

Our Directors

Vera Kochanowsky, founder and director of Carmina and Illuminare, is a graduate of the Oberlin and New England Conservatories. She holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Stanford University, where she specialized in the performance practices of the 17th and 18th centuries. Active as a choral conductor, harpsichord soloist, and chamber musician, Dr. Kochanowsky has performed with numerous Washington area groups including the National Gallery Chamber Players, the Bach Sinfonia, Ensemble Gaudior, and the Washington Kantorei. Dr. Kochanowsky founded Carmina in 1997, and in 2006 she started the Carmina Women's Ensemble, now known as Illuminare. She teaches harpsichord, voice, and chamber music privately.

Hubert Beckwith, assistant director of Carmina, teaches music history and literature at George Mason University. After earning a PhD in musicology at the University of Maryland, he became the first executive secretary of the American Handel Society. He has led choirs at area churches, serving more than two decades as a church music director. A composer, arranger, and writer on music, he often prepares performing editions for Carmina and Illuminare. In 2004 Carmina sang his Beethoven birthday tribute to much acclaim at the German Embassy. Dr. Beckwith has sung with Carmina since 1998 and has shared in its direction since 2007.



Hubert and Vera at the Ovation Awards dinner, June 1, 2016

About Us

CARMINA, Latin for “poetry” or “songs,” is a chamber choir devoted to exploring the diverse musical styles of the Middle Ages through the Baroque. Founded in 1998, the group has sung at many prestigious venues in the Washington area, including the National Gallery of Art, the German Embassy, Washington National Cathedral, and the Church of the Annunciation. Collaborators have included Ensemble Gaudior, Armonia Nova, the Washington Kantorei, and the Bach Sinfonia, as well as sibling ensemble Illuminare. Since 2004 the group has regularly performed as part of the Washington Early Music Festival. Carmina has received praise from the *Washington Post*; the *Baltimore Sun* noted the group’s “gorgeous tonal balance.” Three CDs are available at concerts and through Carmina’s website: *A Carmina Sampler*, the medieval miracle play *The Son of Getron*, and Buxtehude’s *Membra Jesu nostri* with Ensemble Gaudior.

Illuminare, established in 2006, focuses on early vocal repertoire composed or arranged for women’s voices. The name reflects the ensemble’s mission: to illuminate exceptional vocal music of past centuries. Just as beautiful initial letters, or illuminations, decorated medieval manuscripts, the group strives to enhance and enrich the lives of its listeners through its performances. Illuminare has performed with many respected Washington area ensembles including Slaveya, the District Eight, Eya, and the Capitol Hill Chorale, as well as Carmina. Of its recent appearance at the Boston Early Music Festival, *Early Music America* magazine noted: “Among the few concerts exploring the Middle Ages was a beautifully planned, moving, and unusual program of monophony and more, presented by the women’s chorus Illuminare.” The group’s CD *Illuminare Sings!* is available at concerts and through the Carmina website.

Carmina and Illuminare were honored to receive the Choralis Foundation’s 2016 Ovation Award in the category of Best Chamber Chorus in the capital region.

For more information, please call
(703) 532-9356, find **CARMINA** and **Illuminare**
on Facebook, or visit our website:

www.CARMINA.org



Our Nineteenth Season

2016 – 2017

CARMINA & Illuminare
**Behind Closed Doors:
Music from Italian Convents**
Saturday, November 5, 2016

CARMINA & Illuminare
Holiday Lobbying at the Willard
Wednesday, December 14, 2016

CARMINA
In the Footsteps of Ockeghem
Saturday & Sunday, April 22 & 23, 2017

Illuminare
**The Play of the Virtues
by Hildegard von Bingen**
Sunday, May 7, 2017

 *CARMINA & Illuminare*

*Behind Closed Doors:
Music from Italian Convents*

with
Doug Poplin, violoncello;
Thomas MacCracken, organ

Saturday, November 5, 2016 at 8 pm
St. Mary Mother of God Catholic Church
727 5th Street NW, Washington DC 20001
Street parking • Metro: Gallery Place
Suggested donation: \$20/\$10 students

Despite the sometimes vehement opposition of the church hierarchy, which strove to limit service music to plainchant, Italian convents of the seventeenth century were hotbeds of musical creativity that drew the public to performances of the highest caliber. Although seemingly isolated from the outside world, these cloistered composers were well versed in the latest Baroque styles as championed by Monteverdi and other *seconda prattica* composers.

Our program focuses on music by three of the most prolific female composers of the period: Lucrezia Orsina Vizzana (Bologna), Isabella Leonarda (Novara), and Chiara Margarita Cozzolani (Milan), and will feature Cozzolani's Paschal Mass. We will also sing works by contemporary male composers Francesco Cavalli (Venice) and Domenico Mazzocchi (Rome). Join Carmina, Illuminare, and our guest instrumentalists for what promises to be a unique and inspiring concert!

 *CARMINA & Illuminare*

Holiday Lobbying at the Willard

**Wednesday, December 14, 2016
at 5:30 and 6:45 pm**
Willard InterContinental Hotel
1401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Metro: Federal Triangle
Free admission • Limited seating

Celebrate the season with both ensembles in the beautifully decorated lobby of the historic Willard Hotel, where "lobbying" got its name. Hear seasonal music both joyous and tender, and sing along with us in Franz Gruber's own setting of his beloved hymn *Stille Nacht* (Silent Night). Seating is first come, first served. There is ample standing room.

Two 45-minute performances

 *CARMINA*

In the Footsteps of Ockeghem

Saturday, April 22, 2017 at 8 pm
The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer
6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda, MD 20816
Free street parking • Suggested donation \$15

Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 3 pm
St. George's Episcopal Church
905 Princess Anne St., Fredericksburg, VA 22401
540-373-4133 • Free street parking
stgeorgesepiscopal.net
Tickets at the door \$10/students free

Honored in his day as an exceptional composer, and even more as a kind and patient teacher, Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1410-1497) directly and indirectly influenced a generation of younger composers of the Franco-Flemish school.

Carmina presents sacred and secular works by Josquin, Busnois, Obrecht, Brumel, and Ockeghem himself. Our featured work will be the *Missa de Venerabili Sacramento* by Johannes Prioris.

 *Illuminare*

The Play of the Virtues

by Hildegard von Bingen

with
Allison Mondel, soprano,
as Anima (the Soul);
Wilson Hutton, actor,
as Diabolus (the Devil)

Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 4:30 pm
Fairfax United Methodist Church
10300 Stratford Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22030
703-591-3120
fairfaxumc.org
Free parking
Free-will donation

Illuminare presents an abridged version of Hildegard von Bingen's morality play, *Ordo Virtutum*. Tempted by the Devil, the Soul strays, but is redeemed with the help of the Virtues. This is Hildegard's most ambitious musical work and one of the oldest musical plays from western Europe.

As a prelude, Illuminare will sing musical contemplations on the subject of Virtue from the Carmina Burana manuscript, compiled in the early thirteenth century.

