

Poetry and Music

Dear Friends,

Can you believe, this is the Gregg Smith Singers' 55th year! When we began to concertize in 1955, we really were wet behind the ears, but we did have one thing — tremendous desire to perform good music — and that continues to the present day. As always, we try to find a theme and we have an interesting one for you — **Poetry and Music**. This season we are putting poetry first. Of the many great American poets, there is none more enchanting and exciting than Emily Dickinson. Our first concert, November 20, is going to center on that one great American poet We want to pay special tribute to her in a program we call *In Praise of Emily Dickinson*. I am very proud that many composer friends have produced wonderful Emily music.

Prior to this Saturday November 20th concert, we will have a special treat. Dr. Emily Seelbinder of Queens College, Charlotte, North Carolina will discourse on Emily Dickinson. It is the perfect way to start an evening devoted to the Belle of Amherst. However, it being the Saturday before Thanksgiving weekend and the start of the holiday season, we can't resist giving you a few carols at the end of the concert.

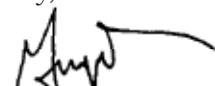
For our second concert, March 12th, we are going to have a very unusual format. We want you to hear some of our Singers as soloists as well as ensemblists. We also promise you exciting new choral pieces by Richard Brooks and Bruce Trinkley, new Emily settings by Jay Anthony Gach and Richard Thompson, and, to end, we are going to bring back a favorite tour piece — *The House on the Hill* — Michael Hennagin's brilliant setting of poetry of another great American poet, Edward Arlington Robinson. We will begin this concert by singing in Russian the Three Church Pieces of Igor Stravinsky. These we performed at his funeral here in New York in April 1971. (We are doing them again in anticipation of a wonderful collaboration of GSS with Saint Peter's Choir here on June 18, 2011 when the Bosler Memorial Vespers will present Rachmaninoff's *All Night Vigil*, popularly known as the *Rachmaninoff Vespers*. Don't miss it!)

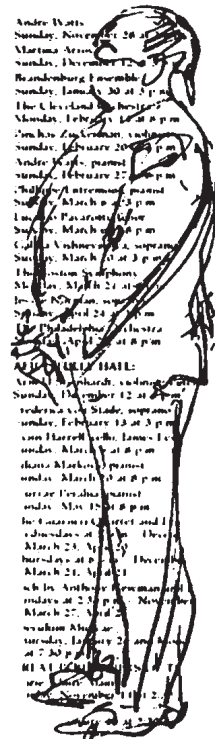
This year the Gregg Smith Singers got a wonderful new grant from the NEA which is in line with several recent archival projects,

to create for our website *The Gregg Smith Singers Stravinsky Chronicles 1959-1971*. These were incredible years in which the Singers worked continually with Stravinsky and Robert Craft in concerts and recordings. Kim Rich, a longtime literary collaborator with Gregg, is helping write this fascinating story. Another ongoing NEA project is our Oral History. We invite any of you who have stories or historic information to share to be in touch. Again, it is eventually to be a website project and become part of our archives.

As usual all our wonderful projects cost wonderful money. NYSCA helps enormously with the Series and we are very grateful. However funding has been cut down. We also need help with the archival projects since our generous NEA grants must be matched dollar for dollar! These NEA grants are devoted to what is really our legacy, and we have a great legacy as many of you know — historic performances, recordings and articles about what the Singers have accomplished in over a half century of history. We had those 12 years with Stravinsky, landmark Gabrieli recordings and historic first recordings of Charles Ives plus a whole range of friendships with other remarkable American composers like Aaron Copland, Leo Smit, Elliott Carter, Lukas Foss and William Schuman. (Consider that, at the end of our recording of *Casey at the Bat*, Schuman himself narrates the final words, "There is no joy in Mudville, the mighty Casey has struck out.") These are just a few of the memorable events attached to our 55 years of history. We still have a lot to do for the various projects, and certainly for the performing events I've described, and there is no question we need your help with financing these programs. They will be significant historically, artistically and entertainment-wise for many years to come. Please be generous and help us to make this a fine year. Next August 21st I will be 80 years old, and I want next season to be a banner year. We aren't done yet!

Yours truly,


Gregg Smith



Drawing by Lawrence Fane — 1976

Andre Watts, Sunday, November 20 at 8 p.m.
Martina Aronson, Sunday, November 20 at 8 p.m.
Brendan Leonard, Sunday, November 20 at 8 p.m.
The Cleveland Orchestra, Monday, January 10 at 8 p.m.
The New York Philharmonic, Monday, January 20 at 8 p.m.
Andre Copland, piano, Monday, February 22 at 8 p.m.
The New York Philharmonic, Monday, March 14 at 8 p.m.
The New York Philharmonic, Monday, March 21 at 8 p.m.
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Gregg Smith Singers
2010-2011 New York Concert Series
42 Custer Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10701

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Gregg Smith Singers



The 39th Year of Our New York Concert Series

Two Saturday Evenings at 8:00 p.m.

- **November 20, 2010**
- **March 12, 2011**

Plus . . . NYC Choral Composers' Readings Workshop March 14 - 17, 2011



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 I'll pick them up at the November concert.
 I am interested in participating in the NYC
Choral Composers Readings Workshop

Gregg Smith Singers

Gregg Smith, Conductor **Thomas Schmidt, Associate Conductor**
2010 – 2011 New York Concert Series



SAINT PETER'S CHURCH
Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, New York City



— **NOVEMBER 20, 2010** —

IN PRAISE OF EMILY DICKINSON

7:30 pre-concert *Conversation with Emily*

Leo Smit - *The Last Hour*
David Thomas

To know just how he suffered would be dear

Fred Thayer - *The Spheres at Play*

Bruce Saylor - *Three Poems by Emily Dickinson*

Dale Jergenson - *Lap the miles*

Elliott Carter

Heart not so heavy as mine
Musicians wrestle everywhere

INTERMISSION

William Vollinger - *What of That*

Gregg Smith - *Emily's Autumn*

HOLIDAY MUSIC

William Billings - *Boston*

A Virgin Unspotted

Virgil Thomson

Song for the New Year

The Holly and the Ivy

George Perle

The Miracle of Saint Nicholas

Thomas Schmidt

O Sleep Now, Holy Baby

Gregg Smith arrangements of Carols from
"Christmas around the World"

— **MARCH 12, 2011** —

PREMIERES, POETRY & SOLOISTS

Stravinsky - *Three Russian Church Pieces*

The Gregg Smith Singers as Soloists

Richard Brooks - *Lux Aeterna*

INTERMISSION

The Gregg Smith Singers as Soloists

Bruce Trinkley

Auld Reikie — 5 Poems of Robert Fergusson

More Emily Dickinson

Jay Anthony Gach - *My Letter to the world*

Richard Thompson - *Emily Swings!*

Michael Hennagin

The House on the Hill (Edward Arlington Robinson)



*This Series is made possible, in part, with public funds
from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency,
and the National Endowment for the Arts*



WORKSHOP WORKSHOP WORKSHOP

The Gregg Smith Singers
with funding from the Alice M. Ditson Fund
announce a special

NYC Choral Composers' Readings Workshop

**Monday, March 14 through
Thursday, March 17, 2011**

A composition will be rehearsed
and taped for each composer
along with commentary during
each 50-minute reading by the Singers
under the supervision of Gregg Smith
with associate conductors
Dale Jergenson and Thomas Schmidt.

Enrollment in workshop is limited
to the first twelve composers to apply.

Fee: \$275

GREGG SMITH SINGERS

42 Custer Avenue

Yonkers, NY 10701

Phone: (914) 376-8899

Email: greggroz1@aol.com

Workshop session on lyrics – with Kim Rich