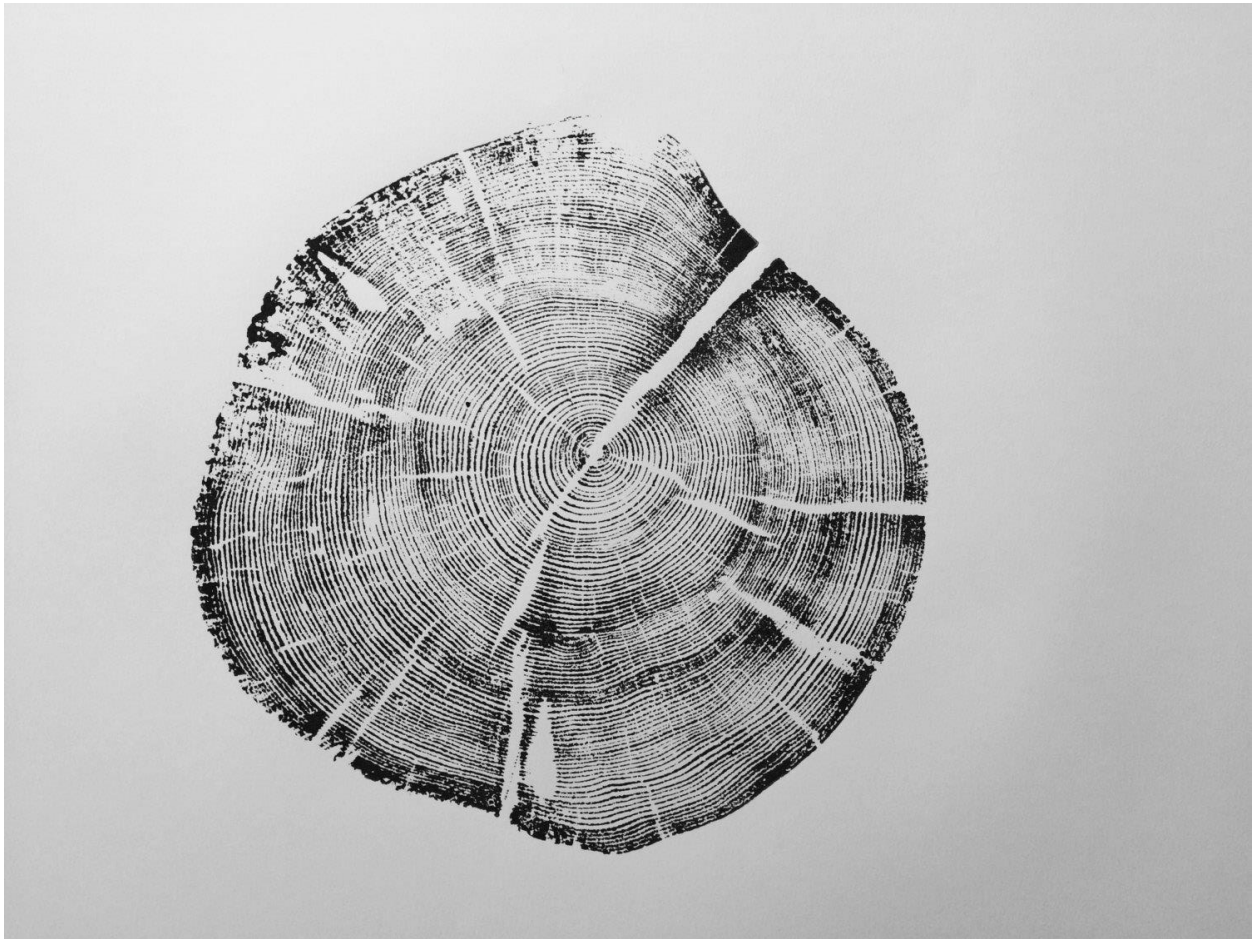


# ROOTS IN THE SKY

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ANDREW MAJOR ▪ CONDUCTOR



LIKE SEASON'D TIMBER

Wednesday, December 23 @ 7 pm

# LIKE SEASON'D TIMBER

Wednesday, December 23 | 7 pm

a concert in the time of the pandemic, filmed & recorded at the Gallatin Valley Fairgrounds

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## Roots in the Sky

Andrew Major, conductor

Sarah Bromell, continuo

Julia Cory Slovarp, Cello

Isobel Anthony, soprano

Erin Henke, soprano

Emily Copeland, soprano

Ana Jarrett, soprano

Hannah Anderson, alto

Kayla Bojkovsky, alto

Cara Robertus, alto

Natalie Mills, alto

Andrew Cantley, tenor

Adam Copeland, tenor

Paul Hunter, tenor

Alan Newbold, tenor

Lukas Graf, baritone

Michael Juel, baritone

Patrick Fischer, bass

John Zirkle, bass

Reid Loessberg, video design

Luke Scheeler, sound design

## PROGRAM

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**JUDITH WEIR**

(b. 1954)

*1. Vertue (from Vertue)*

**KEVIN PUTS**

(b. 1972)

*Most Noble Evergreen (from To Touch the Sky)*

**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**

(1685-1750)

*Komm, Jesu, komm BWV 229*

**ARVO PÄRT**

(b. 1935)

*I Am the True Vine*

**DAVID LANG**

(b. 1957)

*where you go*

**EDIE HILL**

(b. 1962)

*We Bloomed in Spring*

## PROGRAM NOTE

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*Most noble evergreen with your [Roots in the Sky]  
you shine in the cloudless sky of a sphere no earthly eminence can grasp,  
enfolded in the clasp of ministries divine.*

The silence has been heartbreaking, and yet the challenges faced by Roots in the Sky in the time of the pandemic are just a small manifestation of those faced by artists and arts organizations around the world, as well as our whole global human family – threats to lives and livelihoods.

*my body is weary,  
my strength vanishes more and more*

We've had to accept that things don't always go as planned, especially in COVID time, when it feels like time itself barely passes, and yet it slips away from us each day.

*The apparent seasons of life and death  
our eyes can suffer*

In our 2020-21 season, we confront (and sometimes embrace) the isolation we've experienced during the pandemic through imagery of trees, and meditate on this unfolding of time not confined to *evolution* in a linear fashion, but rather as a *revolution*; an equilibrium of hope and futility – a means of waiting.

*I yearn for your peace;  
the sour path becomes  
too difficult for me!*

We begin our season with this program on themes of durability and resilience; as a reminder that renewal happens. And much like the final piece, this program has a peculiar, dual ending – final, and yet unresolved. Expectation and satisfaction.

*Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like season'd timber, never gives;  
But though the whole world turn to coal,  
Then chiefly lives.*

Like you, we long for live performance and miss the dynamic relationships between artists, artwork, and audience. It will be some time before that is possible again, but be assured that when we emerge from this crisis we will welcome you back to a shared space to experience the wonders of this music, together.

*where you go I will go  
where you stay I will stay*

Until then, keep well and keep heart.  
Thank you for being part of this community.  
We are truly grateful.

## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

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### JUDITH WEIR | *1. Vertue (from Vertue)*

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky;  
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,  
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave  
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;  
Thy root is ever in its grave,  
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,  
A box where sweets compacted lie;  
My music shows ye have your closes,  
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like season'd timber, never gives;  
But though the whole world turn to coal,  
Then chiefly lives.

— George Herbert (1593-1633)

### KEVIN PUTS | *Most Noble Evergreen (from To Touch the Sky)*

Most noble evergreen with your roots in the sun:  
you shine in the cloudless sky of a sphere no earthly eminence can grasp,  
enfolded in the clasp of ministries divine.  
You blush like the dawn,  
you burn like a flame of the sun.

— Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

### J.S. BACH | *Komm, Jesu, komm BWV 229*

*Komm, Jesu, komm, mein Leib ist müde,  
die Kraft verschwindt je mehr und mehr,  
ich sehne mich nach deinem Frieden;  
der saure Weg wird  
mir zu schwer!  
Komm, ich will mich dir ergeben,  
du bist der rechte Weg,  
die Wahrheit und das Leben.*

*Drum schließ ich mich in deine Hände  
und sage, Welt, zu guter Nacht!  
Eilt gleich mein Lebenslauf zu Ende,  
ist doch der Geist wohl angebracht.  
Er soll bei seinem Schöpfer schweben,  
weil Jesus ist und bleibt  
der wahre Weg zum Leben.*

Come, Jesus, come, my body is weary,  
my strength vanishes more and more,  
I yearn for your peace;  
the sour path becomes  
too difficult for me!  
Come, I will yield myself to you;  
you are the right path,  
the truth and the life.

Thus I enclose myself into your hands  
and say goodnight to you, world!  
Even though my lifetime rushes to its end,  
my spirit is well prepared.  
It shall soar with its Savior,  
since Jesus is and remains  
the true path to life.

— Paul Thymich (1656-1694)

ARVO PÄRT | *I Am the True Vine*

- I I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
- II Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
- III Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
- IV Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
- V I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.
- VI If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
- VII If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
- VIII Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.
- IX As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.
- X If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.
- XI These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.
- XII This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
- XIII Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
- XIV Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

— John 15: 1–14

DAVID LANG | *where you go*

where you go  
where you stay  
where you live  
where you die

don't make me leave you  
don't make me turn away from you  
don't make me go

where you go I will go  
where you stay I will stay  
where you live I will live  
where you die I will die

don't make me leave you  
I will never leave you  
don't make me turn away from you  
I will never turn away from you  
don't make me go  
I will never go

— David Lang (b. 1957),  
after the Book of Ruth

EDIE HILL | *We Bloomed in Spring*

We  
bloomed in Spring.

Our bodies  
are the leaves of God.

The apparent seasons of life and death  
our eyes can suffer;

but our souls, dear. I will just say this forthright:  
they are God  
Himself,

we will never perish  
unless He  
does.

— St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582),  
translated by Daniel Ladinsky

## ROOTS IN THE SKY

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With performances described as “the best choral singing we’ve ever heard in Bozeman (or almost anywhere),” **Roots in the Sky** (formerly the Aoide Chamber Singers) has established itself as Montana’s premier chamber choir through a commitment to presenting thoughtfully programmed performances of historical and contemporary choral works that ask questions about the world in which we are living.

Sought-after for collaborations, Roots in the Sky has appeared in performance with Grammy-Award winning choir The Crossing, Jitro Czech Children’s Choir, and many of the Gallatin Valley’s finest instrumentalists. Roots in the Sky have performed across the state of Montana at venues including at the Tippet Rise Arts Center as part of the Montana State University Honors College Musicale, in Red Lodge as part of Music from the Beartooths, in the Bozeman Public Library as part of the Montana Chamber Music Society’s Noon Notes series for elementary students, as the chorus of a contemporary chamber opera at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center in Big Sky, at First Presbyterian Church of Bozeman as part of their Mainly Music season, at mass in the Cathedral of St. Helena, and in concert in Missoula, Kalispell, and Big Sky.

Most recently, Roots in the Sky presented the Northwest premiere of Joby Talbot’s epic choral odyssey *Path of Miracles* and collaborated with The Crossing for the World Premiere performance of Pulitzer Prize-Winning composer David Lang’s *in nature*, a work specifically designed for the concept of singing together from a distance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Upcoming projects include our inaugural season as Roots in the Sky, *The Trees of the Lonely*, and a collaboration with James Sewell Ballet of Minneapolis that explores a series of juxtapositions – ballet and choir, urban and rural performance settings, and engaging with sacred and secular perspectives on death and grief – to ask questions about the ways in which we view ourselves in relation to others through a counterpoint of ballet and choir.

## ANDREW MAJOR

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**Andrew Major** is a Thomas R. Kasdorf scholar in choral music in his second year of doctoral studies in Choral Conducting at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music studying under Grammy-Award winning conductor Donald Nally. At Northwestern, Andrew serves as the assistant conductor of the Bienen Contemporary/Early Vocal Ensemble (BCE) and sings with BCE, University Chorale, and in the Recital Chorus. He has also served as the conductor of NU Camerata, the choral department’s non-major treble choir, and as the assistant conductor of the University Singers. Additionally, Andrew has conducted performances with the Renaissance Singers and the Undergraduate Company of Opera Singers. Most recently, Andrew served as the chorus master for the Northwestern Opera Theatre’s pioneering, remote production of Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*. An active singer in Chicago, Andrew has appeared with the Grant Park Chorus, Stare at the Sun, and the Calyx Ensemble and is the tenor section leader at Glencoe Union Church.

Andrew is the Artistic Director and Conductor of Roots in the Sky (formerly the Aoide Chamber Singers), a Bozeman-based chamber choir he founded in his first year at Montana State University where he earned a B.A. in Music, a B.S. in Cell Biology & Neuroscience, and an Honors College Baccalaureate *Summa cum laude*. In 2016, Andrew was honored with an MSU Award for Excellence, awarded to 40 of MSU’s top seniors for academic excellence, campus leadership, and community service. At this time, Andrew was also awarded the Torleif Asheim Community Involvement Award which recognizes one student from each college for community involvement.

Andrew participated as a conducting fellow at the 2015 Westminster Choir College Choral Institute studying under Simon Carrington and at the Big Sky Choral Initiative in 2015, 2016, and 2017 with Donald Nally. Additionally, Andrew conducted as part of the American Choral Directors Association’s National Conference Masterclass with Ann Howard Jones and Jerry McCoy and in masterclasses with Craig Hella Johnson, Matthew Halls, James Jordan, and Andrew Megill.

## DONORS

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Roots in the Sky thanks the following donors whose generous support makes our season possible.  
(Contributions listed as of December 1, 2020.)

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Patrick Fischer

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ROOTS IN THE SKY

ANDREW MAJOR • CONDUCTOR



— ROOTS IN THE SKY 2020-21: a season in the time of the pandemic —

## THE TREES OF THE LONELY



### JUST A COLLECTION OF TREES

TBD (early Spring)

*there is a forest which isn't a forest  
just a collection of trees*  
— Poul Borum

an equilibrium of hope and futility — a means of waiting — through portraits of natural and human cycles



### IN FACT, IN BUD

TBD (late Spring)

*And though I'm poisoned  
choking on the small change*

*of human hope,  
daily beaten into me*

*look: I am still alive—  
in fact, in bud.*  
— Kathleen Jamie

an invitation to listen, to accept the wisdom gained through sorrow