

YALE INSTITUTE OF SACRED MUSIC PRESENTS

Yale Repertory Chorus

Mahima Kumara

Rachel Segman

Alex Whittington

CONDUCTORS



APRIL 15, 2024

5:00 PM

BATTELL CHAPEL

NEW HAVEN

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Your courtesy is appreciated.

YALE REPERTORY CHORUS

MAHIMA KUMARA, RACHEL SEGMAN, ALEX WHITTINGTON

CONDUCTORS

ילאל הדיא Odeh L'eli (I Shall Thank My God) Menachem Wiesenberg
Omer Pshititski *bass* (b. 1950)
Rachel Segman *conductor*

When the Violin Reena Esmail
Maya Ingram *soprano* (b. 1983)
Rachel Segman *alto*
Alex Whittington *tenor*
Even Brock *bass*
Francis Fedora *cello*
Mahima Kumara *conductor*

人日思归 Rén Rì Sī Guī Yiran Zhao
Virginia Grabovsky *soprano* (b. 1999)
Eliana Barwinski *alto*
Vincent Lin *bass*
Alex Whittington *conductor*

A Prayer Ken Burton
(b. 1970)
Mahima Kumara *conductor*

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Ad Manus, from *Membra Jesu Nostri*

Dieterich Buxtehude

(1637–1707)

- I. Sonata
- II. Concerto
- III. Aria
Yiran Zhao *soprano*
- IV. Aria
Eliana Barwinski *soprano*
- V. Aria
Sarah Shapiro *alto*
Alex Whittington *tenor*
Even Brock *bass*
- VI. Concerto

Mahima Kumara *conductor*

Magnificat

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani

(1602–1678)

Rachel Segman *conductor*

Dominus Regnavit

Jean-Joseph Cassanéa de Mondonville

(1711–1772)

- I. Chœur: Dominus regnavit
- II. Trio: Etenim firmavit orbem terrae
Lindsay Elliott *haute-contre*
Jack Purdue *taille*
Terence Wu *basse*
- III. Duo: Parata sedes tua
Rachel Segman *dessus*
Camila Hayashi *dessus*
Amy Kim *oboe*
Maren Tonini *oboe*
Albert Steinberger *violin*
- IV. Chœur: Elevaverunt flumina
Daniel Fletcher *flute*
Nadira Novruzov *flute*
- VI. Chœur: Gloria Patri

Alex Whittington *conductor*

Menachem Wiesenberg, *ילאל ה'דוא Odeh L'eli (I Shall Thank My God)*

יִלְעוֹפ רֹצֵץ יִנְגוֹב יִלְאֵל הַדּוּא *I shall thank my God, my Rock, my Creator*
יִלְלֵמֵם קִיפּוּ יִלּוֹק הַעֲמִשָּׁי אֹוה *He will hear my voice, and listen to my words*

הַנּוֹחֵתֶשָׂא הַעֲרֵכָא הַנּוֹקָא וּמִשֵּׁב *And in his name I hope, I kneel, I pray*
יִלְלֵם הַדִּיחֵי הַאֵג חֲבֵשׁ רִידֶסָא *I'll say a beautiful praise, speak it my soul*

הַנְחֵם יִשְׂאֵרֵל רְנוּפֶצְמֵל יִלְגֵּ *I'll unveil your consciousness to the sages*
יִלְלֵה וּמִשְׁלֹךְ הַגּוֹק וְרֹצֵר יִשְׁעוּ *And do the will of God and praise his name*

יִנְטוֹשׁ וּבְרֵךְ יִנְחַצִּילָהּ סִידָהּ *The wicked enslaved me and numerous were my foes,*
יִלְפּוּא רְאֵהוּ יִנְע תּוֹנֵעַ בְּשָׁהּ *Save my people and enlighten my darkness*

(From the Yemenite Diwan, 16th–18th centuries)

Reena Esmail, *When the Violin*

When
The violin
Can forgive the past

It starts singing.

When the violin can stop worrying
About the future

You will become
Such a drunk laughing nuisance

That God
Will then lean down
And start combing you into
Her
Hair.

When the violin can forgive
Every wound caused by
Others

The heart starts
Singing.

(Hafiz, The Gift, 14th century, trans. Daniel Ladinsky)

Yiran Zhao, 人日思归 *Rén Rì Sī Guī*

入春才七日，离家已二年。 *It is only the seventh day of the Chinese New Year, yet I have already
been away from home for two years.*
人归落雁后，思发在花前。 *I will return home after spring arrives when the wild geese fly back to
the north, but my thoughts of returning took shape well before the
flowers bloomed.*

(Daoheng Xue 薛道衡, 540–609)

Ken Burton, *A Prayer*

O Lord, the hard-won miles
Have worn my stumbling feet:
Oh, soothe me with thy smiles,
And make my life complete.

The thorns were thick and keen
Where'er I trembling trod;
The way was long between
My wounded feet and God.

Where healing waters flow
Do thou my footsteps lead.
My heart is aching so;
They gracious balm I need.
Amen.

(Paul Laurence Dunbar, 1872–1906)

Dieterich Buxtehude, *Ad manus* (To the hands), from *Membra Jesu Nostri*

I. Sonata

II. Concerto

Quid sunt plagae istae
in medio manuum tuarum?

*What are those wounds
in the midst of your hands?*

III. Aria

Salve Jesu, pastor bone,
fatigatus in agone,
qui per lignum es distractus
et ad lignum es compactus
expansis sanctis manibus.

*Hail, Jesus, good shepherd,
wearied in agony,
tormented on the cross
nailed to the cross
your sacred hands stretched out.*

IV. Aria

Manus sanctae, vos amplector,
et gemendo condelector,
grates ago plagis tantis,
clavis duris guttis sanctis
dans lacrymas cum osculis.

*Holy hands, I embrace you,
and, lamenting, I delight in you,
I give thanks for the terrible wounds,
the hard nails, the holy drops,
shedding tears with kisses.*

V. Aria

In cruore tuo lotum
me commendo tibi totum,
tuae sanctae manus istae
me defendant, Jesu Christe,
extremis in periculis.

*Washed in your blood
I wholly entrust myself to you;
may these holy hands of yours
defend me, Jesus Christ,
in the final dangers.*

VI. Concerto

Quid sunt plagae istae
in medio manuum tuarum?

*What are those wounds
in the midst of your hands?*

(Zechariah 13:6)

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, *Magnificat*

Magnificat anima mea Dominum,
et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae.

*My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his
handmaiden.*

Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes.

*For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call
me blessed.*

Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, et
sanctum nomen eius.

*For he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is
his Name.*

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.

*And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout
all generations.*

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit
superbos mente cordis sui.

*He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath
scattered the proud in the imagination of their
hearts.*

Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit
humiles.

*He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and
hath exalted the humble and meek.*

Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit
inanes.

*He hath filled the hungry with good things and the
rich he hath sent empty away.*

Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiae suae.

*He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant
Israel.*

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et
semini eius in saecula.

*As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his
seed forever.*

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Ghost;*

sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper et in
saecula saeculorum. Amen.

*as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.*

(Book of Common Prayer 1662)

Jean-Joseph Cassanéa de Mondonville, *Dominus Regnavit*

I. Chœur

Dominus regnavit, decorem indutus est:
indutus est Dominus fortitudinem, et
præcinxit se.

*The Lord has reigned; beauty has he donned:
The Lord has donned strength and has girded
himself.*

II. Trio

Etenim firmavit orbem terrae, qui non
commovebitur.

*He has fortified the Earth, the which shall not be
moved.*

III. Duo

Parata sedes tua ex tunc; a saeculo tu es.

*Prepared is your throne from then on; you are from
everlasting.*

IV. Chœur

Elevaverunt flumina, Domine, elevaverunt
flumina vocem suam; elevaverunt flumina
fluctus suos, a vocibus aquarum multarum.
Mirabiles elationes maris; mirabilis in altis
Dominus.

*The rivers have raised, Lord, the rivers have raised
their voice; the rivers have raised their waves from
the voices of the many waters. Marvelous are the
raisings-up of the sea; wonderful is the Lord on
high*

VI. Chœur

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Spirit,*

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

*As it was in the beginning is now and will be
forever and throughout the ages of ages. Amen.*

(Psalm 92 [93])

YALE REPERTORY CHORUS

Soprano

Sophie Dvorak
Virginia Grabovsky
India Gupta
Maya Ingram
Mahima Kumara
Erin Low
Rachel Segman
Wanxue Zhang

Alto

Katherine Balch
Eliana Barwinski
Yunke Gu
Camila Hayashi
Fi Schroth-Douma
Sarah Shapiro
Sarah Sparling
Margaret Winchell

Tenor

Stuart Baker
Lindsay Elliott
Rory Latham
Andrew Liu
Jack Purdue
Augie Segger
Alex Whittington

Bass

Lukas Bacho
Even Brock
Quinn Evans
John Hare
Hyunsung Lim
Vincent Lin
Omer Pshititski
Terence Wu

Accompanist

Luke Brennan

ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Albert Steinberger *concertmaster*
Phoebe Liu

Violin 2

Ria Honda
Naomi-Jeanne Main

Viola

Ayano Nakamura
Julian Seney

Continuo

Francis Fedora *cello*
Hector Ponce *bass*
Luke Brennan *organ and harpsichord*

Flute

Daniel Fletcher
Nadira Novruzov

Oboe

Amy Kim
Maren Tonini

לאל ה' Odeh L'eli (I Shall Thank My God)

Based on a traditional melody originating from the Yemenite Diwan, to an anonymous sixteenth-century poem featuring verses in Hebrew as well as Arabic, this fascinating arrangement by composer Menachem Wiesenberg (b. 1950) features a combination of Western harmonic colors and counterpoint techniques with traditional Yemeni Diwan singing characteristics, such as meter obscurity and abundant use of parallel fourths. This type of arrangement, attempting to combine the two worlds of traditional music of Jewish communities from North Africa and the Middle East with the Western art music conceptions brought by Jewish European descendants, was one of the first prominent genres of Israeli choral music, starting from the 1930s. Treatment of this genre is constantly evolving to this day, with the growing awareness of the complex implications of historical discrimination it contains. We will attempt to perform Wiesenberg's arrangement in the traditional Yemeni pronunciation in which the original melody *Odeh L'eli* would be sung, as opposed to modern Hebrew. Wiesenberg is known for his numerous choral arrangements inspired by the Jewish canon, as well as many orchestral works, and his invaluable work in developing the composition departments of the higher music education institutions in Israel.

Rachel Segman

When the Violin

Reena Esmail composed *When the Violin* as a companion to Tomas Luis de Victoria's *O Vos Omnes*, drawing on similar themes of being seen in and uplifted from sorrow. Esmail sets a text by the fourteenth-century *ghazal* poet Hafiz, describing the warmth and freedom derived from trust and forgiveness—of the future, of the past, of others. As in much of her work, Esmail is influenced here by Hindustani music. *When the Violin* is based on the Hindustani *raag Charukeshi*, which in a Western concept is somewhat analogous to the first four notes of a major scale followed by the last four notes of a natural minor scale. The piece opens with intentional mystery, as Esmail omits the third of the scale until almost two minutes into the score. Soloists and cello perform winding, Hindustani-inspired melodies throughout, over meditative choral writing. As Esmail reflects, “This piece is about that first moment of trust, of softening. About the most inward moments of the human experience, of realizing that ‘breakthroughs’ often don’t have the hard edge, the burst of energy that the word implies, but that they can be about finding tender, warm, deeply resonant spaces within ourselves as well.”

Mahima Kumara

人日思归 *Rén Rì Sī Guī*

I left my hometown for college in 2017. Despite my excitement to study in a different continent, it was my first time to be far away from home for a long period of time. I was

able to visit my family and friends almost every year, but little did I know summer 2019 would be the last time before what felt like an eternity.

The world post-March 2020 felt like a nightmare. Almost every day I watched people pass away or suffer from depression. Food and medical care became inaccessible in many places in the world, including my own hometown. I was eager to be home after hearing heart-breaking news from my family and friends. Nightmares with vivid images of my loved ones passing kept creeping up on me, and one of them became a devastating truth in August 2020: Hong-Nian Yang, my mentor who I looked up to like an endearing grandfather, passed away, and I was not able to attend his funeral in Beijing.

Since then, time passed like torture – one month, six months, three years, four years.... All I wanted was to go home and see my parents, my mentor's family, and my dear friends. When my friend Ann Chen reached out to me in 2022 about a commission for her group Exilio, I thought nothing could be more perfect than this poem by Chinese poet Daoheng Xue (540–609) from the Sui dynasty. Everything about it resonated with me, and this piece is especially personal to me because of that.

We all experience nostalgia in some way or another. It is a feeling that has been with people since the beginning of time, as we see in this poem from thousands of years ago. The piece opens with a sense of mourning, with all the voices being the background except for one telling the story. The middle section is more lively, depicting that in dreams, the person goes home and reunites with their family, and people celebrate the spring. Then reality strikes back, where even the beauty of spring cannot cheer the person up because of the sadness in their heart. The piece then ends with a strong and expressive section that almost sounds like a scream of despair, longing for things to change so the loved ones can unite again.

Yiran Zhao

A Prayer

British composer Ken Burton composed *A Prayer* for the first performance of the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers in 2021. Paul Laurence Dunbar's text describes the search for hope and serene comfort through God in times of great adversity, and Burton's setting flows through these contrasting moods. Burton was influenced by a variety of styles in writing *A Prayer*, including plainchant, gospel, and blues; in his own introduction to the composition, Burton calls attention to the vast range of vocal colors required to perform it. The piece opens with a chant-like hum, and each verse of the poem builds in intensity before a wrenching peak at the choir's statement of "my heart is aching." An improvisatory solo then serves as a moment of reflective pause and carries the listener back to a final plea and bittersweet meditation to close the piece.

Mahima Kumara

Ad Manus from Membra Jesu Nostri

Danish Baroque composer and organist Dieterich Buxtehude wrote the cycle *Membra Jesu Nostri* in 1680, consisting of seven cantatas each addressing a part of the crucified body of Christ. Its full title, *Membra Jesu Nostri patientis sanctissima* (The most holy limbs of our suffering Jesus), suggests the deep devotion and sorrow threaded through the cycle. The cantatas in turn address the feet, knees, hands, side, breast, heart, and face of Jesus, lamenting his wounds. Each cantata consists of six sections: an instrumental sonata, a choral concerto, three arias for soloists or trio, and a reprise of the choral movement. *Membra Jesu Nostri* intersperses Biblical verses with text from the medieval hymn *Salve Mundi Salutare*, thought to be authored by Arnulf of Leuven. *Ad Manus* opens with a melancholy instrumental sonata and choral concerto, with voices drawing out pained suspensions as they ask “What are these wounds in the midst of your hands?” Arias for soprano I, soprano II, and a trio of alto, tenor, and bass follow, in turn describing the Crucifixion scene and proclaiming trust and faith.

Mahima Kumara

Magnificat

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani (1602–1678) spent most of her life as a nun at the Benedictine convent of St. Radegonda in Milan. Even though convents were generally closed to the possibility of studying with external music teachers, it is evident that Cozzolani was aware of the new musical aesthetics of her time, suggesting that she received her musical education as a child, before entering the convent. Convents were one of the few settings at the time where women could compose music and have it performed, although only with female voices at their disposal. This is why this composition, originally written in SATB ranges by Cozzolani in 1650, is likely to have actually been transposed to an SA register or performed with bass lines moved up the octave. This is one of two Magnificat settings Cozzolani composed as part of her *Salmi a Otto Voci*, her largest collection known, written mostly for 8 voices and continuo. Featuring constantly changing moods and text themes transferred back and forth between the different voices, this through-composed work creates an originally structured and beautifully painted image of the Magnificat text.

Rachel Segman

Dominus Regnavit

Developed by Jean-Baptiste Lully in the 1660s, the *grand motet* quickly supplanted the polyphonic masses of the Latin Church in France. Though Lully pioneered the style, his contemporary Michel-Richard de Lalande revolutionized it, transforming the *grand motet* into an extended form comprised of solos, choral movements, and symphonies. With these developments, however, the *grands motet* began to fall out of favor liturgically during the early eighteenth century.

Enter the *Concert Spirituel*: from 1725 to 1790, the *Concert Spirituel* was a series of public concerts – primarily attended by the bourgeoisie and lower aristocracy – that featured new works by French and Italian composers of the time. *Grands motets*, instrumental works, and, later, oratorios were among the most frequently presented styles at these *Concerts Spirituels*. One of the *Concert Spirituel*'s most popular composers was Jean-Joseph Cassanéa de Mondonville (1711–1772), a violinist and composer from southern France (Occitania) and a younger contemporary of Jean-Philippe Rameau.

Of Mondonville's seventeen *grands motets*, *Dominus Regnavit* is one of only nine to survive. Likely written in 1737 for the *Concert* at Lille, this motet was regularly interpreted in Paris in the years following. Setting the text of Psalm 92 (93), Mondonville does not shy away from the dramatic, regal text painting that was in vogue at the time. His affective writing captures the most salient features of the Psalm text: the majesty of God as Lord and Defender, God's immovable and eternal throne, and the wild, beautiful violence of the rivers of the Earth.

Alex Whittington

Mahima Kumara (she/her) is a first-year M.M. candidate in choral conducting. She graduated from Yale College in 2020 with a B.A. in statistics and data science and an education studies certificate, after which she worked at the Yale Music in Schools Initiative on the Yale Glee Club Service Through Music Fellowship. Kumara grew up in State College, Pennsylvania, and returns to New Haven from Boston, where she worked in health policy research at Brigham and Women's Hospital and conducted with Boston Children's Chorus and Tactus Ensemble Cambridge. She is also a pianist and Carnatic vocalist, and in all her work, aims to center educational equity and inclusive community music-making. In her free time, Kumara enjoys reading and trail running.

Rachel Segman (she/her) is a first year M.M. choral conducting candidate at Yale, born and raised in Jerusalem, Israel. Segman graduated with a B.M. in choral conducting from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance in 2022, during which she studied a semester in the Hochschule für Musik Würzburg, Germany. She is the founder and artistic director of the Jerusalem Vocal Consort, the first and only professional early music singers' ensemble in Israel. Segman has worked as assistant conductor of the JAMD chamber choir, including during various projects with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Rachel is also one of the founders and producers of "Concert.a" – an annual concert festival in Tel Aviv dedicated solely to women composers. She has also directed several representative conservatory youth choirs in Israel. Aside from classical music, Segman has always had a deep love for Hebrew bible cantillations and has worked for many years as a synagogue cantor and bar/bat-mitzvah tutor. For the 2023–2024 academic year, Segman is serving as the assistant conductor of the Battell Chapel Choir.

Alex Whittington (they/she) is a first-year M.M. candidate in choral conducting at Yale University, where they also received their M.A. in music history after graduating from Yale College. Their primary area of study is Puerto Rican choral music, focusing on edition-making and reconstructions of works by Felipe Gutiérrez y Espinosa. Whittington has worked as a Teaching Artist with the YSM's Music in Schools Initiative and has performed with ensembles such as the Yale Baroque Opera Project and the Yale Collegium Musicum. For the 2023–2024 academic year, they are serving as the director of the Marquand Chapel Choir and one of the assistant conductors of the Yale Camerata. Outside of academics, Whittington enjoys spending their time baking, cycling, and practicing yoga.



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Yale INSTITUTE OF SACRED MUSIC