



Robert Cooper, C.M.  
Artistic Director

Walter Mahabir  
Apprentice Conductor

Edward Moroney  
Accompanist

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**IDENTITIES: Glorious and Free**

**Orpheus celebrates the 125th anniversary of the Ukrainian settlement and Canada's proud history of cultural diversity at Koerner Hall.**

**On Sunday May 14, 2017** the Orpheus Choir of Toronto will host their season finale, **Identities**, featuring renowned soloists Andriana Chuchman, soprano, and James Westman, bass-baritone, together with the Vesnivka Choir and Toronto Ukrainian Male Chamber Choir (Kvitka Kondracki, Artistic Director) and the Orpheus Concert Orchestra at 3:30 PM at Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. West.

Under the artistic direction of Robert Cooper, this gala concert features the Ontario premiere of Canadian composer Larysa Kuzmenko's *The Golden Harvest*. Based on a libretto by Talia Zajac, this trilingual oratorio (Ukrainian, French, English) tells the story of the Ukrainian immigration to Canada 125 years ago and their arduous journey to new beginnings. Ms. Kuzmenko has been compared to film composers John Williams and Danny Elfman for her "vivid imagination".

To complement its themes, John Estacio's magnificent choral exploration of racial unity, *The Houses Stand Not Far Apart*, will also be performed. Together these two major choral orchestral scores express in bold and poignant terms, significant statements of social justice, reflecting how Canadian values have been shaped by cultural diversity. This is music of deep feeling and transformation, and a glorious musical tribute to both the 125th Ukrainian and 150th Canadian anniversaries.

Internationally acclaimed Canadian soloists Andriana Chuchman, soprano and James Westman, bass-baritone will be joining the Orpheus Choir for this special performance. Ukrainian-Canadian opera singer, Ms. Chuchman was described by the Washington Post as having "a full, sure, glorious sound you want to sink into". James Westman is considered "one of Canada's most promising Opera singers, with a lush, soaring, flexible voice". Nominated for two Grammy awards and three Juno awards, Mr. Westman is a Stratford born baritone and Orpheus Sidgwick Scholar Alumni.

A spectacular tribute to the Ukrainian pioneers and all Canadian immigrant communities, Orpheus Choir's season finale, **Identities**, is a concert not to be missed.

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**Concert Tickets:** <http://performance.rcmusic.ca/tickets/seats/27401>

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The **Orpheus Choir of Toronto** has earned a reputation as "one of Toronto's most distinguished and important choirs" (Larry Beckwith, WholeNote Magazine). Under the artistic leadership of Robert Cooper, the seventy-voice ensemble offers a sumptuous entertainment experience, in keeping with its mandate to celebrate life through the discovery and performance of fine choral music. Now in its 53rd season, the Orpheus choir continues to transform Canadian choral performance by championing new and little-known works by Canadian and international composers, and creating immersive presentations and experiences for Toronto audiences. In the last six years alone, the Choir has performed North American or World premieres of works by such composers as Ēriks Ēšņvalds, Howard Goodall, Allan Bevan and Imant Raminsh. With a wide-ranging repertoire of music ranging from secular to sacred, time-honoured classics to experimental works, choral collaborations and forays into multimedia performances, it's only fitting that the Orpheus Choir's mantra is "Expect Something Different". There is truly something for everyone.