Graduate Conductors Chorus
Alexander Nguyễn, conductor

Recital Chorus
Vinroy D. Brown, Jr., conductor

Monday, February 26, 2024 • 7:30PM
Rock Hall Auditorium
1715 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Graduate Conductors Chorus
Alexander Nguyễn, conductor
Kim Barroso, pianist

Sanama (World Premiere)                        Sepehr Pirasteh (b. 1993)
                                      Tatiyanna Hayward and Nālani Matthias, soloists

Mille Regretz                             Josquin Des Prez (c.1450-1521)

Dos Cuerpos                                      Julio Morales (b. 1987)

My Heart Be Brave                                     Marques L.A. Garrett (b. 1984)

Ave Maria, WAB 6                                   Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

Selig sind die Toten                                  Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

Ride in the Chariot                          Spiritual
                                      Arranged by Brandon Waddles (b. 1988)
                                      Roberto Guevara, tenor
                                      Chloe Lucente and Roslyn Rich, soprano descant

We are grateful to Professor Emeritus and former Director of Choral Activities Alan Harler, in whose name the Alan Harler Endowed Choral Fund supported the commissioning of the Pirasteh piece on tonight's program.
Recital Chorus
Vinroy D. Brown, Jr., conductor
Andrew Samlal, pianist

The Word Was God
Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)

Sure on this Shining Night
Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Wake Up, My Spirit
Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)

Jamaican Folk Song Suite
Jamaican Folk Songs
Train a Blow
Arranged by Marjorie Whylie (b. 1944)
Cookie, Cookie
Ha One Cousin

Si, ch’io vorrei morire
Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Clap Praise
Diane White-Clayton (b. 1964)
Tatiyanna Hayward, alto
Zachary Alvarado, speaker

Soon Ah Will Be Done
Spiritual
Arranged by William Dawson (1899-1990)
Sanama

The composer writes:

Sanama embarks on a sonic exploration of love, traversing the emotional landscape between longing, passionate fervor, and selfless devotion. It draws inspiration from Iranian traditional music, borrowing melodic elements from the Dastagah Shoor and Dashti. These structures mirror the intensity of the emotions portrayed, conjuring feelings of both yearning and ardent adoration.

At the heart of the piece lies the poetry of Rumi, a renowned Persian poet known for his exquisite use of unique rhythmic structures. The piece captures the essence of Rumi's verses by incorporating their original rhythmic patterns, playfully weaving them with moments of syncopation. This interplay creates a dynamic energy that reflects the poem's passionate language.

Beyond musical context, the piece emphasizes the power of love itself. It paints a vivid portrait of an individual consumed by love, willing to surrender their life in the name of devotion. This dedication may hint at either a divine or forbidden love, adding a layer of mystery and intrigue to the sonic journey.

As an Iranian composer, I felt compelled to share this precious heritage with those dear to me, and this piece represents a heartfelt offering inspired by my cultural roots.

-Sepehr Pirasteh
Mille Regretz
Josquin Des Prez

*Mille Regretz* is a French chanson often attributed to Josquin Des Prez (though his authorship has been disputed). Josquin’s composition employs 4-part writing in the Phrygian mode to represent the longing and suffering at the loss of love. In addition to the modality, it could also be said that Josquin breaks rules of Renaissance ficta (non-diatonic accidentals) to reinforce the unsettled mood of loss. This idea is then compounded by a final cadence that has no feeling of closure.

Josquin was a Franco-Flemish composer of the High Renaissance. His style developed that of his predecessors Du Fay and Ockeghem. Unlike his contemporaries, his vocal compositions did not feature long melismatic lines. Instead, he preferred his music to reinforce the text with many of the syllables featuring just one or two notes. *Mille Regretz* is an example of a Parisian chanson (a French chanson that is written predominantly homophonic, with 4-part texture with equal rhythm and text stress).

**Mille regretz de vous abandonner**

Et d'eslonger vostre fache amoureuse,
Jay si grand duel et paine douloureuse,
Quon me verra brief mes jours definer.

A thousand regrets at deserting you and leaving behind your loving face, I feel so much sadness and such painful distress, that it seems to me my days will soon dwindle away

Dos Cuerpos
Julio Morales

*Dos Cuerpos* is an an unaccompanied piece composed by Julio Morales. It has been featured in the *Corát México* collection, which documented prominent Mexican choral music. The piece is written in the contemporary choral style with homophonic writing and major-seventh chords. Morales
uses lush chordal writing underneath a soaring soprano melody to bring Octavio Paz’s (1914-1998) romantic text to life.

Julio Morales is an arranger and composer of Mexican choral music. As a conductor he has made waves through his ensemble Vox Populi Project, an internationally admired ensemble that cultivates traditional Mexican rhythms through the lens of a cappella Latin Pop. As a composer, he has served as the Composer-In-Residence for VocalEssence in Minneapolis and Chicago. His arrangements of traditional music from Veracruz and original compositions are performed around the world and admired for their gorgeous melodies and rhythmic energy.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces dos olas
y la noche es océano.

Two bodies face to face
Are at times two waves
And the night is an ocean.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces dos piedras
y la noche desierto.

Two bodies face to face
Are sometimes two stones
And the night a desert.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces raíces
en la noche enlazadas.

Two bodies face to face
Are at times two roots
Intertwined in the night.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces navajas
y la noche relámpago.

Two bodies face to face
Are sometimes two stilettos
And night lightening sparks.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son dos astros que caen
en un cielo vacío.

Two bodies face to face
Are two stars who are falling
In a naked sky.

My Heart Be Brave

My Heart Be Brave is a choral part-song by Marques Garrett. The piece was written for Dr. Anthony Trecek-King and Seraphic Fire. The text is by American poet James Weldon Johnson. The theme is similar to that of Johnson’s other famous poem Lift Every Voice and Sing, and speaks of the continuous fight for social equality. Garrett writes this about the text: “In the midst of discrimination, our heart—the core of our being—must lead us into rightful change. And as we continue doing right, the principles of honesty, love, and justice will give us the power to strive for what is due all of humanity.”

Dr. Marques Garrett is an American composer and Associate Professor of Choral Studies at the University of North Texas. He is a highly sought after choral artist, with invitations to guest
conduct honor choirs and professional ensembles around the country. As a composer, he has been commissioned by groups such as Westminster Choir College and the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia. Dr. Garrett is also a leading expert on non-idiomatic choral music of Black American composers.

**Sonnet**

My heart be brave, and do not falter so,  
Nor utter more that deep, despairing wail.  
Thy way is very dark and drear I know,  
But do not let thy strength and courage fail;  
For certain as the raven-winged night  
Is followed by the bright and blushing morn,  
Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright;  
’Tis darkest when the night is furthest worn.  
Look up, and out, beyond, surrounding clouds,  
And do not in thine own gross darkness grope,  
Rise up, and casting off thy hind’ring shrouds,  
Cling thou to this, and ever inspiring hope:  
Tho’ thick the battle and tho’ fierce the fight,  
There is a power making for the right.

- James Weldon Johnson

**Ave Maria, WAB 6**  

_Ave Maria_ (WAB 6) is Bruckner’s second of three motet settings of the same text. In this version, Bruckner writes for seven-part unaccompanied chorus. This setting comes from his Linz period of 1861. This work represents his compositional style of blending Renaissance chant-like lines with the Romantic era harmonic language and shifts. This setting features block-chord orchestration with antiphonal structures between upper and lower voices as well as dramatic dynamic contrasts.

Anton Bruckner was an Austrian Romantic organist and composer, most remembered for his orchestral symphonies and sacred choral works. He found much of his inspiration in reverence and respect for his musical predecessors of the Renaissance and Classical eras. His identity as a devout Catholic guided much of his largely sacred output, including this setting of the _Ave Maria_.
Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus [Christus].
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus [Christ].
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Selig sind die Toten

Selig sind die Toten is a German motet by Heinrich Schütz from his collection of funeral music, Geistliche Chormusik (1648). The text comes from The Book of Revelations, 14:13 in the Lutheran Bible. The polyphonic texture used in this piece models pieces in the late Renaissance with shorter points of imitation with repetition. Though the motet opens very calmly, Schütz creates contrasting textures with great homophonic affirmation to represent the words of the Spirit. We also see text painting in the music to show the great work that is accomplished on Earth with the “und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach,” section.

Heinrich Schütz is a composer of the Baroque period with strong influences from the Renaissance Venetian School of composition. A student of Giovanni Gabrieli, Schütz is remembered today as Germany's most prolific composer before Bach. He is credited with bringing the Italian style to Germany and continuing its evolution from the Renaissance into the early Baroque. His largely sacred output has ties to his experience as a German Lutheran.


Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord from now on. Yea, the Spirit speaks: they rest from their labors and their works follow them.

Ride in the Chariot

Ride in the Chariot is an arrangement by Brandon Waddles of a traditional African American spiritual. The text originates in the Old Testament story of prophet Elijah as he rode in a chariot of fire to heaven (2 Kings 2:11). It is both a statement of joy and a plea for mercy with the coming of the Revelation. Waddles’s arrangement infuses gospel and jazz chord structure into the traditional spiritual genre. He writes with clear references and homages to 20th century spiritual arrangers Hall Johnson, William Dawson, Moses Hogan, and Roland Carter.
Brandon Waddles is an American composer from Detroit. His choral compositions and arrangements have been published and performed by choral ensembles around the world, including the University of Michigan Glee Clubs, Oakwood Aeolians, Brigham Young University Singers and the Slovenian Philharmonic Choir. He holds music degrees from Morehouse College, Westminster Choir College, and Florida State University.

Ride up in the chariot soon-a in the mornin'
And I hope I join the band

O Lord, have mercy on me
And I hope I join the band

Walk and talk with Jesus soon-a in the mornin'
And I hope I join the band

Chatter with the angels soon-a in the mornin'
And I hope I join the band

- Traditional Spiritual

Notes by Alexander Nguyễn
The Word Was God

*The Word Was God* is an unaccompanied motet by Rosephanye Powell. Its text comes from the first chapter of John. Powell introduces the first musical theme through the upper voices, who sing in unison, and then it is imitated in the lower voices, who respond in harmony. The opening unison represents the “nothingness” of creation. When it is further developed in the lower voices it remains homophonic, but its harmony reflects the duality of God and Christ. Throughout the piece, the initial theme develops, and more are added, each of them syncopated and reflective of the text. According to the composer, the piece is a musical text painting of the creation.

This has become a frequently performed piece of this prolific composer, who is the most published Black female composer in the world. Rosephanye Powell is a versatile composer, musicologist and pedagogue who has presented, performed, conducted, and had her music performed throughout the world. A graduate of Alabama State University, Westminster Choir College, and The Florida State University, she is currently Chair and Professor of Voice at Auburn University.

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him;
and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Sure on this Shining Night

*Sure on this Shining Night* is among Samuel Barber’s most known works. It was first composed as an art song for solo voice as part of his 1938 song cycle *Four Songs*. The text is taken from James Agee’s poem *Descriptions of Elysium* which comes from the 1934 collection *Permit Me Voyage*. It is through-composed and neo-Romantic in style. The composer sets the solo art song several years later. In this original choral version, he keeps the original tune in the soprano voices and adds complimentary lines in the lower voices. The text speaks to the beauty of nature at night and is an ode to the wonder of the stars and night sky. This contemplative piece rests in a warm B-flat major with text being paramount, evidenced by the changing of meter to best align with the text.

Samuel Barber was a 20th century American composer, educator, singer, and pianist. He was a native of West Chester, Pennsylvania, and born to a musical family. His output is diverse, and
includes works not only for chorus, but for solo voice and instruments. He was the recipient of two Pulitzer Prizes for his significant contribution to music of the 20th century.

Sure on this shining night
Of star made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wandering far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

Wake Up, My Spirit

Wake Up, My Spirit is a work for mixed chorus and piano by Adolphus Hailstork. A choral art song, its text is taken from the fifty-seventh Psalm. The text speaks to renewal, joy and praise. Listeners will hear many meter changes, syncopated rhythms, moving tonalities, and a broad range of vocal singing from the choir – all distinctive hallmarks of Hailstork’s compositional style.

Adolphus Hailstork is an American composer and educator. Born in Rochester, New York, he currently resides in Virginia Beach, Virginia. He studied composition with several teachers, most notably Nadia Boulanger. His compositional output includes over 100 works, which span the full spectrum of ensemble makeup and instrumentation. As an educator, he is retired as Professor of Music and Composer-In-Residence at Old Dominion University.

Wake up, my spirit!
I, myself, will waken the dawn.

Exalt Yourself above the heavens, O God,
And Your glory over all the earth.

I will sing praise to You above the nations,
Awake, lute and harp,
I will sing melody.
Marjorie Whylie's Jamaican Folk Song Suite is a set of three traditional songs that in the words of the composer are “full of social commentary, censure, and recrimination in a vehicle of humor.” The first in the set, *Train a Blow*, talks about people you see in the neighborhood as you catch the train. *Cookie, Cookie*, the second in the set, is a humorous “lament” about the playful nature of stealing food from a loved one’s plate. The third and final song, *Ha One Cousin*, speaks to a family member who plays pranks on his parents. The set is performed in Jamaican patois, the native language of the island. It is an English-based Creole language with West African influences.

Marjorie Whylie is a Jamaican instrumentalist, composer, arranger, musicologist, and educator. She is most known for her tenure as the Musical Director of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica, which performed many of her original and arranged music for choreographed works both domestically and abroad.

I. Train a Blow

Train a blow,            The train whistle is blowing.
yuh nuh hear de         don't you hear the
min' 'ilef yuh          make sure ti doesn't leave you
Mas Tom a run,          Master Tom si running,
Miss Mary da come.      Miss Mary has come.
What a way de gyal foot dry!  How skinny her feet are!
Poor Madda Jane         Poor Mother Jane
da try catch de train,  Is trying to catch the train,
but her fowl da look fe fy.  but her chicken
Lok how de woman         is trying to fly away.
a hide her little bwoy   Se how the woman
inna ed ker'sene pan.   is hiding her little boy
in the kerosene pan.
Tap, yuh tink yuh smart, Stop, you think you're smart,
no, ma.                 don't you, ma'm.
Yuh nuh wan' pay        You don't want to pay
fe yuh son.             for your son.
Port Antoni,            Port Antonio,
Frankfield, Ewarton    Frankfield, Ewarton
Gyal an' bwoy,         Girl and boy,
young lady, gentleman   young lady, gentleman
**II. Cookie, Cookie**

Cookie, Cookie,  
yuh nuh se nobody pas yah?  
No, me friend.  
Nuh tel me so.  
One o' me dumplin' gawn.  
Half 'o me sorel gawn.  
Big junk o' corn pork gawn.

**III. Ha One Cousin**

Ha one cousin  
uppa Seafort Town.  
Cheer, bwoys, cheer.  
Tek im' aunty coat,  
trow trough de window.  
Gyal, awhe yuh cal am?  
Cal ma Funduwah.  
Put yuh foot ni deh.  
han,' head, body

**Si, ch’io vorrei morire**

*Si, ch’io vorrei morire* is a madrigal by renaissance composer Claudio Monteverdi. It comes from his *Fourth Book of Madrigals for Five Voices* and is a song of immense passion. The narrator of the text wants to die from passion in the arms of his beloved. The cries of “Ahi” throughout the piece are plaintive in nature, and they create tension between the voices that is an extension of the tension between love and pain in the text. These suspensions figuratively “strangle” the music like a person being held in their lover’s arms.

Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi is regarded as one of the most consequential composers of all time. A composer of both secular and sacred music, and a pioneer in the development of opera, he is considered a crucial transitional figure between the Renaissance and Baroque periods of musical development. While he worked extensively in the tradition of earlier Renaissance polyphony, he also undertook great developments in form and melody, and began to employ basso continuo techniques, notable of the Baroque.
One of Mendelssohn’s smaller sacred choral works, Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich is a hymn setting of a Lutheran text. The call for peace begins with an extended piano introduction. Musical ideas are introduced in the lowest ranges of the piano before extending the range. The vocal theme is presented three times: first in the lowest voices, then in countermelody with the alto voice, and finally, in four-part homophony with a tune original to Mendelssohn. There is a complete orchestration of this work for strings and woodwinds, with cellos and basses driving the piece.

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, widely known as Felix Mendelssohn, was a German composer, pianist, organist, and conductor of the early Romantic period. Mendelssohn's compositions amount to hundreds and include symphonies, concertos, piano music, organ music and chamber music. A traveler throughout Europe, his musical influences were vast and his writing style diverse.

An original composition by Diane L. White-Clayton, Clap Praise is an energetic piece for piano, solo, speaker and chorus. The text comes from verses of Psalm 47 and features the choir clapping throughout of the piece, sometimes all together and in segments. The soloist leads the choir in a
call and response that is further expanded upon and supported by the piano, which is featured prominently in the piece.

Diane L. White-Clayton is a multi-genre composer, conductor and performer. A Washington D.C. native, her earliest musical experiences came from her formative years in the Black church. Currently, Dr. White-Clayton serves on the faculty of the University of California, Los Angeles as a Lecturer of Ethnomusicology. She is also the Artistic Director of the Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers and Founder and CEO of BYTHAX, which serves as her primary publishing outlet, and the BYTHAX Ensemble, a professional vocal group.

Clap Your hands, O ye people
Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

For the Lord most high is to be feared,
A great King over all the earth.
He subdued the peoples under us
and nations under our feet.

God has gone up with a shout.
The Lord ascends with the sound of a trumpet.
God ascends amidst shouts of joy.

Shout unto God with a voice of triumph.
Shout unto God with loud songs of joy!
Sing praises to our King!

God reigns over the nations,
God sits on His holy throne.
He is the King of all the earth,
Sing praises with a psalm.

Everybody!
Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

Soon Ah Will Be Done

Soon Ah Will Be Done is a traditional spiritual arranged by William L. Dawson. Its text speaks to both the hope of the afterlife and of reconciliation. It is composed in a mostly strophic manner with variations from the first to the succeeding choruses, and each verse anticipating the reunion of a loved one. The final verse speaks to the ultimate reconciliation, that with God.
William Dawson was an American composer, choir director, professor, and musicologist. His early music career was spent as a trombonist with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. He is most known for his work as choral director of the Tuskegee Institute, which became the outlet for most of his spiritual arrangements. In addition, Dawson composed original choral and solo art songs, symphonies and other instrumental works.

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Soon ah will be don'
A-wid de troubles ob de worl',
Goin' home t'live wid God.

I wan' t'meet my mother,
I'm goin' t'live wid God.

No more weepin' an' a-wailin',
I'm goin' t'live wid God.

I wan' t'meet my Jesus,
I'm goin' t'live wid God.
In de mornin' Lord!
God, I'm goin' t'live wid God.
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Notes by Vinroy D. Brown, Jr.
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Kim Barroso, pianist

SOPRANO
Angela Bui
Kayla Elliott
Chloe Lucente
Nālani Matthias
Roslyn Rich

ALTO
Elizabeth Beavers
Alison Crosley
Carmelina Favacchia
Tatiyanna Hayward
Sadie Roser

TENOR
Zachary Alvarado
Shawn Anderson
Ben Bian
Roberto Guevara
Blake Levinson
Julian Nguyễn

BASS
Vinroy D. Brown, Jr.
Benjamin Chen
Sergio Paul
Gabriel Eduardo Planas-Borgstrom
Kylar Sprenger
Recital Chorus
Vinroy D. Brown, Jr., conductor
Andrew Samlal, pianist

SOPRANO
Angela Bui
Paulina Cevallos
Kayla Elliott
Victoria Smith

ALTO
Elizabeth Beavers
Gabi Bernstein
Nadia Bodnari
Tayler Butenschoen
Tatiyanna Hayward
Astrid Le
Angelina Soedjartanto
Angela Thornton

TENOR
Roberto Guevara
Julian Nguyễn
Mateo Perez Presmanes
Brandon Scribner

BASS
Anthony Aguilar
Zachary Alvarado
Thomas McLoughlin
Alexander Nguyễn
Kylar Sprenger