



Women's Voices CHORUS

presents

Angels Among Us

Saturday

February 6, 2021

7:00 p. m.



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Program Notes

Compelling, powerful, and beautiful music amplifies the angelic theme of this season's repertoire. Encompassing a wide range of musical styles and genres, *Angels Among Us* illuminates the stories of angels both sacred and secular. The message of the messengers is multi-faceted: hopeful, healing, watchful, compassionate, merciful, loving and revealing.

During our virtual season, Women's Voices Chorus rehearsed over Zoom each Monday evening. We rehearsed with our mics muted and sorely missed the sound of one another's voices. Even so, our evenings were filled with many of the same elements of a traditional rehearsal – catching up with one another socially (our Happy Half Hour before rehearsal), working on vocal technique, learning the fundamental aspects of our repertoire, and focusing on the expressive elements of our music. We used breakout rooms for sectional rehearsals and small group discussions. While intensely missing what we could not have, we made the most of what we could accomplish virtually, and this opened up opportunities to us that we otherwise would not have experienced. One very special aspect of our virtual rehearsals was inviting guests to join us for the season, including our founding director, Mary Lycan. We also invited guest artists and composers who joined us from as far away as California and Canada. While our virtual rehearsals certainly had limitations, physical distance was not a barrier to participation.

For our concert, we created virtual projects of a sampling of our repertoire. These projects are the result of the contributions of many participants – conductor, singers, pianist, section leaders, and the audio/video designer and editor. These projects began with the creation of guide tracks that singers listened to when they recorded themselves singing their respective parts. These recordings, with the addition of complementary images, were then combined and edited to create the finished pieces.

We look forward to the day that we will once again rehearse and perform our music in person, but until then, we are grateful for the virtual season that has kept Women's Voices Chorus singing together during the pandemic. We hope that you enjoy our virtual concert, *Angels Among Us*.

Laura Sam

Program

A Path to Each Other

Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980) and Timothy C. Takach (b. 1978)
Text by Julia Klatt Singer

Each word a stone
We can build a wall
Or a path to each other.

Rise and Stand by

Words and music by Arianne Abela

from the Justice Choir Songbook

*with The Charlotteans of UNC Charlotte, conductor Ginger Wyrick
and the Meredith College Choirs, conductor Shannon Gravelle,
Ginger Wyrick – Percussion*

I will rise with all my daughters, I will rise against my foes.
I will rise with all the mothers, I will carry all their woes.
I will rise to fight for freedom, I will rise, though faced with fears.
I will rise against all hatred while my eyes are veiled in tears.

I will rise for religious freedom, for a rich diversity,
I will rise for all the weary, for each lonely refugee.
I will work for all our women who deserve equal pay,
I will work for all our children who await a better day.

Sisters, oh, stand with me. Rise up hand in hand.
Oh, stand with me. We will rise to spread love across this bitter land.

I will rise for love and justice that we may see a better day,
I will rise in peace and service for our world in disarray,
I will rise with all my brothers for all those who cannot stand,
I will rise with all our fathers who have lost a home and land.

I will rise to build up bridges for this broken world we see,
I will tear down walls between us that divide you and me.

Brothers, oh, stand with me. Rise up hand in hand.
Oh, stand with me. We will rise to spread love across this bitter land.
I will rise.

Snow Angel

Words and music by Sarah Quartel, Narrations by Lisa Helps

Debbie Davis – Cello; Jennie Vaughn and Ginger Wyrick – Djembe;

Narrators: Diane Wold, First Angel; Olivia Michael, Second Angel; Abbie Delauney, Third Angel

1. Prologue

All his angels, all his heavenly armies. Open your eyes, sweet child.

First Angel

On a rock, head in hand, I sit. Long, white hair falls now to my lap and my old, tired wings rest now at my side. Peaceful. Still.

Dawn. I watch the day come into being: the gentle approach of the sun, the world above, the world below, graced with light. And I, witness of thousands of dawns, can't help but remember, this morning near my passing, a time long ago when for a moment these wings, which define my very angelhood, become invisible.

There was a long spring festival in the countryside where I had been sent. Adults and children alike danced and celebrated the end of winter's shelter, the bountiful green beginnings, the harvests to come. My task was very unique, you see, for I was sent to gather light. Our world then – our world now – both bleak and bright, always on the brink of night. So as the townspeople danced and sang, I opened my magic leather sack and let their light flow in. I went from town to town in this way, and in each town I passed through people greeted me with a generosity of spirit and gentle kindness. Yet, seeking light, I had little time to respond in kind. When I arrived in the last village, just when I had almost enough light, I was stopped.

"I've heard about you," said a young man, close to the age I was then. "You are the angel gathering light to save us all from the world's night."

"That's right," I said, a little too proudly for an angel.

"But if you truly are an angel then where are your wings?"

I was puzzled for a moment, sure that my wings were where they had always been – strapped onto my back with heartstrings. But I tried to flap, nothing. I looked behind me, nothing. Then, panicking, I looked into my magic bag...nothing. Where is the light?

2. Creatures of Light

Creatures of light, such as still play, like motes in the sunshine, round the Lord,
And through their infinite array, transmit each moment, night and day,
The echo of His luminous word! Creatures of light.

When earth lay nearer to the skies than in these days of crime and woe,
And mortals saw, without surprise, in midair, angelic eyes
Gazing upon the earth below. Creatures of light.

Second Angel:

I'm Grace. That's what my father calls me anyway, although most days I'm not sure why. My friends call me Gray, 'cause I'm somewhere in the middle, between black and white, boy and girl, angel and human. I do have wings, though, and I'm seventeen and hip so they're tattooed, and I've even got a piercing in my nose. So this is how it goes. We've been hanging around up here for a while now. Waiting for heaven to fall. Waiting for a call. Every day we look out across the sky, across the city – the urban playground for earthbound teenage angels. And every day we look: we see the city spread, we watch with dread the trees disappear, the rivers run dry – we anticipate the end of thousands of harvests.

We watch with fascination angels in human form look without seeing, hear without listening, touch without feeling. I watch compassion disappear as if it were simply going out of fashion. Compassion. Out of fashion as I suppose my own wings might be, tattooed, when I'm old and wise.

So in a flurry I transcend the borderland of the sky between you and me. I swoop down into the heart of New York City, of Montreal, of Moscow. I creep quietly through graffiti-covered alleyways, looking for a message. Looking for direction. I look into the eyes of the people passing by for a message, for direction. And on one corner sits a woman, with a boy child. She looks at me with innocent eyes. I touch her gently. She smiles, then cries. Around the bend near the end of yet another shop-lined street lies a man. I help him to his feet.

And then I come to you. You look at me as if I were anything but heaven-sent. You cannot see past my tattoos, my piercings, past all of me that is different from all of you. Yet I am also the same, you see, and so you let me take your hand. "Let me show you compassion," I say. I lead you to what used to be a garden; it was your Father's when you were a child. But you had forgotten, you see, and in the meantime it became a parking lot. "But look," I pointed. And there, pushing up through the pavement, a solitary red flower, unselfconsciously perfect. "I remember," you assure me, and so I leave you graced, an adult child in the garden of your Father.

3. God will give orders

God will give orders to his angels about you,
And all his angels, all his armies sing: "ah!"
Do not think poorly of these little children.
All of them have an angel in heav'n,
And all of their angels can see the face of the Father.
And all your angels see the face of your Father.

4. Sweet child

Sweet child, hear my song. Sweet child, I will guard you.
Sweet child, you're the future. Love and mercy show to others.

Faith, like a child, can hear the song,
A song that falls on ears of those who wait,
Like a child, for peace to come.
And trust that we will learn to show them love,

Like a child, who knows no wrong
From being loved by those who've taught them.
Faith, like a child, forever strong.
The circle goes on.

Sweet child, hear my song. Sweet child, I will show you how to love!

Third Angel

I am a small angel. Eight years old to be exact. I have a crooked nose and tiny wings. I like them because they make me a little bit different from everyone else, and that makes me special. I know I'm a special angel for other reasons, too – because I'm one of the only angels my age who has a human friend. She's like me – eight. Where she lives it's almost springtime, and the flowers in her mother's garden are poking their heads up through the snow. But she's sad. At first I thought it was because she couldn't see her own wings, but I learned the other day it's because her best friend moved away and she doesn't know who to love anymore. She is what adults call 'lonely.' But I am a young angel with a big heart and tiny wings, and I know how to love. So I went to visit her before bedtime the other night as she sat at her window looking out at winter's end. She smiled as I danced and sang my song, and she giggled, hiding her face in her hands, when I threw myself into the snow and flapped my wings. And when I got up there was a picture of me left behind in the snow. And I felt happy because the little girl had laughed. And I felt happy because she could see love, like a picture in the show.

First Angel

"Sweet child," I say, here at dawn from the rock of my old age. Sweet children. What do we do when the snow melts, when love remains although love's imprint is gone? Once upon a time I told you I couldn't see my wings. Not because they weren't there, but because in seeking light I had forgotten how to give it. The energy of generosity, of compassion, of love, is circular. Inside we know no differently.

Look and see. Hear and listen. Touch and feel. Each of us, inside, a child in the garden. A flower pushing through the pavement. An angel in the snow. Go.

5. Snow Angel

I went to my window one bright winter's morn and gazed at the new fallen snow.
The world overtaken by flurries of white had set my surroundings aglow.
I looked to the heavens seeking the source of this wonderland newly appeared.
When there I spied a snow angel holding the flakes and spreading them near.

She sang: "Even though the snow may blow,
there's not a wind can stop my music. For I know that winter shelters life."

On silver blue wingtips she soared through the air ensuring the flow'rs were warm.
She knew that her snowflakes would blanket the earth and keep all its friends safe from harm.

I thought for a moment she must be a dream, this angel with silvery wings.
But then I discovered she was heaven sent as her icy lips opened to sing.

She sang: "Even though the snow may blow,
there's not a wind can stop my music. For I know that winter shelters life."

When she knew that the flow'rs were asleep she beat her wings faster to go.
But soon, looking back on the work she had done, She let herself fall to the snow.
I saw for a moment the smile on her face 'fore she launched herself back in the air.
I'm sure there are many snow angels in heav'n, but now I have one down here.

I sing: "Even though the snow may blow
there's not a wind can stop my music. For I know that winter shelters life!"

Angels of Mercy

Words and music Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

Written for and Dedicated to American Red Cross

Arr. Milton James

Angels of Mercy, there's so much to do.
The heavens are gray overhead.
Angels of Mercy, they're calling to you.
So march with your crosses of red.
March where the darkness shuts out the light,
March where there is no dawn.
Angels of mercy the world's covered with night,
Your mercy goes marching on.
Angels of Mercy thru darkest night
Your mercy goes marching on.

About Women's Voices Chorus

Women's Voices Chorus has evolved into the premier Triangle chorus for sopranos and altos. While performing a wide and diverse repertoire, we remain steadfast in support of our threefold mission: to provide a welcoming place in the Triangle for women to share the joy of singing together, to promote choral works written by and for women, and to strive to achieve the highest standards of musical excellence. We rehearse from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Mondays from late August through late April, and give concerts in January and April or May. We invite sopranos and altos who are interested to consider auditioning in August 2021. Information will be posted on the 'Sing' page of our website.



Artistic Director Laura Sam began her tenure with the chorus in summer 2019. A North Carolina native, she has been a choral conductor and music educator for the past 35 years, directing choruses at Meredith College, North Carolina State University, Cary Academy, North Carolina Governor's School East, and Walter M. Williams High School. Laura received a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she studied conducting, voice, and choral methods. When not immersed in choral music, she serves as the director of the North Carolina Governor's School East, leading a summer residential program for intellectually gifted high school students.



Pianist Deborah Lee Hollis is highly respected for her sensitivity and skill as a collaborative partner. In addition to working with many prominent music organizations in the Triangle area, Deb has conducted masterclasses with pianists and vocalists at Shenandoah, Furman, and Longwood Universities, served on faculty at Wheaton and Guilford Colleges and UNC-Greensboro, and as collaborative pianist/coach at Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill. Hollis holds piano performance degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and received her Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano from UNC-Greensboro. Deb is an active recitalist and maintains a private piano studio.

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Women's Voices Chorus

2021 Virtual Season Members and Guests

Artistic Director: Laura Sam

Pianist: Deborah Hollis

Director's Assistant: Laura Delauney

Soprano 1

Laura Delauney ☘	Kathleen Jasinkas	Kimberly McCorkle	Rachel Spencer
Deb Gauldin	Brystana Kaufman	Kathy Neal	Shelley Turkington
Gwen Hall	Lauren Keller	Franziska Rokoske	Barrie Wallace
Claire Hermann	Britt Kelly	Katie Shrieves	Carli Webb
Wendy Hua ★	Katherine Lainhart	Trisha Rae Socias	

Soprano 2

Hannah Andrews	Marsha Ferguson	Virginia Byers Kraus ☘	Lou Ann Phelps ★
Sydney Atkinson	Amy Glass	Allison Mangin	Julia Rogers
Jenn Collins	Becky Gollmar	Anne J. Menkens	Amie Tedeschi
Patty Daniel	Shelley Hedtke	Ayumi Nakamae	Darcy Wold
Brenda Dunn	Jo Ellen Hirsch	Shipra Patel	Diane Wold
Brenda Edwards			

Alto 1

Rah Bickley	Jan French	Diane Kirkman	Clare Strayhorn
Judith Bronski	Susan Gidwitz	Jacqueline Little	Jasmine Trinks
Laura Cartier	Ann Harrison	Mary Lycan	Jennie Vaughn
Jeanne Condren	Barbara Holbrook	Lara Olson ☘	Jen Weld
Cheryl Denardo	Mary Hoover	Susan Regier	Betty Wheeler
Nancy Donny	Ann Johnson	Pauline Robinson ★	Nana Wolfe-Hill
Leah Fell	Kay Johnson	Denise Stillwell	

Alto 2

Meg Berreth	Elisabeth Curtis	Tina Sanderford	Sharon Smith ★
Susan E. Brown	Joan Marie Holland	Betty Schumacher	Barbara Tremblay
Karla Byrnes	Patti Holland	Doris Sigl	Jaclyn Walters
Diana Coble	Janet Huebner ☘	Kimberly Slentz-Kesler	Leslie Wicker
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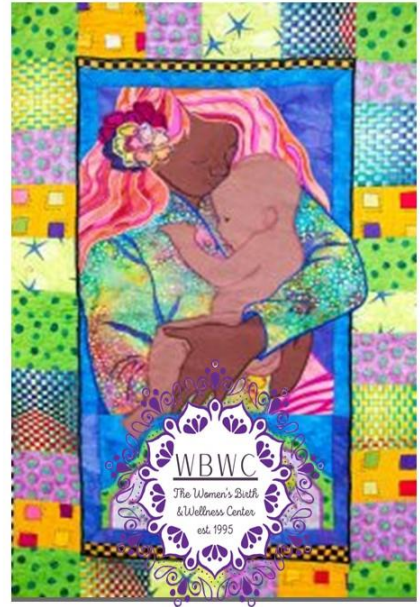
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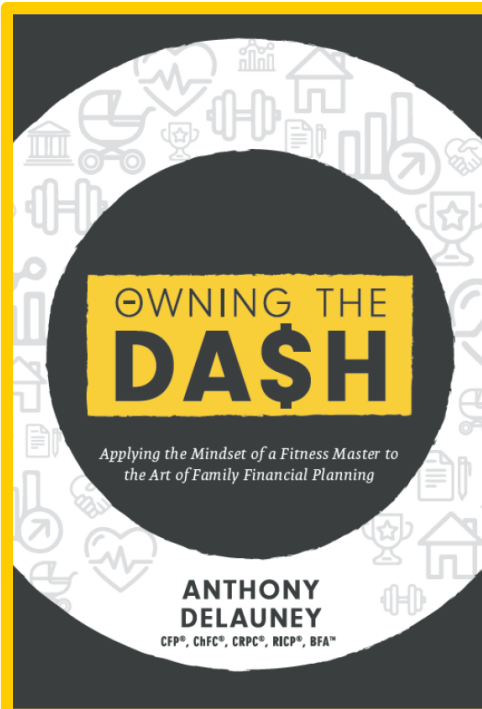
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Spring Virtual Concert: Passion

May 2020

Our spring concert will feature songs overflowing with natural imagery, painting lush and inviting pictures of the wildness of childhood, passionate love, and the fantastic rewards of beginning anew. All are composed by women and feature the poetry of women.

Special thanks to:

Bonnie Burton, photography consultant
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This program is supported by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.



Women's Voices Chorus, Inc.

P.O. Box 2854, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2854

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