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JANUARY—FEBRUARY 2014

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Chris Thile, solo • FEB 15



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# THE KING'S SINGERS

B. EALOVEGA

## A Mondavi Center Special Event

Friday, February 14, 2014 • 8PM

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INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PROVIDED IN HONOR OF  
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THE KING'S SINGERS

**David Hurley** Countertenor

**Timothy Wayne-Wright** Countertenor

**Paul Phoenix** Tenor

**Christopher Bruerton** Baritone

**Christopher Gabbittas** Baritone

**Jonathan Howard** Bass

One of the world's most celebrated vocal ensembles, The King's Singers have a packed schedule of concerts, recordings, media and education work that spans the globe. Instantly recognizable for their spot-on intonation, impeccable vocal blend, flawless articulation of the text and incisive timing, they are also consummate entertainers: a class act with a delightfully British wit.

During the 2013–14 concert season, The King's Singers will perform throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and Australia in some of the world's most famous venues. Launched at the Royal Albert Hall (London), new studio recording and live performance project "Great American Songbook" includes 17 brand new arrangements written specifically for the group.

With a discography of more than 150 recordings, the group's contribution to classical recording was recognized when they were selected to join the Gramophone Hall of Fame in June 2013, marking their influence and inspiration across the years. A new collaborative project sees the group work with oboist Albrecht Mayer for a CD

of works on the theme of winter, released on Deutsche Grammophon.

Deeply committed to new choral music, they have commissioned more than 200 works from prominent contemporary composers and choral luminaries, including Whitacre Richard Rodney Bennett, Maxwell Davies, Ligeti, Rutter, Takemitsu and Tavener. The group is committed to maintaining and developing the international choral canon by commissioning new works from both young and established composers, with the 2013–14 season seeing new works from both James MacMillan and Joanna Marsh.

There are more than two million pieces of sheet music published by The King's Singers in circulation. Their arrangements are sung the world over by school and college choirs, and by ensembles both amateur and professional. The King's Singers are double Grammy® award-winning artists.

Visit [www.kingssingers.com](http://www.kingssingers.com) for the latest news, blog entries, video blogs, tweets and YouTube updates.



# FURTHER LISTENING

by Jeff Hudson

## THE KING'S SINGERS

The most surprising thing about The King's Singers appearance in Jackson Hall this evening is that this will be the first time they've performed here.

The group was organized in 1968, and they've toured extensively over the years. Given that Jackson Hall's acoustic favors vocal ensembles, you'd think The King's Singers might have appeared here at some point during the Mondavi Center's first decade. But better late than never.

The King's Singers spent much of last fall promoting their latest release, "Great American Songbook," launched in mid-October with an appearance in the Elgar Room at the Royal Albert Hall. It's a double album featuring new arrangements (written with this six-voice group specifically in mind) of popular standards from Broadway (and beyond) by the likes of Harold Arlen, Richard Rogers, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and Cole Porter. Included in the set is the Rodgers and Hart classic "My Funny Valentine" – care to guess whether you might hear that song this evening?

Other notable recent releases by The King's Singers include "High Flight," a 2011 album featuring works by the very popular contemporary American choral composers Eric Whitacre and Morten Lauridsen, plus several pieces by British composer Bob Chilcott (who sang tenor with

The King's Singers, back in the '80s and '90s).

The group picked up a Grammy Award (for Best Classical Crossover) for their 2008 album *Simple Gifts*, which included tracks ranging from the ancient English standard "Greensleeves" to arrangements of pop tunes by the likes of Randy Newman and Billy Joel. The album also featured several American spirituals – including "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" – a song I tend to associate with the great Paul Robeson (and other great black vocalists); The King's Singers sang it with something of an English accent.

Also worth a try is The King's Singers technology-assisted recording of "Spem in Alium," the famously-complex 40-part motet composed in the late 1500s by English composer Thomas Tallis. The King's Singers used the recording studio to layer their voices, covering all the parts. (The track is found on their 2006 DVD "From Byrd to the Beatles.")

There are many more albums we could mention – The King's Singers have upwards of 150 recordings to their credit. The vocal line-up has inevitably shifted over the years – countertenor David Hurley is the longest-serving member (since 1990). Members are typically English, though baritone Christopher Bruerton says he's "proud to be a Kiwi."

JEFF HUDSON CONTRIBUTES COVERAGE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS TO CAPITAL PUBLIC RADIO, THE DAVIS ENTERPRISE AND SACRAMENTO NEWS AND REVIEW.

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