



*Strathmore Youth Chorus, George Mason University,
and Washington Adventist University
Present*

VOICES UNITED: A Celebration of Global Harmony

Sunday, April 6, 2025 at 5pm

CONCERT PROGRAM

NEW ENGLAND YOUTH ENSEMBLE

Hebrides Overture (1830, 1832),

Op. 26 “Fingal’s Cave”

by Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

Felix Mendelssohn, a child prodigy from a well-off family, found musical inspiration in natural surroundings. During his 1829 trip to Scotland with his friend Karl Klingemann, they visited the Hebrides Islands and Fingal’s Cave, leading Mendelssohn to compose the Hebrides Overture. The overture, first drafted in Rome in 1830 and completed after revisions, premiered in 1832. Mendelssohn’s work, a concert overture, is evocative of the sea and Hebrides’ scenery, featuring a mysterious arpeggiated fragment and a sprawling second theme. Despite not following a narrative, it vividly represents the ebb and flow of the sea, with dramatic crescendos and sforzandi.

STRATHMORE YOUTH CHORUS, THE CHORUSES OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY AND WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, AND THE NEW ENGLAND YOUTH SYMPHONY

Mass of the Children (2002, 2003)

by John Rutter, b. 1945

Bronwyn Weikert, *soprano soloist*

Samuel Flamenco, *baritone soloist*

Dr. Lisa A. Billingham, *conductor*

Dr. Lisa Bloy, *collaborative pianist*

Rutter’s Mass of the Children was written in response to a desire to compose a work that would bring children and adults together, in the same way that performances of Britten’s War Requiem had done for him when a school chorister.

Kyrie, Greek, and Latin Translations:

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Gloria, Latin Translation:

Glory be to God on high.

And in earth peace towards men of good will.

We praise thee.

We bless thee.

We worship thee.

We glorify thee.

We give thanks to thee for thy great glory.

O Lord God, heavenly King

God the Father almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right of the Father,
have mercy upon us.

For thou only art Holy. Thou only art the Lord.

Thou only art the

Most High.

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost,

art Most High in the glory of

God the Father. Amen

Sanctus and Benedictus Latin Translations:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and
earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Holy, holy, holy, holy.

Agnus Dei Latin Translation:

Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
In Thy mercy, grant them rest.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
In Thy mercy, grant them rest.

In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may
we seek for succor?

Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
In Thy mercy, grant them rest everlasting.

Take pity on us.

Finale (Dona Nobis Pacem) Latin Translation

Grant us peace, peace.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world

There will be a brief intermission.

MUSIC FROM ACROSS AFRICA GMU UNIVERSITY SINGERS/SYC CONCERT CHORUS

Derick Etale, *conductor*

Kothbiro (1993)

by Ayub Ogada, 1956-2019
arr. Allison Girvan, b. 1967

Indigenous Dholuo Translation:

The rain is coming
Do you hear what I say?
The rain is on its way
Return our cattle home

Malaika (1971)

by Miriam Makeba, 1932–2008
arr. David Okuku Zalo, b. 1956

Swahili Translation:

Angel, I love you angel
and I, what should I do, your young friend
I am defeated by the bride price that I don't have
I would marry you, angel
I am defeated by the bride price that I don't have
I would marry you, angel

Little bird, I think of you little bird
Little bird, I think of you little bird
and I, what should I do, your young friend

The money (which I do not have) depresses my soul
the money (which I do not have) depresses my soul
and I, what should I do, your young friend

Audience Participation piece

Thixo Onothando

traditional Xhosa
arr. Michael Barrett

Translation:

God of love, I stand before thee
God of love,
give me love so I may testify about you.
Hossana above, hosanna in the highest.
God I am here today, hosanna.

CHOIR BIOGRAPHIES

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY CHOIRS

The Choral Department at George Mason University is represented by the University Singers and University Chorale under Dr. Lisa A. Billingham, the Director of Choral Activities. These ensembles are dedicated to the performance of a range of choral music including advanced vocal chamber music ranging from Renaissance to contemporary, an annual Broadway Showcase featuring the University Chorale and commissioned works. Past performances have included appearances from Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage to the famed Carnegie Hall in New York City. There are collaborations planned in the future with local choruses in the metropolitan area. The University Singers performed its first immersive concert experience on campus in the spring of 2024 with a featured faculty composition by Dr. Jesse Guessford and Jocelyn Hagen's *The Notebooks of Leonardo*. All choruses present a regular concert series and often collaborate with other George Mason University ensembles from the schools of Music, Dance, and Theater.

DR. LISA A. BILLINGHAM

Dr. Lisa Billingham is the Director of Choral Activities at George Mason University where she conducts the University Chorale and the University Singers and teaches choral conducting and Laban Movement Theory.

She has served as the advisor for the GMU student chapter of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). She is the Past-President for the Virginia State Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association and is a planning committee member for the Annual Voices United Conference hosted each summer on campus.

Dr. Billingham's research interests include the incorporation of Laban Movement Theory in conducting pedagogy and the choral rehearsal. She is a Certified Laban Movement Analyst from the Integrated Movement Studies Program at the University of Utah and incorporates that theory with her private conducting students.

Dr. Billingham is active as a clinician for conferences and choirs throughout the United States and Europe. She has presented for ACDA, VMEA, three Regional ACDA conferences and at the International Society for Music Education (ISME) Conference in Bologna, Italy and Porto Alegre Brazil. Her text *The Complete Conductors Guide to Laban Movement Theory* is available from GIA Publications.

Dr. Billingham holds a DMA in Choral Conducting from the University of Arizona, an MM in Choral Conducting from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and a BME in Choral Music Education from Indiana University (Bloomington). Her conducting mentors include Bruce Chamberlain, Eph Ehly, James Jordan, Maurice Skones, and Volker Hempfling.

NEW ENGLAND YOUTH ENSEMBLE OF WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

The New England Youth Ensemble of Washington Adventist University formed in 1969 by the late Dr. Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse, the NEYE is the resident orchestra of Washington Adventist University and has toured extensively throughout its history, performing to acclaim in major global venues. The NEYE continues in this tradition under the co-direction of Dr. Preston Hawes, and Dr. Brian Liu.

Through the Carnegie Scholars Program of the NEYE, select members of the ensemble augment their orchestral learning alongside world class performing members of the New England Symphonic Ensemble who mentor the Scholars through rehearsals and performances on stage at Carnegie Hall in NYC. Together the NESE and Scholars have performed at Carnegie Hall over 250 times, presenting world premiers of numerous contemporary compositions under the batons of world renowned directors such as John Rutter, Sherrill Milnes, Helmuth Rilling, and Jonathan Willcocks and a stunning array of globally recognized soloist. The Scholars Program remains the only of its kind within Adventist institutions.

DR. BRIAN J. LIU

Dr. Brian J. Liu holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Violin Performance from the Catholic University of America and a Master of Music in Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music. His principle professors include Mikhail Kopelman, Charles Castleman, Jody Gatwood, Christian Teal,

and Mark Reneau. He has performed with numerous orchestras, chamber groups, and has appeared as soloist with the East Tennessee Symphony Orchestra, SAU Symphony Orchestra, and the New England Youth Ensemble.

Dr. Liu serves as Assistant Professor of Music at Washington Adventist University. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he holds the position of Assistant Conductor of the New England Youth Ensemble and Director of the Community Music School. He is also Artistic Director of the Anna H. Wang Concert Series.

Liu has previously taught at Augusta State University and Keuka College. In addition to his teaching, he has previously held the position of Music Director of the East Tennessee Symphony Orchestra.

He is currently a board member of the Howard County Arts Council and a past board member of the Maryland State Music Teachers Association. He has been a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and the Maryland State Arts Council.

COLUMBIA COLLEGIATE CHORALE OF WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

The Columbia Collegiate Chorale of Washington Adventist University was established in 1994 by its former director, James Bingham, and draws its membership largely from the student body of Washington Adventist University. Incorporated within the chorale is a smaller select chamber choir, the ProMusica of Washington Adventist University, which was established in 1967 by the late Paul Hill, director of the famed Paul Hill Chorale. The choir maintains a heavy schedule of services and concerts, traveling extensively both nationally and internationally. It has appeared in numerous prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the National Gallery of Art, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC, as well as in other leading concert halls and cathedrals, both within the United States and abroad. Under the current leadership of Dr. Anwar Ottley, the choir continues the legacy and standard of excellence for which it has become known.

DR. ANWAR OTTLEY

Anwar Ottley is an Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Washington Adventist University, where he leads university choirs and teaches sacred music and musicianship. He also serves as Director of Worship at Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Maryland, overseeing worship services, ministry staff, and ensembles. A sought-after clinician, he has led clinics, festivals, and workshops on choral music and worship ministry.

A published arranger, his works have been performed at the American Choral Directors Association Conference, the Kennedy Center, and the Washington National Cathedral.

Dr. Ottley is a rehearsal conductor for the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers and has served with the Washington Master Chorale. His teachers include Jason Ferdinand, Stephen Zork, Thomas Colahan, Claudio Gonzalez, Timothy Sharp, and James Bingham.

He holds a Bachelor of Music from Washington Adventist University, a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Andrews University, and a Doctor of Worship Studies from Liberty University. Passionate about choral music, he also equips future musicians for worship ministry. He, his wife Sharlene, and their two sons reside in the Washington, D.C. area.

CONCERT CHORUS OF STRATHMORE YOUTH CHORUS

Strathmore Youth Chorus (formerly Strathmore Children's Chorus) is a choral music education program for children grades two through 12. We teach music literacy and bel canto vocal production in an ensemble context while fostering authentic creative expression, challenging growth, bringing joy, and contributing to the well-being of our choristers. As a Strathmore Education program, SYC provides children of all backgrounds excellence in choral artistry, promotes their self-expression, and offers them professional performance opportunities. Through our focus on training and education, SYC creates informed appreciation for and involvement in the arts, produces exemplary performing arts programs for diverse audiences, and develops choristers into "singing ambassadors." The Concert Chorus is SYC's top performing ensemble. In addition to the two annual SYC concerts, they add community events much like this collaborative concert.

DR. MICHAEL WU

Dr. Michael Wu is the Artistic Director of SYC, where he currently conducts their concert, tenor bass, treble, and touring ensembles. He has served as a guest conductor, adjudicator, presenter, organist and accompanist extensively in Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania. A composer and arranger (ASCAP), Michael is published by Boosey & Hawkes. He holds Artist-Teacher Certification from the Choral Music Experience and has completed OAKE Kodaly Music Education courses at Westminster Choir College. He is also a full-time faculty member at Landon School, Bethesda, Maryland and the Director of Music at Faith United Methodist Church.

Wu received his Doctor of Musical Arts at George Mason University, where he studied choral conducting with Dr. Stan Engebretson and Dr. Lisa A. Billingham. He also earned the Victoria N. Salmon scholarship to help write his dissertation on best practices among children's choruses in America. He has also conducted the University Chorale and taught undergraduate courses in person and on-line for Mason. He earned degrees in Organ Performance and Church Music from the Peabody Conservatory, and from Northwestern University. This native Washingtonian has toured with American choirs and given organ recitals throughout the United States and the United Kingdom. He is currently a Children's Choirs Repertoire and Resources Chair for the American Choral Directors Association (Maryland/DC Chapter).

DERICK ETALE

Derick Etale is a choral conductor and educator from Luanda, Western Kenya, currently based in Waco, Texas. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya, as well as a Master's degree in Church Music and Choral Conducting from Baylor University. While at Baylor, he performed with and conducted the Baylor Concert Choir and Baylor Men's Choir, in addition to serving as a section leader and choreographer. Derick is the founder and director of Angaza Choir, a community choir in Waco, TX that focuses on music from various African countries. He also serves as the music minister at Central Presbyterian Church in Woodway, TX.

CHOIR ROSTERS

STRATHMORE YOUTH CHORUS, CONCERT CHORUS

Directed by Michael Wu

Soprano 1

Kristian Carpenter
Maurie Anne Dieudonne
Melina Fotopoulos
Heidi Gohari*
Tiffany Lolley*
Molly McAlvanah
Annabelle Ni
Rinzin Phuntsokyi
Emery Que
Saloni Roy
Nicholas Sabran
Hana Sor
Carys Tan
Sofia Veshi*

Soprano 2

Sophie Baxter
Clara Brock
Danielle Cho
Mahi Celeste Dumas
Elizabeth Eyler
Tian Feng
Sam Ghosh-Coggins
Natalie Habib
Anna Ibrahim
Nilsa Johnson
Leah Mack
Isabella Reyes
Yuka Tanigawa
Kieran Tyan
Katelin Paige Velasquez
Juliana Zarate

Alto

Lauren Briggs*
Tianxi Chi
Ashley Davis
Camilla Fan*
Lillian Fischer
Sarah Foote
Athena He
Serena Huang
Hannah Hulley
Lauren Jain
Nahhila Keita
Katherine Mygatt
Leilani Nesson
Sophia Neufeld*
Isabella Patterson
Mia Payson*
Jake L. Pien
Harriet Ritchie
Tegan Royster
Keane Russell
Palen Russell
Abigail Scouler
Henry Shenefield
Isabella Tabares*

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Directed by Lisa Billingham

Soprano

Kaylee Cobb
Annie French

Grace Fullinwider
Alondra Gutierrez-Rivera
Julia Messner
Willow Morrison
Pragyaa Singh
Bronwyn Weikert^

Alto

Grace Fullinwider
Lucia Ku
Ash Mattos
Ruth Osaro
Madelyn Taxis

Tenor

Chakeal Gibson
Conor Kelly
Wei-Gin Lee
James Smith III
Roberto Solito-Vasquez

Bass

Win Asamoah
Samuel Flamenco^
Chris Hewitt
Samuel B. Kim
Reed League
Andy Lovelace
Daniel Olenick
Ernesto Servin-Molina
Joshua Slutsky

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY CHORALE

Directed by Lisa Billingham

Soprano

Kylie Andrews
Lena Browne
Erin Davis
Jamaya Edwards
Mary Elder
Serena Jelwan
Emily Maes
Ellen Moyle
Katie Murchison
Taylor Sexton
Alyssa Sherman
Tayla Springer
Anna Stock
Emily Williams
Ava Willis

Alto

Rebecca Ascencio- Flores
Miriam Bijoy
Karelle Maxine De Asis
Selma Derbali
Kezia Francis
Grace Fullinwider
Brogan Graham
Leah McMurry
Madelyn Taxis
Allison Thoma
Jillian Zaepfel

Tenor

Matthew Boulton
Mikhail Danilyan
Lincoln Hop
James Smith III
Matthew Thomas

Bass

Connor Brunson
Dylan Garcia
Angraj Singh
Ian Skolarus
Ethan Yearwood

COLUMBIA COLLEGIATE CHORALE OF WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Directed by Anwar Ottley

Soprano

Angelisa Andrade
Elibeth Benton Gonzalez
Janelle Bryant
Luz Camila Castro
Isabelle Cipriano
Daniela Cruz
Carissa Desjardins
Catusha Desjardins
Ife Henry
Bethany Krause
Charis McRoy
Blessey Napold
Desca Samuel
Camilly Soares
Angelina Wong

Alto

Scout Calderon
Davya Devadass
Rachel Hampton
Marcela Jones-Moreno
Hedvig Lunderquist
Faith Mann
Kelly Ramirez
Scarlen Reyes
Andrea Rinza

Tenor

Daniel Amfo
Cedric Ernst Boyardi
Daniele Oduro Kye Boahen
Richard Macado
Melquisedec Merchan
Anwar Ottley
Andrea Salva
Kyle Swift
Xuan Tilghman-Phillips

Bass

Ali Bryan
Sean Charles Pierre
Josue Desjardins
Samuel Fernandez
Lysle Follette
Christian Rose
Gopi Sunkara

NEW ENGLAND YOUTH ENSEMBLE OF WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Directed by Brian J. Liu

Violin 1

Gabriela Apola
Veronica Anzola
Alexei Elliott
Rachel Helm
Rachel Choi

Olivia Ren
Joanna Choi
Brian Liu

Violin 2

Alejandra Anzola
Nina Staniszewska
Juanita Cabrales
Tatenda Chakanaka
Niamh Sheridan
Renée Battle Brooks
Alex Marte
Meisber Rojas

Viola

Angel Contreras
Nikita Elliott
Nikki Ponticelli
Kristin Gomez
Ashley Santore
Jane Lee

Cello

Soffia Yatsyshyna
Ana Girarte
Mike Schmitz
Ricardo Flores
David Selinsky
Jonathan Velsey

String Bass

Daphne Henderson
Wendy Hellman
Shawn Alger

Flute

Shannon Smith
Carol Herder
Rhandi Stanislas

Oboe

Daniel Rodriguez
Luis Gonzales

Clarinet

Rebecca Ascanio
Joseph Shin

Bassoon

Cheryl Nkeba
Nancy Switkes

French Horn

Sam Fernandes
Sarah Soisson

Trumpet

Oliver Gonzalez
Sophia Schroedell
Jonathan Rova

Percussion

Cata Steihm
Oscar Rinza
Asiel Hetsberger

Harp

Shannon Smith

Key

* notates SYC Singing
Ambassador

^ notates GMU Soloist