

YALE INSTITUTE OF SACRED MUSIC AND YALE GLEE CLUB

PRESENT

YALE CAMERATA

DR. FELICIA BARBER, CONDUCTOR

JASON MAX FERDINAND SINGERS

JASON MAX FERDINAND, CONDUCTOR

Shout for Joy

NOVEMBER 2, 2024

7:30 PM

WOOLSEY HALL

NEW HAVEN

Yale Camerata is thrilled to open its 39th season with this wonderful collaborative concert with the internationally renowned Jason Max Ferdinand Singers. The concert entitled Shout for Joy reflects on the joy of the music and our excitement in sharing this ensemble with the Yale and broader New Haven community. The music featured celebrates idiomatic and nonidiomatic compositions of leading African American composers. This special performance, as well as the weekend of pedagogical events, have been sponsored by Yale Camerata and Yale Glee Club.

Please silence all mobile devices.

The use of photographic, recording, or electronic equipment during the performance is prohibited.

Your courtesy is appreciated.

YALE CAMERATA
JASON MAX FERDINAND SINGERS
Shout for Joy

DR. FELICIA BARBER AND JASON MAX FERDINAND, CONDUCTORS

YALE CAMERATA

Shout for Joy	Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)
Venite populi	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
Bring Me All Your Dreams	Christopher H. Harris (b. 1985)
This Little Light of Mine Harriett Alfred, Jaminda Blackmon <i>sopranos</i>	Traditional Spiritual arr. Moses Hogan (1957–2003)

INTERMISSION

JASON MAX FERDINAND SINGERS

John Stoddart *piano*

Pieces to be selected from the following:

I

Lift Every Voice and Sing	J. Rosamond Johnson (1873–1954) arr. Roland Carter (b. 1942)
A Prayer	Ken Burton (b. 1970)

(continues on next page)

Hallelujah! from *Mount of Olives*

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Kéramos

James Mulholland
(b. 1935)

II

The Lord's Prayer

Roderick Williams
(b. 1965)

A Choral Fantasy on Soon I Will Be Done

John Stoddart *piano*

arr. John Stoddart
(b. 1971)

III

Didn't It Rain?

arr. Donald Dillard
(b. 1940)

Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

arr. Norman Luboff
(1917–1987)

IV

Misty

Thomas Allen *countertenor*

Erroll Louis Garner
(1921–77)
arr. Stoddart

This Land is Your Land

Woody Guthrie
(1912–1967)
arr. Blake Morgan
(b. 1991)

Safe In His Arms

Jason and Meka Ferdinand
(both b. 1977)

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Cedric Dent *piano*

Thomas Dorsey
(1899–1993)
arr. Cedric Dent
(b. 1962)

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

arr. Dent

World, O World

Jacob Collier
(b. 1994)

Holy City

Michael Maybrick
(1841–1913)
arr. Stoddart

Shout for Joy

Shout!

Alleluia.

Shout! Shout!

Shout! Shout for joy, all ye righteous.

Give thanks to the Lord,

Give thanks to the Lord, rejoice.

Rejoice. Rejoice. Hallelujah!

Sing Him psalms,

Shout in triumph,

Praise the Lord,

Shout for joy!

Shout for joy, all ye righteous!

Shout! Sing to the Lord a new song.

The word of the Lord holds true,

And all His work endures.

His Love, never failing, fills the earth,

The word of the Lord holds true.

The word of the Lord made the sky,

And my Lord made the sea.

He spoke, and the world came to be,

And the word of the Lord made me.

The Lord is our help and our shield.

We put our trust in Him.

At the sound of His voice our hearts shall rejoice.

The word of the Lord holds true.

Give thanks to the Lord.

Rejoice. Hallelujah!

Sing Him psalms,

Shout in triumph,

Praise the Lord,

Shout for joy!

Shout! Shout for joy, all ye righteous!

Sing to the Lord a new song.

Alleluia! Shout!

(Psalm 33:1-11, 20-22, New English Bible)

Venite populi

Venite, populi, venite,
de longe venite,
et admiramini gentes.
Venite, populi, venite,
an alia natio tam grandis,
quae habet Deos appropinquantes sibi,
sicut Deus noster adest nobis,
cujus in ara veram praesentiam
contemplamur jugiter per fidem vivam,
an alia natio tam grandis?

O sors cunctis beatior,
O sors sola fidelium,
quibus panis fractio
et calicis communitio
est in auxilium.

Eja ergo epulemur
in azymis veritatis et sinceritatis,
eja ergo epulemur
et inebriemur vino laetitiae sempiternae;
an alia natio tam grandis?
Venite, populi, venite.

*Come, O peoples, come;
come from afar,
and marvel, O races.
Come, O peoples, come;
is there any nation so great
that it has its gods so near to it
as our God is near to us,
whose true presence on his altar
we continually contemplate through living faith:
is there any nation so great?*

*O fate more blessed than all others,
O fate only of the faithful
for whom breaking bread
and sharing the cup
is a help.*

*Therefore let us feast
on the unleavened bread of truth and sincerity.
Let us feast, therefore,
and become drunk with wine of eternal joy;
is there any nation so great?
Come, O peoples, come.*

(Anonymous)

Bring Me All Your Dreams

Bring me all your dreams,
You dreamers.
Bring me all your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud-cloth
Away from the too rough fingers
Of the world.

(The Dream Keeper from the Weary Blues — Langston Hughes, 1902–67)

This Little Light of Mine

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine.

All through the night,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine.

My God gave it to me, (Oh, children,)
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine.

(African American Spiritual)

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning 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 chast'ning 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 hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast 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.

(James Weldon Johnson, 1871-1938)

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;
Thy gracious balm I need.

(Paul Laurence Dunbar, 1872-1906)

Kéramos

Turn, turn, my wheel! Turn round and round
Without a pause, without a sound:
So spins the flying world away!
This clay, well mixed with marl and sand,
Follows the motion of my hand;
For some must follow, and some command,
Though all are made of clay!

Turn, turn, my wheel! All life is brief;
What now is bud will soon be leaf,
What now is leaf will soon decay;
The wind blows east, the wind blows west;
The blue eggs in the robin's nest
Will soon have wings and beak and breast,
And flutter and fly away.

Turn, turn, my wheel! The human race,
Of every tongue, of every place,
Caucasian, Coptic, or Malay,
All that inhabit this great earth,
Whatever be their rank or worth,
Are kindred and allied by birth.

Hallelujah! from *Mount of Olives*

Hallelujah! Unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord, ye bright angelic choirs,
In holy songs of joy.

Man, proclaim His grace and glory!
Hallelujah! unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord in holy songs of joy.

*(Original German text by Franz Xaver Huber,
1755-1814)*

Turn, turn, my wheel! What is begun
At daybreak must at dark be done,
To-morrow will be another day;
Too soon to-day be yesterday;
Behind us in our path we cast
The broken potsherds of the past.

To-morrow will be another day;
To-morrow the hot furnace flame
Will search the heart and try the frame,
And stamp with honor or with shame
All these vessels made of clay.

All that inhabit this great earth
Are kindred and allied by birth!

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-82)

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

(Matthew 6:9-13)

A Choral Fantasy on "Soon I Will Be Done"

No more! No more!
Someday, I will be done!
Goin' home to live with God!
There will be no more weeping;
No more pain;
And no more heartache,
no more fear.
Forever joy and only cheer.
I will be at rest. Someday.
Soon, I will be done.

(African American Spiritual)

Didn't it Rain?

Didn't it rain, chillen?
Rain, oh my Lord.

Well it rained forty days an' it rained forty nights,
Wa'n' no lan' nowhere in sight.
Noah sent the raven to bring the news,
Flapped his wings an' away he flew.
To the eas', to the wes',
To the nawf, to the souf,
All day, all night,
Oh tell me, Didn't it rain?

Some at the winder, an' some at de do',
Some say, "Noah, can't you take no mo'?"
"No," said Noah, "You full o' sin,
God's got de key an' you can't get in!"
From the eas', from the wes',
From the nawf, from the souf,
All day, all night!
Oh, tell me! Didn't it rain?

(Sister Rosetta Tharpe, 1915-73)

Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

Nobody knows the trouble I've seen.
Nobody knows my sorrow.
Glory, Hallelujah.

Sometimes I'm up,
sometimes I'm down.
Oh yes, Lord.
Sometimes I'm almost to the groun'
Oh yes, Lord.

(African American Spiritual)

Misty

Look at me,
I'm as helpless as a kitten up a tree
And I feel like I'm clingin' to a cloud
I can't understand
I get misty, just holding your hand.

Walk my way
And a thousand violins begin to play
Or it might be the sound of your hello
That music I hear
I get misty whenever you're near.

Don't you know that you're leading me on?
And it's just what I want you to do
Can't you see that I'm hopelessly lost?
That's why I'm following you.

On my own
When I wander through this wonderland alone
Never knowing my right foot from my left
My hat from my glove
I'm too misty, and too much in love.

(Johnny Burke, 1908–64)

This Land is your Land

This land is your land and this land is my land
From California to the New York island
From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream waters
This land was made for you and me.

As I went walking that ribbon of highway
I saw above me that endless skyway
I saw below me that golden valley
This land was made for you and me.

I roamed and rambled and I followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
All around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me.

When the sun come shining, then I was strolling
And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
The voice was a'chanting as the fog was lifting
This land was made for you and me.

In the squares of the city, in the shadow of the steeple
By the relief office, I saw my people
As they stood there hungry, I stood there wondering
Is this land made for you and me?

(Woody Guthrie, 1912–67)

Safe in His Arms

The world's gone mad,
Chaos ev'rywhere,
I look into your eyes and realize
There I'm safe without a care.

You bring out my best,
Forgive my worst,
When I weep you embrace, I see your face
Where I'm safe without a care.

Daddy's little child, hallelujah!
So near, never far.

Life can bring so much pain,
It goes down and up again,
Remember life brings certain change,
I will not stray.

Sometimes I feel alone,
Thoughts are lodged in my heart
forevermore,
Thoughts of our refuge and your strength,
And your never-ending love for me.

I will not fear,
You bottled every tear,
You command your angels to
protect me through,
And I'm safe without a care,
Hallelujah!

I hear you say:
"Lullaby my dear child,
Oh I'll always love you
With all my heart
Safe in my arms."
Amen. I'm safe in His arms.

(Meka Ferdinand, b. 1977)

Precious Lord

Instrumental

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got you and me brother in His hands
He's got you and me brother in His hands
He's got you and me brother in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got you and me sister in His hands
He's got you and me sister in His hands
He's got you and me sister in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got the itty-bitty baby in His hands
He's got the itty-bitty baby in His hands
He's got the itty-bitty baby in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands.

Uphethe bonk'a ba ntu Ezandle'
Uphethe bonk'a ba ntu Ezandle'
Uphethe bonk'a ba ntu Ezandle'
Uphe thum hlab Ezandle'.

Hallelujah!

(African American Spiritual)

World, O World

World, O world, you've been my home,
Now it's time for me to go,
Give me wings to fly.
Sun did rise and sun did fall,
You've been with me through it all.
Always keeping by my side,
Always by my side.

Love, O love, you've been a friend,
Now the road must reach an end,
Come, it's time to go.
Time is swift to come to pass,
Nothing stays, and nothing lasts,
Always moving on and on,
Always moving on.

And when I call your name,
I think I'll love again,
I lay my world upon your hands again,
And when you hold my pain,
I feel my fire again.
You are my soul,
O take me home.

Until we meet again,
Goodbye!

(Jacob Collier, b. 1994)

The Holy City

Last night I lay a sleeping,
There came a dream so fair,
I stood in old Jerusalem
Beside the temple there.
I heard the children singing,
And ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels
From Heav'n in answer rang;

And then methought my dream was changed,
The streets no longer rang,
Hushed were the glad hosannas
The little children sang.
The sun grew dark with mystery,
The morn was cold and chill,
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill,

And once again the scene was changed,
New earth there seem'd to be,
I saw the Holy City
Beside the tideless sea;
The light of God was on its streets,
The gates were open wide,
And all who would might enter,
And no one was denied.
No need of moon or stars by night,
Or sun to shine by day,
It was the new Jerusalem,
That would not pass away.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Hark! how the angels sing,
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna to your King.
Hosanna forevermore!

(Frederic Weatherly, 1848–1929)

YALE CAMERATA

Dr. Felicia Barber *conductor*

Caspar Wein and Hyunju Yang *student assistant conductors*

Don Youngberg *manager*

Ethan Haman *rehearsal accompanist*

Soprano I

Shane Gillespie

Kelsey M. Guinipero

Kristin Jensen

Veronica Kushner

Elizabeth Lee

Eizel Magno

Mae McDonnell

Isabel Mestey-Colon

Rebecca Stoll

Kate Walker

Soprano II

Harriett Alfred

Jaminda Blackmon

Nira Hernández Martín

Nida Noor Khan

Matiya Kouassi

Carolyn Ladd

Erin Low

Elle Rothermich

Beth Wang

Hannah Xiong

Hyunju Yang

Lisa Zhang

Wanxue Zhang

Alto I

Katie Becker

Emily Breeze

Savita Diggs

Liese Franklin-Zitzkat

Gabrielle Johnson

Helena Lindner

Sylvia Lipnick

Nandita Rao

Valerie Trantum

Iris Xia

Mika Yamaguchi

Jungmin Youn

Alto II

Carey A. Bates

Emilee Biles

Katie Bucaccio

Sara Culver

Grecia Hernandez Perez

Gabriella Mendoza

Susan Olson

Martha Kirk Swartz

Lindasusan Ulrich

Amber Woodward

Tenor I

Lindsay Elliott

Junjie Guo

Michael F. McGovern

Christopher Song

Kevin Vondrak

Caspar Wein

Andrew Zager

Tenor II

Josh Goodbaum

Dennis Jin

Tim Lind

Frank Parker

Al Powers

Jason Zentz

Bass I

William Chang

Michael Coderre

Ethan Haman

Andrew Jean-Charles

Donald Kohn

Michel Ledizet

John Lee

Joon Lee

Shoji Mizumoto

Bass II

Matthew Bogen

Gerry Holmes

Hahram Kim

Hyunsung Lim

David Low

Burton Lyng-Olsen

John Phelan

Terence Wu

THE JASON MAX FERDINAND SINGERS

Jason Max Ferdinand *founder & artistic director*

Darren Daly *executive director*

Vilroy McBean *chief financial officer*

Jalen Scott *marketing director*

Mallory McHenry *director of advancement/creative director*

Kobe Brown *executive assistant*

Cedric Dent *artistic advisor*

Soprano I

Brittney Booker

Danielle Cornwall

Jormilit Garcia

Makeda Hampton

Allayna O'Quinn

Kirk Ann Spence

Soprano II

Esther Benjamin

Yasmin Bradshaw

Cherie Davis

Audrey Moise-Beloni

Alto I

Kennedy Chisolm

Andraea Keene

Jade Madden

Alto II

Thomas Allen

Lindsay Gibbons

Mallory McHenry

Chidera Perry

Tenor I

Devin Mercer

Sean Tillery

Tenor II

Stanton Flemons

Alan Magny

Taiwan Norris

Anwar Ottley

Baritone

Cedric Dent

Garrett Jackson

Theodore Thorpe III

Bass

Alexander Chambers

Asriel Davis

O'Brian Harris

Angelo Johnson

ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Sory Park *concertmaster*

Jimin Lee *assistant concertmaster*

Marika Basagoisia

Ben Kremer

Violin II

Naeun Kim

Sofia Matthews

Laura Wright

Viola

Matthew McDowell

Ayano Nakamura

Andy Park

Cello

Dylan Kinneavy

Ravenna Michelson

Double Bass

Joshua Rhodes

Julide San

Flute

Michael Huerta

Oboe

Gabriela Fry

Clarinet

Nicole Martin

Bassoon

Darius Farhoumand

French Horn

Dylan Kingdom

Trumpet

Grace O'Connell

Benjamin Ray

Jacob Rose

Trombone

Jude Morris

Griffin Rupp

Naomi Wharry

Timpani

Jacob Leshnower

Percussion

Doug Perry

Piano/Organ

Nathaniel Gumbs

Ethan Haman

Adolphus Hailstork, *Shout for Joy*

Adolphus Hailstork is one of America's most distinguished composers, known for his works across various instrumental and vocal genres. His unique compositional style reflects his classical training and lived experiences, characterized by complex themes, influences from Black idioms, and a rich palette of tone colors. *Shout for Joy*, a vibrant festival anthem originally composed for choir, brass, organ, and percussion, premiered in May 1990 for the 150th anniversary of the Bank Street Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia. The Nashville Symphony commissioned a string version in 2014, which Yale Camerata will perform this evening, and premiered it a year later. This work draws inspiration from Hailstork's early experiences as a choirboy in an Episcopal cathedral. It opens with a fanfare featuring the organ and strings, leading the listener on a tonic journey before the chorus enters with a resounding G-major chord proclaiming the first of many "shouts!" The text is derived from the first 11 verses and verses 20–22 of Psalm 33, a song of praise, and is structured mostly in ternary form with distinct themes and variations. The work's bookends are vibrant and strong, while the middle section offers an unaccompanied, intimate chorale reminiscent of a gospel hymn. In approximately fifteen minutes, Hailstork crafts what feels like a miniature symphonic work, beautifully encapsulating the duality of his experience and creating a profound song of praise and assurance in God.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Venite populi*

Venite populi K. 260 was composed by a teenage Mozart for Salzburg, reflecting the expectations placed upon him in his hometown. This work is part of a collection of shorter sacred pieces created for the Archbishop, many of which remain rarely performed today. While an "offertory" traditionally uses a text linked to the Liturgy of the Eucharist, by Mozart's time, there was considerable flexibility in text choice. Of his seven extant offertories, only *Benedictus sit Deus* K. 117 qualifies as a true offertory; the others, including *Venite populi*, utilize "free" texts. Notably, *Venite populi* is a rare example of Mozart writing for double chorus, with the only other instance being the *Mass in C minor* K. 427. This lively work features spirited alternation of lines between the choirs, a practice rooted in the Venetian polychoral tradition established by composers like Giovanni Gabrieli and Heinrich Schütz. Although the text is anonymous, the call to "Come, all ye people" evokes a gathering for Eucharistic celebration, enhanced by overlapping entrances that create a vibrant, imitative "blizzard" effect typical of the Venetian polychoral style. First published in 1872 and edited by Johannes Brahms, who greatly admired it, *Venite populi* was also performed at the unveiling of a Mozart statue in Salzburg in 1842, attended by Mozart's sons; sadly, his widow, Constanze, had passed away that March.

Christopher H. Harris, *Bring Me All Your Dreams*

Christopher Harris's *Bring Me All Your Dreams* is an unaccompanied work for mixed chorus, featuring text from Langston Hughes's poem "The Dream Keeper," a hallmark of the Harlem Renaissance. Harris is a rising compositional star writing in both idiomatic and

nonidiomatic Black genres. Harris crafts a poignant choral piece that delves into themes of hope, aspiration, and the power of dreams. The work begins with a gentle, lyrical melody that sets a reflective tone, inviting listeners to consider their own dreams and desires. Harris skillfully weaves together rich harmonies and dynamic contrasts, creating an atmosphere of intimacy and warmth. As the piece progresses, the music builds in intensity, mirroring the journey of pursuing one's aspirations. Expressive phrasing and rhythmic variations highlight the emotional depth of the text, resulting in a contemplative work with contemporary relevance. *Bring Me All Your Dreams* serves as both a celebration of youthful ambition and a reminder of the importance of nurturing our dreams, making it a powerful addition to the choral repertoire.

***This Little Light of Mine*, Moses Hogan, arr.**

Moses Hogan's arrangement of *This Little Light of Mine* transforms the beloved spiritual into a vibrant celebration of hope and resilience. Renowned for his contributions to choral music, Hogan infuses this piece with his signature style, blending traditional elements with contemporary harmonies and rhythms. "This Little Light of Mine" has long served as an anthem for civil rights and empowerment. Hogan's arrangement, commissioned by Anton Armstrong and the St. Olaf Choir, elevates its message, employing rich vocal textures and dynamic contrasts that invite the choir to express both joy and determination. The arrangement showcases Hogan's ability to create a sense of call and response, drawing on African American musical traditions that emphasize communal participation. Beginning with a gentle, reflective introduction, the piece gradually builds in intensity, culminating in a spirited finale that encourages listeners to embrace their inner light. Hogan's use of syncopated rhythms and harmonies adds a layer of complexity, a hallmark of Hogan's compositional language. Hogan is often credited with revitalizing the genre of the African American Spiritual as a staple of choral concert performances. Through the prolific number of arrangements of spirituals and his work in bringing the genre to live audiences with the Moses Hogan Choral, he forever changed the landscape of the traditional choral canon. Through this arrangement, Hogan not only honors the song's roots but also revitalizes it for a new generation, reminding us of the enduring power of hope and the importance of sharing our light with the world.

Vinroy D. Brown, Jr., M.A., M.M.
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Sacred Music
Westminster Choir College

The following program notes provided by the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers unless otherwise noted.

J. Rosamond Johnson, *Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing*, Roland Carter, arr.

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” is one of this country’s most beloved songs of hope and freedom. In 1919 it was designated “the Black national anthem” by the NAACP. The song was written in 1899 in a collaboration between two brothers: James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938) wrote the inspiring text, which was set to an equally stirring melody by J. Rosamond Johnson (1873–1954). The elder Johnson’s novels and poems were central to the Harlem Renaissance, and he was also a prominent academic (the first Black professor at New York University) and diplomat (President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him as U.S. consul to Venezuela and Nicaragua). Closely associated for years with the NAACP, James Weldon Johnson led the organization throughout the 1920s.

The song was first performed by schoolchildren in Jacksonville, Florida, celebrating the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Included in nearly 40 hymnals, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” is an essential piece for innumerable choirs and distinguished soloists across America.

Ken Burton, *A Prayer*

Ken Burton’s compositions and arrangements are performed around the world by singers and musicians, and his music is featured on mainstream UK television nearly every week on BBC1’s *Songs of Praise*. With music ranging from *a cappella* to music for full symphony orchestra, his music has been performed by some of the world’s leading professional choirs – including ORA, Voces8, the Flemish Radio Choir, and the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers.

In seeking a text to write a new work for the newly formed Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, the Dunbar poem, “A Prayer,” spoke to the times in which we find ourselves. The consistent metrical structure suggested the setting be approached like a hymn with a defined melody. Burton is very much drawn to the idea of tension and resolution; *A Prayer* is built on a series of unresolved phrases, which eventually come to rest.

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Hallelujah!* from “Mount of Olives”

In 1802, Beethoven composed *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, which took less than three weeks and is the earliest of his three major choral works. It is a much more personal portrayal of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane than works by previous classical artists. The composition sits within a period of mental fragility for Beethoven. Just one year earlier he had written a letter to his siblings, the “Heiligenstadt Testament,” in which he revealed that his increasing deafness, causing him great difficulty and sadness both in his social life and as a performer, had prompted him to have suicidal thoughts. Nevertheless, he also wrote in his Testament of his resolution to live for and through his art. There is a similar sense of naïve optimism at work in the celebratory “Welten singen Dank und Ehre,” otherwise known as “Hallelujah Chorus.” This piece has been recorded and performed by choirs around the globe.

James Mulholland, *Kéramos*

James Mulholland is one of the most published, performed, and commissioned composers and arrangers of his generation. Children's choirs, high school ensembles, choral associations, and universities throughout the world regularly perform and commission his choral music. From 1995, he has received and completed more than 200 commissions. Over his career he has written over 600 compositions.

Mulholland's setting of "Kéramos," the Greek word meaning "ceramics" or "the potter's clay," highlights his unique harmonic style and his creative use of word-painting. The text, written by the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, speaks of all life originating from the "potter's clay" and how humanity's ultimate pursuit should be of unity rather than of division. Mulholland skillfully embeds this idea into this setting, summarized by the concluding phrase of the piece rightfully exclaiming, "All that inhabit this great earth are kindred and allied by birth!"

Roderick Williams, *The Lord's Prayer*

Roderick Williams is a distinguished British baritone and composer renowned for his versatile and expressive voice, which has made him a sought-after performer in both opera and concert settings. He has performed with many leading opera companies and orchestras worldwide, showcasing a wide-ranging repertoire that spans from Baroque to contemporary music.

As a composer, Williams has created a variety of works, including choral music, song cycles, and instrumental pieces. His arrangement of *The Lord's Prayer* features an intricate harmonic display while simultaneously portraying a deep, meditative reverence, represented by the consistency of the pedal tone in the upper voices.

***A Choral Fantasy on "Soon I Will Be Done,"* John Stoddart, arr.**

This gospel classic is said to be "traditional," with an unknown composer. It was included in a 1940 compilation entitled *American Negro Folk Songs* and has been a mainstay in gospel music ever since. Highlighting the accompanying element, this arrangement reflects the flexibility, musical depth, and fervor of pianist and composer John Stoddart.

***Didn't it Rain?*, Donald Dillard, arr.**

I was first introduced to this arranger/composer while a student at Morgan State University. We did two short works by him and I was immediately hooked. For decades I have been trying to find him and a few mere months ago we reconnected. This short but exciting arrangement is just a glimpse of his arranging voice.

Notes by Jason Max Ferdinand

***Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*, Norman Luboff, arr.**

The Norman Luboff Choir became one of the leading choral groups in the world, recording a wide variety of music on more than seventy-five LPs and touring yearly from 1963 to 1987. As an educator, Mr. Luboff was in much demand, guest conducting all-state, clinic, and festival choirs of every description in the United States and abroad. This Negro Spiritual originated during the time of slavery, but it seems to resonate now as we battle with the pandemic, social maladies, and political angst. The lush textures, anchored by the low basses, all work to give us a sense that a better day is coming.

Errol Lewis Garner, *Misty*, John Stoddart, arr.

Erroll Garner was moved to compose “Misty” on a flight from San Francisco to Chicago that encountered a thunderstorm. The plane descended into the airport and Garner looked through the window to see a rainbow shimmering through a haze and was moved to begin composing “Misty” on the spot. He played imaginary piano keys on his knees as he hummed this iconic tune.

Woody Guthrie, *This Land is your Land*, Blake Morgan, arr.

One of the most significant and pioneering songwriters in the history of American folk music, Woody Guthrie was also known for his fiery convictions regarding social injustice. He wrote “This Land is Your Land” in 1940, a tune that we celebrate today among the greatest patriotic songs ever composed. Guthrie’s original design for the hummable anthem however, was one with a more radical edge.

As the Great Depression lingered into its tenth year and Irving Berlin’s chart-topping hit “God Bless America” boomed on every radio, Guthrie became increasingly disheartened by the bleak conditions of life for so many Americans around him, and was frustrated by the rose-tinted sentiments expressed in the popular song. Reflecting on the fact that many of his fellow men and women weren’t feeling blessed at all and believing that the country’s beauty and abundance should be made for everyone, he penned the lyrics to the iconic tune, initially giving it the satirical working title “God Blessed America For Me.” Though many of those verses are familiar to or the same as the ones we know today, rejoicing on the grace and allure of our great land of opportunity, other stanzas consider the grittier side of the coin and a different human experience for those who fall through the cracks.

As the arranger of this work, I felt it was fitting to illuminate one of Guthrie’s original verses, placed at the heart of this new rendition for the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers. We all have unique stories of what this land means for us, but like the songwriter himself, I believe it was made – and still can be made – for you and me.

Notes by Blake Morgan

Jason and Meka Ferdinand, *Safe in His Arms*

A baby is like the prompting of all things wonderful; having a baby opens up a bastion of creative possibilities. Baby Jamē Max was born in the summer of 2018, and the birth of my first child provided an immediate spark to a musical idea.

Over the first few weeks of Jamē's life, it was evident to my wife and me that Jamē always looked to us for approval to be held by someone else or to be comforted in a time of distress. Her beautiful eyes spoke loudly. Already, we have bottled many of her tears, comforted her in moments when she thinks we have left the room, and cuddled her in the safety of our arms. Meka penned the words to let her know that she will always be safe in Daddy's arms. All people operate best in safe environs. Hopefully this song will be a reminder of just that.

Note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Thomas Dorsey, *Precious Lord*, Cedric Dent, arr.

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" is a well-known gospel hymn with deep roots in the African American Spiritual tradition. The hymn was written by Thomas A. Dorsey in 1932. Dorsey, often referred to as the "Father of Gospel Music," was a prominent African American composer, pianist, and music director.

The hymn was born out of personal tragedy for Dorsey. In August 1932, while he was away leading a revival meeting, he received the devastating news that his wife, Nettie Harper, had died in childbirth. Shortly thereafter, their newborn son also passed away. Overwhelmed by grief, Dorsey turned to his faith for comfort and solace. In his grief, Dorsey sat down at the piano and composed this hymn, pouring his sorrow and longing for divine guidance into the music and lyrics. Cedric Dent makes the sentiments of this hymn personal in his arrangement.

***He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*, Cedric Dent, arr.**

Negro spirituals are famously known for their beautiful word pictures. Writing in 1903, W. E. B. Dubois penned "The Negro folksong ... the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas ... still remains as the singular spiritual heritage of the nation and the greatest gift of the Negro people." He could not have better captured the essence of the spiritual "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." This arrangement draws on traditional choral music, South African musical influences, and a touch of the gospel-jazz style of TAKE 6 to paint a portrait of a world that sits in the palm of God's hand.

Knowing that this arrangement would be premiered by the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers made the creative process a labor of love from conception to completion.

Notes by Cedric Dent

Jacob Collier, *World, O World*

Back in 2013, at the ripe young age of 18 years old, I had the privilege of witnessing the magic of the Aeolians of Oakwood University performing live in London. It was an experience that changed the course of my life forever. That SOUND – colossal, deep, resonant, dynamic, singular – created by 45 undergrad students became forever emblazoned into my imagination. After the concert, I met Jason Max Ferdinand, the group’s esteemed conductor, and vowed to one day write a piece for them to sing. Jason held me to that promise...and, fast-forward five years, I was beginning work on my *Djesse* album series, and felt this was the moment for such a piece to spring to life. I secured a recording session with Jason and the choir at Ocean Way Studios in Nashville, and composed “World, O World” in an afternoon, the day before I flew from London to the studio to meet them. The 12-hour session that commenced was, and will forever be, one of my life’s defining musical moments. We recorded this piece, among some other things – and I left a different person from when I walked in. That day was also the first time I’d ever conducted a group of singers myself, which is something I’ve gone on to do a great deal of since, all around the world, by way of my Audience Choirs. What an honour it is to have the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers – a group so dear to my heart, which has so many of those original Aeolian singers within its ranks – to premiere my first choral original.

Note by Jacob Collier

Michael Maybrick, *The Holy City*, John Stoddart, arr.

“The Holy City” is a religious Victorian ballad dating from 1892, with music by Michael Maybrick writing under the alias Stephen Adams, and lyrics by Frederic Weatherly. Its sheet music sales made it one of the most commercially successful songs in the UK and United States around the beginning of the 20th century. For many of you, this would be a very familiar song. John and I decided that we wanted to give it a fresh spin. The motive that appears in the introduction and throughout, literally ascends into the heavens. We loved singing this at the recording. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed singing it.

Yale Camerata is an eighty-voice vocal ensemble whose members are Yale graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and experienced singers from the New Haven community. Conducted by Dr. Felicia Barber, the ensemble performs a widely varied spectrum of sacred choral literature, with a special commitment to choral music of our time. The Camerata was founded by Marguerite L. Brooks in 1985.

The Camerata has collaborated with Yale Schola Cantorum, Yale Glee Club, Yale Philharmonia, Yale Symphony, Yale Band, Yale Chamber Players, Yale Collegium Musicum, the New Haven Chorale, and the symphony orchestras of Hartford, New Haven, and Norwalk. The ensemble has also performed for Yale Music Spectrum and New Music New Haven.

The Camerata has been heard on Connecticut Public Radio and national broadcasts of National Public Radio's program *Performance Today*. Guest conductors have included Marin Alsop, Simon Carrington, André Thomas, Matthew Halls, David Hill, Nicholas McGegan, Erwin Ortner, Stefan Parkman, Grete Pedersen, Krzysztof Penderecki, Helmuth Rilling, Jaap Schroder, Robert Shaw, and Dale Warland.

The Institute of Sacred Music has commissioned works for Camerata by Martin Bresnick, Daniel Kellogg, Aaron Jay Kernis, Robert Kyr, Tawnie Olson, Stephen Paulus, Daniel Pinkham, Robert Sirota, Julia Wolfe, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, among others. The chorus has sung premiere performances of works by many other composers, including Kathryn Alexander and Francine Trester.

Dr. Felicia Barber is the Associate Professor, Adjunct, of Choral Conducting at Yale University and conductor of the Camerata. In addition to teaching graduate-level choral conductors and aspiring undergraduate conductors, Dr. Barber is developing a new initiative designed to prepare Yale students to work with young musicians on choral music in school and church settings.

Previous to her appointment at Yale, Dr. Barber served as Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Westfield State University (WSU) in Westfield, MA, where she conducted the Chamber Chorale, University Chorus, and Gospel Choir; as well as taught courses in conducting and choral methods. In addition to her position at WSU, Dr. Barber also served as Choral Lecturer for the summer master's program at Gordon College for five years. There she taught courses in Choral Conducting and Choral Music Education for the MME degree.

Dr. Barber—whose research interests include effective teaching strategies, fostering classroom diversity and incorporating equity and justice initiatives in choral curricula, and the linguistic performance practice of African American spirituals—has contributed to such periodicals as the American Choral Directors Association's *Choral Journal* and is the author of *A New Perspective for the Use of Dialect in African American Spirituals: History, Context, and Linguistics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021).

Additional projects include serving as curator and editor for the "Felicia Barber Choral Series," a choral series with Hinshaw Music Publications to promote and amplify music of new BIPOC composers and arrangers. In addition, Dr. Barber's poetry has recently been featured in a new choral project entitled *Dedication* (music composed by Dr. Zanaida Robles). Dr. Barber also served as the conductor for the SATB premiere at American Choral Director's (ACDA) Eastern Division SATB High School Honor Choir; the SSAA version will be premiered March of 2025 in Dallas as part of ACDA's National Conference with the SSAA National High School Honor Choir.

An active member of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), she has presented her research at state, divisional, and national conferences. Dr. Barber has also served the organization on the National Diversity Committee and the Eastern Division

2020 Conference committee, and is the current President of the Massachusetts ACDA board. In addition, she is regularly engaged as a guest conductor for youth and community festivals around the country, including All-State ensembles in Vermont, Oklahoma, California, Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Rhode Island, and she conducted the ACDA Eastern Division Conference in 2024. Upcoming events include North Carolina SATB High School All State Choir in November of 2024 and a Carnegie Hall Festival in March of 2025.

Dr. Barber earned a B.M. in Vocal Performance from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, OK, an M.M. in Choral Music Education from Mansfield University in Mansfield, PA, and a Ph.D. in Music Education and Choral Conducting from The Florida State University.

The Jason Max Ferdinand Singers was formed during one of the most challenging periods in recent history – the Covid-19 pandemic. At a time when the world was grappling with unprecedented uncertainty, fear and isolation, merely the opportunity to create art emerged as a beacon of hope and resilience. For artists, and particularly for singers, the ability to come together and produce something beautiful was not just a creative endeavor: it was a lifeline.

Together we faced numerous challenges that tested our commitment and resolve. The logistics of travel in a world of lockdowns and restrictions were formidable. Limited rehearsal time meant we had to make the most of every moment we could spend together, honing our craft under less-than-ideal circumstances. Singing with masks, an essential health precaution, added an additional layer of difficulty, affecting breathing and diction. Yet we persevered, driven by our passion for music and our determination to bring a message of solace to the world. This journey is a testament to the power of collective strength and resilience. It is a reminder of what can be achieved when individuals come together with a shared purpose, overcoming obstacles and turning adversity into an opportunity for growth and expression. I will forever be an admirer of their unwavering dedication and sheer artistry on display.

In these exasperating times, when chaos seems to be the order of the day – with ongoing pandemics, social unrest and the natural disasters of floods, earthquakes and wildfires – finding an authentic sense of peace can feel like a daunting undertaking. Nonetheless, it is precisely in these moments of mayhem that the healing power of art becomes most evident. Through our music, the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers seek to offer a sanctuary, a moment of calm amid the storm. Our hope is that through our voices, listeners can find solace, a respite from the bedlam that surrounds us. As members of the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, we are deeply committed to this mission. We believe in the transformative power of music to heal, uplift, and inspire. Our sincerest longing is that our music provides you with a sense of succor and tranquility, a reminder that, even in the darkest times, there is beauty and optimism.

Jason Max Ferdinand currently serves as the Director of Choral Activities at the University of Maryland in College Park. He is the founding artistic director of the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers: An Ensemble of Exceptional Talents, and was the director of choral activities, chair of the music department, and a full professor at Oakwood University, where he conducted the Aeolians of Oakwood University.

He is a published author and composer with GIA Publications, featuring the book, *Teaching with Heart: Tools for Addressing Societal Challenges Through Music*, and *The Jason Max Ferdinand Choral Series* (Walton & Gentry). He maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and lecturer, both domestic and international.

Caspar Wein, born and raised in Berlin, Germany, completed his master's degree in Church Music at the Berlin Universität der Künste (University of the Arts) in May 2022 with majors in both Organ Playing and Conducting.

While earning his bachelor of music degree (Church Music, UdK Berlin) in 2017, Wein served as substitute Kantor at the cathedral in Brandenburg an der Havel, where he was fully responsible for the Cathedral's musical activities. There he conducted his first J. S. Bach *Christmas Oratorio* and performed Franz Schubert's *Tragic Symphony* No. 4 in C minor with the Brandenburg Symphony Orchestra.

In the following years he was Musical Director of several ensembles and carried out among other works Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Händel's *Acis and Galatea*, and Puccini's *Missa di Gloria*. In January 2023, Wein became Kantor at the Friedenskirche Potsdam-Sanssouci, overseeing all musical activities at this historic UNESCO World Heritage Site. In this position he conducted, among other works, Schütz's *Schwanengesang*, Händel's *Israel in Egypt*, and Dvořák's Requiem. In June 2024, he left the position in Potsdam to pursue his Master of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting at Yale University (Class of 2026).

Hyunju Yang is a South Korean conductor and soprano, currently pursuing a Master of Music degree at Yale University (Class of 2026, Choral Conducting). She graduated from Yonsei University with undergraduate degrees in Church Music (with an emphasis in Choral Conducting) and Business Administration. With an extensive background in music education and performance, Yang served as both a teacher and conductor of the Seoul Metropolitan Junior Chorus and conducted a choir composed of North Korean defectors and their descendants. She has also performed as a professional singer and soprano soloist with the Boryeong City Chorale and other ensembles across South Korea.