fun-loving and attractive singers! Especially Tenors!!!
To schedule an audition, please contact Matt Greer at info@quintessence-abq.com.*

Congratulations to the door prize winners from our October and December Concerts!!!

Ms. Mary Glazier, Ms. Doris Bromberg, Mr. Jeff Hoffman and Ms. Jan Krakow

Congratulations to our new Executive Director!!!

Mary-Ellin Brooks has accepted the position as Executive Director of Quintessence. She has loved music since she was a child and sang show tunes – loudly – in her parents' basement. As Executive Director, she is responsible for overall operations in support of Quintessence's mission, including publicity; concert and event planning; and assisting the Artistic Director and Board of Directors with strategy and development. A long-time choral performer and enthusiast, Mary-Ellin was previously the Marketing Director for Quintessence, and over the years has served on the boards of choral groups in NM and CA. She spent ten years with Intel Corporation in Rio Rancho, NM and Santa Clara, CA, performing roles ranging from process engineering to worldwide press relations, combining her knowledge of process technology with an interest in marketing and communications. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering from MIT, with a minor in music. Mary-Ellin sings alto with Quintessence. You can also hear her on Saturday and Sunday mornings on Classical 95.5 KHFM.

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