

For Release Prior to April 29 Performance
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Cantemus' April 29 and 30 Concerts Reveal "The Poet's Prism"

Nature often says it best and, over the centuries, poets have borrowed images of nature to express ideas about life and love. In its upcoming concerts, Cantemus Chamber Chorus will reveal "The Poet's Prism" – a program of choral works that use poetic nature metaphors as texts.

Performances will take place on Saturday, April 29 at 7:30 p.m. at First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, 225 Cabot St. in Beverly and Sunday, April 30 at 4:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 166 High St. in Newburyport. Tickets can be purchased at the door or online at <http://www.cantemus.org/tickets>.

"From the florid phrases of the Romantic poets to straightforward lyrics of 20th-century singer-songwriters, poets have often communicated their world-view using language couched in metaphors about nature," said Artistic Director Jason Iannuzzi. "And composers have taken inspiration from the poets' words to capture the spirit of the texts. The result is an enormous and deeply varied body of choral works."

Drawing on these works, Cantemus will offer an evocative multi-cultural program, featuring compositions from across 200 years, three continents, and five languages. "It's an exciting study in contrasts," Iannuzzi said, "and a celebration of the human spirit."

The concert begins with Robert Schumann's "*Zigeunerleben*," in which carefree wanderers carouse in a dark forest – the idealized natural world of the Romantics. Three of Morten Lauridsen's "*Chansons des Roses*" are settings of sensual love poetry by Rainer Maria Rilke. From Argentinian composer Carlos Guastavino come songs from "*Indianas*" employing Argentinian folk songs and dance forms forbidden in the 1960s by the fascist regime.

The concert's centerpiece, "*Sügismaastikud*," by Estonian 20th-century Estonian composer Veljo Tormis, draws from natural landscapes to express dissent against the Soviet occupation of Estonia. The program also includes Carly Simon's call for social change in "Let the River Run," and more.

Cantemus gratefully acknowledges funding support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Recent programs have also received generous support from the Local Cultural Councils of Groveland, Merrimac, Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, and Salisbury.

Cantemus singers and musicians come from 20 communities on the North Shore and surroundings, including Amesbury, Beverly, Bradford, Byfield, Danvers, Essex, Georgetown, Gloucester, Hamilton, Ipswich, Lexington, Lynnfield, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marblehead, Newburyport, Rockport, South Hamilton, West Newbury, and Durham NH. Jeffrey Mead, who accompanies Cantemus on keyboards and serves as organist at First Congregational Church in Winchester, lives in Melrose.

Cantemus is a member of Chorus America and the Greater Boston Choral Consortium, a cooperative association of diverse choral groups in Boston and the surrounding area.

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