



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MONMOUTH CIVIC CHORUS PRESENTS MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE
Acclaimed Chorus to Feature Iconic Shorter Works of Lauridsen and More**

The award-winning Monmouth Civic Chorus presents *Message in a Bottle: Songs Sent Across the Seas* on Sunday, May 21, 2023, at 4 p.m. This crowd-pleasing concert comprises a collection of iconic shorter works originating in the United States and Europe, featuring favorites by Morten Lauridsen to celebrate his 80th year. The chorus will tour to Austria and Italy with similar repertoire in July.

“The choral works Morten Lauridsen created in the 1990s reignited the choral repertoire, earning quickly and truthfully the oft-meaningless designation ‘instant classics.’ I’ll never forget hearing them for the first time, feeling them mesmerize my young musical mind, said Dr. Brandau. “This was music that somehow glimmered, shone, and pulsed in a way I hadn’t experienced before. Lauridsen alit on a combination of harmony and voicing that beguilingly and powerfully conveyed the images of light and spirit and mystery in his texts.”

Message in a Bottle: Songs Sent Across the Seas takes place Sunday, May 21, 2023, at 4 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church of Freehold, 118 West Main Street, Freehold, N.J. Ticket prices are \$35 adult, \$32 senior, \$30 group, \$15 student.

All chorus members are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and engage in serial testing per CDC guidelines before the performance. Audience members are no longer required to show proof of vaccination. Masking is respected, but not required. MCC will follow all forthcoming state mandates and reserves the right to amend these policies if it becomes advisable. Tickets and information are available at monmouthcivicchorus.org or (732) 933-9333.

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Event Summary

Event title: *Message in a Bottle: Songs Sent Across the Seas*

Event sponsor: Monmouth Civic Chorus

Date and time: Sunday, May 21, 2023, 4 p.m.

Location: First Presbyterian Church of Freehold, 118 West Main Street, Freehold

Tickets: \$35 adult, \$32 senior, \$30 group (10 or more), \$15 student

About Monmouth Civic Chorus: Monmouth Civic Chorus makes the music that moves you. The Chorus has been called “near-flawless” (*Asbury Park Press*), “alive and evocative” (*The Star-Ledger*) and “superior” (*Red Bank Green*). MCC is the proud recipient of the 2008 ASCAP/Chorus America Alice Parker Award, the 2010 Spinnaker Award for Arts and Culture from the Eastern Monmouth Area Chamber of Commerce, and a third-place winner of the 2018-19 American Prize Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music.

About Ryan James Brandau: Artistic Director Ryan James Brandau has broad experience conducting a variety of choral and orchestral ensembles. In addition to his work with Monmouth Civic Chorus, he serves as Artistic Director of Princeton Pro Musica and Amor Artis, a chamber choir and orchestra in New York City. He has also served on the faculty of Westminster Choir College, where he has worked with the Symphonic Choir, which he has prepared for performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and the New Jersey Symphony. He remains active as a choral arranger, composer, and clinician, whose arrangements and compositions have been featured by choral ensembles across the globe. Ryan received the Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees from the Yale School of Music. Prior to pursuing graduate study in conducting, Ryan attended the University of Cambridge in the UK as a Gates Scholar, earning an M.Phil. in historical musicology. He received his B.A. in music, *magna cum laude*, from Princeton University.

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