



Presents

A WORLD OF CELEBRATION

Friday, December 6, 2024, 7:30pm



WELCOME

Welcome to tonight's concert! This program brings together holiday music from across the globe, celebrating diverse traditions and shared themes of hope, light, and joy. Through an array of carols, folk songs, and beloved seasonal pieces, our choristers invite you to join in the spirit of connection and unity that resonates through music from around the world.

CONCERT PROGRAM

COMBINED CHOIRS

“Magnify the Light” (2024), Joshua Fishbein, b. 1984

Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland, where SYC Artistic Director Michael Wu has taught full-time for 31 years, commissioned this work from award-winning composer and SYC parent Dr. Joshua Fishbein. Dr. Fishbein focused on light—literal in menorah candles, figurative in the hope for a future guided by truth, justice, and peace. The song's text includes quotes from Aaron David Gordon, Emma Lazarus, and Walt Whitman.

PREPARATORY CHORUS

“Frosty Winter Snow” (2010), Russian folk song, English words and arrangement by Audrey Snyder, b. 1953

A Russian folk song that celebrates the joy of the first snowfall, alternating between lyrics about the beauty of snow and playful “la la la's.” In the second half, voices share the melody, blending excitement and wonder until the joyful finale, “We love the snow!”

“Bashana Haba'ah” (1969), Ehud Manor, 1941–2005, and Nurit Hirsch, b. 1942, arr. Henry Leck, b. 1946

Translation of the Hebrew: Next year we will sit on the porch and count migrating birds. Children on vacation will play catch between the house and the fields. You will see how good it will be next year.

Written in 1969 by Ehud Manor and Nurit Hirsch, this popular song of hope, translated as “next year,” envisions a brighter future. Our arrangement by Henry Leck takes a slower, reflective approach, inviting listeners to consider both the present and the promise of the future.

“Candy Covered Gingerbread House” (2018), Andy Beck, b. 1986

This jazz-style piece focuses on the European and North American tradition of gingerbread house-

making, where cookies, frosting, and candy create whimsical buildings and scenes. The melody captures the joy and creativity of this festive art.

APPRENTICE CHORUS

“Gatatumba” (2022), traditional Andalusian Villancico, arr. Ruth Morris Gray, b. 1961

Ruhi Deshpande, Elliot Lange, Kate Mygatt, percussion
Translation of the Spanish: Gatatumba, with tambourines and rattles. | Gatatumba, do not get into the pile of hay. | Gatatumba, play the whistle and rabel | Gatatumba tambourine and rattle.

This Andalusian Christmas carol mimics percussive sounds with “Gatatumba,” played on instruments like tambourines, rattles, and whistles. Voices alternate the rhythmic phrase with lyrics describing the lively holiday scene. A *rabel* is a bowed stringed instrument from Spain, a rustic folk-fiddle descended from the medieval *rebec*, and both *rabel* and *rebec* likely descended from the Arab *rabab*.

“Yuki,” traditional Japanese School Song (2007), arranged with additional words and music by Lois Brownsey and Marti Lunn Lantz, living
Ada Bjerga, Ana Maria Friguras, *percussion*

This Japanese children's song, arranged with a new English text, features sounds like “kon-kon” to mimic falling snow. The gentle piano and instrumentation evoke the soft beauty of snow blanketing the ground.

“You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch” (1966), Albert Hague, 1920–2001, arr. Jeff Funk, b. 1971
Cecily Davenport & Thomas Sandhaus, *speaking soloists*

Composed for the 1966 TV special *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, this humorous song lists the Grinch's comical flaws. Its popularity has made it a holiday favorite.

TOURING CHORUS

“Il Est Ne Le Divin Enfant” (1988),

French traditional carol, arr. John Rutter, b. 1945
Ella Liu, Carin Takamatsu, *flute*
Sophia Neufeld, *percussion*

Translation of the French (Edward Bliss Reed, 1930):
Chorus: He is born, the Heav’nly Child, | Oboes play;
set bagpipes sounding. | He is born, the Heav’nly
Child, | Let all sing His nativity. || ‘Tis four
thousand years and more, | Prophets have foretold
His coming. | ‘Tis four thousand years and more, |
Have we waited this happy hour. || *Chorus* || Ah,
how lovely, Ah, how fair, | What perfection is His
graces. | Ah, how lovely, Ah, how fair, | Child divine,
so gentle there. || *Chorus* || In a stable lodged is
He, | Straw is all He has for cradle. | In a stable
lodged is He, | Oh how great humility! || *Chorus* ||
Jesus Lord, O King with power, | Though a little babe
You come here. | Jesus Lord, O King with power, |
Rule o’er us from this glad hour. || *Chorus*

John Rutter’s arrangement of this traditional French carol uses instruments to embed the entire setting in the oboes and bagpipes described in the first verse; there is a respite from those sounds when the third verse describes the fairness and loveliness of the baby Jesus, and the first soprano section gets an inventive and lyrical “ah” to accompany this verse.”

“A Ma Lei A Ho” (2001), Tibetan folk song, arr. Yi Chen, b. 1953

Sung to nonsense syllables in this arrangement, the original text translates to: There are many stars in the sky, | Only the Plough is the brightest; | There are many friends and relatives, | Only the parents are the dearest.

This traditional Tibetan folk song reflects the joy and vibrancy of Tibetan rural life. Its rhythmic repetition and lively melody evoke a strong sense of unity and celebration.

TOURING AND TREBLE CHORUS

“Under the Stars, One Holy Night” (2007),

Jocelyn Hagen, b. 1980
Jessica Yao, Eileen Zhang, *flute*

Under the Stars captures the wonder and serenity of the night sky. Inspired by the vastness of the universe, Hagen was commissioned to write this to combine an adult women’s chorus with a children’s choir.

TREBLE CHORUS

“Gong Xi Gong Xi,” Chen Ge Xin, 1914–1961,
arr. Lily Lung Grant, living
Michelle Niu, Ethan Xia, *percussion*

Translation of the Chinese: Refrain: Congratulations to you! || In every street corner and small alley | from every person’s lips | when they see each other, the first thing they say | is congratulations! || *Refrain* || Winter has already come to an end. | What good news! | Warm spring wind | will soon wake up the earth. || *Refrain*

Gong Xi Gong Xi is one of the most well-known and popular Chinese New Year songs today, heard in Chinese communities around the world. It was written for the first Chinese New Year after the end of World War II.

“Light,” Lisa Loeb, b. 1968, and Cliff Goldmacher, b. 1968

Owen Burke, Mohamad Taha Bustillos,
Lela Corman, Arianna Dalvi, Naomi Fishbein,
Coralie Malloy, Sahar Maru-Jauhari, Anna Melchior,
Lucas Saelzer-Broxton, Christine Tenny,
Zara Wehri, *featured echo voices*

Originally recorded by pop sensation Lisa Loeb, this folk-infused ballad is a fresh take on the miracle of Hanukkah. Its rhythmic flow, pop-style harmonies, and guitar-inspired piano accompaniment bring a change of pace to traditional winter holiday music while still focusing on hope represented by light in a window.

“Santa Claus Is Comin’ to Town” (1934, 2022), J. Fred Coots, 1897–1985, arr. Kirby Shaw, b. 1942

Gabriel Ahrens, Roopa Bharania, Lela Corman,
DJ Deane-Ryan, Ruhi Deshpande, JJ Hansupichon,
Avery Lange, Elliot Lange, Ruby Mendenhall,
Sophia Patterson, Leela Ramaswamy, *featured singers*

When Eddie Cantor covered “Santa Claus Is Comin’ to Town” on his radio show in November 1934, it became a hit: within 24 hours, 500,000 copies of the sheet music and more than 30,000 records were sold. This Kirby Shaw arrangement highlights the song’s jazz roots, and it includes scat singing (improvisation on nonsense syllables) before coming to a grand finish.

TENOR BASS CHORUS

“Riu, Riu, Chiu” (c. 1530-1550, 2024), Mateo Fletch the elder, c. 1481–1553, arr. Michael Wu, b. 1967
Lily Fischer, Anna Ibrahim, Avery Lange, *percussion*

Translation of the Spanish: Refrain: Riu, riu, chiu, the shepherd by the river: | God protected our ewe from the wolf. || The furious wolf tried to bite her, but almighty God protected her well: | He made her in a such a way that she could know no sin, a virgin unstained by our first father’s fault. || This new-born Child is a mighty monarch, the patriarchal Christ clothed in flesh; | He redeemed us by making himself tiny: he who was infinite became finite. || *Refrain* || I saw a thousand young angels singing as they flew, making a thousand sounds, chanting to Basques: | “Glory be in the heavens, and peace on earth, now that Jesus is born!” || Now we have gained what we desired. Let us go together to present to him our gifts; | let each resign his will to the God who was willing to come down to earth to become man’s equal. || *Refrain*

This *villancico* (carol) is a vigorous imitation of peasant song from the Valencian court in the mid-1500s. “*Riu, Riu, Chiu*” was a traditional call of Spanish shepherds when guarding their flocks in a riverside fold. I arranged this for Tenor Bass Chorus this past summer.

“Christmas Dance of the Shepherds” (1927–1935), Zoltán Kodály, 1882–1967
Joshua Ibrahim, *flute*

The text is based on a Hungarian Christmas Carol. Tenor Bass Chorus sings the English translation created by Elisabeth M. Lockwood for the piece’s international publication in 1953.

CONCERT CHORUS

“Iraqi Peace Song” (2008), traditional Iraqi song, arr. for chorus by Lori Tennenhouse, b. 1956, based on solo vocal arrangement by Knut Reiersrud, b. 1961
Lauren Jain, Anna Ibrahim, Sophie Baxter, Heidi Gohari, Bella Reyes, Sofia Veshi, *soloists*
Alice Guo, *cello*
Zara Wehrli, *percussion*

Translation of Arabic: Regards to your eye, oh homeland. | A sweet flows liberal and respect. | Moreover, how are your hopes, how is the palm tree? | How are the decorations, how are the children?

“Iraqi Peace Song” features a lullaby first presented in its original form, then repeated in a Western version with English interpretations set to music by Knut Reiersrud. The lullaby’s collector and arranger agree that despite differences in scales, language, metaphors, and religion, lullabies reveal the shared essence of cultures around the world.

“S’vivon” (1985), traditional Hebrew, arr. Betty Berteaux, 1939–2014
Translation of Hebrew: Little dreydl, spin, spin, spin, | Hanukka is a festive time. | A joyous holiday for everyone, | For a great miracle happened there.

The song *S’vivon* depicts the Hanukkah dreidel, a small top with four sides. Each side of the dreidel contains one of the four Hebrew initials of the phrase, “(A) Great Miracle Happened There.” Betty Berteaux, whose work as the founding artistic director of the Children’s Chorus of Maryland helped usher in the civic children’s chorus movement in America in addition to bringing Kodály-pedagogy music education to a choral ensemble setting, arranged this traditional song to play with one-, two-, three-, and four-part harmony to text paint the idea of a four-sided dreidel.

COMBINED TENOR BASS AND CONCERT CHORUSES

“Desh” (2006), Indian Raga, arr. Ethan Sperry, b. 1971
Amara Shah, *Bharatanatyam dancer*

The term *raga* refers to the specific scale on which a piece of Indian music is based, with over 400 distinct ragas in the classical tradition. While ragas are typically accompanied by one or two percussionists and melodic instruments like violin, flute, or sitar, arranger Ethan Sperry aimed to recreate those traditional sounds here by using only human voices.

COMBINED CHOIRS

“Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!” (1945), Sammy Cahn, 1913–1993, and Jule Styne, 1905–1994, arr. Carl Strommen, b. 1939

This American holiday classic was written during a heat wave in Los Angeles, July 1945. Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne wanted to imagine cooler conditions, and when Vaughn Monroe released his recording of this just after Thanksgiving, it was a hit by Christmas.

STUDENTS AND STAFF

PREPARATORY CHORUS

Sophia Adams
Maria Bjerga
Eli Block
Helen Cahill
Natalie Chen
Juliette Christophe
Thomas Concannon
Shaina Daniels
Isabella Fox
Augustina Friguras
Arya Gaba
Olivia Garrett
Albie Gershowitz
Yasmeen Haas
Lillian Hausdorfer
Ethan Huang
Lydia Huang
Alexandra Ilie
Eleanor Johnson
Amelia Kim
Caroline Kleinow
Gracelynn Komba
Victoria Legarreta
Lucy Li
Timmy Li
Angelina Marano
Lilly Pascual
Franklyn Pepper
Talia Povcher
Fatima Serra
Margaret Tilghman
Onie Wang
Amie Wu
Sophie Xue
Stella Zhang
Viola Zhang

APPRENTICE CHORUS

Leila Ako-Adjei
Sofia Basogul
Ada Bjerga
Juliana Bonney
Asia Cauthen
Cecily A Davenport
Iona Fanning
Hugh Friel
Ana Maria Friguras
Jasveen Gosal
Jonas Hibbs
Evan Jepsen
Alex Jiang
Joni Kayne
Sofia Legarreta
Sophie Li
Audrey Liou
Sophia Lu
Leah McAlvanah
Mia Medina
Zina Moussa
Sophia Natelson
Michelle Niu
Anna Nylund
Ruhani Panse
Caleb Park
Anna Parker
Emma Rangachari
Isabel Ricka
Zoe Samulcek
Thomas Sandhaus
Cael Sindjou
Lydia Vasileff
Mila Velazquez
Sarkisova
Claire Williams
Emma Yang
Emily Zhang
Ella Zhang
Anna Zhi

TREBLE CHORUS

Gabriel Ahrens
Roopa Bharania
Valerie Brown
Owen Burke
Mohamad Taha Bustillos
Surina Chawla
Henry Corcoran
Lela Corman
Arianna Dalvi
Daniel Deane-Ryan
Ruhi Deshpande
Tara Djavan
Naomi Fishbein
Angela Gonzalez
Marveentee Hansupichon
Jungwon Kim
Elena Kim
Avery Lange
Elliot Lange
Ruby Lee
Angele Ling
Coralie Malloy
Sahar Maru-Jauhari
Anna Melchior
Ruby Mendenhall
Sophia Patterson
Leela Ramaswamy
Adrian Lucas Saelzer-
Broxton
Andrea Seale
Cora Soderberg
Christine Tenny
Zara Wehrli
Ethan Xia

CONCERT CHORUS

Sophie Baxter
Lauren Briggs
Clara Brock
Kristian Carpenter
Tianxi Chi
Danielle Cho
Ashley Davis
Mahi Celeste Dumas
Elizabeth Eyler
Camilla Fan
Tian Feng
Lillian Fischer
Sarah Foote
Melina Fotopoulos
Sam Ghosh-Coggins
Heidi Gohari
Clara Jane Gomez
Natalie Habib
Athena He
Madeline Heath
Lily Heiser
Serena Huang
Hannah Hulley
Anna Ibrahim
Lauren Jain
Nahhila Keita
Tiffany Lolley
Molly McAlvanah
Katherine Mygatt
Sophia Neufeld
Annabelle Ni
Isabella Patterson
Mia Payson
Rinzin Phuntsokyi
Jake L. Pien
Emery Que
Isabella Reyes
Harriet Ritchie
Saloni Roy
Tegan Royster
Keane Russell
Palen Russell
Nicholas Sabran
Abigail Scouler
Henry Shenefield
Hana Sor

Isabella Tabares
Carys Tan
Kieran Tyan
Ruthiga Veerasingham
Katelin Paige Velasquez
Sofia Veshi
Juliana Zarate

TENOR BASS CHORUS

Eli Baranoff
Langston Cephas
Garrett Cypress
Lyn Davenport
Areg Louis Devoyans
Hunter Fotopoulos
Ian-Enzo Ngango
Cole Waybright
Skyler Xue

TOURING CHORUS

Roopa Bharania
Daniel Deane-Ryan
Tian Feng
Lillian Fischer
Heidi Gohari
Angela Gonzalez
Marveentee Hansupichon
Hannah Hulley
Isabella Patterson
Leela Ramaswamy
Tegan Royster
Abigail Scouler

SCC STAFF

Michael Wu, DMA, *Artistic Director; Treble, Concert, Tenor Bass, and Touring Chorus*
Ann Bartlow, *Collaborative Pianist, Preparatory, Apprentice, Treble, and Touring Chorus*
Yee Von Ng, DMA, *Principal Collaborative Pianist, Treble, Concert and Tenor Bass Chorus*
Carla Wardell, *Associate Director, Preparatory and Apprentice Chorus*
Lauren Campbell, *Managing Director*
Suzanne Bagheri, *Administration and Singer Services Manager*
Rachel Borzuch, *Production Specialist*

GUEST ARTISTS

Ella Liu, *MCYO flautist*
Carin Takamatsu, *MCYO flautist*
Jessica Yao, *MCYO flautist*
Eileen Zhang, *MCYO flautist*
Joshua Ibrahim, *MCYO flautist*
Alice Guo, *MCYO cellist*
Amara Shah, *Bharatanatyam dancer*

STRATHMORE MUSIC CENTER BIRTHDAY BASH

*A **FREE** day of fun for our community!*

Saturday, February 8

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE MUSIC CENTER

You're invited to our birthday party! Join us and our resident partners for a family-friendly celebration as the Music Center turns 20!

Enjoy an afternoon filled with:

- Kid-friendly concerts
- Art-making activities
- Music classes
- Puppetry
- Building tours
- And much more!

FEATURED PERFORMANCES:

Inez Barlatier & Justin Roberts

11:30am & 2:30pm

Kattam and His Tam-Tams

1pm & 4pm

Everything is free, but capacity is limited for each performance.

Get your tickets now!

STRATHMORE.ORG/BIRTHDAY



Justin Roberts & Inez Barlatier,
Kattam and His Tam-Tams by Maxence Bildeau

STRATHMORE.ORG

301.581.5100 | 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda

Love to Sing? Join us!

EDUCATION

STRATHMORE

Children's Chorus

MID-YEAR AUDITIONS

Monday, December 9

**AUDITION REGISTRATION
IS NOW OPEN FOR THE
SPRING 2025 SEMESTER.**

The Strathmore Children's Chorus (SCC) provides pre-professional choral experience to students entering grades 2–12. With six performance ensembles, SCC promotes self-expression and engages youth in uplifting music-making.

*Scholarships available
for qualifying students.*



STRATHMORE.ORG/SCC | 301.581.5237