



EARTHSONGS

JUNE 3 & 4, 2023

Earth Song
Seawall*

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)
Jamie Klenetsky Fay (b. 1984)

We Will Stand Up*
Keeping Quiet*
Dan Greenfield, Laura Quinn

Karen Siegel (b. 1980)
J. David Moore (b. 1962)

The Peace of Wild Things*
To Make a Prairie*

Michael Conley (b. 1970)
Elaine L. Bearer

Now is the Cool of the Day
Michele Yurecko, Matt Onigman

Jean Ritchie (1922-2015)
arr. Kevin Siegfried (b. 1969)

Kasar Mie La Gaji

Alberto Grau (b. 1937)

INTERMISSION

Eskimo Curlew*
Sarah Murray

Eddie Hill (b. 1962)

I am the World
Water

Melissa Dunphy (b. 1980)
Anders Edenroth (b. 1963)

CHAMBER SINGERS

This We Know (*TBB*)
The Blue Eye of God (*SSAA*)

Ron Jeffers (1943-2017)
Nancy Telfer (b. 1950)

Presentation of the 2023 High School Composition Contest Winners
Wind (*Grand Prize*)

Gabriel Tarrow (b. 2008)

Yemaya
Holding the Light

Diana V. Sáez
B.E. Boykin

Big Yellow Taxi
Jackie Ross

Joni Mitchell (b. 1943); arr. Greg Gilpin

*NJ Premiere

Instrumentalists

Piano/Harpsichord: David Davis
Cello: Michael Holak
Percussion: Joe Keefe, Linda Clark

Oboe: Teddy Love
Bass: Dan Malloy

Choral music, as much as any other pursuit, demonstrates community, interdependence and our need for one another, as in the quote from Chief Seattle's prayer, "All things are connected." This concert's music cherishes the earth and our connection to her. Several of the pieces are cautionary. It might seem strange that we need to both 'stand up' and 'keep quiet,' but it is only when we take a moment to reflect and enjoy the natural world that we have the strength and resolve to make noise about what we are doing to it.

Many of the composers/publishers have provided their own program notes, which will be quoted here.

Earth Song, written in 2007, is one of only four published choral pieces by **Frank Ticheli**, who is most famous for his concert band works. The text, also by the composer, speaks to the question of how to proceed creatively in a hurting world. Ticheli is professor of composition at the University of Southern California. He explains at bandirector.com:

I went on to get both a masters and doctoral degree in composition from The University of Michigan, where I had the good fortune to study with four different members of the composition faculty. Each exposed me to a different aspect of composition. William Bolcom was a generalist, while Leslie Bassett was wonderful with the details. Going from a lesson with Bolcom to one with Bassett was like switching from large, sweeping brush strokes with a paint brush to detailed precision work under a magnifying glass; their approaches to composition were quite different. William Albright stressed beauty of sound and the importance of taking risks, and George Wilson taught me to respect the integrity of the musical line.

Earth Song will be sung in the round so its comforting chords can encircle the audience.

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 and pain and strife, I'll
Sing, Be, Live, See...

Peace.

As a vocalist, composer **Jamie Klenetsky Fay** fell in love with writing choral music. Jamie was born and raised in New Jersey, and lives in Morristown. She attended Rutgers University, graduating with a B.A. in music. After working as a digital media manager for Morris County for many years, she now works as a content designer at Coforma, a digital services company that partners with government agencies, but continues to sing and compose professionally. She's a long-time member of the ASCAP Adventurous Programming Award-winning C4: The Choral Composer/Conductor Collective, where she's sung in over 50 premieres of new work. Jamie's choral and vocal compositions have been performed across the United States. Inspired by music from many genres, Jamie strives to create music that is meaningful and relevant to today's audience. She explains:

I read an article about the potential of seawall construction in Lower Manhattan. Climate change is happening today, and we have to accept it; we have to mitigate it; we have to fight it; we have to have empathy; we may have to leave our homes. How do you mitigate rising seas? Do you build a wall? Put dunes in your yard, if you live on the shore? Do you get protection if your land isn't valuable? Are we protecting the buildings, the history, or the people? What are our priorities? *Seawall* is about a person confronting these issues, not drawing conclusions. It is both a meditation and a plea to take climate change seriously and face it head-on. <https://jamieklenetsky.com/>

The seas are rising
How soon we forget that we're on an island.
The tracks go on for miles
The shoreline creeps into the tunnels
It will rise.
And who will we protect?
The numbers on the ledger?
The people in the station?
They will rise
It will rise
We must rise.

The co-founder of C4: The Choral Composer/Conductor Collective in 2005, composer/conductor **Karen Siegel** draws on her experience as a vocalist in her creation of innovative choral and vocal works. Karen received a Ph.D. in composition from the CUNY Graduate Center, where she studied with Tania León; she also holds degrees from Yale (B.A. in psychology) and NYU Steinhardt (M.M. in composition). Her works have been commissioned, performed, and recorded all over the country. Karen lives in Hoboken with her husband and two sons. <https://karensiegel.com/>

We Will Stand Up was commissioned by a consortium of ten choirs. Like *Seawall*, the composer wrote her own text, inspired by the youth plaintiffs in *Juliana vs. the United States* who sued the federal government for infringing on their right to a stable climate. *We Will Stand Up* celebrates the initiative and determination of the young activists fighting against climate change. Youthful energy and determination are captured in the driving complex rhythms and virtuoso piano part.

Yes, we will stand up to protect our earth.

Yes, we will stand up to protect our oceans.

Yes, we will stand up to protect our atmosphere.

Yes, we will stand up to protect our future.

We will bring change.

We will bring hope.

We have a right

To a stable climate.

Yes!

J. David Moore is a composer, arranger, conductor, teacher, and Southerner who has lived in the Upper Midwest for most of his life. David is the founder and music director of the First Readings Project, a chamber choir that acts as a resource for composers in the development of new work. He has won numerous grants, awards, and residencies from many organizations such as ASCAP, the Jerome Foundation, and the American Composers Forum; he was also the recipient of the 2001 McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians, along with his *a cappella* group Dare To Breathe. David has written hundreds of arrangements of vocal jazz, spirituals, barbershop quartet, Celtic mouth music, civil rights marching songs, early American hymn tunes, sixteenth-century madrigals, and folk music in Ukrainian, Gaelic, Austrian, Brazilian Portuguese, French, and Latin. His own compositions are shaped by his voracious appetite for music of every era and style. *Keeping Quiet* sets a poem by Pablo Neruda. <https://j davidmoore.net/>

Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still.

This one time upon the earth,
let's not speak any language,
let's stop for one second,
and not move our arms so much.

It would be a delicious moment,
without hurry, without engines
all of us would be together
in a sudden uneasiness.

Those who prepare green wars,
wars of gas, wars of fire,
victories without survivors,

would put on clean clothing
and would walk alongside their brothers
in the shade, without doing a thing.

What I want shouldn't be confused
with final inactivity:
life alone is what matters,
I want nothing to do with death.

If we weren't unanimous
about keeping our lives so much in motion,
if we could do nothing for once,
perhaps a great silence would
interrupt this sadness,
this never understanding ourselves
and of threatening ourselves with death,
perhaps the earth is teaching us
when everything seems to be dead
and then everything is alive.

Now I will count to twelve
and you keep quiet and I'll go.

Michael Conley has a multifaceted career as conductor, pianist, organist, singer, and composer. For 15 seasons, he was artistic director of the West Village Chorale and was (like two of the composers above) a singer/conductor/composer member of C4. Currently he is the music director at Calvary Presbyterian Church, San Francisco. He holds degrees in composition from James Madison University in Virginia and Westminster Choir College. This setting of Wendell Berry's poem for eight-part chorus and oboe is excerpted from the larger *Appalachian Requiem*. Lush and piquant harmonies and swirling phrases evoke a scene of natural beauty. The composer explains:

I had had in mind the idea of writing a large-scale work, using as supporting material traditional Southern shape-note hymns and folk music, for many years. But it wasn't until I read an article in, of all places, *GQ* magazine, on the subject of mountaintop-removal mining in Appalachia, that the work I would come to call *Appalachian Requiem* started to take shape. I was so appalled and disheartened by what I read that the idea of turning this piece into a kind of requiem first occurred to me. Not a requiem in the traditional sense, with the intent of consoling the living on the death of a fellow human being, but with the idea in mind of lamenting the loss of an old and enduring culture, and a natural heritage that continues to be under assault. While the economic and environmental consequences of mountaintop-removal mining are staggering in their own right, it is the wanton disregard for the people—the farmers and miners and families whose homes, lives, hopes, traditions, and physical environments have been permanently erased—that makes this a tragedy that diminishes us all.

The Peace of Wild Things (the “Agnus Dei” movement) is not a plea for reconciliation with God, but rather with nature itself. Berry’s beautiful poem is a powerful ode to the possibility that we can only be at peace with ourselves, and each other, when we find that calm, still place that communion with the natural world alone provides.

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the middle of the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water,
and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Elaine L. Bearer was born in Morristown and attended Summit High School. As a teenager, she was a pupil of Nadia Boulanger in Paris, then went on to receive a bachelor of music from The Manhattan School of Music and a master of arts in musicology from New York University. In addition to Boulanger, Bearer studied both with traditional composers, Ludmilla Ulehla, Nicholas Lopatnikov, and Virgil Thompson, and with composers of the Columbia-Princeton electronic music axis, including Mario Davidovsky. She has won several awards, including those from ASCAP, Meet the Composer, and Contemporary Music Studios; received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; and was named a distinguished alumna from the Manhattan School in 2019. She receives numerous commissions and performances worldwide, with performances scheduled this spring in Boston, Pasadena, Providence, and Norway. While in Rhode Island, she composed for Festival Ballet of Providence (Vibe of the Venue) and various groups at Brown University. Her hour-long oratorio, *The Passion of Magdalene*, was performed by the Providence Singers under the direction of Julian Wachner. Since moving to New Mexico with appointments at Caltech in Pasadena, many of her works have been inspired and performed by Pasadena Promusica. A neuroscientist and pathologist at both Brown University and now at UNM, Bearer holds appointments both in departments of music and in the medical schools. She explains:

To Make a Prairie was composed for the First Unitarian Church Choir in Youngstown, OH, as a birthday gift for my sister, Cynthia Bearer, a physician neonatologist, biochemist and bee-keeper. The text by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was published in 1924 in *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*. This musical setting twines the phrases of the text into repetitions and superimpositions not present in the published poem. Since Dickinson's works originally consisted of brief notes on scraps of paper subsequently assembled into poems, this seems appropriate usage.

To make a prairie it takes a clover and a bee,
One clover and a bee.

And reverie.
The reverie alone will do,
If bees are few.

Jean Ritchie grew up in the Cumberland Mountains, the youngest of 14 children, to become Appalachia's most famous folksinger, songwriter, and dulcimer player, known as "The Mother of Folk." She was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to trace the links between American ballads and the songs of the British Isles. As a song collector, she began by setting down the 300 songs that she already knew from her childhood. She also sold hundreds of dulcimers with her photographer husband, George Pickow. In 2002, Ritchie received a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. Her original composition, *Now is the Cool of the Day*, shows her deep reverence for nature, and calls us to be stewards of the earth. The chorus alludes to Genesis 3:8 ("and they heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day") but portrays Eden as the garden we inhabit and must care for today. Released on her 1977 album *None But One*, the song found its way into the repertoire of many folk artists and, according to arranger **Kevin Siegfried**, became an anthem of opposition to mountaintop-removal mining in the Appalachian Mountains. Siegfried teaches songwriting, theory, and piano in the Theater Division at The Boston Conservatory at Berklee. Since 2014, he has been composer-in-residence with the Capitol Hill Chorale in Washington, DC, who commissioned and premiered this arrangement in 2019.

My Lord, he said unto me,
"Do you like my garden so fair?
You may live in this garden if you keep the grasses green,
and I'll return in the cool of the day."

Then my Lord, he said unto me,
"Do you like my garden so pure?
You may live in this garden if you keep the waters clean,
And I'll return in the cool of the day."

Now is the cool of the day,
now is the cool of the day,
O this earth it is a garden, the garden of my Lord,
And he walks in his garden in the cool of the day.

Then my Lord, he said unto me,
"Do you like my garden so green?
You may live in this garden if you keep the people free,
and I'll return in the cool of the day."

Now is the cool of the day,
now is the cool of the day,
O this earth it is a garden, the garden of my Lord,
And he walks in his garden in the cool of the day.

Now is the cool of the day,
Now is the cool of the day,
You may live in this garden if you keep the people free,
and we will walk in his garden in the cool of the day.

Kasar Mie La Gaji is a dramatic rendition of the short text “the earth is tired.” The longer explanation is (translated from Spanish): “for an international mobilization to save THE EARTH and a conscientious effort regarding the problems of the environment. The inhabitants of the African Sahel say: ‘kasar mie la gaji’ (‘the earth is tired’).” The piece uses cross-rhythms, clapping, and speech-vocalizing; we have added some modest choralography to create a provocative performance piece.

Catalan-Venezuelan distinguished composer, conductor and teacher **Alberto Grau** is one of the leading musical personalities in the history of contemporary Venezuelan music. In 1967, he founded the Schola Cantorum de Caracas, a prestigious choral group that was awarded first prize at the 1974 Concurso Internacional Guido D'Arezzo in Italy. He has participated in many international choral events as a performer, a guest conductor, and an adjudicator at festival competitions in Europe, North America, and Latin America.

A three-time McKnight Artist Fellow and a two-time Bush Artist Fellow, **Edie Hill** has received grants from the Jerome Foundation, ASCAP, New Music USA, Meet The Composer, Minnesota State Arts Board, and Chamber Music America. She was awarded a doctor of humane letters from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN. She has a B.A. from Bennington College and earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Minnesota. She has lectured at colleges, universities, and various institutions in the States and abroad. For Hill, writing music is an opportunity to research, learn, muse, reach down deep and allow inspiration to come from the stuff of life. Her compositions are fueled by her experiences, passions, and curiosities. Harmonium commissioned and premiered her work *There is No Age* in 2005.

Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews*, first published by Dodd, Mead & Company in 1955, was a fictionalized account of a real situation. Eskimo Curlews were dangerously close to extinction back then. The last photograph of the bird was taken in 1963 and the last confirmed sighting was in Nebraska in 1987. ***Eskimo Curlew*** is a short movement from a longer work, *Spectral Spirits*, based on poetry by Holly J. Hughes, which lovingly tells the story of birds who are highly endangered, extinct, or believed to be gone. *Spectral Spirits* is featured on the album, *Born: music of Edie Hill and Michael Gilbertson*, which won the 2023 Grammy for “Best Choral Performance” for The Crossing (Donald Nally, conductor). <https://www.ediehill.com/>

Numenius borealis.
Swiftwing. Sweetgrass.
Little sicklebill.

I grew up reading *The Last of the Curlews* before bed,
your crescent moon beak beckoning me north.

Even then you were almost gone, though millions of you

once filled the skies, migrating from the northern tundra
to South America, feeding on grasshoppers along the way.
Within twenty years, your vast flocks were brought down
by market hunters, fire suppression, tilling of the prairies,
eradication of grasshoppers. Before hunting was banned,
two million curlews were killed each year.
Here's the part that still makes me weep:

You were wiped out because you stayed
by your fallen companion; from you

I learned what loyalty means. Today, birders
search for you along Galveston's shore,

sometimes catch a glimpse, memory being so strong.
No one knows for sure you're gone. You live on

in the pages of a book, a waning crescent moon.

Born and raised in Australia, **Melissa Dunphy** immigrated to the United States in 2003 and has since become an award-winning and acclaimed composer specializing in vocal, political, and theatrical music. Her choral work *What do you think I fought for at Omaha Beach?* won the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers Composition Competition and has been performed nationally by ensembles including Grammy Award-winning Chanticleer, Cantus, and the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, and by Harmonium's Chamber Singers last June. She holds a Ph.D. in music composition from the University of Pennsylvania, currently teaches composition at Rutgers University, and is also active in Philadelphia as a sound and lighting designer, actor, theater owner, and podcaster (The Boghouse). Recently her chamber opera *Alice Tierney* was premiered at Oberlin and by Columbus Opera. *I am the World* was commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and first performed by the BBC Singers on March 8, 2022 at Temple Church, London. The program marked International Women's Day with a live broadcast of music by leading women composers of the 21st century. It is an exuberant tour de force based on the poem of Irish author and sculptor Dora Sigerson Shorter (1866-1918).

<https://melissadunphy.com/compositions.php>

I am the song, that rests upon the cloud;
I am the sun:
I am the dawn, the day, the hiding shroud,
When dusk is done.

I am the changing colours of the tree;
The flower uncurled:
I am the melancholy of the sea;

I am the world.

The other souls that, passing in their place,
Each in their groove;
Out-stretching hands that chain me and embrace,
Speak and reprove¹.

"O atom of that law, by which the earth
Is poised and whirled;
Behold! you hurrying with the crowd assert
You are the world."

Am I not one with all the things that be
Warm in the sun?
All that my ears can hear, or eyes can see,
Till all be done.

Of song and shine, of changing leaf apart,
Of bud uncurled:
With all the senses pulsing at my heart,
I am the world.

One day the song that drifts upon the wind
I shall not hear;
Nor shall the rosy shoots to eyes grown blind
Again appear.

Deaf, in the dark, I shall arise and throw
From off my soul,
The withered world with all its joy and woe,
That was my goal.

I shall arise, and like a shooting star
Slip from my place;
So ling'ring see the old world from afar
Revolve in space.

And know more things than all the wise may know
Till all be done;
Till One shall come who, breathing on the stars,
Blows out the sun.

1- to scold gently or with kindly intent

The acclaimed *a cappella* quintet The Real Group's **Anders Edenroth** has written and published many original songs and arrangements of well-known standards. He is constantly exploring the development of new vocal textures and the integration of vocal percussion and rhythmic effects.

Born in Stockholm, Edenroth's youthful music studies had a strong focus on choral singing. After studying at The Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, since 1989 he has been a full-time singer performing with The Real Group in more than 40 countries and recording 20 albums, many of which he also produced. Edenroth is deeply interested in environmental conservation. He writes in the introduction to *Water* (dedicated to the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain): "a poetic and philosophical perspective on the transparent matter so essential to the survival of every living creature. Some of us take it for granted, others perish from lack of it." The work makes creative use of tuned water bottles.

Water...

In the mind of a melting snowman,
in the sound from a whistling kettle,
in the gently alighting crystal of ice,
in the dewdrops of a colorful petal.

To live, everyone must have water,
to give not to deny each other,
to bring from source to mouth
just like the food of love from a nursing mother.

Sweet as an angel's kiss,
salt as her falling tears
droplets in patience wearing away
the mountain of time for billions of years.

In the shape of a cloud evolving,
in the gleam when your skin perspires,
in the curse of a lost and foundering ship,
in the silent face Narcissus¹ admires.

To kill, for in a global battle,
to chill well in a plastic bottle,
to find between air and earth
both cold and wet says Aristotle.

Mild as mermaid's song,
wild when the oceans roar,
never been born and never been buried,
infinite waves caressing the shore.

1- Greek mythological figure who rejected all romantic advances, eventually falling in love with his own reflection in a pool of water, staring at it for the remainder of his life.

Ron Jeffers served as associate professor and director of choral activities at Oregon State from 1974 to 1982, and as associate professor of theory and composition from 1982 to 1998. In 1988, he founded *earthsongs*, a company that publishes choral music from many different countries

and books of translations of foreign language texts. (*Kasar, This We Know* and *The Blue Eye of God* are all *earthsongs* publications.) Jeffers studied composition and choral conducting at The University of Michigan, Occidental College, and the University of California (San Diego), with John Warren Owen, Howard Swan, Robert Shaw, and Eric Ericson. He directed choirs and taught various courses at these institutions and at the University of Wisconsin (Eau Claire), S.U.N.Y. at Stony Brook, and Oregon State University. The basic SATB edition of *This We Know* with English, German, French, and Spanish translations was prepared for the First World Symposium on Choral Music held in Vienna in August 1987. It is dedicated to the International Federation for Choral Music and to the abiding wisdom and spirit of Chief Seattle. The piece is also available in Finnish, Hebrew, Hungarian, Irish, Japanese, Polish, Russian, Swedish, and Wolof, for SSA as well as TTB. And finally, as Black Elk says in his book *The Sacred Pipe*, it is hoped that this piece "will help in bringing peace upon the earth, not only among humankind, but within each person and between the whole of creation."

This we know.
The earth does not belong to us;
we belong to the earth.
This we know.
All things are connected
like the blood that unites one family.
All things are connected.
Whate'er befalls the earth
befalls the children of the earth.
This we know.
We did not weave the web of life,
we are merely a strand in it.
Whatever we do to the web,
we do to ourselves.
This we know.

The Blue Eye of God was commissioned by Les Choristes, the award-winning women's choir at the University of Western Ontario. **Nancy Telfer** is a Canadian composer who received her formal education at the University of Western Ontario where she concentrated on music education, composition, piano, and voice. She now works full-time as a composer and has composed numerous works ranging from short pieces for beginning students to full extended works for virtuoso musicians, works for soloists, chamber ensembles, orchestras, choirs, and bands. She has had works commissioned by many fine performers and her music has been performed and broadcast around the world. In addition to her work as a composer, she frequently presents workshops in Canada and the United States. Barbara Powis was a Canadian poet from British Columbia who died from cancer while in her forties. All her poems present a vivid image of the outdoors: movement, color, and a strong sense of life. The music incorporates this sense of movement in vivid text painting depicting the cries of the whales and leaping and dipping of dolphins and birds.

The animals, the winged and swimming creatures,
rose in their agony, confronted man.

Dolphins, butchered on beaches,
sea tears brimming startled eyes,
observed an arc of knives
obscure the sun.

Ducks and long-limbed herons
raised their jewelled wings,
their bright and patterned necks,
and sank, oil-girdled
in the black and tarnished sea.

The humpback whales,
the orcas wrote Cetacean history.
Their underwater songs rang plunder-
the scraped dead space behind the factory ships;
Their underwater songs sang of mysteries
greater than man, greater than whales:
the blue eye of God in the water.

Grand Prize Winner **Gabriel Tarrow** is a freshman at Columbia High School in Maplewood. He has been playing the piano for ten years and composing for eight years. He loves choir and choral music and has attended several summer music camps. He draws inspiration from Baroque and modern choral music. Gabriel's sponsor is choral teacher Nicholas Diaz. The poem **Wind** is by Harlem Renaissance poet Gwendolyn Bennett (1902-1981).

The wind was a care-free soul
That broke the chains of earth,
And strode for a moment across the land
With the wild halloo¹ of his mirth.
He little cared that he ripped up trees,
That houses fell at his hand,
That his step broke calm on the breast of seas,
That his feet stirred clouds of sand.

But when he had had his little joke,
Had shouted and laughed and sung,
When the trees were scarred, their branches broke,
And their foliage aching hung,
He crept to his cave with a stealthy tread,
With rain-filled eyes and a low-bowed head.

1- holler

Diana V. Sáez is the director of choral activities at Towson University. A leading specialist in Latin American music, Dr. Sáez is a frequent guest conductor, adjudicator, and lecturer in the United States and abroad. In the past five years, she has presented at national and regional

ACDA conventions, American universities, and various other engagements in North and South America. Prior to that, she served for 25 years as artistic director of Cantigas, the award-winning chamber choir of Latin American and Spanish music. She began her musical education at the *Escuela Libre de Musica* in San Juan, PR, followed by a M.M. in choral conducting from Temple University and a D.M.A. from the University of Maryland. <https://dianavsaez.com/>

Yemaya is the goddess of the ocean and the mother of all goddesses from the *Rule of the Osha*, a Yoruba religion that has its origins in West Africa. It was brought to the Americas by African slaves where it exchanged logics and symbols with Catholicism. This Afro-Cuban chant is meant to be sung as a meditation. In the Americas, including Brazil, Yemaya represents maternity, the mother deity who looks out for our land, its natural resources, and all its living creatures.

The text reads:
Yemaya Asesu
Asesu Yemaya
Yemaya Olodo
Olodo Yemaya

In English, it means:
A celebration of the moment when the river meets the ocean.

B.E. Boykin (Brittney Boykin) is a native of Alexandria, VA. After graduating from Spelman College in 2011 with a B.A. in music, Ms. Boykin continued her studies at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ. She continued to compose music during her time at Westminster and was awarded the R & R Young Composition Prize just a few months shy of graduating. In May 2013, Ms. Boykin graduated from Westminster Choir College with a M.M. in sacred music with a concentration in choral studies. Among her professional endeavors, Ms. Boykin is currently an assistant professor of music at the Georgia Institute of Technology. She recently obtained her Ph.D. from Georgia State University with an emphasis in music education. *Holding the Light* was written on a commission from Albright College, coming out of the dark times of pandemic. It is based on a poem by Stuart Kestenbaum that speaks to community finding ways to move forward.

Gather up whatever is
glittering in the gutter,
whatever has tumbled
in the waves or fallen
in flames out of the sky,

(holding the light)

for it's not only our
hearts that are broken,
but the heart
of the world as well.
Stitch it back together.

Make a place where
the day speaks to the night
and the earth speaks to the sky.
Whether we created God
or God created us

(holding the light)

it all comes down to this:
In our imperfect world
we are meant to repair
and stitch together
what beauty there is, stitch it

with compassion and wire.
See how everything
we have made gathers
the light inside itself
and overflows? A blessing.

A biography of the great **Joni Mitchell** is beyond even these program notes! Roberta Joan "Joni" Mitchell is a Canadian-American musician, producer, and painter and one of the most influential singer-songwriters to emerge from the 1960s folk music circuit. She has received many accolades, including ten Grammy Awards and induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997. It seemed like a great way to end this concert to sing *Big Yellow Taxi* (1970) aka "they paved paradise and put up a parking lot." I hope that by immersing yourself in these compositions, poems, and community partners, we can realize what "we've got *before* it's gone," and go out into our beautiful world with renewed spirits.

They paved paradise,
put up a parking lot,
with a pink hotel, a boutique,
and a swinging hot spot.

Refrain:
Don't it always seem to go
that you don't know what you've got
till it's gone?
They paved paradise,
put up a parking lot.

They took all the trees,
put 'em in a tree museum
and they charged the people
a dollar and a half just to see 'em.

Refrain

Hey, farmer, farmer,
put away that DDT now.
Give me spots on my apples,
but leave me the birds and the bees.
Please.

Refrain

Late last night
I heard the screen door slam.
And a big yellow taxi
Took away my old man.

Refrain

Congratulations to our Second & Third Prize Winners!

Aaron Caso is a senior from Mountain Lakes High School who submitted two works, thus winning both second prize (*Where's That Rural Scene* on a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins) and a tie for third (*Carefree Soul* also setting Gwendolyn Bennett's *Wind*). For many years, he has enjoyed writing works for band and choir alongside his competitive trumpet playing. He has taken inspiration for his music from some of the ensembles he has been involved in, including the NAFME All Eastern Orchestra and the NJMEA New Jersey All State Wind Ensemble and Orchestra. Aaron is so grateful to the Harmonium Choral Society for the opportunity to submit and compete in a music composition contest for the first time, and is thankful to his choir director/sponsor Austin Vallies for all the help and support during Aaron's four years in high school. Aaron would also like to acknowledge the love and support that his parents have shown him throughout his musical journey.

Charlie Love (third place tie for *Some Effects of Global Warming in Lackawanna County* by contemporary poet Jay Parini) is a senior at Parsippany Hills High School where he is a member of the choir programs and the spring musicals. He plays string bass in wind ensemble, percussion and bass in marching band, and piano in jazz band. He sings with the choir at Grace Church in Madison (head chorister and member of the Gargoyles) as well as Harmonium Choral Society. He is a piano student of Nancy Modell (his sponsor for the contest) in Springfield. Charlie also attends Kinhaven Music School for piano during the summer. He was a student at the American Boychoir School and toured the United States and China during his time there. He lives in Mount Tabor with his family and intends to study composition at Bennington College (Vermont) in the fall.

Meet the Judges

New Jersey composer **Amanda Harberg's** work has been described by *The New York Times* as "a sultry excursion into lyricism." "She invigorates the brain and touches the soul," says composer John Corigliano; "I love her work." Harberg's music has been presented at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Verizon Hall, Symphony Center, and Bargemusic. Orchestral premieres have included performances by the Philadelphia Orchestra with Erica Peel and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Albany Symphony, the Grand Rapids Symphony, the Interlochen Philharmonic, the New Jersey Youth Symphony, and the Reno Philharmonic. Her works have been commissioned and performed by many instrumental soloists worldwide. She says:

Harmonium Choral Society has been an important part of my musical life for over a decade. Their leadership in championing new music and in heralding the next generation of composers is remarkable. I have been judging the Annual High School Choral Competition for ten years, and every year I am astounded by the incredible music being written by NJ's young composers. It's an honor to be a part of this important educational opportunity!

Matthew Harris' choral music is performed and recorded worldwide by major groups as well as school and community choruses. Harmonium commissioned his *A Child's Christmas in Wales* for chorus and orchestra in 2002, and performed it again last Dec. for its 20th anniversary. Choirs around the world know his many volumes of *Shakespeare Songs*. Mr. Harris has taught at Fordham University and Kingsborough College, CUNY. In 1988, he founded Harris Musicology. He currently teaches at Brooklyn College and New York City College of Technology, CUNY. Matthew has also been a judge for Harmonium's High School Choral Composition Contest the longest- for over 20 years! "The Harmonium Choral Contest is a treasured institution that helps young choral composers develop their skills, hear their works and launch their careers. I've had the honor and pleasure of serving it for over twenty years and hope to be part of its success for years to come."

Sarah Rimkus is an American composer who earned M.M. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, studying with Phillip Cooke and Paul Mealor. She received a B.Mus. in music composition from the University of Southern California where she developed a love of choral music while studying with Morten Lauridsen. She has received numerous awards, including the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award for *Trapped in Amber* for string orchestra, the ASCAP Foundation Leonard Bernstein Award, and the Cantus Ensemble's composition award in 2017. Her works have been performed and commissioned by musicians and ensembles on both sides of the Atlantic, including the Gesualdo Six and the Ligeti Quartet, and featured on Classic FM and BBC Scotland. She is currently an instructor at Michigan Technological University, teaching composition and music fundamentals. Harmonium commissioned and premiered her multilingual *In the beginning was the Word* in 2019.

Dr. Trevor Weston's musical education began at the prestigious St. Thomas Choir School in NYC at the age of ten. He received a B.A. from Tufts University and continued his studies at the

University of California, Berkeley where he earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in music composition. Dr. Weston is currently an associate professor of music at Drew University in Madison. His many honors include the George Ladd Prix de Paris from the University of California, a Goddard Lieberon Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and residencies at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and the MacDowell Colony. Weston won the first Emerging Black Composers Project sponsored by the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the San Francisco Symphony. Choral works have been performed by Roomful of Teeth, The Boston Children's Chorus, Washington Chorus, The Manhattan Choral Ensemble and many others, including Harmonium, whose Chamber Singers recently gave the NJ premiere of *Voices Live Forever*.

Artistic Director **Dr. Anne Matlack** rounds out the panel. "I am honored to have these wonderful composers on our team. All students, whether or not they win or place, receive constructive feedback from all judges. It was great to have many new entrants this year. I am also thankful for the mentoring support we offer from composer-in-residence **Martin Sedek**, and the loving work of contest coordinator **Rachel Clark**. I would also like to thank climate-change poets Jay Parini (<https://poets.org/poet/jay-parini>), Sam Illingworth (<https://thepoetryofscience.scienceblog.com/author/thepoetryofscience/>), and Hilda Raz (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/hilda-raz>) for permission to offer their poems for setting by students."