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Chorus pro Musica presents the Gershwins' 'Of Thee I Sing'

Robbins Memorial Town Hall Auditorium | May 13, 2017, at 8 p.m.

BOSTON — [Chorus pro Musica](#), directed by [Jamie Kirsch](#), will present a concert version of **George and Ira Gershwin's** Pulitzer Prize-winning musical **"Of Thee I Sing"** on **May 13 at 8 p.m.** at Robbins Memorial Town Hall Auditorium in Arlington, Massachusetts.

This all-American political satire, set in Washington, D.C., in the 1930s, focuses on the election, campaign and presidency of John P. Wintergreen. His party, lacking a viable platform, runs on love, promising that if elected, he will marry the partner chosen for him at an Atlantic City beauty pageant. When he falls in love with his campaign secretary instead of the contest winner, he finds himself embroiled in an international scandal.

The original Broadway production opened in 1931 and ran for 441 performances. The following year, it became the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize. The New York Times called a 2006 revival "one of the silliest and yet most sublime things on a New York stage right now."

Some eight decades after its premier, this hilarious portrayal of America's highest office still provides nonpartisan comic relief from present-day concerns. With unnerving prescience, this 1930s send-up of the "reality-TV" elements of our political system eerily may ring even more true today. It's "Saturday Night Live" meets Gilbert and Sullivan, with a touch of Kurt Weill. Yet, according to Kirsch, it was not so much the timely jokes as the charming music, especially the grand choruses, that tilted the scales to add "Of Thee I Sing" to CpM's 2016-17 season.

"This presidential election cycle was well underway when we made the decision to include it. Perhaps current affairs elevated it to the top of the list, but musically, it stands on its own and features a multitude of splendid choral numbers and delightful characters," said Kirsch. "CpM has a long history of presenting concert versions of operas, and 'Of Thee I Sing' is an exciting prospect for any chorus — everyone here is really excited to perform it."

CpM's presentation features [Margaret Rood](#), soprano; [Christina English](#), mezzo-soprano; and [David McFerrin](#), baritone. Matthew McMahan will direct.

CpM's concert version of 'Of Thee I Sing' is presented through a special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com

About Chorus pro Musica: Now in its 67th season, Chorus pro Musica (CpM), under the direction of Jamie Kirsch, is a Boston-based chorus recognized for innovative programming and superb performances of beloved classics and new works that inspire singers and listeners alike.

The chorus was founded in 1949 by the late Alfred Nash Patterson, one of the most influential forces in choral music in New England, and quickly built a superb reputation for its professional-level musical standards and innovative programming. Over the years, these strengths have led to collaborations with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Philharmonic, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, Craig Smith and Emmanuel Music, and the Boston Academy of Music, as well as various opera companies, including Boston Concert Opera, the Opera Company of Boston and Commonwealth Opera. CpM has recently commissioned works from composers such as James Kallenberg, Stephen Feigenbaum, Peter Child, Abbie Betinis and Andrew Rindfleisch and has presented numerous regional premieres, including that of Roger Ames's "Requiem for Our Time" (subsequently nominated for a Pulitzer Prize) and Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Attila."

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