

Women's Voices CHORUS

presents



Saturday, January 27, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

Laura Sam, Artistic Director

womensvoiceschorus.org



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Presents

Together We Sing

Women's Voices Chorus 30th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, January 27, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

United Church of Chapel Hill

Please join us for a reception in the Fellowship Hall following the concert.

Program Notes

Today we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Women's Voices Chorus with a retrospective repertoire. Thank you for joining us for a look back and a look forward, through music.

Some highlights of our celebratory concert include the first piece of music performed by Women's Voices Chorus at our first concert in January 1994, the Brahms *Ave Maria*, Op. 12. Also included are two iconic pieces suggested by Founding Director, Mary Lycan (1993-2007), exemplifying salient aspects of WVC's mission. The first, reviving lost or forgotten works by women composers, is *Through the House Give Glimmering Light* from *Three Shakespeare Songs*, Op. 39, No. 3 by Amy Beach. The second is *The March of the Women* by Ethel Smyth, exemplifying the pivotal societal changes brought about by women visionaries and activists.

Other pieces drawn from previously performed repertoire include commissioned pieces representing the importance Women's Voices Chorus places on supporting women composing for women's voices. Two of these works have a special connection to our chorus. *Mah Dodech Midod* by Eleanor Epstein was commissioned by WVC to honor Allan Friedman, second WVC Artistic Director (2008-2019), and his wife Katie on the occasion of their wedding day. *Sparks of Divinity*, by Lana Walter, was commissioned by WVC to celebrate the life of Janie Perrin Stevens Brown, mother of chorus member Susan E. Brown.

Also included are pieces that celebrate musical cultural diversity such as *Ikan Kekek* by Tracy Wong, *Spes (Hope)* by Mia Makaroff, and *Gloria* from *Misa Criolla* by Ariel Ramirez. New additions to our repertoire include Rosephanye Powell's *To Sit and Dream*, set to the Langston Hughes poem and incorporating elements of jazz and the blues, and *You've Got a Friend in Me* from *Toy Story*, arranged in the contemporary a cappella style by Julie Gaulke.

From serious to spirited and introspective to exuberant, "Together We Sing: Women's Voices Chorus 30th Anniversary Celebration" showcases the history, artistry, and sisterhood of Women's Voices Chorus.

Laura Sam

Program

Please turn off or silence all cell phones and other noise-making devices before the concert begins.

Note that the use of cameras and other recording equipment is strictly prohibited. Thank you!
Restrooms are located through the lobby to the left as you exit the sanctuary and at other locations throughout the building. See any usher for help.

We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable everyone, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. If you would like accommodation such as reserved seating or have questions about accessibility, please ask at the box office table or see any usher.

Guest Musicians: Salomé Sandoval, Guitar;

Chloe Gude and Julia Reeves, Violin; Sarah Persing, Viola; Debbie Davis, Cello;

Tim Turkington and Emily Turkington, Percussion

Love Is Welcome Here

Music and Text: Catherine Dalton (b. 1963)

Spoken Word: Joe Davis

Soloist: Jennifer Canada; Narrator: Hannah Andrews

Only love is welcome here.

Only love, love, oh love, sweet love,
only love is welcome here.

Only kindness is welcome here.

Only kindness, yes, loving kindness,
only kindness is welcome here.

So bring your pain and bring your sorrow.

Bring your hope and bring your fear,
and we will wrap our loving arms around you
because love is welcome here.

Love, sweet love, only love is welcome here.
Only love.

*Here is where we give you the
permission you haven't yet given
yourself to show up and be your
most authentic self*

You can cry here

You can take your time here.

To be you is not a crime here!

We are all divine here. We shine

brighter when we all shine here

We rise higher when we all rise here

We practice being kind here

*We celebrate the fact that we are
still alive here*

Love, only love is welcome here

You can make mistakes here

No guilt, blame, or shame here

There's only grace here

We know you by name here

We've been waiting for you

So glad you came here

We hope that you stay here

*All that you are can be reclaimed
and embraced here*

Only love is welcome here.

Love Is Welcome Here merges the music of Catherine Dalton and poetry of Joe Davis, beginning our concert with heartfelt expressions of welcome and affirmation.

The verse and chorus of *Love is Welcome Here* came to me each night for weeks during the summer of 2020. It was my body's way of calming me and helping me sleep. It was also a reminder that art can work in mysterious ways, if I'm listening. When Margaret Sabin asked me to select the text for a commission by the Osseo Chamber singers while we were in the midst of a world-wide pandemic and social reckoning, I offered these words and melody that had been gifted to me from the Universe. I am beyond thrilled that Joe Davis said he would collaborate on this project by writing a spoken word poem for the bridge.

— *Notes from the Composer*

I wrote this poem as a reflection on what it means to commit to creating spaces of vulnerability and compassion, where we can bring our full selves without fear of judgment or shame. I want to experience more spaces like this in the world, which is why I'm intentional about exploring what that can sound like and feel like through my poetry and music. I feel the more we're able to practice feeling and creating the world we long to live in together, the closer we get to that world existing within and around us.

— *Notes from the Poet*

I Started Out Singing

Music: Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980)

Text: Naomi Shihab Nye (b. 1952)

I started out singing oh yes oh yes
in a voice as clear as a penny and a dime
in time in time I came to be
as tall as a riddle as full as a shadow
as far as the wind that blows itself along to the sea

I started out smiling oh yes oh yes
with my face tipped up to the moon's soft stare
a halo of giggles tied in my hair
with a sleep as deep as desert sand
my dreams were the stories that crossed the land

Jocelyn Hagen, co-founder of Graphite Publishing and the band Nation, is a pioneer in the field of composition. A champion of the female spirit, many of her projects focus on the stories of women. In this piece, set to Naomi Shihab Nye's poetry, both Hagen and Nye capture the exuberance and optimism of new beginnings and adventures. First performed by Women's Voices Chorus on May 23, 2021 as part of our virtual season, it is a joy to experience this piece in 'real life!'

Ave Maria

Music: Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Text: Luke 1:28,42

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum;
Benedicta tu in mulieribus
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, pray for us sinners.*

Women's Voices Chorus performed Brahms's first choral composition to open its inaugural concert on January 23, 1994. Brahms wrote all of his women's choruses between 1858 and 1873, during his middle compositional period. He composed most of them for the Hamburger Frauenchor, a group that he directed from 1859-1861. The group began when one of Brahms's piano students requested folk arrangements to sing with her friends. It quickly grew into a choir of approximately forty singers who rehearsed on a weekly basis. The music that Brahms composed for this choir is simple and practical. He composed *Ave Maria, op. 12*, for women's choir and organ (his first choral composition) before his association with the Frauenchor. The Frauenchor December 2, 1859 performance of *Ave Maria* at the Grädener Academy in Hamburg, however, featured Brahms's newly arranged orchestral accompaniment.

- *Excerpts from "The Pivotal Role of Brahms and Schubert in the Development of Women's Choir," by Victoria Meredith, Choral Journal, February 1997, pages 7-12*

Through the House Give Glimmering Light

Music: Amy Beach (1867-1944)

from Three Shakespeare Songs, op. 39, no.3

Text: from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Through the house give glimmering light, by the dead and drowsy fire,
Ev'ry elf and fairy sprite hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty after me sing and dance it trippingly.
First, rehearse your song by rote, to each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand, with fairy grace, will we sing and bless this place.

Previously performed by Women's Voices Chorus on May 31, 1998 and January 24, 2016, the last piece of Beach's *Three Shakespeare Songs*, with text from *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, receives a madrigalesque setting by the composer. The songs were premiered by the sixteen members of the women's Detroit Madrigal Club on December 8, 1896. The demand for women's chorus repertoire grew exponentially in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Women's musical clubs flourished in the years following the 1893 meeting of the Woman's Musical Congress at the Chicago World's Fair, where Beach played a prominent role. She later credited the proliferation of women's clubs with spreading musical taste and fostering more frequent performance of music by women composers.

- *"Through the House Give Glimmering Light, op. 39, no. 3" by Amy Beach. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200153368/>.*

To Sit and Dream

Music: Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)

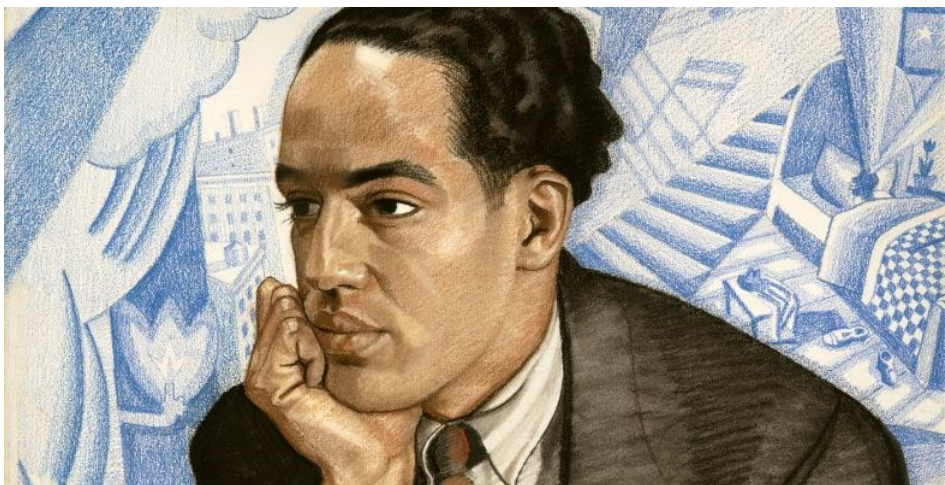
Text: Langston Hughes (1901-1967) from "To You"

To sit and dream, to sit and read,
To sit and learn about the world.
Outside our world of here and now,
Our problem world.
To dream of vast horizons of the soul
Of dreams made whole,
Unfettered, free – help me!
All you who are dreamers, too,
Help me make our world anew.
I reach out my hands to you.

In *To Sit and Dream*, I sought to musically paint Langston Hughes's poignant poetry with jazz harmonic colors, rhythmic syncopation, and improvised speech. The song begins with a piano introduction comprised of a simple "quiet" motive which depicts Hughes's placidity as he sits alone disheartened while reading the newspaper headlines. This motive represents Hughes's inner voice as he lays the paper in his lap, deep in thought.

Text painting expresses a dream-like state in which Hughes envisions our world and its vast horizons before imagining himself on the streets of Harlem reaching out his hand to any who will join him in making "our world anew." As each person joins Hughes, reaching out their hands to others, a growing crowd of people come together to create a new world characterized by love, peace, equality, and justice for all. Hughes awakens and resolves that he may never see such a day – except as he sits and dreams.

— *Notes from the Composer*



Langston Hughes, by Winold Reiss. (AP Photo/National Portrait Gallery)

Sparks of Divinity

Music: Lana Walter (b. 1948)

Text: Susan E. Brown (b. 1950)

Sparks of divinity
flames of godhood together
a fire of connection and rich beauty.

We are all different
all related we are all one
sparks of divinity:
stranger, friend
flawed, angry, different.

All parts of the whole,
pieces of our rich and magnificent universe,
from unimaginably tiny
to impossibly infinite:

clouds of electrons quantum leaping
chromosomes dancing, pairing, shuffling
all life changing, singing, dying
planets spinning, shifting, flowing
moons and stars and galaxies racing
through the cosmos.

Ceaseless cycles of death and creation
and change:
sunlight into energy
carbon into diamond
energy into mass
mountain to hill to rock to stone to
pebble to earth
cloud to rain to creek to stream
to river to sea to mist to cloud.

Look
Listen
Touch
Taste
Feel
Attend
Here
Now
Look for the sparks
Everywhere

Commissioned by Susan E. Brown for Women's Voices Chorus in celebration of the life of Janie Perrin Brown (1915-2006), this work was premiered on May 1, 2010.

It has been a deep privilege to work on this set of pieces in honor of Janie Brown. It is my understanding that Janie suffered with Alzheimer's disease in her last years. My own mother, also born in 1915, also suffered with Alzheimer's. She died in May of 2009, as I was working on these pieces, although she never knew about them. Throughout the process I felt a particular kinship with Susan Brown and the search she was making for the right textual material to memorialize her mother. Mothers are with us from before our entrance into this world and are probably the most profound influence throughout our lives. Having your mother suddenly gone, never to return, is a jarring experience that births you yet again into a new reality. In addition, having your mother slip away from you, little chips of mind and personality at a time, is its own special kind of loss. Working with these texts, which Susan selected in her mother's memory, was an unexpected and welcome comfort to me as I was experiencing the loss of my own mother. I believe Janie Brown was a remarkable woman of deep faith, love, and wisdom and I wish I had known her. I like to think that she was there, guiding my ear as I was setting her daughter's text choices to music, and that a little of her will shine through as the music is performed. — *Notes from the Composer*

The March of the Women

From Songs of Sunrise

Music: Ethyl Smyth (1858–1944)

Text: Cicely Hamilton (1872–1952)

Shout, shout, up with your song! Cry with the wind, for the dawn is breaking;
March, march, swing you along, Wide blows our banner, and hope is waking.
Song with its story, dreams with their glory, Lo! they call, and glad is their word!
Loud and louder it swells, Thunder of freedom, the voice of the Lord!

Long, long, we in the past Covered in dread from the light of heaven.
Strong, strong, stand we at last, Fearless in faith and with sight new given.
Strength with its beauty, Life with its duty (Hear the voice, oh hear and obey!)
These, these, beckon us on. Open your eyes to the blaze of day.

Comrades, ye who have dared First in the battle to strive and sorrow,
Scorned, spurned, nought have ye cared, Raising your eyes to a wider morrow.
Ways that are weary, days that are dreary, Toil and pain, by faith ye have borne;
Hail, hail, victors ye stand, Wearing the wreath that the brave have worn!

Life, strife, these two are one, Nought can ye win but by faith and daring;
On, on, that ye have done, But for the work of today preparing.
Firm in reliance, laugh a defiance (Laugh in hope, for sure is the end.)
March, march, many as one. Shoulder to shoulder and friend to friend.

In its 30-year history, *The March of the Women* is one of Women's Voices Chorus' most often performed pieces – Jan. 22, 1995, Sept. 22, 2000, Feb. 22, 2003, Nov. 22, 2014, Jan. 25, 2015, and April 28, 2019. *Songs of Sunrise* was written for the suffragettes, and *The March of the Women* became the anthem of the women's suffrage movement throughout the United Kingdom. The march was also used during a large demonstration of American suffragists rallying in Washington, D.C., on May 9, 1914.

Smyth based the melody on a folksong from the Abruzzo region in Italy, and Cicely Hamilton penned lyrics to fit the music. The published score is dedicated to Emmeline Pankhurst and the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). Pankhurst herself introduced the song to suffragist ears at a January 1911 WSPU rally organized to welcome newly-freed members back to the fighting line after two months' imprisonment. According to a biography of Smyth, "a suffragette choir was drilled by the composer for weeks" before the performance on Pall Mall in London. Before the performance Smyth spoke to the crowd: "If I have contrived to get into my music anything of the spirit which makes this movement the finest thing I have ever known in my life, then perhaps the March may in some way be worthy of your acceptance ... I think it a most marvelous contribution to the fighting force. The poem was written after the music was composed, and that is about one of the most difficult things to do in this world..." (Votes for Women, "The Speeches," Friday, January 27, 1911).

- [Ethyl Smyth and "The March of the Women"](#) blog posted by Cait Miller, March 8, 2022, *In the Muse – Performing arts at the Library of Congress*

The Birds' Lullaby

Music: Sarah Quartel (b. 1981)

Text: E. Pauline Johnson (1861-1913)

Chamber Choir

Sing to us, cedars; the twilight is creeping
With shadowy garments, the wilderness through;
All day we have carolled, and now would be sleeping,
So echo the anthems we warbled to you;
While we swing, swing, And your branches sing,
And we drowse to your dreamy whispering.

Sing to us, cedars; the night-wind is sighing,
Is wooing, is pleading, to hear you reply;
And here in your arms we are restfully lying,
And longing to dream to your soft lullaby;
While we swing, swing, And your branches sing,
And we drowse to your dreamy whispering.

Sing to us, cedars; your voice is so lowly,
Your breathing so fragrant, your branches so strong;
Our little nest-cradles are swaying so slowly,
While zephyrs are breathing their slumberous song.
And we swing, swing, While your branches sing,
And we drowse to your dreamy whispering.

In January 2020, Women's Voices Chorus began rehearsing this piece, preparing for our spring concert, only to have the season abruptly end in March due to the global Coronavirus pandemic. Four years later, we continue to face the interruptions and health challenges of COVID-19, but are so grateful to sing together with voices soaring and laughter ringing through our rehearsal hall each Monday evening. We learned to adapt during the pandemic, but perhaps, most of all, we learned to truly appreciate our close-knit community of musicians and friends.

Quartel takes great care in selecting texts that resonate and that evoke images of personal significance, and when writing her own lyrics, that draw on the spirit and character of the commissioning ensemble or the event for which the piece is being written. Until recently, she composed many of her own texts, but in discovering the poetry of others, she has found her works taking on a greater diversity of color and sound. Her compositional style has an energetic, contemporary flavor to it, and her works typically embrace sweeping, charming melodies supported by a fresh, harmonic language.

- *Excerpts from "The Life and Works of Four Female Canadian Choral Composers," by Rachel Renskink-Hoff, Choral Journal, October 2015, Vol 56 Number 3, pages 34-60*

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Ikan Kekek

Music: Tracy Wong
Text: Malay Children's Song

Chamber Choir; Soloist: Kinley Russell

Ikan kekek mak iloi-iloi
Ikan gelama mak ilai-ilai
Sung guh cantik sayangku amboi
Tapi ketawa mengailai-ngi-lai

*Ponyfish mak iloi-iloi
Croaker fish mak ilai-ilai
My dear is very beautiful
But her laugh is loud and not graceful*

Ikan kekek mak iloi-iloi
Ikan gelama mak ilai-ilai
Kalau adik nak jadi pandai
Mari belajar janganlah lalai

*Ponyfish mak iloi-iloi
Croaker fish mak ilai-ilai
If you little one want to be wise
Come learn, study hard, don't be lazy*

Tenang, tenang air di laut
Sampan golek mudik ke tanjung
Hati terkenang mulut tersenyum
Budi yan gaik rasa dijunjun!

*The sea is calm
The boat floats towards the bluff
The heart recalls, the mouth smiles
Kindness is always upheld/encouraged.*

Tracy Wong hails from Malaysia and is a choral conductor, music educator, vocalist, and pianist currently residing in Canada.

Children's songs in Malaysia are usually taught by rote and passed down from generation to generation. As with children's songs from other countries, Malaysian children's songs consist of simple, catchy, and repetitive melodies. These tunes, usually lively and festive, introduce new vocabulary and encourage children to sing freely. The lyrics often tell a story or bear advice which are intended for young people, although some are humorously written and are meant to entertain.

"Ikan Kekek," like many Malay folk and children's songs, is composed based on the Malay Pantun – a form of Malay poetry that is usually made up of four rhyming lines with an A-B-A-B rhyming scheme. The pantun is divided into two parts – the "shadow" (lines 1 and 2) and the "meaning" (lines 3 and 4). The former is usually a preamble ("ikan kekek" and "ikan gelama" are types of fishes found in Malaysia) and sometimes has little relation with the latter, besides rhyming. The 'meaning' delivers the true message of the pantun (in this song, it's either a tease or an advice).

— *Notes from the Composer*



Tundra

Music: Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)

Text: Charles Anthony Silvestri (b. 1965)

Soloists: Wendy Hua, Kinley Russell

Wide, worn and weathered,
Sacred expanse
Of green and white and granite grey;
Snowy patches strewn,

Anchored to the craggy earth,
Unmoving;
While clouds dance
Across the vast, eternal sky.

Previously performed by Women's Voices Chorus on January 24, 2016 and May 7, 2017, *Tundra* was composed by the pianist-composer Ola Gjeilo, commissioned by and dedicated to the 2011 American Choral Directors Association Women's Repertoire and Standards Commissioning Consortium. Gjeilo's numerous choral works are performed world-wide and are characterized by his cinematic approach in creating both time and space in his music.

The lyrics for *Tundra* were written by Charles Anthony Silvestri, specifically for this work. I asked him to write a text based on the title and some photos of a part of my native Norway that is very dear to me; the Hardangervidda mountain plateau. It's pretty close to where my father grew up, a ski resort town called Geilo, in the mountains between Oslo and Bergen.

— *Notes from the Composer*

Spes (*Hope*)

Music: Mia Makaroff (b. 1970)

Text: Nils Aslak Valkeapää (1943-2001), Ecclesiastes 8:1,8

Quis talis, ut sapiens est?
Et quis cognovit solutionem rerum?

*Who is like the wise?
Who knows the explanation of things?*

Biekka oapmi lean,
muhto liikká ealán ,
ja dat lea vissa eallima dárkkuhus.
Ealán done dál ja dás ...
ja just dat lea madoheapme de in eali sat ihttin.
Nu ja máid dasto,

*I belong to the wind,
but I live,
maybe that is the meaning of life.
I live here and now ...
I won't be alive tomorrow.
That is the way – and so what.*

Non est in hominis potestate
dominari super spiritum,
nec cohibere spiritum
nec habet potestatem supra diem mortis.

*As no one has power
over the wind to contain it,
so no one has power
over the time of their death.*

Sapientia hominis illuminat vultum eius
et durities faciei illius commutatur.

*A person's wisdom brightens their face
and changes its hard appearance.*

The words *spes* and *doaivu* both mean hope, but in very different languages. *Spes* is Latin, the language used in Catholic churches, and *doaivu* is Sámi, a language coming from Lappland. Sometimes these cultures have conflicted: Biblical Latin has represented the Christian church and Sámi has represented animism and shamanism in the northern parts of Scandinavia. This has led to violence and demolition, although both cultures seek peace and understanding. In 2012, the bishop of Oulu, Finland, asked the Sámi people for forgiveness. Hope is present whenever people are humble enough to seek understanding.

There is a question in Ecclesiastes: *Who is as the wise man? Who knows the resolution of things? It is not in man's power to stop the wind, neither hath he power to know the time of his death.* The Sami singer, poet, and artist Nils Aslak Valkeapää wrote: *I belong to the wind, but I live, maybe that is the meaning of life. I live here and now...I won't be alive tomorrow. That is the way—and so what?* Valkeapää was not only speaking about himself, but also the old culture of the Sámi people, because they have always struggled for existence. I felt that this thought resonated with the Bible text.

So what? Those were the powerful words of Valkeapää. If we disappear, so what? We were small from the beginning. That liberates us to live to the fullest and be ourselves in the short time we exist. The Ecclesiastes text explains how humility and wisdom change a man: his face softens and he is not rigid or violent anymore. This humility and understanding is the key for the hope of mankind.

Understanding the combination of two very different worlds and aesthetics is critically important; the world of Nils Aslak Valkeapää and the world of the western church. There is wisdom and beauty in both. The song offers a possibility to use different kinds of vocal techniques, both with respect. The main idea is to bring forth the peace between both, not the dissonances.

I had the yoik as an inspiration but understood that I could not write or use a yoik myself, not being of Sámi origin. The history in Finland has been quite similar with other countries that have indigenous people; quite a sad history of exploitation and demolition, trying to make everyone the same. I believe that the new generation is more civilized, the culture of living in symbiosis with nature is more respected now. — *Notes from the Composer*

Yoik is the singing style of the Sámi, the transnational indigenous people of northern Scandinavia, Finland, and a small area of Russia (the territory called Sápmi in their own culture). Traditionally unaccompanied and often sung in wordless syllables, yoik is a musical language of feeling: a yoik describes or evokes an emotion, a person, a landscape, an animal, or whatever the singer may choose. A yoik can be joyous, loving, contemplative, haunting, angry, danceable, or humorous. It's the song of a culture at home with its soul. How does yoik work in musical terms? It's energetic and highly rhythmical, sung very loosely and in the throat. The structure of a yoik is circular, without a distinct beginning or end.

Gloria from Misa Criolla

Music: Ariel Ramirez (1921–2010), Text: Common Mass

Soloists: Rachel Bowman-Abdi, Marsha Ferguson

Gloria a Dios en las Alturas
Y en la tierra paz a los hombres
Que ama el Señor.
Te alabamos. Te bendecimos.
Te adoramos. Glorificamos.
Te damos gracias por tu inmensa gloria.

*Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace to his people
That love the Lord.
We praise you. We bless you.
We adore you. We glorify you.
We give you thanks for your great glory.*

Señor Dios, Rey celestial.
Dios Padre Todopoderoso.
Señor, hijo único Jesucristo,
Señor Dios, cordero de Dios,
Hijo del Padre,
Tú que quitas los pecados del mundo,
Ten piedad de nosotros.
Tú que quitas los pecados del mundo,
Atiende nuestras súplicas.
Tú que reinas con el Padre,
Ten piedad de nosotros.

*Lord God, Heavenly King.
God the Father Almighty.
Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten son,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
You who take away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.
You who take away the sins of the world,
Hear our prayers.
You who reign with the Father,
Have mercy on us.*

Gloria a Dios en las Alturas
Y en la tierra paz a los hombres
Que ama el Señor.
Porque Tú sólo eres Santo,
Sólo Tú Señor Tú sólo,
Tú solo altísimo, Jesucristo,
Con el Espíritu Santo,
En la gloria de Dios Padre. Amén.

*Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace to his people
That love the Lord.
For You alone are Holy,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

Women's Voices chorus previously performed Gloria on May 5, 2013 and May 6, 2018.

Born in Santa Fé on the Rio Paraná north of Buenos Aires, Ariel Ramirez began teaching in a rural mountain post when he was just 19. There he became fascinated with the music of the Indians, gauchos, and creoles, which has since been the inspiration of most of his music. In 1963, after the Second Vatican Council authorized vernacular mass settings, Ariel Ramirez created his widely popular *Misa Criolla* on a Spanish translation of the traditional liturgical text. Each movement of the mass is based on specific folk material, particularly dance rhythms: the *carnavalito* and *yaraví* from northern Argentina for the Gloria. The vocal writing is light and lively, distinguished by numerous call-and-response passages, such as the *carnavalito* sections of the Gloria.

— [Excerpts from a description](#) by John Henken, Los Angeles Philharmonic's Director of Publications.

Mah Dodech Midod

Music: Yedidiah Admon (1894–1995), arr. Eleanor Epstein (b. 1950)

Text: Song of Songs 5:9–11, 16

Mah dodech midod
hayafah banashim?

*How is your beloved better than any other,
O fairest among women?*

Dodi tsach v'adom,
dagul meir'vavah!

*My beloved is radiant and ruddy,
he towers over ten thousand!*

Rosho ketem paz,
k'vutsotav taltalim, sh'chorot kaorev.

*His head is burnished gold,
his locks are curled, black as a raven.*

Zeh dodi, v'zeh rei,
b'not Y'rushalayim!

*This is my beloved and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem*

Commissioned by Women's Voices Chorus and dedicated to Allan and Katie Friedman on the occasion of their marriage, this piece was performed on April 24, 2016.

The Song of Songs is the great love poem of the Bible. More precisely, it is a series of poems spoken by two lovers – sometimes to each other, sometimes about each other. In the last eight verses of chapter five, the daughters of Jerusalem (who function in The Song as a kind of Greek chorus) encourage the woman to describe her beloved and she willingly obliges. Yedidiah Admon's captivating setting of a selection of these verses makes this the perfect choice, to my mind, for this auspicious commission! — *Notes from the Composer*

You've Got a Friend in Me *from Toy Story*

Music: and Text: Randy Newman (b.1943)

arr. Julie Gaulke (b. 1966)

Soloist: Rah Bickley

When the road looks rough ahead
And you're miles and miles
From your nice warm bed
You just remember what your old pal said
Boy, you've got a friend in me.

Some other folks might be
A little bit smarter than I am
Bigger and stronger too maybe
But none of them will ever love you
The way I do. It's me and you, girl.

You got troubles, I've got 'em too
There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you
We stick together and see it through
'Cause you've got a friend in me.

And as the years go by
Our friendship will never die
You're gonna see it's our destiny
You've got a friend in me,

Composed by Randy Newman and featured as the theme song in the Disney/Pixar *Toy Story* films, *You've Got a Friend in Me* was arranged by Julie Gaulke in the style of contemporary a cappella. Gaulke highlights this playful yet poignant piece about friendship with syncopated rhythms and consonant harmonies.

Big Dogs, Music, and Wild, Wild Women

Music and Text: Ruth Huber (b. 1949)

Big dogs, music, and wild, wild women are making my life complete.
They make me happy, they make me glad, they give me all that I need to flourish.

I got a dog he's so big, so fine,
he makes me really happy nearly all the time.
And when I wake up in the morning
for a run for a mile or two with my dog,
go home and play my piano
and give my lover a call, I'm telling you that

Big dogs, music, and wild, wild women are making my life complete.
They make me happy, they make me glad, they give me all that I need to flourish.

Singing music with the women, it's so fine,
it makes me really happy nearly all the time.
And when I wake up in the morning
and go down to the spa with my dog,
write a song in the shower
and give my lover a call, I'm telling you that

Big dogs, music, and wild, wild women are making my life complete.
They make me happy, they make me glad, they give me all that I need to flourish.

I know a woman, she's so fine,
she makes me really happy all the time.
So if you wake up in the morning,
you're not feeling so fine with your dog,
you may not want my opinion,
here's a little advice of mine, get you some

Big dogs, music, and wild, wild women are making my life complete.
They'll make you happy, they'll make you glad, they'll give you all you need to flourish.

'Cause a song will make you happy, a dog will make you smile,
but a woman will make you feel just like a natural child.
You in my life, making my life complete ... with my dog!

This fun-filled piece by Ruth Huber, featuring our wonderful collaborative pianist, Deb Hollis, is a favorite of women's choruses everywhere. Previously performed by Women's Voices Chorus on April 26, 2015, we happily reprise it today as we celebrate the "big dogs, music, and wild, wild women" who make our lives complete!

How Can I Keep From Singing

Music: arr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)

Text: Quaker Hymn (c. 1800)

My life flows on in endless song
above earth's lamentation,
I hear the real though distant song
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing,
It sounds an echo in my soul,
how can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars,
I hear the truth, it's living!
What though the darkness 'round me close,
songs in the night it's giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since I believe that love abides,
how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble when they hear
the bells of freedom ringing.
When friends rejoice both far and near,
how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell, in dungeon dark,
our thoughts to them are winging.
When friends hold courage in their heart,
how can I keep from singing?

Closing our program with Gwyneth Walker's setting of the Quaker hymn *How Can I Keep from Singing?*, we leave you with a piece sung by many choirs around the world, especially over the course of the pandemic. Previously performed by Women's Voices Chorus on March 11, 2007 and May 1, 2022, this piece references the persecution of Friends who with faith and courage prevail, emphasizing the celebratory and life-affirming aspects of the song.

As we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Women's Voices Chorus, we honor our Artistic Directors Mary Lycan, Allan Friedman, and Laura Sam; our collaborative pianists Deborah Coclanis, Nancy Whelan, and Deb Hollis; and the 393 singers who together have created the history, artistry, and sisterhood of Women's Voices Chorus.

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. WVC strives to foster a climate of purposeful inclusion. A diverse, multicultural, multiracial choral community enriches a chorus and its music. We welcome women sopranos and altos regardless of race, sexual orientation, past gender identity, culture, religion, disability, or educational, financial, or class status. 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 singers who are interested to consider auditioning in early February. 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 38 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 master classes 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.

Women's Voices Chorus

Artistic Director: Laura Sam

Director's Assistant: Kay Johnson

Pianist: Deborah Hollis

Soprano 1

Katie Barton	Deb Gauldin	Brystana Kaufman	Trisha Socias ✧
Rachel Bowman-Abdi	Marissa Goodall	Lauren Keller ★	Marley Steffens
Rebecca Bruening ☼	Mariah Hoye	Ellie Sheridan	Shelley Turkington
Jennifer Canada ✧	Wendy Hua ✧		

Soprano 2

Hannah Andrews	Kate DeAlmeida	Mia Prior	Sarah Town ★
Ellie Bautista	Amy Glass	Kinley Russell ✧	Sheila Williams
Carly Bunch	Virginia Byers Kraus ☼	Leandra Merea Strobe	Darcy Wold ✧
Linda Coerr	Allison Mangin ✧	Amie Tedeschi	Diane Wold ✧
Genevieve DeAlmeida	Shipra Patel		

Alto 1

Christa Abedi	Sheryl Fowler	Susan Gidwitz	Anne J. Menkens
Rah Bickley ★ ✧	Marsha Ferguson ✧	Kay Johnson ☼ ✧	Susan Regier
Diana Coble	Jan French	Jacqueline Little	Pauline Robinson

Alto 2

Meg Berreth	Janet Huebner ☼ ✧	Debbie Russell ✧	Kimberly Slentz-Kesler ✧
Susan E. Brown ✧	Diane Kirkman	Betty Schumacher	Sharon Smith ★
Karla Byrnes ✧	Susanna Lambert	Doris Sigl	Jaclyn Walters
Megan Hast	Caryl Thomason Price		

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★ **Membership Liaison**

✧ **Chamber Choir**

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	Jaclyn Walters, <i>At Large Tour</i>	Laura Sam, <i>Artistic Director</i>

Emeritus Members

(If you sang with the chorus 5 years or more and would like to be listed, please let us know.)

Sydney Atkinson	Britt Kelly	Gail McKinnis	Lisa DiMaria Park
Laura Delauney	Susan Lowell	Judy Morris	Barrie Wallace
Shelley Hedtke	Kim McCorkle	Melissa Nolan	

History

Women's Voices Chorus (WVC) was founded in 1993 when Mary Lycan brought together 30 women interested in singing together. That first year, the chorus operated on a shoestring budget, premiering with a concert titled *Images of Women in Music*. Over the next decade, WVC grew in membership, budget, and musical reputation, commissioning and premiering choral works written by women, for women.

After Lycan retired in 2007, Artistic Director Allan Friedman brought expertise in choral conducting and a commitment to maintaining the WVC mission: promoting and performing choral works by women, for women. The first concert directed by Friedman featured the premiere of "Herself a Rose," written by Eleanor Daley in honor of Lycan. Under Friedman's leadership, the chorus grew to 70 singers and expanded its outreach in the community, sponsoring summer community choruses to raise funds for community organizations; holding a music festival with young women from several local high schools; and collaborating and performing with other men's and women's choral and jazz ensembles in the area.

In 2014 WVC celebrated 20 years as the Triangle's only classical women's chorus. That season highlighted works written for or commissioned by the chorus and included a collaboration with a 23-piece orchestra and a nationally known soprano soloist for the southeastern premiere of "The Long Bright."

In 2012, WVC enjoyed a concert tour to Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy; in 2017, the chorus toured the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia). Each trip gave the chorus the opportunity to perform for international audiences, to share American choral music celebrating women, and to be enriched by the choral traditions and perspectives of people from other cultures.

In 2018, WVC held its first competition to select a composer and support them in creating a new work celebrating women's suffrage in America. Of the 28 submissions from across the globe, Michael Bussewitz-Quarm's composition *Only Time to Love* was selected. Its performance, with the Capital City Girls Choir Chorale, was the centerpiece of WVC's final concert with Friedman as Artistic Director.

In 2019 WVC announced Laura Sam as its new Artistic Director. An accomplished and skillful practitioner with a demonstrated commitment to excellence, Sam has a life-long passion for choral music created by and for women's voices, as well as a love of the sense of community and joy inspired by choral singing.

When the Covid-19 pandemic forced WVC to cancel rehearsals and concerts in spring 2020, Sam dedicated herself to mastering audio and video editing to allow our 2021 season to continue virtually. With her invaluable leadership and technical expertise, WVC rehearsed via Zoom and completed three virtual concerts featuring a variety of choral music genres. (These concerts can be viewed at the [Virtual Projects](#) page on our website and on our YouTube channel.) The chorus returned to in-person rehearsals in the fall of 2021 and held its first post-pandemic, in-person concert in May 2022.

This 2024 winter concert, *Together We Sing*, begins the celebration of WVC's 30th year, with a retrospective repertoire that includes the first piece sung by the chorus, plus pieces that exemplify its mission. The spring concert, *Songs from Here and Éire*, will preview WVC's tour to Ireland in August 2024, the culmination of our anniversary celebration.

As we celebrate the achievements of our past, we also look forward to the future of WVC. Our song continues.

Past Directors

Ms. Mary Sherman Lycan, Founder and Artistic Director 1993-2006



Born in Connecticut, Ms. Lycan was involved in music at a very early age, learning piano and sight singing and singing in church and school choirs. She graduated from Brown University with an A.B. in Music, then studied musicology at the University of Chicago and choral conducting at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

In 1991, while living in Palo Alto, CA, Ms. Lycan joined the Peninsula Women's Chorus and was reminded of the power and beauty of adult women singing together. She was determined to start a women's chorus when she returned to Chapel Hill. As a result, in 1993 Women's Voices Chorus was born.

In her search for lost, historic repertoire by women composers for the chorus to sing, she amassed a database of 1000 pieces by women, for women. When she heard fellow conductors begging publishers for more good repertoire for women's choruses, she started a desktop publishing venture to fill this need: the Treble Clef Music Press. Wishing that more community women's choruses could enjoy the musical growth and joy of a festival, she started the North Carolina Choral Festival in 2002.

Ms. Lycan has been a devoted researcher, publisher, performer, conductor, and advocate of classical choral music for women's voices. In 2003, as a member of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), she was named the North Carolina state chair for women's chorus repertoire and standards. She has presented workshops on women's choral history and repertoire at regional and national conventions of the ACDA.

Ms. Lycan is now retired and living in Connecticut.

Dr. Allan Friedman, WVC Artistic Director 2007-2019



Originally from Duluth, MN, Dr. Friedman earned his BA in music at Duke University, his masters in Musicology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2001), and his Doctorate in Musical Arts from Boston University (2005). In the late 1990s, Dr Friedman studied choral music at the University of Natal, Durban in South Africa, under Joseph Shabalala, leader of Ladysmith Black Mambazo. While at UNC he conducted the Collegium Musicum and the Harambe Choir. While at Boston University he conducted the BU Women's Chorus and the BU Repertory Chorus.

From 2004 to 2012, Dr. Friedman served as the associate conductor of Duke Chapel Music, directing the Duke Vespers Ensemble and the Duke Divinity School Choir. He is the founding (and current) director of SONAM, a chorus dedicated to supporting our community through benefit concerts, and he directs the Duke Chorale. Dr. Friedman serves as the Director of Music and Congregation Engagement at Judea Reform Congregation in Durham, NC. He is also active as a music teacher and clinician in the Triangle, teaching music history courses and leading choral clinics and workshops throughout the state,

Dr. Friedman is also an accomplished composer and arranger. Women's Voices Chorus has been honored to premiere several of his works including the choral cycle *Songs of Radiance*, and, most recently, *Miriyam, Maria and Maryam—a Refugee Song*.

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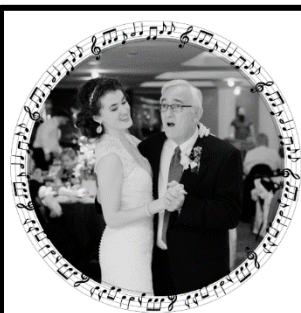


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Birthday, Dad!**

You're always there
to sing along and
support me!

Even if a *little* out of key ;)

Love, Mariah



With gratitude for Laura Sam,
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and leadership!



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Chrystina Passanisi

Eileen Schroeder

Type size indicates length of membership.



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Kate Murray

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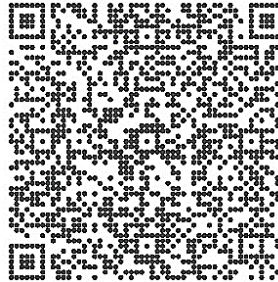
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Venmo

Spring Concert: Songs From Here and Éire

Saturday, May 4, 2024, 3:00 p.m., Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Durham

Songs From Here and Éire celebrates the rich musical traditions of America and Ireland, presenting songs that explore universal themes of joy, love, loss, resilience, and the depth of a shared human experience. With an emphasis on storytelling, these songs highlight the power of music to convey social messages and reflect on historical events, as well as to entertain. Featuring works by Irish and American women, this program includes pieces composed and arranged by Alice Parker, Elaine Hagenberg, Joy Ondra Hirokawa, Rosephanye Powell, Julie Gault, and Sue Furlong.

Women's Voices Chorus, Inc.

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

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