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## NEWS RELEASE

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# **A WORLD PREMIERE BY PHILIP GLASS HIGHLIGHTS THE PHILADELPHIA SINGERS 2009-2010 SEASON**

*Featuring works from Bach to Higdon and two Philadelphia premieres by Reich and Bryars*

PHILADELPHIA, PA - The Philadelphia Singers' 2009-2010 subscription season showcases the organization's artistic vision and embraces the ensemble's long tradition of presenting masterworks and fostering its enthusiastic commitment to the preservation and creation of American choral music. The four-concert subscription series includes numerous choral masterworks, intimate chamber works and a world premiere by Philip Glass. Three and four concert Subscription packages range from \$62-\$135 and can be purchased by calling 215-751-9494 or visiting [www.philadelphiasingers.org](http://www.philadelphiasingers.org). Single Tickets range from \$20 -\$45 and go on sale on September 1.

The Philadelphia Singers opens its 2009-2010 subscription season on Sunday, November 8, 2009 at 4:00pm with its presentation of "Bach and Beyond" featuring influential choral works from the Baroque to the twentieth century at the newly restored Church of the Holy Trinity on 19<sup>th</sup> and Rittenhouse Square. The thirty-two voice professional chamber chorus opens the program with Bach's intricate *Jesu Meine Freude*, for mixed chorus and organ. Composed in 1723, it is widely considered to be the finest of Bach's six motets. This work is contrasted with the raw emotions of 20<sup>th</sup> century Argentinean composer Alberto Ginastera's *Lamentations of Jeremiah*. The concert concludes with the *Mass for Double Chorus* by Swiss composer Frank Martin which Music Director David Hayes calls, "exquisitely detailed". Written in 1922, but not performed until 1963, this inspiring work is considered one of the great choral monuments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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The Philadelphia Singers presents its beloved "Christmas on Logan Square" concerts on Saturday, December 12 and December 19 at 5:00pm at Philadelphia's St. Clement's Church on 20<sup>th</sup> and Cherry Streets. This year's program features Jennifer Higdon's ethereal O

*Magnum Mysterium* scored for chorus, flutes, crystal glasses and chimes. The Philadelphia Singers commissioned this work and gave the world premiere in 2002. The centerpiece of the concert is Ottorino Respighi's (1879-1936) pastoral *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* (Laud to the Nativity). Respighi, whose music was often referred to as "new old-music" combines elements of madrigals, fugue and Monteverdi-influenced vocal style in this seldom performed work scored for chorus, wind ensemble, piano and vocal soloists. The concert which begins with a candlelight procession will conclude with an audience carol sing.

On March 6, 2010 at 8:00pm, The Philadelphia Singers will join forces with new music ensembles Relâche and Orchestra 2001 to present three premieres by Americans Philip Glass and Steve Reich (who is the 2009 Pulitzer Prize-winner in music) and British composer Gavin Bryars at Zellerbach Theatre in the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts located at 3680 Walnut Street. The concert features the world premiere of Glass's *Persephone* and Philadelphia premieres of Reich's *You Are (Variations)* and *Laude 23 and 24* from Bryars' *Lauda Cortonese*.

*Persephone* is a five-movement work for chamber ensemble and chorus. It was commissioned by Relâche and was first performed by the ensemble in 1994 for a Robert Wilson theatrical installation but voices were not utilized in that performance. This performance will mark the world premiere of the piece as it was originally scored. Steve Reich's *You Are (Variations)* is one of his most recent works and is scored for an 18-voice chorus and large instrumental ensemble including four pianos. Bryars' *Laude 23 and 24* for a cappella women's chorus fill out this program. Written in Italian and hearkening back to both forms and styles of the earliest polyphony of the Renaissance, Hayes says "they form a fascinating bridge between the musical and vocal styles of Glass and Reich." Lloyd Shorter, Co-Artistic Director of Relâche remarked, "this combination of musical forces in choral and new music is not typical and a concert featuring instrumental and vocal works by Philip Glass, Steve Reich and Gavin Bryars on the same program is even more unusual, particularly in the United States."

The Philadelphia Singers will close its subscription season on Saturday, May 1, 2010 at 8:00pm with a performance of Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Vespers*, Op. 37 at the Church of the Holy Trinity, 19<sup>th</sup> and Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia. *Vespers* is a fifteen movement a cappella work requiring an expanded chorus of forty singers. It is often praised as one of Rachmaninoff's finest. It was also one of the composer's favorites among his own works and has been called the crowning masterpiece of Russian sacred music.

The Philadelphia Singers, a professional choral ensemble engages and inspires a broad range of audiences in the Philadelphia region with compelling concert experiences. The Singers has a special commitment to preserve and strengthen America's rich choral heritage through performances, commissions, and music education. It seeks to enrich the broader community through embodying the highest standards of classical musicianship and providing a platform for its musicians to serve the community in a wide variety of formats.

Founded in 1972 by Michael Korn, The Philadelphia Singers is now under the dynamic leadership of Music Director and Conductor David Hayes. For 36 years, The Philadelphia Singers has contributed to the city's vibrant cultural community through presenting choral music of the highest caliber, meaningful education and community programs, and significant collaborations with local, national and internationally recognized performing arts organizations. In 2001, The Philadelphia Singers Chorale was named Resident Chorus of The Philadelphia Orchestra, the first time in the orchestra's history that a chorus has received this distinction. The Philadelphia Singers Chorale appears on all of the orchestra's choral subscription concerts including performances at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts and annual performances of Handel's *Messiah*. Maestro Wolfgang Sawallisch, Conductor Laureate of The Philadelphia Orchestra, hails The Singers as "one of the musical treasures of Philadelphia."

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