



Lionheart is one of America's leading ensembles in vocal chamber music. Acclaimed for its "smoothly blended and impeccably balanced sound" (Allan Kozinn, *The New York Times*), Lionheart (Jeffrey Johnson, Lawrence Lipnik, John Olund, Richard Porterfield, Kurt-Owen Richards, and Michael Ryan-Wenger) is best known for its interpretation of medieval and Renaissance a cappella music, with Gregorian Chant as the keystone of its repertoire. The ensemble also collaborates with instrumental ensembles,

dance companies, and contemporary composers, and was recently selected for inclusion on the Star Spangled Touring Roster, the first year of an initiative by Early Music America.

Lionheart has released two CDs on the Nimbus label: "My Fayre Ladye: Tudor Songs and Chant: (1997), and "Paris 1200: Chant and Polyphony from 12<sup>th</sup> Century France" (1998). The ensemble is also heard on Sony Music's CD companion to *A History of Western Music*, and on NPR's "Christmas Around the Country II," a collection of favorites from NPR's *Performance Today*. The group recently recorded a new CD of the music of Palestrina and his contemporaries with Koch International which is due for release in October of 2001. On radio, Lionheart has been featured on *Performance Today*, on PRI's *Harmonia*, on WGBH, and appears regularly on WNYC. Lionheart has also received significant air play on Radio Shanghai, which broadcasts Western music to a wide audience in China.

In 1998 the six men of Lionheart began a continuing collaboration with Anonymous 4, joining forces to explore rare and ravishing repertoire to create a combined sound that is "mystical... resonant with haunting beauty" (*The New York Times*). In December 2000, Lionheart furthered its commitment to presenting the work of living composers by premiering a new piece by composer Julia Wolfe as part of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival.

In New York City Lionheart performs regularly on the distinguished series *Music Before 1800*, at The Cloisters, and in its own concert series at Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church. The ensemble has also appeared at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, at Lincoln Center, and at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall (in collaboration with composer Steve Reich). Out-of-town venues include the Kennedy Center, the National Cathedral and the Folger Library in Washington, D.C., the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Friends of Chamber Music series in Kansas City, and the campuses of Stanford, UCLA, and Yale University. In Europe they have participated in festivals including *musikpodium* in Stuttgart, *Tage Alte Musik* in Regensburg, and the Covent Garden Festival in London.



**Jeffrey Johnson**, baritone, recently appeared in the Steve Reich video opera "The Cave". Other recent performances include the Boston Early Music production of Purcell's semi-opera "King Arthur" and the Robert Wilson-Philip Glass opera "Einstein on the Beach". Recordings include *Voices of Ascension*, the Gregg Smith Singers, Ensemble for Early Music, Toby Twining Music, *Musica Sacra*, and *Pomerium*. Recordings can be heard on Catalyst, Delos, Electra Nonesuch, MusicMaster, Dorian, and Deutsche Grammophon Archiv. He has also been active on Broadway and regional theater as a performer and director in plays and musicals from "Death of a Salesman" and "Eastern Standard" to "A Lion in Winter" and "Three Musketeers". Future projects include a piece with Wendy Carlos.



**Kurt-Owen Richards**, bass, is an accomplished performer in a wide range of styles. A graduate of Indiana University, his work ranges from medieval liturgical drama to experimental music theater. He performs regularly with such distinguished ensembles as The American Bach Soloists, New York's Ensemble for Early Music, the Waverly Consort, and *Pomerium*. Mr. Richards may be heard on the Koch International releases of the American Bach Soloists' one-on-a-part recordings of Bach cantatas and motets and PGM recordings of Schutz and Rossi. When not singing, he indulges his passion for computers as Technology Solutions Manager for EmcArts, Inc., an arts consulting firm.



**Richard Porterfield**, baritone, is a Ph.D. Candidate in Music Theory at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY) writing his dissertation on the tonal structure of Gregorian Chant. He is also an Associate Teaching Professor at the Mannes College of Music; in 2008 he established the Mannes Schola to assist him in lectures on medieval and Renaissance music at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2009 he was a guest lecturer at Yale (his alma mater), and Music Advisor for the WNET film *The Music Instinct: Science and Song* broadcast nationwide on PBS.



**Lawrence Lipnik**, countertenor, has performed with many acclaimed early music ensembles from Anonymous 4 and ARTEK to the Waverly Consort. He is a founding member of the viol consort Parthenia and vocal ensemble Lionheart, and is a frequent music collaborator with video artist William Wegman. He has recently prepared a performing edition of Francesco Cavalli's opera *La Calisto*, which was commissioned by the Juilliard School and performed by the San Francisco Opera and was continuo gambist and recorder player as well as musical score research and preparation for a new production of Monteverdi's *Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* at Wolf Trap. In addition to performing, he currently serves on the board of VdGS/NY and is co-director of the New York Recorder Guild, enjoys a busy teaching schedule which has included national and international festivals from the Benslow Music Trust in the UK, Port Townsend, and the San Diego Early Music Festival to Pinewoods and Amherst Early Music, instructor of viol, recorder and early music performance at Wesleyan University, and is music editor for an upcoming authoritative edition of the original songs from the plays of William Shakespeare. He has recorded for numerous labels including EMI, Angel, Nimbus, Virgin, Sony, Koch International and Cantaloupe.



**John Olund**, tenor, is known as a versatile performer of vocal chamber music, particularly early and contemporary. He is a member of the Waverly Consort and has appeared with such notable ensembles as the New York Consort of Viols, Pomerium, Concert Royal, the Alliance for American Song, New York Baroque, Anonymous 4, and Music Before 1800 Productions. He has toured extensively in the United States, Europe, South America and the Far East, and has recorded for CBS Masterworks, and ENE Classics.



**Michael Ryan-Wenger** is a tenor, composer, choral conductor and graphic designer, not necessarily in that order at any given moment. In addition to Lionheart, he has appeared with such distinguished groups as Anonymous 4, Vox Vocal Ensemble, and the Kansas City Chorale. Michael gave the world premiere of Richard Hundley's "Oh My Darling Troubles Heaven" in a concert given by Joy in Singing, honoring Hundley's lifetime achievements. Michael has recorded for Nimbus and Koch Classics. As a composer, Michael's choral anthem, "In the Beginning Was the Word," is published by Augsburg Fortress Publishers. A song set, "In the Center of Your Soul - Poetry of James Kavanaugh," received its debut by soprano Debra Scroggins Sowerwine. Michael is also a composer and performer in the pop/dance music duo "DVNT." In his "spare" time, Michael is a graphic designer, primarily in packaging design, and enjoys putting little labels on anything he can.