



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSPIRARE DELIVERS TWO WORLD PREMIERES IN ONE CONCERT

THIS DELICATE UNIVERSE BY ERIC BANKS AND COME TO THE WOODS BY JAKE RUNESTAD TO BE PERFORMED IN THREE EXCLUSIVE TEXAS DATES MAY 8, 9 AND 10

-Featuring a Pre-Concert Composer Symposium Each Night, an Exclusive Sneak Peak Open Rehearsal and intimate Composer Conversations

Austin's Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble **Conspirare** gives patrons a treat with two world premieres in one extraordinary performance. **This Delicate Universe** by composer **Eric Banks** and **Come to the Woods** by composer **Jake Runestad** will both debut in concert on May 8 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Houston and May 9 and 10 at St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Austin.

Each extraordinary night will commence with a special one-hour, **pre-concert symposium** featuring Banks and Runestad, hosted by journalist and composer **Joelle Zigman**, and provide an insider's look into both incredible works for choir. Additionally, patrons are invited to attend a sneak peak **open dress rehearsal** on May 7 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at St. Martin's Lutheran Church Sanctuary.

Composer Conversations is an intimate, and casual gathering with composer Eric Banks to discuss his inspiration behind "This Delicate Universe," including the creative process, his journey to Egypt to visit Constantine Cavafy's apartment, and his relationship with Conspirare's Craig Hella Johnson. Saturday May 9, from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at **Aviary Lounge**. Guests can enjoy a special menu of delicious locally-sourced food, fresh pressed juice, mimosas, iced toddies and more. Available for purchase.

This Delicate Universe, by acclaimed composer Eric Banks, explores human connections with art, home nature, love, and the great beyond. This beautiful and complex work is based on five poems by Greek-Egyptian poet Constantine Cavafy (1863-1933), who is best known for his poetic recreations of classic images of ancient Greece. "I'm honored to have this opportunity to compose **This Delicate Universe** for one of the nation's best vocal ensembles, and I am excited to finally have the chance to collaborate with Conspirare's Craig Hella Johnson again," said Banks.

Conspirare will open the performance with a ten minute prelude of **Come to the Woods** by award-winning composer Jake Runestad. **Come to the Woods** is based on texts by Scottish-American naturalist John Muir. "The music honors John Muir's devotion to the natural world. It will imitate climbing a tree in a storm, exploring a flower, and allowing nature's power to bring peace and healing," said Runestad.

Conspirare and conductor Craig Hella Johnson are excited to give patrons a special treat with two world premieres in one evening. “Debuting both of these remarkable compositions is truly exciting for Conspirare. Banks and Runestad are each known for their compelling and inspirational work, it is a privilege and a joy to explore and share this music with our audience for the very first time,” said Johnson.”

THIS DELICATE UNIVERSE/COME TO THE WOODS

OPEN REHEARSAL

May 7th in Austin, TX

St Martin’s Lutheran Church, 606 W. 15th St. Austin

6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Free and open to the public

RSVP suggested: [Facebook/open rehearsal](#).

COMPOSER CONVERSATIONS

May 9, Austin, TX

Aviary Lounge, 2110 S. Lamar Blvd.

11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Free and open to the public (food/drinks for purchase)

RSVP suggested: [Facebook/Composer Conversations](#)

PERFORMANCES

May 8, Houston, TX

St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Houston, 717 Sage Rd

6:30 p.m. pre-concert talks, 7:30 p.m. performance

Tickets: www.stlukesmethodist.org or 713.622.5710

May 9, Austin, TX

St. Martin’s Lutheran Church, 606 W. 15th St. Austin

7 p.m. pre-concert talks, 8 p.m. performance

May 10, Austin, TX

St. Martin’s Lutheran Church, 606 W. 15th St. Austin

3 p.m. pre-concert talks, 4 p.m. performance

Tickets: <http://conspirare.org/event/eric-banks-this-delicate-universe/>

About Conspirare:

Conspirare is a family of vocal ensembles known for delivering uniquely beautiful and transformative musical experiences. Its flagship ensemble is Grammy® award-winning Company of Voices, a dream team of professional singers from around the country under the leadership of artistic director Craig Hella Johnson. The Conspirare Symphonic Choir and two Conspirare Youth Choirs complete the Conspirare family. Conspirare’s repertoire is as diverse as its talent, spanning eras from medieval to modern. For more information go to www.conspirare.org.

About Eric Banks:

Eric Banks is an established composer, conductor, translator, linguist, vocalist, and clinician. He has garnered international acclaim for his creative direction, and for his unwavering commitment to new music and voices gathered in song. Eric was granted the prestigious *Dale Warland Singers Commission Award* from Chorus America and the American Composers Forum to compose *This Delicate Universe*, a cantata based on climate-change statistics, for the choral ensemble Conspirare. For more information go to www.ericbanks.com

About Jake Runestad:

Jake Runestad is an award-winning composer of music for orchestra, choir, wind ensemble, chamber ensembles, and opera. Having worked with leading ensembles around the world, he **has** established himself as a distinguished young composer of ‘highly imaginative’ and ‘stirring and uplifting’ musical works. For more information go to www.jakerunestad.com