# YALE CAMERATA SPRING CONCERT

ANDRÉ THOMAS, CONDUCTOR

# Let Your Voice Be Heard

Video premiere May 7, 2021

# I. FROM THE WOMAN'S VOICE

Florence Price (1887–1953)

Praise the Lord

Abe Wallace, organ

Spoken introduction by Joe Lerangis, principal assistant conductor and director of the Camerata Chamber Chorus

Maddalena Casulana

Morir non puo

(c. 1544-c. 1590)

Chamber Chorus Joe Lerangis, conductor

Spoken introduction by Misha Semenov, member of the Camerata

Juana Inés de la Cruz (attributed)

Madre, la de los primores

(c. 1648-1695)

Chamber Chorus Joe Lerangis, conductor Francis Fedora, violoncello Roberto Granados, guitar

Recitation of the poem "Still I Rise" by Kimberly Wilson, in the character of Maya Angelou

Rosephanye Powell

Still I Rise

(b. 1962)

Soloists: Sarah Reed, Marnielle Charles, Rosephanye Powell Michael Olatuja, bass

James Davis Jr., piano Gerald Law, percussion

## II. FROM THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Jennifer Higdon Invitation to Love

(b. 1962)

Chamber Chorus Joe Lerangis, conductor

Spoken introduction by Mari Ésabel Valverde, composer

Mari Ésabel Valverde When Thunder Comes

(b. 1987)

Abe Wallace, piano Russell Fisher, percussion

Craig Hella Johnson All of Us

(b. 1962) from Considering Matthew Shepard

Solo trio: Maura Tuffy, Sarah Reed, Mahima Kumara

Michael Olatuja, bass Roberto Granados, guitar Abe Wallace, piano Russell Fisher, percussion

## III. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Greeting by Martin Jean, director of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music

Joel Thompson The Caged Bird Sings for Freedom

(b. 1988)

David Shifrin, clarinet Abe Wallace, piano

Troy D. Robertson, adapted by members of the Morse Chorale I Will Be the Change

(b. 1978)

Morse Chorale

Stephanie Tubiolo, conductor and editor Eden Levy-Roginsky, violin (freely improvised)

Ziggo C., spoken word

Jonathan Jalbert, bass clarinet and clarinet

Lauren Bond, guitar Alex Whittington, flute

Soloists (in order of appearance): Gabriella Xavier, Veronette Legeon, Sofia Shubin, Sheyla Cabrera, Karolina Jasaitis, Elijah Rious, Lizamishel Boateng, June Lanpher

Alma Bazel Androzzo, arr. André Thomas If I Can Help Somebody

(1912-2001)

Soloists: Sharon R. Fennema, NicDaniel Charles, Jaminda Blackmon

Michael Olatuja, bass Abe Wallace, piano Gerald Law, percussion Moses Hogan (1957–2003)

Lift Every Voice for Freedom

James Davis Jr., narrator Abe Wallace, piano

#### TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS, AND NOTES

#### Florence Price, Praise the Lord

Praise the Lord, all ye nations, praise the Lord, all ye people. Praise the Lord for his merciful kindness is great toward us. And the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise the Lord.

(Psalm 117)

With countless others in the Great Migration, Florence Price moved in 1927 from her native Arkansas to Chicago. She had already graduated from the New England Conservatory and taught music in Atlanta and Arkansas, and in Chicago she joined a cultural milieu that included Richard Wright, Gwendolyn Brooks, Louis Armstrong, Mahalia Jackson, and the *Chicago Defender*. After Price won first prize in a composition contest with her Symphony in E Minor, the Chicago Symphony performed the work, the first time a major American orchestra programmed a piece by an African American woman. Along with orchestral and instrumental music, Price continued to write sacred songs and arrangements of spirituals, including *Praise the Lord* in 1951. Despite Price's popularity during her lifetime, most of her compositions remain unpublished.

# Maddalena Casulana, Morir non puo

My heart cannot die, I would like to kill it, Since that would please you, But it cannot be pulled out of your breast, Where it has been dwelling for a long time, And if I killed it, as I wish, I know that you would die, and I would die too!

Little is known about the life of Maddalena Casulana, an Italian composer, lutenist, singer, and teacher in the second half of the sixteenth century. She appears to have been the first woman to publish a book of madrigals, the preface of which asserts "the foolish error of men who believe themselves the masters of high intellectual gifts that cannot . . . be equally held among women." Casulana's patrons included Isabella de' Medici Orsini, the duke of Munich, and other European nobles, and she features prominently in dedications by other composers. She performed at the *Accademica Olimpica* in Vicenza, which was likely the center of her professional life.

#### Attributed to Juana Inés de la Cruz, Madre, la de los primores

## Madre, la de los primores

Madre, la de los primores, la que es ÿu yen siendo madre, la madre de tantas hijas, y madre de tantos padres. Goza hoy en tu templo felicidades, pues de tu esposo eres divino Atlante.

Señora reformadora, la que a sus benditos frailes, los trae por esos desiertos, al sol, a la nieve, al aire. *Goza hoy* ...

El premio de sus trabajos paga el cielo con mandarles, que para que al cielo suban, les haga que descalcen. *Goza hoy...* 

Quien la vido y la ve agora andar por sotos, y valles entonces, y en esas fiestas ocupar mil altares. *Goza hoy...* 

Por Dios mi señora monja, que supo de amor los lances, pues se ÿu y la cruz a cuestas por seguir bien a su amante, *Goza hoy...* 

Descanse ÿu yen buen hora en el templo que le hace, quien amante solicita que de trabajar descanse. *Goza hoy...* 

## Mother of the very finest

Mother of the very finest, a virgin while also a mother, the mother of so many daughters, and mother of so many fathers. Today in your temple you delight, for you are your husband's Atlas divine.

Lady Reformer, who guides her blessed flock of nuns, traversing through these deserts to the snow, the air, the sun. Today in your temple . . .

Heaven repays your great work by sending you a mission: you make your nuns go barefoot\* to help them go to heaven. Today in your temple . . .

Those who saw her, and see her still, walking through groves and valleys, taking her place, back then as now at this feast, in thousands of altars.

Today in your temple . . .

By God, our dear lady nun
The throes of love well knew,
for she carried the cross on her back
To follow her lover true.
Today in your temple . . .

The time has come to rest in this temple you have made, for your lover has commanded you to rest from your work today.

Today in your temple . . .

\*(i.e., join the barefoot Carmelite order of nuns) (Translation by Misha Semenov and Kassandra Leiva)

#### Rosephanye Powell, Still I Rise

Though I have been wounded: aching heart full of pain,

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Jus' like a budding rose, my bloom is nourished by rain.

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Haven't time to wonder why, tho' fearful I strive.

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

My pray'r and faith uphold me 'til my courage arrives.

Still I rise as an eagle, soaring above ev'ry fear.

With each day I succeed, I grow strong an' believe that it's all within my reach.

I'm reaching for the skies, bolstered by courage, yes, still I rise.

As my heart grows heavy and my confidence dies,

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Pure strength is in my tears and healing rains in my cries.

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Plunging depths of anguish, I determine to strive.

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

My pray'r and faith uphold me 'til my courage arrives.

Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Though you see me slump with heartache: heart so heavy that it breaks.

Be not deceived – I fly on birds' wings, rising sun, its healing ray.

Look at me, I'm getting stronger; I'm determined to survive.

Tho' I get tired an' I get weary, I won't give up, I'm still alive.

Yes, still I rise as an eagle . . . .

African American poet and author Maya Angelou is quoted as saying, "You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it." Ms. Angelou's words, and her poem "Still I Rise," were the inspiration for this song of the same name. *Still I Rise* is a salute to the strength of the human spirit to persevere through adversity and disappointments. It is the celebration of a life resolved to overcome obstacles despite times of defeat, to persevere and never give up. Although one's life may be filled with tears and heartaches, with each day that one finds oneself having overcome, one finds that one has grown stronger and risen a little higher. Thus, every new day can be one of celebration because since I am here, "Still I Rise!"

(Note by the composer)

## Jennifer Higdon, Invitation to Love

Come when the nights are bright with stars Or come when the moon is mellow;
Come when the sun his golden bars
Drops on the hay-field yellow.
Come in the twilight soft and gray,
Come in the night or come in the day,
Come, O love, whene'er you may,
And you are welcome, welcome.

You are sweet, O Love, dear Love, You are soft as the nesting dove. Come to my heart and bring it to rest As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.

Come when my heart is full of grief Or when my heart is merry; Come with the falling of the leaf Or with the redd'ning cherry.

Come when the year's first blossom blows,

Come when the summer gleams and glows,

Come with the winter's drifting snows,

And you are welcome, welcome.

[Hear this . . . Invitation to Love]

(Paul Laurence Dunbar)

A setting of Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem of the same name, *Invitation to Love* unfolds as a blanket of sound around the listener. Beginning with simple triadic harmony, the voice parts gradually split, but the harmonies remain extremely close, painting a vivid picture of sounds intertwining and welcoming one another into their realms harmonically. As the piece unfolds, Higdon evokes the idea of a bird, perhaps a dove, landing in its nest after flight. Beginning in C major, the piece gradually adds flats until the entire choir is singing in G-flat, nesting into sonorities a full tritone lower than the original key. The warmth of the final moments of the piece invites us home, to a place where acceptance is vital and love is unconditional.

(Note by Joe Lerangis, conductor of the Chamber Chorus)

# Mari Ésabel Valverde, When Thunder Comes

The poor and dispossessed take up the drums
For civil rights – freedoms to think and speak,
Petition, pray, and vote. When thunder comes,
The civil righteous are finished being meek.
Why Sylvia Mendez bet against long odds,
How Harvey Milk turned hatred on its head,
Why Helen Zia railed against tin gods,
How Freedom Summer's soldiers faced the dread
Are tales of thunder that I hope to tell
From my thin bag of verse for you to hear
In miniature, like ringing a small bell,
And know a million bells can drown out fear.
For history was mute witness when such crimes
Discolored and discredited our times.

(J. Patrick Lewis, from When Thunder Comes)

When Thunder Comes is a celebration of American civil rights heroes: Sylvia Méndez, who challenged California's justice system in a fight for racial desegregation of schools; Helen Zia, Chinese-American lesbian feminist author, journalist, Fulbright scholar, and activist for peace; Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in California's history, remembered as a vocal gay rights advocate; and Freedom Summer's "soldiers," who risked their lives in their movement to enfranchise black voters in Mississippi of the 1960s.

Calling attention to our history's systemic erasure of the stories of marginalized human beings in the United States, Lewis's sonnet presents a powerful model for patriotism. The drums, a figurative representation of a grassroots revolution, provide thunder, and the singing relays the message that, once unified, our individual voices can come together and "drown out fear."

This work was commissioned in 2015 by One Voice Mixed Chorus, Minnesota's LGBTA Chorus, for their concert "Queer Thunder" in collaboration with Mu Daiko taiko ensemble.

(Note by the composer)

# Craig Hella Johnson, "All of Us" (from Considering Matthew Shepard)

What could be the song?
Where begin again?
Who could meet us there?
Where might we begin?
From the shadows climb,
Rise to sing again;
Where could be the joy?
How do we begin?

Never our despair,
Never the least of us,
Never turn away,
Never hide your face;
Ordinary boy,
Only all of us,
Free us from our fear,
Only all of us.

Only in the Love,
Love that lifts us up,
Clear from out the heart
From the mountain's side,
Come creation come,
Strong as any stream;
How can we let go? How can we forgive?
How can we be dream?

Out of heaven, rain,
Rain to wash us free;
Rivers flowing on,
Ever to the sea;
Bind up every wound,
Every cause to grieve;

Always to forgive Only to believe.

Most noble Light, Creation's face,
How should we live but joined in you,
Remain within your saving grace
Through all we say and do
And know that we are the Love that moves
The sun and all the stars?
O Love that dwells, O Love that burns
In every human heart.

(Only in the Love, Love that lifts us up!)

This evergreen, this heart, this soul,
Now moves us to remake our world,
Reminds us how we are to be
Your people born to dream;
How old this joy, how strong this call,
To sing your radiant care
With every voice, in cloudless hope
Of our belonging here.

Only in the Love,
Only all of us . . .
(Heaven: wash me . . . )
All of us, only all of us.
What could be the song?
Where do we begin?
Only in the Love,
Love that lifts us up,
All.

"All of Us" comes from a concert length work I composed called *Considering Matthew Shepard*. As a stand-alone piece, it can be sung in a wide variety of contexts. At its core, it is intended to be a jubilant call to remember the inherent value and radiance in every living being, indeed, in every aspect of Creation. It is a song of celebration—raising up the voices of all of us, with special attention given to those in our world who have been marginalized, mistreated, or simply not seen. I have a vision for a huge tent where we all are welcomed—at first the solo trio is proclaiming in Gospel style, followed by the choir; then the upright chorale and later I hope you will hear the solo trio imitating the three oboes in a Bach cantata movement dancing within the Gospel framework. I was inspired to compose the full concert length work to pay tribute to a young gay man, Matthew Wayne Shepard, whose heartbreaking death in 1998 pierced the hearts of countless people around the world. May your singing of "All of Us" come from the heart and may it be a vibrant declaration of love, celebration, and deep respect for all beings.

(Note by the composer)

# Joel Thompson, The Caged Bird Sings for Freedom

A free bird leaps on the back of the wind and floats downstream till the current ends and dips his wing in the orange sun rays and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks down his narrow cage can seldom see through his bars of rage his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill of things unknown but longed for still and his tune is heard on the distant hill for the caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn and he names the sky his own

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream His wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill of things unknown but longed for still and his tune is heard on the distant hill for the caged bird sings of freedom.

(Maya Angelou, Caged Bird)

Maya Angelou's beautiful poetry seems to follow a simple formula on its surface: a verse about a free bird, a verse about a caged bird, and a poignant refrain. However, when one views the imagery in the light of the history of the Black freedom struggle in the United States, Maya Angelou's verse illuminates the wellspring of Black creativity and resistance. The juxtaposition of a bird free to "claim the sky his own" with a bird standing "on the grave of dreams" is a powerful image that reflects the vast disparity that still persists within our culture. The caged bird's only act of resistance is to sing. To sing, despite clipped wings and tied feet, for "things unknown but longed for still." To sing for a more equitable future for every human being, regardless of gender, orientation, creed, or race. To sing for freedom.

(Note by the composer)

#### Troy Robertson, I Will Be the Change

I will be the change I want to see in the world.

This piece was born of necessity. Tesfa Wondemagegnehu served as a clinician for Tarleton State University's All State Choir Camp in the summer of 2020, and of course that meant we would not see singers face to face. How could we create music with our students over such a short period of time? We decided that I would write a short melody that could be taught quickly and then "looped," repeated and layered like a round or canon, then that new texture could be used to form backing vocals, a chorus, a bridge, all the parts of a pop song. Tesfa loves the Gandhi quotation that serves as the basis for the title and hook of the piece, and that inspired the remaining text.

(Note by the composer)

Our young people have undergone a traumatic year of isolation, confusion, exhaustion, and loss. The world sits heavy on their shoulders in ways beyond their control, and yet they also bear the societal expectation of bringing light and uplift. Born out of this complicated

pain, Morse Chorale's adaptation of *I Will Be the Change* took form as a meditation on resilience, weighed down but ever rolling forward. Using the melody as a seed, singers improvised remotely, unknowingly creating duets and trios with the friends they miss so much, and with those they have never met.

Commonly attributed to Gandhi, the repeated line "I will be the change I want to see in the world" is both hopeful and urgent: we will be the change because we must be the change.

We invite you to sing with us.

(Note by the conductor)

# Alma Bazel Androzzo, arr. André Thomas, If I Can Help Somebody

If I can help somebody as I pass along
If I can cheer somebody with a word or song;
If I can show somebody he is trav'ling wrong;
Then my living shall not be in vain;
If I can do my duty as a Christian ought;
If I can bring back beauty to a world up-wrought;
If I can spread Love's message that the master taught;
Then my living shall not be in vain.

Alma Bazel Androzzo was an African American songwriter, lyricist, and pianist born in Tennessee and raised in Philadelphia. Like Florence Price, she found musical inspiration in the cultural milieu of Chicago, where she produced a number of sacred songs. Although she had no formal music education, Androzzo found success with her first published song, *If I Can Help Somebody*, in 1945. The work has been recorded by artists as diverse as Liberace, Mahalia Jackson, Bryn Terfel, and the King's Singers. Martin Luther King Jr. was reported to have favored *If I Can Help Somebody*, and he quoted its lyrics to conclude a sermon just two months before he was assassinated.

# Moses Hogan, Lift Every Voice for Freedom

Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.

(Martin Luther King Jr., from Letter from Birmingham Jail)

Although Moses Hogan was a pianist at Oberlin and Juilliard, he devoted his career to reviving traditional spirituals, which he perceived to be in decline. As an arranger of songs and a performer with the Moses Hogan Singers, he helped advance the popularity of spirituals in the standard choral repertoire. The events of 9/11 inspired Hogan to combine "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing" into a patriotic anthem, *Lift Every Voice for Freedom*. A narration by Walter Bonam originally accompanied the work, speaking of efforts to spread United States–style freedom to the rest of the world. For this virtual concert we have chosen to replace the original narration text with an excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.'s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, which better fits the ethos of our program.

#### YALE CAMERATA

André Thomas, conductor

Joe Lerangis, principal assistant conductor

Laurie Ongley, manager

James Davis Jr., Michael Lukin, and Gloria Yin, student managers

Julie Hogan\* Bola Akanji Sydney Mukasa\*† Deborah Allen-Dozier Patrick Holland\* Bradley Naylor\* Alexandra Apolloni Kristen Hunt Kate Nyhan\* Helen Bartlett Ellen Oak Lisa Hunt Grace Bergin Anna K. Jedd\* Laura Ostrowsky\* Hollister Berry Katherine Jones\* Iulianne Parolisi Jaminda Blackmon\* Sean Patterson Xilin Jordan Natalie Plaza Jerry Boryca Matthew Judd Faith Brill Ian Powell Karen Schneider Kirner

Constance Turnburke Cahill\* Nathan Kloczko\* Laura A. Rais Catherine Campbell Donald Kohn Julia Blue Raspe\* Andy Celella\* Emma Reed Sydney Kopera Marnielle Charles Mahima Kumara\* Sarah Reed\* NicDaniel Charles\* Carolyn Ladd\* Gail Reen Xinyuan Chen Chandler Riker\*

Sofia Laguarda Vanessa Rivkin Logan Clark Karen Clute Caroline Lawrence Misha Semenov\* Matthew Cramer\* Michel Ledizet\* Sofia Shubin James Davis Jr.\*† Meghan Stoll\*† Chia-Yi (Joy) Lee Ryan Sutherland William Degan Joe Lerangis\*† Camilla Tassi Dayna Lee Drake\* Tim Lind\* Joslyn Thomas\* Heather Lacy Eaves Sylvia Lipnick

Geriana Vanatta Lagase\*

Alexander Lubka **Emily Eisenlohr Esther Ting** Michael Lukin\*† Sharon R. Fennema\* Stephanie Tubiolo Maura Tuffv\*† Ioe Finetti **James Maciel** Sachita Ganesa\* Abe Wallace David Maier

Rachel Glodo\* Persephone Marien\* Nate Widelitz\*† Virginia Taylor Grabovsky\* Talia Marinaccio Terence Wu Patti Graetz Meghan McCabe Gabriella Xavier Adam Hall Janet McCray Gloria Yin\*† Bonnie Havery Peter Meredith Iiwon Yun

Robin Michalak\* Jason Zentz\* Robert Havery Sarah Sedgwick Heath Catherine Miller Ke Jia Zhang Matthew Hirschtritt Gregory P. Muccilli Lawrence Zukof\*

#### **Camerata Instrumentalists**

James Davis Jr., piano David Shifrin, clarinet Roberto Granados, guitar Francis Fedora, violoncello Gerald Law, percussion Abe Wallace, piano and organ Russell Fisher, percussion Michael Olatuja, bass

<sup>\*</sup> Chamber chorus

<sup>†</sup> Assistant conductor

#### MORSE CHORALE

# Stephanie Tubiolo, conductor and editor

Lizamishel Boateng Eden Levy-Roginsky

Ziggo C. James Maciel

Sheyla Cabrera Carlie Mathews-Ramos

NicDaniel Charles

Fiona Cox

Sophia Rivkin

Henrietta Geertz

Vanessa Rivkin

Karolina Jasaitis

Gabriel Rodriguez

DJ Jordan

Sarah Seipold

Matthew Judd

Sofia Shubin

June Lanpher

Gabriella Xavier

Veronette Legeon

#### TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

Video designer and videographer: Camilla Tassi Audio and video production: Troy D. Robertson

Recording engineer: Mateusz Zechowski

#### WORKS AND PERMISSIONS

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- "I Will Be the Change" by Troy D. Robertson. Performed with permission.
- "If I Can Help Somebody" by Alma Bazel Androzzo, arranged by André Thomas. Published by Boosey & Hawkes and performed with permission.
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