

Hamilton College Choir
presents

Closer Together

An uplifting celebration of singing, community, and perseverance

Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 7:30pm

Wellin Hall, Schambach Center for Music and the Performing Arts

I Everyone is welcome!

We open our concert with two messages of welcome. *Bonk'abaphandle* is a traditional isiZulu song from South Africa. Listen out for ululation, and the sound of the choir's feet pulsing the pentameter over a polyrhythmic canon of syncopated super-triplets. *Ambe* is based on an original Ojibway song that was gifted to Andrew Balfour (of Cree descent) and the University of Manitoba Concert Choir by traditional drummer and singer Cory Campbell. Campbell describes the song as "a call to the people to the ceremonial way of life or to the red road or, quite frankly, to whatever we have going on, because everything happens with spirit and in spirit." The steady, repeating rhythmic patterns in Balfour's composition echo the drum patterns of Campbell's song, representing the heartbeat of Mother Earth. According to Balfour, the soaring Soprano line that emerges from this rhythmic texture conveys the powerful totem of the eagle which represents the teaching of love, wisdom, and strength.

***Bonk'abaphandle* (2020)**

Arr. Michael Barrett (b. 1983) and Mbuso Ndlovu (b. 1982)

Bonk'abaphandle babizeni
Bonk'abaphandle bangene Phakathi

All those (that are) outside, call them in
All those (that are) outside, come inside

Yiyo lendlela ivuliwe
Yiyo lendlela bangene Phakathi

We have made a passage, let them in
We have made a passage, come inside.

***Ambe* (2017)**

Andrew Balfour

Based on an original song, gifted by Cory Campbell, edited by Catherine Robbins

Text by Cory Campbell

Ambe
Ambe Anishinaabeg
Biindigeg Anishinaabeg
Mino-bimaadiziwin omaa
Ambe!

Come in
Come in, two legged beings
Come in all people
There is good life here
Come in!

Translation by Cory Campbell

** Please hold your applause until the end of each section*

II Singing, always.

Despite multiple restrictive risk-mitigation strategies, the Hamilton College Choir has kept singing throughout the coronavirus pandemic. To celebrate the choir's perseverance and commitment to continued singing, we present a series of songs that are consecutively connected by key on Pythagoras's "Circle of Fifths:" D-G-C-F. We start with Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel's refusal to stop singing, next performing *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, also known as the Black National Anthem. **It is customary for all present to stand as they are able when this hymn is sung.**

"Together at Last" is the final piece in Indian American composer Reena Esmail's *Quarantine Madrigals*. Disappointed with the limitations of conference software when used for singing, Esmail created a set of contemporary madrigals that would allow an individual singer to record multiple parts of the same song in isolation. The music resulted in a poignant articulation of the moments of loneliness many singers have shared over the last 21 months.

The *All-Night Vigil* is often referred to as Russian composer Rachmaninoff's *Vespers* in the United States. The work was composed in two weeks during January and February of 1915. Like nine of the fifteen movements, "Богородице Дево" is based on znamenny chant. Moses Hogan's *I'm gonna Sing 'til the Spirit Moves in my Heart* is a concert arrangement of a folk spiritual — a genre developed by enslaved Africans and African Americans to express their hopes and longing to be free of the cruel conditions under which they lived. Victims of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade forged African American music styles by combining West African characteristics

such as ostinato, call-and-response, and syncopation with Old Testament texts from the Bible. The dialect that is commonly associated with African American spirituals developed through acquisition, as a means of survival.

***Wer will mir wehren zu singen?* (1846)**

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847)

Text excerpted from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's poem *Unvermeidlich*

Wer will mir wehren zu singen
Nach Lust zum Himmel hinan?
Den Wolken zu vertrauen
Wie lieb sie mir's angetan.

Who will keep me from the pleasure
that singing to heaven provides?
From telling the clouds
how charmingly they've bewitched me?

Translation by Michael Lipkin

***Lift Every Voice and Sing* (c. 1905)**

J. Rosamund Johnson (1873-1954)

Quartet: Olivia Seymour '22, Kate Burnham '23, James Kaeser '24, Max Wohlfeld '25

Text by James Weldon Johnson (c. 1900)

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty
Let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light
Keep us forever in the path, we pray

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand
True to our God, true to our native land

“Together at Last” from *Quarantine Madrigals* (2020)

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Text by Amy Fogerson

Together at last
Voices entwining
In a Communion of Song

“Богородице Дево” from *All-Night Vigil* Op. 37 (1915)

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Богородице Дево, радуйся,
благодатная Марие, Господь с тобою.
Благословена ты в женах,
и благословен плод чрева твоего,
яко Спаса родила еси душ наших.

Rejoice, virgin mother of God,
Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb,
for you have borne the Savior of our souls.

Translation by Barry Johnston

***I'm gonna Sing 'til the Spirit Moves in my Heart* (1995)**

Moses Hogan (1957-2003)

Solo group: Maia Disbrow '22, Ryan Hayes '24, David Li '24

I'm gonna sing 'til the spirit moves in my heart.
I'm gonna sing 'til Jesus comes.
It was grace that brought me.
It was grace that taught me.
It was grace that kept me.
And it's grace that will lead me home. Hallelu!
I'm gonna pray 'til the spirit moves in my heart.
I'm gonna pray 'til Jesus comes.
Can't you feel the spirit move!
I'm gonna shout 'til the spirit moves in my heart.
I'm gonna shout 'til Jesus comes.

III

Music, our refuge

Using a quintessential early 21st-century harmonic language, the opening of Ticheli's *Earth Song* paints an ethereal soundscape. The cluster chord suspensions are dissonant, but still hopeful. This work is deeply personal for many of our singers. During the pandemic, the choir rehearsal has become one of the only places where we find refuge, community, and space for expression. *Earth Song* ends with a direct modulation to an unrelated key for the word “Peace.” The harmonic shift is refreshing, rather than jarring, and flows directly into *In Meeting We are Blessed*, composed for a collaboration between the Nairobi Chamber Chorus and the Festival Singers of Florida. For the event, Robertson fused Kenyan rhythms and American pop vocal styles into a choral idiom. The Hamilton College Choir performs this piece as a celebration of our upcoming opportunities to travel together and meet fellow-singers through performance and cultural outreach.

Earth Song (2006)

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Text by composer

Sing, Be, Live, See...

This dark stormy hour,
The wind, it stirs.
The scorched earth
Cries out in vain:

O war and power,
You blind and blur,
The torn heart
Cries out in pain.

But music and singing
Have been my refuge,
And music and singing
Shall be my light.

A light of song
Shining Strong: Alleluia!
Through darkness, pain, and strife, I'll
Sing, Be, Live, See...

In Meeting We are Blessed (2016)

Troy D. Robertson (b. 1961)

Djembe: Ryan Hayes '24

Text by R. Gatsnahos after Donne

We are met together and in meeting we are blessed.
Peace in coming and in going, peace in labor and in rest.

Hold on dear brother!
Hold on dear sister!
Hold on to me.

You're not alone.
No, and you never more will be.
I will be with you and I will carry you with me.

Friendship endures and surely, we will prove
It's not ourselves, but our bodies that move.
Hold on dear family*!
Hold on dear sibling*!
Hold on to me.

**Lyrics have been altered to represent and include all members of the choir and Hamilton community*

IV
Hope

Hella-Johnson's arrangement of Parton's tune captures both vulnerability and resilience. The College Choir has remained steadfast and committed to nurturing the choral culture on our campus, despite the restrictions of the pandemic. It is our sincere hope that the College Choir's dedication will be a source of inspiration to all. Clear blue mornings will come again.

Light of a Clear Blue Morning (1977, renewed 2005, arr. 2010)

Dolly Parton (1946), arranged by Craig Hella-Johnson (b. 1962)

Soloist: Hannah Petersen '21

Flute: Gwen Child '24

Text by Dolly Parton

It's been a long dark night
And I've been a waitin' for the morning
It's been a long hard fight
But I see a brand-new day a-dawning

I've been looking for the sunshine
You know, I ain't seen it in so long
And everything's gonna work out just fine
And everything's gonna be all right

'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of a brand-new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
And everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay

V
A joyful noise

While the choir regularly sings in a wide variety of languages, wrapping our minds and mouths around the Finnish text of *Kaikki maat, te riemuitkaatte* has, at times, been a bit of a joyful noise — therefore quite well-suited to the clamoring gladness associated with psalm 100. The song was written for the Finnish a cappella group Rajaton, meaning “limitless.” Having persevered through the multiple limitations necessary to make music during the COVID-19 pandemic, we return to in-person performance with gratitude. With hard work, creativity, and 50 awesome friends, we can keep singing alive at Hamilton and bring all those who hear us a little bit closer together.

Kaikki maat, te riemuitkaatte (2005)

Mia Makaroff (b. 1970)

Text by Johann Franck (1653)

Kaikki maat, te riemuitkaatte, kansat, Herraa palvelkaa!
Hänen luokseen tulla saatte, sydäimestä veisatkaa.
Kiitosvirsi kohotkoon, riemun huuto raikukoon!

Tyhjästä hän, Mestariimme, meihinkin loi elämän.
Armon valoon heräsimme, ruumiin, hengen antoi hän.
Kristus meidät verellään osti uuteen elämään.

Viettäkäämme kiitosjuhlaa, tulkaa Herran huoneeseen!
Hyvydessään Herra tuhlaa laupeutta lapsilleen.
Kautta sukupolvien kestää armo Kristuksen.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness:
come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God:
it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts
with praise:
be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;
and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalm 100, King James Version

** All former members of the Hamilton College Choir are invited to join us for the singing of the Hamilton College alma mater.*

Carissima* (1901)

Fabio Campana (1815-1882), revised by president Melancthon Woolsey Stryker

Conductor: Kate Peinkofer '22, Hamilton College Choir president

Dear is thy homestead, glade and glen,
Fair is the light that crowns thy brow;
Gather we close to thee again,
Mother, all loving thou hast been,
Our own sweet Lady thou! Our own sweet Lady thou!

Haunting our hearts in absent days,
Calling us back from stress and storm,
Tenderly all thy good old ways
Shine in thy smiles; be love thy praise!
Thine arms are ever warm. Thine arms are ever warm.

Memory still shall close enfold,
Bringing us joys of days of yore;
Faith shall thy constant fame uphold,
While years, Carissima, grow cold.
We love thee evermore. We love thee evermore.

Collaborative pianist

Tina Toggia, DMA, is a native of Philadelphia, PA. and holds degrees from SUNY Stony Brook, Curtis Institute of Music, and Temple University. An avid collaborative pianist, she has recorded art songs with Hamilton soprano, Lauralyn Kolb, for New World Records, and performed extensively throughout the US. She is a Lecturer in Piano at Hamilton.

Conductor

Charlotte Botha, DMA, is a conductor, composer, and ensemble singer from South Africa, who regularly appears as a guest conductor domestically and internationally. Since her tenure as conductor of the Drakensberg Boys Choir, Charlotte has nurtured her passion for working with children's and equal-voice choirs. Current engagements include the United Children's Choir of Lithuania and the Southwest ACDA tenor-bass choir. Her conducting degrees are from the University of Pretoria, Nelson Mandela University, and the University of North Texas, where she also completed a related concentration in Music Theory. Since her appointment as Director of Choral Activities at Hamilton College in fall 2020, Charlotte has led the College Choir and established Hamilton Voices, a flexible ensemble that uses interdisciplinary approaches to highlight often neglected social and environmental justice issues.

Sopranos

Sofi Block '23
Kate Burnham '23
Shelly Cao '23
Gwen Child '24
Phoebe Child '24
Maia Disbrow '22
Eva Millay Evans '25
Helen Higgins '24
Jules Mancuso '24
Maggie Marks '25
Grace Park '25
Hannah Petersen '21
Alyssa Samuels '25
Veronica Seixas '24
Kat Tsaryova '24
Hunter Wisneski '25

Basses

Julian Arky '25
John Frank '24
Matt Jankowski '22
Sampson Lamberth '23
Benn Otten '22
Alex Ruffer '25
Joey Tarlavsky '25
Max Wohlfeld '25
Simon Zhang '25

Altos

Eliza Behrke '25
Maia Chakin '25
Mia Chervenkova '25
Sophie Crehan '24
Rebecca Dalphin '25
Shraddha Datta '25
Kaylee Davis '22

Altos (cont.)

Elizabeth Gee '24
Daniel Lipson '25
Niamh McDade Clay '25
Kelly McElroy '24
Kate Peinkofer '22
Ella Scott '25
Anna Skrobala '24
Olivia Seymour '22
Katherine Shock '24
Cynthia Yang '25

Tenors

Jeremy Gordon '22
Ryan Hayes '24
John Hern III '24
James Kaeser '24
David Li '24
Kirk Petrie '25