

For Immediate Release

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**Bi-Lingual (English/Spanish) Conversation Concert with Bach's Motet,
"Jesu, meine Freude," (*Jesus, Priceless Treasure*) To Be Presented
with Free Admission in Wheaton by ChorSymphonica**

ROCKVILLE, MD - *ChorSymphonica*, the outstanding Montgomery County-based classical music ensemble, today announced its next "*Wheaton Conversation Concert*" featuring Johann Sebastian Bach's "Jesu, meine Freude" (*Jesus, Priceless Treasure*), BWV 227, at Hughes United Methodist Church, 10700 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton, MD, 20902 on Sunday 20 October 2019, at 3:00 pm. This annual event is part of ChorSymphonica's programming in Wheaton, an artistically underserved part of Montgomery County. Admission is free, a \$20 donation is suggested.

The performance features the professional chorus and orchestra ChorSymphonica, which has been exciting audiences in the DMV since 2011 with its unique programming of choral and choral-orchestral repertoire. The music will be introduced in English by ChorSymphonica's Artistic Director and Conductor [Richard Allen Roe](#) and in Spanish by Towson University faculty member [Diana V. Sáez](#).

A "*Conversation Concert*" is an elaborate musical and educational event, where chorus and orchestra are employed to illustrate points of a pre-performance lecture, in the style of the New York Philharmonic's "Young People's Concerts." In Wheaton, due to the large population of Spanish-speaking individuals, the pre-performance lecture is made in English and Spanish. The exploration of the musical and historical context of the concert's repertoire makes the composer's efforts more accessible to modern ears, and more relevant to contemporary life. Following the introduction, which lasts approximately 45 minutes, the entire work is performed, uninterrupted.

"I first learned how to do this by watching Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts on TV," says founder and conductor Richard Allen Roe. "In college, I had a wonderful teacher, Professor Henry Gibbons, who studied in Germany with Helmuth Rilling, himself a pupil of Bernstein. I really learned how to do it from all three: Rilling, Gibbons, Bernstein. But it was my years of study with Rilling that gave me the experiences and insight to forge my own way."

For this concert, the presentation is focused on one example of a smaller group of Bach's compositions, the motets. Unlike the cantatas, motets do not contain solo music, like recitatives and arias. They are pieces for chorus only. The instruments in Bach's motets do not provide independent accompaniment, but rather reinforce the choral voices, giving his motets a powerful sonic profile. This motet, "Jesu, meine

Freude" (*Jesus, Priceless Treasure*) occupies a special place of admiration and reverence among choral music fans, and is perhaps the most musically and technically demanding of all Bach's motets. In "Jesu, meine Freude" the composer's inspirational ability to set texts with music that renders the words extraordinarily meaningful, is on full display. Symbols, word painting, genre references, and contrapuntal writing, that is among the most masterful in all of music, are pointed out in English and Spanish in a way that helps the listener grasp and understand them, in turn deepening their experience and appreciation of the music.

ChorSymphonica is a project-based classical music ensemble, specializing in choral and choral-orchestral repertoire. The group does not meet on a regular basis for rehearsals, but comes together for brief, intense work periods ("projects"), which culminate in performances. Musicians self-select for projects, depending on their own availability. In this way the ensemble can draw on a large range of qualified musicians from throughout the region for concerts. This concert marks the third year in a row that ChorSymphonica has produced a bi-lingual conversation concert in Wheaton, an underserved neighborhood of Montgomery County.

This performance is made possible in part by a Wheaton Cultural Project Grant from The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County. Further support comes from the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, and individual donors participating in the Power2Give matching grant program of the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, and by The Rockville Bach Academy, Inc.

More information on the program can be found at <https://chorsymphonica.org/wheaton-conversation-concert-2/>

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Named for the choral-orchestral repertoire that spans from the Renaissance to the modern era, ChorSymphonica (*formerly The Advent Project*) has delighted audiences with unique performances since 2011. Founded by conductor Richard Allen Roe, the group continues to offer traditional concerts and its unique "Conversation Concert" experiences in Montgomery County and the Greater Washington, DC area.

ChorSymphonica inspires, educates, enlightens, and enriches Montgomery County and the Greater Washington, DC area with unique choral concerts, performed at the highest artistic standard. We further strive to promote appreciation for and understanding of our specialty repertoire through educational programming such as our Conversation Concerts.

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