

Quintessence Choral Artists of the Southwest
Matthew Greer, Artistic Director

**“The Song Is Alive Everywhere:
A Virtual Festival of Song”**

July 20-24, 2020

Schedule

(subject to change)

All sessions are one hourish, unless specified.

Monday, July 20

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| 9am | “Mornings With Matt” | Matthew Greer |
| | <i>A 15-20 minute daily introduction to the day, with singing and coffee. Also, a chance to win prizes.</i> | |
| 10am | “The Life-Changing Magic of Practicing:
Redefining Practice in a World Gone Mad” | Amy Greer |
| | <i>Practicing is not limited to serious musicians. We all have practices: yoga practices, meditation practices, the practice of early morning dog walks or sacred holiday traditions. And never have we needed practice more than in these troubled times. Practices not only help to structure our days and routines, but the daily discipline teaches us who we are. This session will take a practical and psychological look at the discipline of practice and will offer tools and strategies to develop rich and nourishing practices of all kinds.</i> | |
| Noon | “After Silence: An Interactive Workshop” | Paul Smith |
| | <i>Paul Smith, co-founder of VOCES8 and CEO of the VOCES8 Foundation, joins us from London to bring a fun and interactive session that will get us playing and singing! His session will also provide an introduction to the VOCES8 session on Tuesday.</i> | |
| Afternoon | Individual viewing of the award-winning documentary “Robert Shaw:cMan of Many Voices” by private Vimeo link. (1 hour, 11 minutes) | |

5pm

**Alice Parker, Ann Howard Jones,
Pam Elrod Huffman, Matthew Greer
Panel Discussion: “Robert Shaw: Man of Many Voices”**

On the heels of the private Vimeo screening of the Robert Shaw documentary, Matthew Greer will lead a discussion with three great figures in American choral music, about the influence of Shaw on their careers and artistry.

Tuesday, July 21

8am

“Yoga: Freeing the Breath”
(45 minutes)

Kira Rose Harrison

9am

“Mornings With Matt”

Matthew Greer

10am

**“Don’t Stop Singing:
Ways to Keep Yourself Motivated to Sing During the Pandemic”**

Maria A. Ellis

Singing for some of us is our life! We love singing in choirs, solos, or just around the house, but how do we stay motivated to sing in the middle of a pandemic where we are told singing may not be safe? This session will offer tips and tricks of how to stay motivated to sing and enhance your musical abilities during the middle of the pandemic.

Noon

“After Silence”

VOCES8 and Paul Smith

Live from the VOCES8 Centre (a refurbished Christopher Wren church in the heart of London), members of VOCES8 will lead us in a participatory concert experience.

3pm

**Bradley Ellingboe and Rev. Talitha Arnold
“Mental Health and Choral Singing
in the Time of COVID-19”**

The current pandemic and the need for social distancing has a negative impact on mental health in a number of ways. Research shows that faith communities provide multiple “protective factors” for mental health care. Research also shows that music—particularly group music-making – provides similar protective factors. Yet the pandemic also makes it challenging, if not impossible, to come together to make music—especially to sing—in this time. Join us for a discussion of how we can continue to be in community with each other during these difficult times.

Wednesday, July 22

8am **“Yoga: Relieving Stress From the Body”** **Kira Rose Harrison**
(45 minutes)

9am **“Mornings With Matt”** **Matthew Greer**

11am **“Lift Every Voice:
The Liberating Power of Black Spiritual Music”** **Benjamin Mertz**

Conductor and pianist Benjamin Mertz leads participants on a journey to the music of West Africa, and follow its development through work songs, field hollers, and the early Negro Spiritual. This workshop is designed to help all of us (not only black folks) connect with our own ancestral stories, and learn to tell our stories through the power of music. It focuses on identity, resilience, empathy, honoring the gift of life, and deepening our understanding of ourselves and one another.

3pm **“Connecting Through the Voice”** **Darci Balkcom**

When the body and voice coordinate with ease this opens the doors of expression for the heart and soul. Singing is a way to give voice to what is inside of us by expressing what is in our hearts. In this workshop we will explore connecting the voice with the ease of movement in the body in order to access this inner expression. Incorporating principles of Alexander Technique and Yoga of the Voice we will bring awareness to how the whole being. Through playful singing and body learning we will discover how humans can connect by singing even online.

5:30pm **“Singing for Social Justice”** **Mark Miller**

Composer, conductor, and keyboardist Mark Miller will lead us in singing songs of lament, encouragement, and inspiration.

Thursday, July 23

9am **“Mornings With Matt”** **Matthew Greer**

10am **“Exploring Vocal Acoustics and Mindfulness”** **Jennifer Kuchar**

Have you ever wanted to expand your range and track your choral tuning? Is it possible to find a perfect resonant 'e' vowel? Join us for a workshop where we will explore the fundamentals of vocal acoustics. Vocal Acoustics is cutting edge vocal science that allows the singer to track vocal resonance/vibration, harmonics, and timbre in a visually appealing and user-friendly way. In this workshop, we will explore these principles to find healthy recording tactics from home. Finally, through Alexander Technique principles we will make many discoveries in the present moment that allow the voice science to be less intimidating.

Noon **“Magnificent Magnificat”**
 Barnaby Smith, Taylor Davis, Matthew Greer

Join composer Taylor Scott Davis, and conductors Barnaby Smith and Matthew Greer, for a discussion of a Davis' joyous “Magnificat,” including video excerpts from a live performance by VOCES8.

3pm **“Choristers Going Beyond the Score”** **Marques L.A. Garrett**

Many of us have been told from previous choir directors what we are expected to do to be prepared for and engaged in rehearsal. However, those basics only allow us to take the music so far. You will learn a system that can be applied to every rehearsal which can help save time and allow for more music-making. We will also discuss the history of spirituals and several performance practice elements. If time permits, our last topic will be how our musical perceptions have been shaped by previous repertoire.

5:30pm **BEER CHOIR! (Virtual Edition)**
 Sponsored by Quarter Celtic Brew Pub

Gosh, we have missed singing together and drinking beer at the same time. Matthew Greer will be joined by two leaders from Beer Choir Twin Cities, Adam Reinwald and Sara Langworthy, for a special raucous happy hour session that will span two time zones! (Quarter Celtic will offer a 20% discount on 32-ounce “Crawlers” during festival week if you mention Beer Choir. Go to either location, stock up, and join us!)

9am	Mornings With Matt	Matthew Greer
10am	“Courageous Artistry: How Anxiety Affects Our Music-Making”	Ingela Onstad
	<i>Join singer and coach Ingela Onstad as she walks us through the basics of anxiety, coping strategies, and how to show up with ease and confidence in our singing. Whether singing at home, solo, or in a group learn quick and easy tips to help quiet your inner critic and get back to joyful music-making!</i>	
Noon	“Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci” Jocelyn Hagen and Matthew Greer	
	<i>This summer’s Quintessence Choral Festival was to have featured the New Mexico premiered of an extraordinary work by Minnesota composer Jocelyn Hagen. Join us as we explore Jocelyn’s inspiration and compositional process, and view clips of other performances. This session will make you want to sing it with us in 2021!</i>	
3pm	“The Song Is Alive Everywhere”	Ken Medema
	<i>Join us for a closing sing as the one-and-only Ken Medema wraps up the week for us. We will share stories, and Ken will offer us an extraordinary gift of music.</i>	