ABOUT THE THIRTEEN

Hailed as singing with “striking color and richness” (The Washington Post), and praised for “a tight and attractive vocal blend and excellent choral discipline” (American Record Guide), THE THIRTEEN is an all-star professional choir known for inspired and powerful live performance. Since its founding in 2012, the choir has been at the forefront of bringing invigorating performances to the American choral community in repertoire ranging from the Renaissance to the Romantic, from Bach to Bruckner; and from Gregorian chant to the world premieres of new American composers. The Thirteen draws its artists from among the finest ensembles in the world, including Chanticleer, Seraphic Fire, Apollo’s Fire, Conspirare, I Fagiolini, Opera Philadelphia, Boston Early Music Festival and Trinity Wall Street. The choir’s peerless singers are best described by National Public Radio commentator M.D. Ridge: “to talk about the remarkable abilities and sound of the individual singers would… be like trying to say which whitecaps on the ocean reflect the sun most beautifully, or which leaves on a tree dance most gracefully with the wind… I stand in awe.”

The Thirteen’s growing discography includes “Voice Eternal,” the critically-acclaimed Christmas album “Snow on Snow,” “RADIANT DARK,” which features the finest works of the late Tudor period and reached #28 on the iTunes Classical Charts, as well as The Thirteen’s debut recording “…to St. Cecilia.” In 2018 The Thirteen was awarded the Greater Washington Area Choral Excellence award for Most Creative Programming.

In past seasons, The Thirteen has performed and been in residency at Yale University, Bowling Green State University, Eastern Illinois University, the University of Central Oklahoma, York College, The University of Tampa, Virginia Wesleyan University, St. Ambrose University, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Guilford College, as well as concerts throughout the United States. The Thirteen is committed to educating and inspiring the next generation of musicians, and frequently coaches students at the high school and collegiate levels in masterclass, workshop and collaborative performance sessions.

For more information about The Thirteen, please visit www.TheThirteenChoir.org.
ARTISTIC DIRECTION

MATTHEW ROBERTSON, praised for his “sensitive and nuanced” conducting, is acclaimed as the driving force behind the all-star professional choir, The Thirteen, and is acclaimed as a leader in the field. As Founder and Artistic Director of The Thirteen, he has conducted the ensemble throughout the United States and on multiple recordings.

Robertson's 2018-2019 with The Thirteen sees fifteen performances, repertoire spanning more than half of a millennium, collaborations with REBEL Baroque Orchestra and Jeremy Filsell, and numerous world and regional premieres. Robertson will lead residencies at Hood College, St. John’s College, McDaniel College and more. Highlights of his 2018-2019 season include performances of J.S. Bach’s St. John Passion, Handel’s Dixit Dominus, Duruflé's Requiem, Poulenc’s Figure Humaine, David Lang’s the little match girl passion, and much of J.S. Bach's oeuvre. Mr. Robertson will serve as a guest clinician throughout the East Coast and collaborate with many of the finest musicians of his generation, including members of the Metropolitan Opera, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Seraphic Fire, Apollo’s Fire, Trinity Wall Street, Opera Philadelphia, Washington National Opera and more.

During the 2017-2018 season, Robertson led performances of masterworks including Handel’s Messiah and Brahms’ Requiem, served as a presenter at ACDA's Voices United festival, and led workshops throughout the East Coast. Additionally, Robertson served on the faculty of Oberlin Conservatory’s Baroque Performance Institute, a premiere summer institute and festival dedicated to music of the Baroque.

From 2010-2012 Robertson served as Assistant Conductor for the Westminster Symphonic Choir, conducting the choir in performance and assisting in preparation for concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, for such conductors as Yannick Nezet-Seguin, Peter Schreier, Alan Gilbert and Jacques Lacombe.

Mr. Robertson was the Robert P. Fountain Scholar at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, earning a degree in Organ Performance. While at the Oberlin Conservatory he conducted the Oberlin College Choir, College Singers, Musical Union, Conservatory Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra.

Robertson received his M.Mus. in conducting from Westminster Choir College where he studied with Andrew Megill and Joe Miller. He has also worked with such luminary conductors as Norman Scribner, Stan Engebretson, Robert Spano, Joseph Flummerfelt, Gary Graden and JoAnn Falletta.

A Washington, DC native, Robertson serves as Director of Music at Bradley Hills Church, in Bethesda, MD, and serves as a board member of the Washington, DC Chapter of the American Choral Director's Association. Additionally active as an organist, Mr. Robertson has performed throughout the United States and in Western Europe.
REVIEWS & TESTIMONIALS

“...the Thirteen sings with striking color and richness...”

–Washington Post, Anne Midgette

The Thirteen “has a tight and attractive vocal blend and excellent choral discipline. There is a good sense of phrase and deliberate forward movement without exaggerated or artificially imposed dynamic contrasts. Listeners interested in this repertory will not go wrong.”

–American Record Guide

“... The Thirteen, gave a stunning performance of music from the Tudor period at Virginia Wesleyan’s Hofheimer Theater April 10, under Matthew Robertson’s crisply spirited direction. The historically informed program, entitled Immortal Legacy–Tudor Giants, was a shining wonder from start to finish. Meticulous phasing, clear diction, superb blend and extraordinary beauty of sound were among the hallmarks of The Thirteen's performance. I stand in awe.”

–M.D. Ridge on WHRO, the Norfolk, VA NPR Affiliate

“We were grateful to kick back and let the beautiful sounds of this professional choir wash over us.”

–Morristown (NJ) Green, Ken Coughlin

“The concert of the Thirteen was an overwhelming success. I was delighted with the variety to the group’s program as well as its execution. The sound of the Thirteen is exquisite, beautifully balanced with immaculate pitch and superior interpretation of both text and music.”

–Samuel Adler, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, The Juilliard School; Prolific Author and Composer

“The Thirteen, under the leadership of Matthew Robertson, sing with passion and great beauty. They have quickly distinguished themselves among the crowded field of early music vocal ensembles.”

–Scott Tucker, Artistic Director; Choral Arts Society of Washington

“The Thirteen sing with such precision and innate musicality. The many high schoolers in attendance were absolutely smitten by your performance, which is priceless. I was particularly impressed with the programming, and by this I mean your ability to practice historically informed performance and present a completely engaging and innovative selection of historical repertoire. Perhaps the most special part of the weekend, however, was the masterclass with our Chamber Singers. Each and every member of The Thirteen is clearly committed to not only presenting choral art at the highest level of artistry but to openly sharing their knowledge, stories and warm advice with young musicians. I couldn’t have asked for more in a guest artist.”

–Wendy Looker, Director of Choral Activities; Guilford College
Reincarnations
Reincarnations featured a diverse and engaging program of masterworks new and old. Replete with choral pyrotechnics and electric harmonies, Reincarnations featured the American Premiere Performance of Thomas Tallis’ epic Ave Dei patris filia, Samuel Barber’s touching Reincarnations, the virtuosic and infectiously-fun I’ll fly away by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw, and Ted Hearne’s Letter to my father.

Bach Reflections
Three lively and joyous motets by Johann Sebastian Bach provide the framework for this concert. Mingled alongside the motets are works that were separated from Bach by time, style, and sometimes language, including pieces by Jocelyn Hagen, Heinrich Schütz, Giacomo Carissimi, Philip Stopford, Michael Tippett, Bo Hansson and more.

Snow on Snow
This program explored the Christmas story with The Thirteen through English-language works from the 15th century through the present day. Including works by Howells, Todd, Byrd, Tye, Elder, Britten, Walton, Gibbons, Willan and more.

...to St. Cecilia
Spanning the 15th through the 20th century, this program centers around the themes of music and musicians, featuring Tallis’ Gaude gloriosa Dei mater, the twelve-voiced Missa Cantantibus organis Cecilia which was a group effort of Palestrina and his contemporaries, and Benjamin Britten’s Hymn to St. Cecilia.

J.S. Bach's St. John Passion
Bach’s St. John Passion remains one of the most deeply affecting and riveting masterworks in this genre. It is a rich, highly dramatic portrayal of the Biblical passion story with soloists, chorus, and a colorful Baroque orchestra, with rarely heard archaic instruments including the lute and viola da gamba. The radiant purity of sound in this emotionally expressive work shines in poignant arias, powerful choruses, and gentle, reflective chorales.

EDUCATION

Masterclasses
- Choral Masterclass
- Conducting Masterclass
- Early Music Voice Masterclass
- Small Consort Masterclass

Lectures
- Grammar, Style and Rhetoric in Ensemble Singing
- Music of the Early British Masters
- Franco-Flemish Polyphony
- Pre-Concert Lectures

Forum Discussions
- Entrepreneurship in Music
- Be Nice, Be Prepared, Be Generous: Making it in the Music Business
VENUES & RESIDENCIES

Universities | Colleges | High Schools
- Yale University, Institute of Sacred Music (New Haven, CT)
- The University of Tampa (Tampa, FL)
- St. Ambrose University (Davenport, IA)
- Southern Illinois University (Carbondale, IL)
- Eastern Illinois University (Charleston, IL)
- Glenbard East High School (Lambert, IL)
- Baltimore School for the Arts (Baltimore, MD)
- Northern Michigan University (Marquette, MI)
- Guilford College (Greensboro, NC)
- Bowling Green High School (Bowling Green, OH)
- Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, OH)
- University of Central Oklahoma (Edmond, OK)
- York College (York, PA)
- Virginia Wesleyan College (Norfolk, VA)
- Campbell University (Buies Creek, NC)
- Hood College (Frederick, MD)
- St. John's College (Annapolis, MD)
- McDaniel College (Westminster, MD)
- St. Mark's Episcopal Church (Glen Ellyn, IL)
- Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church (Bethesda, MD)
- The Spire Series (Baltimore, MD)
- Church of the Advent (Cape May, NJ)
- Downtown Concert Series (Freehold, NJ)
- Christ Church (Glenridge, NJ)
- Haddonfield Center for the Performing Arts (Haddonfield, NJ)
- Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Hamilton, NJ)
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church (Metuchen, NJ)
- Church of the Immaculate Conception (Montclair, NJ)
- Morristown Presbyterian Church (Morristown, NJ)
- Grace Church (Newark, NJ)
- Church of St. Luke in the Field (New York, NY)
- Church of the Transfiguration (New York, NY)
- St. Thomas Episcopal Church (Fort Washington, PA)
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church (Pennsburg, PA)
- Christ Church (Philadelphia, PA)
- St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Philadelphia, PA)
- Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral (Philadelphia, PA)
- St. James' Episcopal Church (Cincinnati, OH)
- St. Timothy's Episcopal Church (Perrysburg, OH)
- Grace Episcopal Church (Sandusky, OH)
- Abingdon Episcopal Church (Gloucester, VA)
- St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Port Royal, VA)
- Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church (Richmond, VA)
- Live at 10th & G (Washington, DC)

Other Concert Venues
- Orange Congregational Church (Orange, CT)
- The Cosmos Club (Washington, DC)
- St. Columba's Church (Washington, DC)
- Church of the Epiphany (Washington, DC)