



# ***THE SONGS OF SOLOMON***

**AN INTENSE AND QUICK FIRE - CELEBRATING  
THE MUSIC AND LEGACY OF SALAMONE ROSSI**

**SOPRANO** Clara Rottsoik

**MEZZO SOPRANO AND DIRECTOR** Meg Bragle

**TENOR** Stephen Soph

**BARITONE** Christopher Talbot

**VIOLIN** Evan Few

**VIOLIN** Mandy Wolman

**VIOLA DA GAMBA** Elena Kauffman

**HARPSICHORD** John Walthausen

**THEORBO** Kevin Payne

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Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral

Thursday, November 9 @ 7:30 PM

There will be no intermission.

## PROGRAM

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Sonata sopra la Bergamasca	<i>Il Quarto Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonie, Gagliarde, Brandi e Corrente (1622)</i>
In dolci lacci	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali a Quattro Voci (1614)</i>
Gagliarda a 5 (et a 3 si placet) detta la Massara	<i>Il Primo Libro delle Sinfonie et Gagliarde (1607)</i>
Dolcemente dormiva	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali a Quattro Voci</i>
Sonata sopra l'Aria di Ruggiero	<i>Il Terzo Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonia, Gagliarde, Brandi e Corrente (1613)</i>
Messagier di speranza	<i>Madrigaletti a due voci (1628)</i>
Gagliarda a 4 et a 3 si placet, detta la Zambalina	<i>Il Secondo Libro delle Sinfonie è Gagliarde à Tre voci (1608)</i>
Anima del cor mio	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali (1600)</i>
Corrente terza	<i>Il Terzo Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonia...</i>
Amor, se pur deggio	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali a Quattro Voci</i>
Sinfonia Grave	<i>Il Primo Libro delle Sinfonie et Gagliarde</i>
Barekhu	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo (1622/23)</i>
Lamnatseah, binginet	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Sonata in dialogo detta la Viena	<i>Il Terzo Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonia...</i>
Shir hamma'alot	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Sinfonia sestadecima	<i>Il Secondo Libro delle Sinfonie è Gagliarde à Tre voci</i>
Al naharot	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Sonata ottava sopra l'Aria "È tanto tempo hormai"	<i>Il Quarto Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonie...</i>
Elohim hashivenu	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Keter yitenu lakh	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Corrente settima	<i>Il Terzo Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonie...</i>
Haleluya	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Schlomo</i>
Brando secondo	<i>Il Terzo Libro de Varie Sonate, Sinfonia...</i>
Tirsi mio	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali</i>
Sinfonia seconda detta Emiglia	<i>Il Terzo Libro di Varie Sonate, Sinfonie...</i>
Com'e dolc'il gioire	<i>Il Primo Libro de Madrigali a Quattro Voci</i>
Pargoletta che non sai	<i>Madrigaletti a due voci</i>
Sonata sesta sopra l'Aria di Tordiglione	<i>Il Quarto Libro de varie sonate, Sinfonie...</i>
Lemi ehpots - A Wedding Ode	<i>Hashirim Asher Li'Shlomo</i>

## PROGRAM NOTES

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The revolutionary *Hashirim asher Lish'lomo*, or *Songs of Solomon*, Salamone Rossi's collection of polyphonic music for the synagogue, was published 400 years ago. The only collection of its kind, it was a creation of new music for the synagogue in the musical language of the time. After an "intense and quick fire" of interest and performance, these innovative works, along with most of Rossi's oeuvre, disappeared for centuries.

Salamone Rossi (1570-c.1630) worked at the Gonzaga court in Mantua as both a violinist and composer at the same time as Claudio Monteverdi, Giaches de Wert and Giovanni Gastoldi. We know very little about his life, but his importance in the Gonzaga court can be seen in the many volumes of music published during his lifetime, including four books of instrumental music and nine books of Italian secular music. Though overshadowed by his colleague Claudio Monteverdi in the history books, Rossi was at the forefront of musical development. His first book of madrigals (1600) includes the first known intabulation for chitarrone included with the voice part, and his second book (1602) includes a basso continuo part which predates Monteverdi's first concerted madrigals (*Il quinto libro de madrigali a cinque voci* - 1605). As an early proponent of the trio sonata form (two equal top voices with a bass line accompaniment), he was at the vanguard of the development of virtuosic and idiomatic writing for the violin.

Despite his considerable work for the court, Rossi is best known for his collection of polyphonic music for the synagogue, the *Hashirim asher li'Shlomo* (1622/23), or *Songs of Solomon* - a play on words referencing both the biblical King Solomon and the composer's first name. These innovative settings of Hebrew psalms and hymns introduced polyphony into Jewish sacred music for the first time, where only monody had been considered an appropriate musical expression for a people in exile.

Walking a fine line between acceptance and persecution, Jewish people living in the 17th century were buffeted by two conflicting movements - humanism and the Counter-Reformation. Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga created an oasis of tolerance during his rule, elevating many Jewish writers, musicians, dancers and artists that thrived at court, none more so than Rossi; he also resisted the pressure to isolate the Mantuan Jewish community for many years. The first segregated Jewish neighborhood in Italy was established in Venice in 1516. Named after the foundry located nearby, it was called the "ghetto." The enforced segregation in Mantua, a barricaded ghetto, was created in 1612.

Salamone Rossi, a Jewish Italian musician, lived and worked between two worlds. The toast of the glittering court and its entertainments, he went home every evening to the walled and gated neighborhood of his community. After the Austrian invasion of Mantua and destruction of the ghetto in 1630, all traces of Rossi disappear, and his music lay undiscovered for 200 years. We celebrate this multifaceted composer whose music was almost lost to us and explore the soundworld of 17th century Mantua through his unique perspective.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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### **Meg Bragle** (Mezzo Soprano and Director)

Widely praised for her musical intelligence and "expressive virtuosity" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), Bragle has earned an international reputation as one of today's most gifted mezzo-sopranos. As an established early music specialist, she has sung in North America and Europe with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, English Baroque Soloists, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Netherlands Bach Society, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Les Violons du Roy, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique and the Dunedin Consort.

A leading interpreter of both Baroque and Classical repertoire, she has collaborated with many symphony orchestras in the U.S. and Canada including the Houston Symphony, Seattle, Detroit, Toronto, Atlanta, Calgary, Cincinnati, National and Colorado Symphony Orchestras, among others.

With over 20 recordings to her credit, Bragle's discography includes several with Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists, including Bach's *Easter and Ascension Oratorios* - the vehicle for her BBC Proms debut - and Bach's *Mass in B Minor*. She made several recordings with Apollo's Fire including Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* and Monteverdi's *Vespro della Beata Vergine* and *L'Orfeo*. Other recordings include Bach's *St. John Passion*, the complete works of Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, Toby Twining's *Chrysalid Requiem*, Anthony Newman's *Requiem*, Copland's *In the Beginning* and the *Five Borough Songbook*.

Bragle is the afternoon classical host and producer at WRTI 90.1 FM. She is also an Artist in Residence at the University of Pennsylvania where she directs the Collegium Musicum and the Opera and Musical Theater Workshop and serves as the vocal arts advisor to the Platt Performing Arts House.

### **Evan Few** (Violin)

Few has established himself as a leader in his generation of historical performance specialists, having studied and performed repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Gershwin on period instruments. An assertive, collaborative instrumentalist, he is equally adept as music director, orchestral musician and chamber soloist and has performed on stages across the globe with some of its most esteemed early music ensembles, including Anima Eterna Brugge, Bach Collegium Japan and the Taverner Consort. Few is a core member of the Carmel Bach Festival, associate concertmaster of Atlanta Baroque, principal second violin of Philharmonie Austin and co-founder of Filament.

Few received his principal training at Oberlin College as a pupil of Marilyn McDonald and pursued further studies in string quartet performance at Rice University and in Baroque violin at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag. He has played on numerous records from Accent, CPO, Deutsche Harmonia Mundi and Zig-Zag Territoires, among others, as well as Filament's forthcoming complete Buxtehude opera prima. His violin was built for him in 2010 by Matthieu Besseling of Amsterdam; he plays with baroque bows by Luis Emilio Rodriguez Carrington (2011) and Thomas Pitt (2016). Few lives in Philadelphia and is a devoted home cook, plant dad and yogi.

### **Elena Kauffman** (Viola da gamba)

A Philadelphia native, Kauffman maintains an active career as a performing and teaching artist. She is the cellist and manager of Blue Line Quartet and performs frequently with Fairmount String Quartet, Elysium String Quartet and many other chamber ensembles in the Philadelphia area. She is the principal cellist and personnel manager of the Wayne Oratorio Society and Haverford-Bryn Mawr Chorale Orchestra, and she has performed with the Philadelphia Ballet Orchestra, Reading Symphony, Bay Atlantic Symphony and West Jersey Chamber Orchestra.

Kauffman also has a passion for historical string instruments, and she performs regularly on Baroque cello and viola da gamba. She has appeared on tour with Venice Baroque Orchestra, and she was the viola da gamba soloist in New York City Opera's production of *Los Elementos* by Antonio Lites. She has participated in the American Bach Soloists Academy in San Francisco, the International Masterclasses Festival in Gaming, Austria and Juilliard at Piccola Accademia in Montisi, Italy. Kauffman is a founding member of Filament and has appeared as a guest with Tempesta di Mare, The Thirteen Chamber Choir Baroque Orchestra, Bach Collegium Philadelphia, Gamut Bach Ensemble, Crescendo Period Instrument Orchestra, Ex Umbris and Elm City Consort. She has studied with Sarah Cunningham and Phoebe Carrai and has performed in masterclass for Thomas Fritzsche and Paolo Pandolfo.

A dedicated educator, Kauffman maintains a private studio and is the operations director of The Common Place Orchestra in Southwest Philadelphia. Kauffman is a graduate of Temple University, where she studied with Jeffrey Solow.

**Kevin Payne** (Theorbo)

Lutenist Kevin Payne is active as a recitalist, accompanist and continuo player. Recent ensemble work includes performances with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Tempesta di Mare, Philharmonie Austin and Bach Collegium San Diego. Festival appearances include Caramoor, Tanglewood, Spoleto and Newport Classical. Performance venues include Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the National Concert Hall in Taipei, Taiwan, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Festspielhaus in Baden-Baden, Germany. His playing has been broadcast on several nationally syndicated radio programs including *Sunday Baroque* and *Performance Today*.

Payne is a graduate of the Peabody Institute, The Juilliard School and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Basel, Switzerland. When not performing, Payne enjoys cooking, reading, watching *Star Trek* (P'Tach!) and attempting to delay the inevitable (and often imminent) demise of the houseplants he shares with his wife, cellist Caroline Nicolas.

**Clara Rottsolk** (Soprano)

A brilliant and accomplished concert artist, "resplendent" soprano, Rottsolk has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including American Bach Soloists, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Pacific MusicWorks, the American Classical Orchestra, St. Thomas 5th Avenue, Richmond Symphony, Bach Collegium San Diego, Virginia Symphony, New Mexico Philharmonic, Pacific Symphony, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Trinity Wall Street and Seattle Baroque Orchestra, under the direction of conductors including Stephen Stubbs, David Danzmayr, Nicholas McGeegan, Jeffrey Thomas, Grete Pedersen, John Scott, Daniel Hyde, Joshua Rifkin, Bruno Weil, John Sinclair, Chia-Hsuan Lin, Gabriel Crouch, Timothy Nelson and Andrew Megill.

With "sophisticated mastery of the nuances of the libretto: with perfect diction and expressive delivery" (Cleveland Classical), she performs chamber and recital repertoire with Les Délices, ARTEK, TENET, Les Canards Chantants, Folger Consort, Piffaro, Byron Schenkman & Friends, Colorado Bach Ensemble and as soloist at festivals including Carmel Bach, Berkeley Early Music, Montréal Baroque, Spoleto USA, Winter Park Bach, St. Louis Bach, Indianapolis Early Music, Whidbey Island Music and Boston Early Music Fringe. Rottsolk's solo recordings can be found on Chandos, MSR Classics and independent labels. Currently, she is based in Philadelphia and teaches voice at Swarthmore, Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges.

**Steven Soph** (Tenor)

A "superb vocal soloist" (*The Washington Post*) with "impressive clarity and color" (*The New York Times*), Soph performs concert repertoire spanning the Renaissance to modern day. During the 23-24 season, Soph makes his Carnegie Hall debut with the New York City Chamber Orchestra in Mozart's *Requiem*, his Symphony Hall debut with Boston's Handel and Haydn Society in Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and his Tucson Symphony debut in Handel's *Messiah*. He returns to Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall with the American Classical Orchestra in Bach's *Mass in B minor*, to Boulder's Pro Musica Colorado for Handel's *Messiah*, to Choral Arts Philadelphia for Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and to the Bach Society of Saint Louis as the Evangelist in Bach's *St. John Passion*. Soph holds degrees from the University of North Texas and the Yale School of Music. [stevensoph.com](http://stevensoph.com)

**Christopher Talbot** (Bass-baritone)

Talbot is a versatile performer with a wide variety of repertoire, from the medieval to the present day. Praised for his "voice of warmth and strength" (*Classical Review*), he has performed with major ensembles across the U.S., including Seraphic Fire, The Thirteen, Apollo's Fire, The Crossing and the Carmel Bach Festival, where he was a 2023 Virginia Best Adams vocal fellow. Talbot has been fortunate to study with some of the world's foremost Baroque vocalists, including James Taylor and Bernarda Fink during graduate study at Yale's Institute of Sacred Music, and Peter Harvey and Dame Emma Kirkby at the Internationale Bachakademie masterclass in Stuttgart, Germany. Highlights of 2023 include Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with Choral Arts Philadelphia, works of Mozart and C.P.E. Bach at the Staunton Music Festival in Virginia, Italian madrigals with New York's Parthenia Viol Consort and joining Apollo's Singers for Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with the New York Philharmonic. Talbot is also a consultant with New Muses Project, an organization dedicated to researching and performing works of underrepresented composers. A lifelong choral singer, Talbot got his start as an eight-year-old treble in the All Saints Choirs of Worcester, MA.

**John Walthausen** (Harpsichord)

Walthausen is an increasingly sought-after harpsichord and organ soloist and ensemble artist with a worldwide performance career. Accomplished as a recitalist, Walthausen has been heard in concert throughout Europe in Paris, Chartres, Poitiers, Toulouse, Hamburg, Milan, Treviso, Innsbruck, Basel and Zurich. From 2015 to 2016, he served as organist in residence at Sapporo Concert Hall in Hokkaido, where he performed and recorded on the Hall's four-manual organ by Alfred Kern and in cities across Japan. Recent projects have taken him to New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, Victoria (British Columbia), Cincinnati and Bogotá. In 2019, he co-founded the ensemble Filament, a Philadelphia-based ensemble dedicated to exploring the rich chamber music repertoire of 17th century Northern Europe, with violinist Evan Few and viola da gamba player Elena Smith. In addition to his concert appearances, Walthausen currently serves as director of music at First Presbyterian Church in Germantown.

**Mandy Wolman** (Violinist)

Wolman is a member of Tempesta Di Mare and the Bach Collegium Orchestra in Philadelphia. Described as an "impressive and bold leader" (*Chestnut Hill Local*), she performs with Apollo's Fire, Bach Festival of Philadelphia, Washington Cathedral Orchestra, Spire Ensemble, Chestnut Hill Cantata Series, Washington Cathedral Orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of New York, the Handel Choir of Baltimore and the Indianapolis Early Music Festival, among others. Aside from her busy freelance career, Wolman is a dedicated educator. She teaches with Tune Up Philly, a division of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, is on the faculty of Apple Hill Music Festival, gives workshops for Philadelphia public schools and maintains a private studio. She is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and enjoys Flamenco dancing and drawing in her free time.