



UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON

**SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE**

University of Oregon  
**Chamber Choir**

SPRING 2021

**Livestreamed from Beall Hall**

Saturday, June 5, 2021

## Welcome

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As choral musicians we are accustomed to standing shoulder to shoulder, synchronizing our breath, and according to research, possibly even our heartbeats. In rehearsal we rely on looking at each other to match a vowel or place a consonant. In performance our facial expressions help breathe life into the stories we tell.

All of this changed in the time of COVID. At the onset of the pandemic, we were not permitted to make live music at all for fear of aerosolizing the virus through our active exhalations. By fall of 2020, however, established safety protocols allowed us once again to rehearse in person. Singers had to stand 12-feet apart and wear masks while singing. We could sing for only 30 minutes at a time before needing to change rehearsal spaces. Room capacities were reduced so we rehearsed most often in small groups. Our performance on June 5th will be one of the few times this year that all our singers will stand in the same room to make music together.

And yet despite these challenges, we found renewed joy in making music together and our hearts were full at the end of each rehearsal.

Our program this evening presents a diverse set of composers representing a multiplicity of cultures and communities. Our overall theme is one of renewal, moving from darkness into light. We begin with one of Scottish composer James MacMillan's fourteen *Strathclyde Motets*, *O Radiant Dawn*, depicting God's light being shone on those in darkness. Clément Janequin's exuberant *Le Chant des Oyseaux* follows, awakening the birds to sing your troubles away. Hard to imagine that these bird calls originated in 16th-century France!

The second set opens with Jordanian-born composer Shireen Abu Khader's moving setting of the protest song *Law Rahal Soti*, in which the singer acknowledges that the cause for which they fight must continue even if the singer's voice is silenced. *Ay'bobo Pou Yo* is a work we commissioned from Haitian American composer Sydney Guillaume last year, a jubilant setting of his father's text honoring musicians, especially composers and conductors!

## Welcome

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*Clearing at Dawn*, Alvin Trotman's exquisitely colorful setting of eighth-century Chinese poet Li Po's meditative contemplation on a sunrise, opens the second half of our program. Still immersed in nature, we continue with Irish composer Michael McGlynn's *Alleluia: Incantations* from his Celtic Mass in which the divine is seen in all things. The set closes with English composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's melancholy setting of the Christina Rossetti poem *Bitter for Sweet*, expressing longing and loss as one season gives way to the next.

Our final set begins with Dale Trumbore's *In the Middle*, a setting of a text we can all relate to about time slipping away from us, and a reminder to occasionally "take off our watches" and "lie in the hammock." *Meet Me Here* opens the epilogue to Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard*, a work paying homage to the young gay man killed in a horrific hate crime in 1998. We close our program with Shawn Kirchners' *I'll Be On My Way*, a story of moving from pain to a better world, from darkness into light.

Sharon Paul

*Robert M. Trotter Chair of Music*

*Director of Choral Activities*

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## **A New Day: Songs of Renewal**

### **Reawakening**

O Radiant Dawn (2008)

James MacMillan

Le Chant des Oyseaux

Clément Janequin (1485-1588)

### **Resilience**

Law Rahal Soti (2019)

Samir Shqer

arr. Shireen Abu Khader

Leah Burian, soprano

Ay'bobo Pou Yo (2020)

Sydney Guillaume

Joey Decker, tenor

Jeffrey Boen & Leah Burian, percussion

### *Intermission*

### **Reflections**

Clearing at Dawn (2012)

Alvin Trotman

Alice Somerville, soprano

Alleluia: Incantations (1989)

Michael McGlynn

Summer is Gone

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

### **Remembrance**

In the Middle (2016)

Dale Trumbore

Hung-Yun Chu, piano

Meet Me Here (2016)

Craig Hella Johnson

Bridget Calhoun, soprano

I'll Be on My Way (2004)

Shawn Kirchner

Blake Balmaseda, bass

Hung-Yun Chu, piano

Daniel Cho, violin

## Chamber Choir Personnel

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Sharon J. Paul, *conductor*

Jeffrey Boen and Jonah Heinen, assistant conductors

### *Soprano/Alto*

Mia Bledsoe

Leah Burian

Bridget Calhoun

Naomi Castro

Clara Eddleman-Hunley

Alyse Jamieson

Evelina Koreshko

Emilie Ormsby

Jessica Searl

Shirlanna Shoop

Alice Somerville

Kendra Taylor

Abigail Wilson

Elena Zilar

### *Tenor/Bass*

Blake Balmaseda

Jeffrey Boen

Ely Cleland

Mitch Davey

Joey Decker

Jonah Heinen

Matthew Hill

Rami Holmes

Mark King

Gibson Landreville

Easton Marks

Dylan Nguyen

Payton Swartout

### ***O Radiant Dawn***

(Antiphon for 21 December)

O Radiant Dawn,  
Splendor of eternal Light,  
Sun of Justice: Come,  
Shine on those who dwell in darkness  
And the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied,  
The people who walked in darkness  
Have seen a great light;  
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom  
A light has shone.

Amen.

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### ***Le Chant des Oyseaux***

Wake up, sleeping hearts,  
For the God of love summons you!

On this first day of May  
Birds will work wonders  
To take away your troubles  
Listen attentively.

You will be filled with joy  
For the season is good.

You will hear, I believe,  
Sweet music.  
Sung by the royal thrush.  
The blackbird and the starling will also come together  
In one, magisterial voice.

What are you saying?  
The little starling of Paris. The little darling  
Who goes there? Sparrow, you villain!  
Good heavens!

## Text & Translations

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It's time to go drinking.  
Off to "Mass," mistress mine,  
Let's take a walk to see "Saint Robin";  
The sweet musician  
Guillemette, Colinette, it's time to go drinking.

Off my lady! Off to the "Mass"  
Of prattling Saint Cluck.  
The tiny Parisian starling,  
Wise, courtly, and most learned.  
To laugh and poke fun at myself is my intent;  
Everyone gives into it.

Nightingale from the lovely woods  
In which the voice resounds,  
You babble on and on  
To relieve your sorrow.

Regrets, tears, and cares, away with you.  
For the season commands it.

Away with you, master cuckoo,  
Leave our assembly;  
Everyone will feed you to the owl  
Because you are nothing but a traitor.

Deceitfully in each nest  
Laying eggs that no one requests of you.

Wake up, sleeping hearts,  
For the God of love summons you!

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### ***Law Rahal Soti***

If my voice departs, your voices will not . . .  
I see tomorrow and my heart is with you . . .  
If the singer goes, the songs will remain . . .  
Bringing together the broken and suffering heart . . .

### ***Ay'bobo Pou Yo***

(Text by Gabriel T. Guillaume)

Poets and musicians, actors, singers and farandoles,  
Artists from everywhere, gather under the Dome.  
Join in! Let's go! We are honoring them!

The curtains are open and the scene is in play;  
Corypheus, intone a marvelous chant!  
"Praise and honor to all composers!  
Praise and honor to the conductors too!"

From the crack of dawn till the darkness of night,  
They are spreading joy and they are sowing peace.  
They plant in our hearts the joy of harmony,  
The meaning of the bar and the taste of life.

For their beautiful mission, we honor them!

Music and love forever enlighten us,  
And the light shines brightly throughout the world.  
The light of peace, the light of friendship,  
The light of dignity and the light of humanity.

How wonderful it is when everyone's heart is filled with joy!  
Music and love are the best legacy!

We thank and honor them! Bravo for them!

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### ***Clearing at Dawn***

(Text by Li Po)

The fields are chill, the sparse rain has stopped;  
The colors of Spring abound on every side.  
With leaping fish the blue pond is full;  
With singing thrushes the green boughs hang.  
The flowers of the field have dabbled their powdered cheeks,  
The mountain grasses are bent level at the waist.  
By the bamboo stream the last fragment of cloud  
Blown by the wind slowly scatters away.



### ***Alleluia : Incantations***

You are the stag,  
You are the bird,  
You are the fish, Alleluia.

You are the wind,  
You are the cold,  
You are the sea, Alleluia.

You are the sun,  
You are the star,  
You are the sky, Alleluia.

You are the grass,  
You are the flower,  
You are the trees, Alleluia.

Alleluia my Jesus,  
Alleluia my heart,  
Alleluia my Lord,  
Alleluia my Christ.

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### ***Bitter for Sweet***

(Text by Christina Rossetti)

Summer is gone with all its roses,  
Its sun, and perfumes and sweet flow'rs,  
Its warm air, its refreshing show'rs;  
And even Autumn closes.

Yea! Autumn's chilly self is going,  
And Winter comes which is yet colder,  
Each day the hoarfrost waxes bolder,  
And the last buds cease blowing.

### ***In the Middle***

(Text by Barbara Crooker)

In the middle of a life that's as complicated as everyone else's,  
struggling for balance, juggling time.  
The mantle clock that was my grandfather's  
has stopped at 9:20; we haven't had time  
to get it repaired. The brass pendulum is still,  
the chimes don't ring. One day I look out the window,  
green summer; the next, the leaves have already fallen,  
and a grey sky lowers the horizon. Our children almost grown,  
our parents gone, it happened so fast. Each day, we must learn  
again how to love, between morning's quick coffee  
and evening's slow return. Steam from a pot of soup rises,  
mixing with the yeasty smell of baking bread. Our bodies  
twine, and the big black dog pushes his great head between;  
his tail, a metronome,  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. We'll never get there,  
Time is always ahead of us, running down the beach, urging  
us on faster, faster, but sometimes we take off our watches,  
sometimes we lie in the hammock, caught between the mesh  
of rope and the net of stars, suspended, tangled up  
in love, running out of time.

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### ***Meet Me Here***

(Text by Craig Hella Johnson)

Meet me here,  
Won't you meet me here  
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins?  
There's a balm in the silence  
Like an understanding air  
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins.

We've been walking through the darkness  
On this long, hard climb,  
Carried ancestral sorrow  
For too long a time.  
Will you lay down your burden,  
Lay it down, come with me?  
It will never be forgotten,  
Held in love, so tenderly.

## Text & Translations

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Meet me here,  
Won't you meet me here  
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins?  
There's a joy in the singing  
Like an understanding air  
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins.

Then we'll come to the mountain  
We'll go bounding to see  
That great circle of dancing,  
And we'll dance endlessly.  
And we'll dance with all the children  
Who've been lost along the way.  
We will welcome each other,  
Coming home, this glorious day.

We are home in the mountain,  
And we'll gently understand  
That we've been friends forever,  
That we've never been alone.  
We'll sing on through any darkness  
And our Song will be our sight.  
We can learn to offer praise again,  
Coming home to the light . . .

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### ***I'll Be On My Way***

(Text by Shawn Kirchner)

When I am gone, don't you cry for me, don't you pity my sorry soul.  
What pain there might have been will now be past and my spirit will be whole.  
I'll be on my way, I'll be on my way  
I'll have left my feet of clay upon the ground  
I will be glory bound I'll be on my way.

## Text & Translations

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When I am gone, please forgive the wrongs that I might have done to you;  
There'll be no room for regrets up there, high above, way beyond the blue.  
I'll be on my way, I'll be on my way.  
I'll have laid my frown and all my burdens down,  
I'll be puttin' on my crown, I'll be on my way.

When I am gone, don't you look for me in the places I have been;  
I'll be alive, but somewhere else, I'll be on my way again!  
I'll be on my way! I'll be on my way!  
I will lift my wings and soar into the air, there'll be glory ev'ry where, I'll be on my way.

I'll be on my way . . .  
I'll have laid my frown and all my burdens down,  
I'll be putting on my crown, I'll be on my way.



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