

THE BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
Dr. Stephen W. Sachs, Chair

presents

*William Billings
of Boston:
A Choral Drama*

Dr. Christopher Shelt, Playwright and Artistic Director

Saturday, April 25, 2015 • 2:30pm & 7:30 p.m.
Belhaven University Center for the Arts • Concert Hall

*There will be a reception after the program. Please come and greet the performers.
Please refrain from the use of all flash and still photography during the concert.
Please turn off all cell phones and electronics.*

PROGRAM

Scene One: Recalling the Revolution - The Graveyard in Boston, Massachusetts, circa 1820

Chester

The Belhaven University Concert Choir & Chorale
Allie Sahli, Flute; Corbin Shields, Drum
Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

Scene Two: Billings and Barry Agree to Found a Singing School - Billings Home in Boston, circa 1769

Scene Three: Fond Recollections of the Singing School, circa 1820

When Jesus Wept

The Women of the Belhaven University Concert Choir & Chorale
Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

Scene Four: Paul Revere and Benjamin Edes Assist in Publishing The New England Psalm Singer - Billings Home, circa 1769

There Is a Land of Pure Delight

The Belhaven University Concert Choir & Chorale
Mr. Christopher Phillips, Conductor

Scene Five: Billings Responds to Criticism - Billings Home in Boston, circa 1777

Jargon

Alexia Valente, Violin; Andrew Horton, Violin; Thorburn McGee, Viola; John Sinclair, Cello

Scene Six: Creative Liberties or Rewriting the Bible - Billings Home in Boston, circa 1793

Psalm 148 - O Praise the Lord of Heaven

The Belhaven University Concert Choir & Chorale
Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

INTERMISSION

Scene Seven: The Death of Billings Wife, Lucy - The Billings Home in 1795

Is Any Afflicted?

Teach Me the Measure of My Days

Members of the Jackson Prep Camerata

with

John Alford, Grace Anna Randall, Grace Andrews, and Jordan Locke

joined by the Belhaven University Chorale

Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

Scene Eight: The Sober Business of Death and God's Last Laugh- Boston Graveyard, circa 1820

The Lord is Risen Indeed

My Flesh Shall Slumber

The Belhaven University Concert Choir & Chorale

Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

The Choral Drama *William Billings of Boston* is based on my research of Billings life, mostly from the biography *William Billings of Boston: Eighteenth Century Composer* by David P. McKay and Richard Crawford. Some artistic license has been taken to formulate a dramatic production, but the essential depiction is based on historical evidence from this book and elsewhere. No attempt was made to tell Billings' complete life story. Rather, a series of theatrical glimpses into this larger than life personality seemed appropriate to enhance the appreciation of the music of this foundational American composer.

William Billings lived his whole life in Boston, Massachusetts. At the age of 14, the death of his father stopped Billings' formal schooling. In order to help support his family, young Billings trained as a tanner of leather. He received musical instruction from John Barry, one of the choir members at the New South Church; but, for the most part, he was self-taught.

Virtually all of Billings' music was written for four-part chorus, singing a cappella. His many hymns and anthems were published mostly in

book-length collections, as follows: *The New-England Psalm-Singer* (1770), *The Singing*

Master's Assistant (1778), *Music in Miniature* (1779), *The Psalm-Singer's Amusement* (1781), *The Suffolk Harmony* (1786), *The Continental Harmony* (1794). Billings was involved in teaching singing schools throughout his life. He was listed as "singing master" in the Boston city directory up until 1798. Billings' work was very popular in its heyday, but his career was hampered by the primitive state of copyright law in America at the time. By the time the copyright laws had been strengthened, it was too late for Billings; the favorites among his tunes had already been widely reprinted in other people's hymnals, permanently copyright-free.

Billings died in poverty on September 26, 1800 at the age of 53, and for a considerable time after his death, his music was almost completely neglected in the American musical mainstream. However, his compositions remained popular for a time in the rural areas

of New England, which resisted the newer trends in sacred music. Moreover, a few of Billings' songs were carried southward and westward through America, as a result of their

appearance in shape note hymnals. They ultimately resided in the rural South, as part of the Sacred Harp singing tradition.

THE CAST

Gravedigger (Old Man)..... James Kenyon
 William Billings (23, Then Older, 53 - Ages at Intermission) John Alford
 John Barry (Approximately 30) Thorburn McGee
 Paul Revere (Mid-Thirties) Connor Bingham
 Benjamin Edes (Late Thirties) Mac Mitchell
 Lucy Billings -Wife (Approximately 30, dies at age 43)..... Michaela Bowen
 Abigail Adams Billings (born: 1777) 23 Years Old Grace Anna Randall
 Elizabeth Adams (born: 1779) 21 Years Old..... Sarah Kennedy Duncan (Jackson Prep)
 Sarah (born: 1783) 16 Years old..... Grace Andrews
 William (born: 1786) 14 Years Old Jordan Locke
 Peggy Dawes (born: 1788) 12 Years Old Khue Tran (Jackson Prep)
 Lucy Billings (born: 1792) 8 Years Old Gracie Tew (Jackson Prep)
 Benjamin, a friend, 24 years old Richard Palmer (Jackson Prep)
 Alice, a friend..... Anna Kat Ireland (Jackson Prep)

THE BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY CONCERT CHOIR

Mr. Christopher Phillips, Conductor

Ms. Maggie McLinden, Staff Accompanist/Rehearsal Assistant

Cassandra Acker · Grace Andrews · Dave Barnett · Lydia Brandt · Anna Bryant · Jessica Charitos · Mary Ansley Chitwood · Siwon Choi · Kaley Copeland · Dorothy Claire Glover · Natalie Guillot · Anne Hilleke · Lydia Jones · Adrienne Joransen · James Kenyon · HyunJin Kim · Sangkyoon Kim · Yeon-soo Kim · Mali Lin · Rachel Loftus · Rachael McCartney · Ann Louise McGee · Thorburn McGee · Aron McRaney · Tyanaese Moore · Jiwoo Nam · Billy Overton · Gyu Ree Park · Brandon Randle · Charity Ross · Susan Smallwood · Brandon Smith · Caleb Wolfe

THE BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY CHORALE

Dr. Christopher Shelt, Conductor

Ms. Maggie McLinden, Staff Accompanist/Rehearsal Assistant

John Alford · Annie Andrews · Michaela Bowen · Madeline Jolley · Lydia Jones · Joy Kenyon · Jinyoung Kim · Brooke Kressin · Jordan Locke · Lissie Massengale · Tiffany Merritt · Phillip Nichols · Hannah Olson · Madison Parrott · Constance Prince · Missy Samsel · Faith Schumacher · Cory Smith · Mariah Taylor · Elizabeth Walczak · Rachel Walczak · Evangeline Wilds · Julie Wolfe · Sarah Wolfe · Jessica Ziegelbauer

BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY CHORAL ARTS CABINET

Rachel Loftus, President · Annie Andrews, Chorale Secretary
 & Singing Christmas Tree Coordinator · Faith Schumacher, Chorale Intern ·
 Lydia Jones, Concert Choir Secretary · Jordan Locke, Concert Choir Intern

WILLIAM BILLINGS OF BOSTON: A CHORAL DRAMA

Artistic Director.....	Dr. Christopher Shelt
Conductor of the Belhaven Chorale.....	Dr. Christopher Shelt
Conductor of the Concert Choir.....	Mr. Christopher Phillips
Stage Direction.....	Dr. Christopher Shelt
Stage Manager	Lydia Jones
Props/Set Piece Manager	Dr. Christopher Shelt
Make-Up Artist	Julie Phillips, Dr. Christopher Shelt
Costume Artist	Hannah Olson
Poster Artwork	Lissie Massengale
Light Design/Operation	Stephen Craig
Sound Design/Operation.....	Stephen Craig
Videography	Cory Drake
Production Photographer	Elizabeth Klunder

SPECIAL THANKS

To Belhaven University Theatre for lending us many costumes and props and some great help moving platforms. To Dr. and Mrs. Sauerwein for use of their shovel. To Lisa Ireland for helping communicate with Jackson Prep participants. To the entire Belhaven Music Office staff, especially Ms. Grace Anna Randall.

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC MISSION STATEMENT

The Music Department seeks to produce transformational leaders in the musical arts who will have profound influence in homes, churches, private studios, educational institutions, and on the concert stage. While developing the God-bestowed musical talents of music majors, minors, and elective students, we seek to provide an integrative understanding of the musical arts from a Christian world and life view in order to equip students to influence the world of ideas. The music major degree program is designed to prepare students for graduate study while equipping them for vocational roles in performance, church music, and education. The Belhaven University Music Department exists to multiply Christian leaders who demonstrate unquestionable excellence in the musical arts and apply timeless truths in every aspect of their artistic discipline.

The Music Department would like to thank our many community partners for their support of Christian Arts Education at Belhaven University through their advertising in "Arts Ablaze 2014-2015." It is through these and other wonderful relationships in the greater Jackson community that makes many of our concerts possible at Belhaven. We praise God for our friends and are truly thankful for their generosity. Please mention The Arts at Belhaven University when you visit our community partners.

For a complete listing of Music Department scheduled spring semester programs, please visit our website at <http://www.belhaven.edu/music/recitals.htm>. A complete listing of major Belhaven University arts events may be found at <http://www.belhaven.edu/arts/schedule.htm>.

Thank you to those working behind the scenes to make today's program a success: music faculty supervisor, Dr. Sauerwein; student workers – 2:30pm - house manager, Tripp Stewart; ushers, Sidney Durham & Ella Castro; stage hand, Roland Dixon; recording/sound/lighting, Stephen Craig; photographer, Kate Ray; reception hosts, Billy Overton & Thorburn McGee. 7:30pm – house manager, Tripp Stewart; ushers, Sidney Durham & Roland Dixon; stage hands, Taylor Scrivner & Jinhua Shi; recording/sound/lighting, Stephen Craig; reception hosts, Allie Sahli & Thorburn McGee.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, April 28, 7:30pm, Concert Hall
Wednesday, April 29, 7:30pm, Concert Hall

Saturday, May 2, 7:30pm, Concert Hall
Thursday, May 7, 7:30pm, Concert Hall
Saturday, May 9, 6:00pm, Concert Hall
Saturday, May 9, 8:00pm, Concert Hall

Best of Belhaven III
Victor Piantanida & Daniel Bravo
Joint Junior Percussion Recital
Grace Anna Randall Senior Voice Recital
Brooke Kressin Senior Piano Recital
Alesia Sterling Senior Voice Recital
Rachel Walczak Senior Piano Recital

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, FACULTY AND STAFF

Dr. Stephen Sachs, pianist, chair • Dr. Paxton Girtmon, director of bands, woodwind specialist • Dr. Andrew Sauerwein, composer, theorist • Dr. Christopher Shelt, coordinator of vocal activities, director of choral ensembles and Singing Christmas Tree • Song Xie, violinist, director of string ensembles • Nancy Bateman, cello adjunct • Dennis Bonds, jazz guitar adjunct • Richard Brown, string bass adjunct • Sybil Cheesman, flute adjunct • Dr. Dennis Cranford, music theory adjunct • Carol Durham, organ adjunct • Sarah Elias, piano and music theory adjunct • Doug Eltzroth, worship arts adjunct • Gena Everitt, vocal adjunct • Dr. Rebecca Geihlsler, vocal and music history adjunct • Kenneth Graves, clarinet adjunct • Christina Hrivnak, vocal adjunct • Andrew Lewis, jazz and music theory adjunct • Amanda Mangrum, harp adjunct • Randy Mapes, double reed adjunct • Dr. Marlynn Martin, music education adjunct • Maggie McLinden, staff accompanist • Dr. Tanja Miric, classical guitar adjunct • Christopher Phillips, vocal/choral & worship arts adjunct • Dr. Owen Rockwell, percussion adjunct, director of percussion ensembles • Carolyn Sachs, piano adjunct • Dr. Carla Stovall, low brass adjunct • Lloyd Turner, trumpet adjunct • Grace Anna Randall, administrative assistant

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, MUSIC MAJORS

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