

## Best Turnout Ever for Spring Concert

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*Paul Meers (right) leads the choir*

The AUB Choir and Choral Society performed their Spring Concert on Monday May 26th, at 8pm in Assembly Hall, to an audience of around 600 people. The performance featured distinguished guest organist from Switzerland, Antje Traub, and Reem Deeb, assistant professor of music at AUB.

Paul Meers, director of the AUB Choir and assistant professor at AUB, introduced the evening's delightful program of festive music by George Frideric Handel, in the presence of President John Waterbury, important members of the AUB community, and the Ambassadors from Switzerland, USA, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Many secondary school students that had participated in the high school workshop in March also attended the concert.

The concert opened with four pieces from the English renaissance, three by Thomas Weelkes and the fourth by Orlando Gibbons. This was followed by three pieces by Felix Mendessohn, where the choir joyfully celebrated the arrival of spring.

Reem Deeb, assistant professor at AUB performed Handel's aria 'Let the Bright Seraphim', where voice and trumpet perform a brilliant duet accompanied by strings and continuo.



*Reem Deeb*



*Dr Antje Traub*

Antje Traub then gave a thrilling performance of Handel's Organ concerto Op 4, No 4 with the orchestra. Her expressive playing in the andante and adagio movements contrasted beautifully with clear articulation in allegro movements, demonstrating a sure sense of baroque-era performance practice and style, and a keen awareness of ensemble balance with the orchestra.

Finally the concert ended with Handel's Coronation Anthems for

King George II, 'The King Shall Rejoice' and 'Zadok the Priest.'

Meers says of the event "It was very festive, with baroque-style chamber orchestra, much like the one Handel would have used." Meers adds, "it was also our best ever turnout for a spring concert." Considering the costs involved in such a professional event, Meers stated that he is very grateful to all the individual supporters who made it all possible. Major funding came from The Cultural Fund of the Embassy of Switzerland, Pro Helvetia Schweizer Kulturstiftung, the University Student-Faculty Committee, The AUB President's Club and Marti Farha Ammar, as well as other individual contributors.



*National Symphony Orchestra*

In addition to her performance in the AUB Choir concert, Antje Traub played a program of virtuoso organ music on the recently-restored Marcussen organ in Assembly Hall on May 24. The program included works by J. S. Bach, Felix Mendelssohn, and the Swiss composer, Paul Hindemith, and was marked by sure technical facility and clear underlining of each of the composers' stylistic demands. She also performed a beautifully-nuanced evening recital of scores by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Ravel, and Swiss composer Andreas Nick for invited guests at the residence of the Swiss ambassador on May 25, and gave lectures and masterclasses for music students at AUB.

The AUB Choir consists of full time undergraduate students from all faculties and majors. The Choral Society was founded in 2000, and consists of graduate students, faculty, staff and members of the community. There are currently 42 members of the choir, and all members must pass an audition at the beginning of each fall semester. Rehearsals start as early as the beginning of the spring term in February. For more information about the AUB Choir, or future events, please send your name and email to Paul Meers at pm05@aub.edu.lb

Paul Meers is now completing his third year as Director of the AUB Choir and Choral Society, and is an assistant professor of music at AUB. Previously he served as Director of Choral Activities at Indiana-Purdue University, taught and conducted

at Indiana University Bloomington and The Florida State University. He did doctoral research and performance in France as the recipient of the Fulbright grant, and has conducted and taught in numerous schools, churches and performing arts organizations in the US.

Reem Deeb is assistant professor of music at AUB. She holds a doctorate of music in Voice Performance, History and Literature, and Organ and Church Music from the internationally-renowned School of Music at Indiana University. She has performed extensively in opera, oratorio and recital, and resides in Lebanon, performing here and abroad.

Antje Maria Traub is a distinguished organist, pianist and music educator from Switzerland. She is instructor of organ and historical keyboard instruments at the Kantonsschule Baden, and holds degrees with high distinction from institutions including the Hochschule for Music in Vienna and the Eastman School in the US. She visited and taught at AUB during the month of May, keeping a very busy schedule.