

2023 Central Manitoba Youth Choir

# Concert Program

<i>Nipîy (Water Song)</i>	Sherryl Sewepagaham 
<i>Art Thou Troubled?</i>	George Frideric Handel
<i>Le Train d'hiver</i>	Marie-Claire Saindon 
<i>Tshotsholoza</i>	arr. Jeffery L. Ames
<i>The Battle of Jericho</i>	arr. Moses Hogan
<i>Rejoice</i>	Jeffery L. Ames
<i>Ave verum corpus</i>	William Byrd
<i>God be in my Head</i>	Andrew Balfour 
<i>The Seal Lullaby</i>	Eric Whitacre
<i>Cé Grand Matin</i>	arr. Emile Desamours
<i>Sun on Water</i>	Hussein Janmohamed 
<i>Verleih' uns Frieden</i>	Felix Mendelssohn
<i>Be Love</i>	Scott Reimer 
<i>Sisi ni moja (We are one)</i>	Jacob Narverud
<i>Right Here</i>	Scott Reimer 
<i>Bridge Over Troubled Water</i>	arr. Kirby Shaw
<i>Nothing Gold Can Stay</i>	Stephanie Martin 

 *Canadian composer*

Thank you for joining us today! We are thrilled to share these stories with you through the wonderful, collaborative art of choral music, and we hope that their lyrics and melodies resonate with you. The overall intent of the program is to share a variety of voices across eras and cultures on the themes of perseverance, peace, love, and belonging.



Our second set uses trains and trumpets to tie the weary troubles around us to our ability to overcome them, as well as the joy that follows in the end.

**Le Train d'hiver** is a song of a rumbling train flying down a winter-scorned track. As bleak as the scene may be, there is a persistence in this French text that emboldens us. This is followed by **Tshotsholoza**, a piece with Zulu and Ndebele text that spurs us onward through the challenges of life.

*Le Train d'hiver*

*(Le Train d'hiver continued)*

*The billowing train whistles  
through winter  
At a furious rhythm, burning coal  
Smoke stacked, wagons rocking  
As an iron iceberg, it plunges  
through the cold.*

*As it slices the endless spread  
The convoy contrasts with the  
white countryside  
Protesting, it stretches away  
Into the lost season.*

*Towing this chasing load  
The locomotive, battling, pressing on  
Tearing straight ahead on snowy tracks  
Iron furies buried beneath ice.*

*Tshotsholoza  
  
Shosholoza  
You are moving fast on those mountains  
The train is coming out of South Africa*

*And from afar echoes a muffled roar  
On these endless tracks,  
in this frozen landscape  
In the dead of winter  
And the chill of the wind.*

*You are running away on those mountains  
The train is coming out of South Africa*

This brings us to **The Battle of Jericho** which is a great obstacle in itself for the Israelites on their way to entering the Promised Land. This melody is a Traditional Spiritual from the African-American community during the time of slavery in the Southern States. Spirituals usually carried a sense of hope in the minds and hearts of slaves, often providing them with the steely resolve to keep working on the fields at an acceptable pace while maintaining the belief in a better life to come, whether that be fleeing north or passing on to the next life. While the melody would likely have been originally sung in a call and response style as a *field shout*, this concert arrangement was set by one of the all-time greatest composers of this musical genre, Moses Hogan.

**Rejoice** is a piece from the *gospel* tradition and is a loose setting of text from Psalms 34, 47, and 100, and Philippians 4. While Spirituals generally use biblical texts from the

Old Testament and would have been sung unaccompanied, Gospels generally use New Testament texts and are accompanied by keyboards and organs, electric guitars, and drums. This tradition comes out of the churches of the Southern States throughout the early-mid 20th century and featured elements that grew out of the blues, much like early rock & roll and jazz idioms. With this piece, “the battle is done and the victory is won.”

### The Battle of Jericho

(Rejoice! continued)

Joshua fit the battle of Jericho,  
And the walls come tumbalin' down.

Sing praises to the Lord, our God,  
There is power in the name of the Lord.  
He will see you through it all,  
Just have faith; He will answer your call.

Talk about your kings of Gideon,  
Talk about your men of Saul,  
There's none like good ol' Joshua,  
At the battle of Jericho.

Come bless the Lord with all of your heart,  
And forever sing His praise.  
Enter into His gates with singing  
and rejoicing.  
And into His courts with praise.

Right up to the walls of Jericho,  
He marched with spear in hand,  
Go blow that ram horn, Joshua cried,  
Cause the battle am in my hand.

O magnify the Lord with me.  
And let us exalt His name together.  
We are His people  
and the sheep of His pasture.  
Be thankful unto Him and bless His name.

Then the lamb, ram, sheep horns  
Begin to blow,  
And the trumpet begins to sound,  
Joshua commanded the children to shout  
And the walls come a tumbalin' down.

So let's give Him praise.  
Clap your hands today.  
Let us rejoice and sing out His praises,  
Rejoice!

Rejoice

O clap your hands, all ye people,  
Shout unto God with a voice of triumph,  
For the battle has just begun;  
But the victory is already won!  
Raise up a song and sing out his praises,

For the battle is done;  
and the victory is won!  
O clap your hands, all ye people,  
Shout unto God with a voice of triumph!  
O taste and see that the Lord is good,  
Be ye thankful and bless His holy name!

Rejoice!

Rejoice!

Our next set features a local composer and some of his roots, and it also calls us to consider our inner being and what we focus our energy and time on.

**Ave verum corpus** is a motet composed for the feast of Corpus Christi. Composer William Byrd lived during the time of King Henry VIII's English Reformation which followed on the tail of Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation in Germany. During this time, it was forbidden to compose or perform music set in Latin but Byrd continued to set music in Latin through his later years: music that most likely would have been sung in secret at masses held in private residences. This particular motet uses counterpoint with instances of imitative polyphony that is common to the late Renaissance period. Listen for the cascading calls for mercy ("miserere mei") from the various voices in the final section.

**God be in my Head** was one of the very first pieces composed by Winnipegger, Andrew Balfour, in the late '90s. This well-known piece of text is from the *Sarum Primer* of England and, like Byrd, originates from the 1500s. As a young Cree boy, Balfour was part of the "Sixties Scoop" and subsequently grew up in the men-and-boys-choir tradition at All Saints Anglican Church in central Winnipeg, an experience he values at least in part because of his deep love for choral music that was fostered there. In this motet, Balfour's unique "sound" is already evident through his use of suspended and cluster chords, but it also echoes the modal harmonies of the Renaissance composers whose music he grew up singing.

Ave verum corpus

Ave verum corpus, natum de Maria virgine, Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine: Cujus latus perforatum, unda fluxit sanguine. Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine: O Dulcis, O pie, O Jesu fili Mariae, Miserere mei. Amen.	<i>Hail true body, born of the Virgin Mary. Truly suffering,     was sacrificed on the cross for all From whose pierced side flowed blood, Be a foretaste in the final judgment. O sweet, O merciful, Jesus, Son of Mary     Have mercy on me. Amen.</i>
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God be in my Head

God be in my head, and in my understanding,  
    God be in mine eyes, and in my looking,  
        God be in my mouth, and in my speaking,  
            God be in my heart, and in my thinking,  
                God be at my end, and at my departing.

The rest of the program carries us through a worldly darkness to one of peace, love, and belonging.

Eric Whitacre's **The Seal Lullaby** sings of the night behind us and the peace at which we might sleep.

Oh, hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us  
And black are the waters that sparkled so green  
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us  
At rest in the hollows that rustle between

Where billow meets billow, then soft be thy pillow  
Oh weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease  
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee  
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas

Asleep in the arms  
Of the slow swinging seas

With the night behind us, **Cé Grand Matin** speaks of a beautiful and lively morning and calls us all in Creole to "get up and see the sun rising!"

*Get up! Come out!  
Children, wake up and let us all go out to see the sun arise!  
It's early morn, see the morning dew,  
The day begins, come see!*

*On such a lively morning, let's gather in the round,  
And let's all sing and dance, and let's all spin and leap and bound!*

And now we watch the **Sun on Water**, rising in the sky. Now from Port Moody, BC, Hussein Janmohamed is an Ismaili-Muslim of South Asian ancestry who was born a fourth-generation Kenyan and grew up in Alberta. This piece that he composed in 2015 combines traditional Hindu and Indic Ismaili text with traditional biblical text from Psalm 130 in Latin in hopes that we might experience harmony in this world despite our differences. Listen for the individual prayers of the basses represent the depths ("de profundis") as the upper voices slowly ascend as a prayer to God.

Surya  
Nayno se nayn milavo, mere Saheb.

*Sun, Supreme Light,  
Let me eye meet with yours, my Lord/Beloved*

De profundis clamavi ad te Domine,  
Domine exaudi vocem meam.

*Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord  
Lord, hear my voice.*

**Verleih' uns Frieden** is an echoing call for peace written in 1831 by Felix Mendelssohn, who would have known of various Uprisings and Revolutions around that time and with the Napoleonic Wars having occurred in his childhood years. The text was written by Martin Luther and is a paraphrase of traditional Catholic prayer, Da pacem Domine.

Verleih' uns frieden gnädiglich, Herr Gott! Zu unsern zeiten Es ist doch ja kein ander nicht, Der für uns könnte streiten, Denn du unser Gott alleine.	<i>Graciously grant us peace Lord God, in our time; there is no one else who could fight for us except you alone, our God.</i>
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In pursuing peace, it is vital to embody love. I wrote **Be Love** in the early days of the recent pandemic, May 2020, because I foresaw turmoil and fighting among families, friends, communities, and nations. My wish was to remind all of us what love looks like, according to the apostle, Paul, in his letter to the church in Corinth.

Be patient, be kind, do not envy or boast, nor have pride,  
Be humble, be content, be faithful in how you abide.  
Be honouring and honourable, be generous of spirit and mind,  
Be patient, be kind, be love.  
Always protect, always trust, always persevere, always hope.  
Be love, never fail.  
Be patient, be kind, be rejoicing in all that is true,  
Be patient, be kind, be love!

With peace and love, **Sisi ni moja (We are one)**. This Swahili phrase rallies us around the idea of finding common ground with your neighbours.

We all laugh, we all cry, we all feel hunger, we all feel pain,  
We all love, we all hate, we all hope, and we all dream.  
We are one world, one people. And we all breathe the same.  
A tribe of many languages, a group of many heartaches,  
Fighting for peace among the land.

We all want, we all need, we all seek passion, we all seek joy.  
We all bruise, we all scar, we all fail, but learn to thrive.  
We are one world, one people. And we all breathe the same.  
In the darkness of the night and in the glory of the morning,  
We walk along the path and find our way.

Now we stand here together and lift our hearts in song,  
To the rhythm of this moment in our lives;  
Heya, heya, sisi ni moja! Heya, heya, we are one!

This idea of belonging among humanity gains focus within our communities in **Right Here**, a song I wrote in 2019. Here was my dedication at the time:

*“This song is dedicated to all those who are struggling to find their place in the world.*

*Even those for whom life is pretty simple and enjoyable will experience difficulties from time to time. Getting through our toughest times usually involves a group of supportive, encouraging people who don’t give up on us. The value of community is vast and our sense of belonging is what will keep the flicker of hope burning thorough our darkest hours.”*

...

You don’t need to be just like me for us to agree,  
That you are worth more than gold,  
And that you should be told,  
You belong.

To put these ideas into action, we will close with the well-known Simon & Garfunkel tune, **Bridge Over Troubled Water**. When you’re down and out, weary, feeling small, I will be on your side, I’ll lay me down, I’ll be your friend.

Our final piece of the concert is a setting of the famous 100 year old poem from Robert Frost, **Nothing Gold Can Stay**. This from composer, Stephanie Martin’s program notes:

“[This] Robert Frost poem reflects on the ephemeral nature of existence, the consequences of decision-making, and the tug of our dream world against the real world of responsibilities. An over-arching theme is time: time that decays all that is precious, time that we cannot recover or re-live, and time that passes too quickly, even as we recognize the fleeting beauty surrounding us.”

It brings about the question: what *does* last if not gold? As the old rhyme states, “all things shall perish under the sky. Music alone shall live, never to die.” What is the music that you live your life by?