

Vox Grata

WOMEN'S CHOIR

Presents

“When Music Sounds”

Jeanette MacCallum and Susan Kelly, Conductors
John Semingson, Pianist

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Thursday, May 9, 2019

Second Presbyterian Church
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Free will offering to benefit The New Beginnings Center

When Music Sounds

Please silence all cell phones and pagers for the duration of the program.

Music Stirs Us

When Music Sounds

Daniel Kallman

Music Elevates Us

Be Like the Bird

Abbie Betinis

Music Expresses Joy

Jubilate Deo

Marie Winget and Maria Conti, violin
Alan Fey and Frank Kirchner, percussion

Levente Gyöngyösi

Music Consoles Us

Solitude

Stephen Smith

Music Transports Us

An Die Musik

Schubert/Courtney

Music Empowers Us

Sih'r Khalaq

Alan Fey, percussion

Jim Papoulis

Music Inspires Us

Vide Cantas Credas

Emily Beavers and Erica Scaramuzza, soloists

Zebulon M. Highben

Music Soothes Us

The Singing Place

Joan Szymko

Music Awakens Us

O Music

Emily Nelson, cello

David Brunner

Finale

How Can I Keep from Singing?

arr. Gwyneth Walker

Vox Grata Women's Choir

Soprano 1

Hannah Baisley
Catherine Birdsong Broyles
Brittany Carnegis
Anne Louise Jones
Dina Mañalac
Diana Neely
Leigh Sutherland
Sharon Warfield

Soprano 2

Jan Allison
Emily Beavers
Katy Burrows
Amanda Cormier
Amanda Craft
Susan Kelly
Anne Reeve-Osborne
Jenna Payne
Mareike Sattler
Erica Scaramuzza
Haley Smith
Elizabeth Stroud

Alto 1

Annabelle Absar
Jennifer Adam
Julie Birdsong
Devin Bradbury
Kelly Christie
Jane-Coleman Cottone
Amy Kadish
Jane Kirchner
Suzie Lane
Mary Louise McCullough
Janet Salyer
Rosie Smith
Krysta Waldrop

Alto 2

Sara Chang
Sylvia Leins
Jeanette MacCallum
Linda McFadyen-Ketchum
Dory Miller
Bridget Simpson
Nancy Williams-Nettles

Jeanette MacCallum is the Director of Music Ministries at Second Presbyterian Church in Nashville, TN and founder and Artistic Director of *Vox Grata*. She previously served as an Adjunct Professor in music theory and history at Belmont and Lipscomb Universities. In addition, she served as the Director of Choral Activities at Saint Cecilia Academy in Nashville, TN, from 2002 to 2012, where she conducted various ensembles and taught AP Music Theory. During her tenure at Saint Cecilia, the Advanced Choir received superior ratings at all regional and state adjudication festivals in which it participated. In addition, the St. Cecilia Advanced Choir performed at ACDA and TMEA state conferences. Mrs. MacCallum led the St. Cecilia Choir on performance tours to Carnegie Hall, Canada and Italy. In 2007, the Saint Cecilia Choir performed by invitation at the *Ospedale della Pietà* and the *Ospedale dei Derelitti* in Venice. Her students earned positions in numerous All-State and ACDA Honor Choirs.

Reared in Princeton, New Jersey, Mrs. MacCallum's passion for choral music began as a member of the distinguished Princeton High School Choir. She received her musical education at the Eastman School of Music and Belmont University, and received the Master of Church Music degree from Belmont. A frequent adjudicator and clinician, Mrs. MacCallum has directed choirs at the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University, as well as at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Nashville, TN. She is the President of Tennessee ACDA and has served as the Tennessee Chair for Women's Choir Repertoire and Standards. Mrs. MacCallum is the Past President and Treasurer of the Middle Tennessee Vocal Association. She is also the author of "*The Sacred Choral Works of the Venetian Ospedali*," published by GIA in "*Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success*," Debra Spurgeon, Editor and Compiler (2012).

Dr. Susan Kelly serves as Assistant Professor of Music/Choral Director at Tennessee State University. She directs the University Choir and Meistersingers, teaches classes in Music Education and Conducting, teaches Applied Voice, and serves as advisor for Club V, the student vegan organization. Aside from her work at TSU, Susan is the Associate Conductor for the Vox Grata Women's Choir, and serves as a soprano section leader at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Additionally, she sings soprano with the Tennessee Chamber Chorus, a professional choir based in East Tennessee and The Cecilia Ensemble, a professional choir based in Augusta, Georgia.

Before coming to Tennessee State University, Dr. Kelly taught at Abington Heights High School in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, where she directed the 120-voice Concert Choir, the Women's Ensemble, the Men's Ensemble, and served as music director for the musical. She was also the director of the Cantare Choir of The Choral Society of Northeast Pennsylvania, a community high school women's ensemble that performed at both state ACDA and PMEA conferences. She also served as the Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit, and sang soprano with The Lyric Consort, an eight-voice vocal ensemble.

Susan holds undergraduate degrees in Music Education and English Education from Wilkes University, a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance and Choral Conducting from Temple University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from the University of South Carolina. Prior to her move to TSU, Susan was active in both PMEA, in which she served as Choral Coordinator of District 9, and ACDA, in which she served as President-Elect Designate of ACDA-PA. Currently she is serving as the President-Elect for ACDA-TN.

Dr. John W. Semingson serves as Accompanist for Vox Grata Women's Choir. Since 2001, John has served as the Director of Music Ministries for Westminster Presbyterian Church – Nashville, where he oversees a multi-faceted music program of nine choirs involving over 200 children, youth, and adults. John holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting, the Master of Church Music in both conducting and organ, and the Bachelor of Music in organ performance. He has conducted and/or served as an accompanist for church, community, and university choirs in Illinois, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Tennessee over the past 30 years.

Mission of Vox Grata

Vox Grata is comprised of joyful women who, out of gratitude for the fullness of their own lives, possess a desire to sing together for the benefit of others. The group performs repertoire that expresses a uniquely feminine spirit, especially works that promote the best interests of women in society. Vox Grata sings concert programs that directly benefit the needs of women in the Nashville community. Vox Grata is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.

To be added to our mailing list, for information about supporting Vox Grata or to find out about auditions and upcoming events, please visit our website at www.voxgrata.com, or visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/VoxGrata>.

100% of the contributions received at this program will benefit New Beginnings Center whose programs are designed to improve the health, strength and wellness of women regardless of their ability to pay. New Beginnings gives qualified low-income women the tangible skills, training and empowerment needed to assist them in improving their health, futures, capabilities and quality of life. All donations to New Beginnings are tax-deductible.

Special Thanks

Vox Grata Board of Directors – Jan Allison, St. Clair Blue, Karen Weir, Sylvia Leins, Susan Hassell, Laurie Cooper, Jennie Renwick, Jane Ferrell, Vicky Tarleton, Teresa Davidson, Jeanette MacCallum, Kelly Christie and Carla Lovell

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Rev. Dr. Mary Louise McCullough, Pastor, **Second Presbyterian Church**

Dr. John Semingson, Director of Music Ministries, **Westminster Presbyterian Church**

Texts and Translations

When Music Sounds (text by Walter de la Mare)

When music sounds, gone is the earth I know.
And all her lovely things even lovelier grow;
Her flowers in vision flame, her forest trees
lift burdened branches, stilled with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the water rise
naiads whose beauty dims my waking eyes,
rapt in strange dreams burns each enchanted face,
with solemn echoing stirs their dwelling-place.

When music sounds, all that I was I am
ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came;
and from Time's woods break into distant song
the swift-winged hours, as I hasten along.

Be Like the Bird (text by Victor Hugo)

Be like the bird that, pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight,
feels them give way beneath her, and sings knowing she hath wings.

Jubilate Deo (from Psalm 66)

(translated from Latin)

Shout for joy to God, all the earth!
Sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious.

Solitude (text by Lorna Crozier)

Sometimes, the dark's so dark nothing can move through it,
even the geese who just an hour ago charcoaled their journey from star to star.
You love the lake at night, because water keeps its distance and yet carries sound,
crackled and clear from the farthest shore.
You said nothing moves through this dark,
but music does,
and voices,
and you go on.

An Die Musik (text by Franz von Schober)

(translated from German)

You, beloved Art, in so many grey hours,
when life's mad tumult wraps around me,
have kindled warm love in my heart
and transported me into a better world!
How often a flowing sigh from your harp,
a sweet, divine harmony from you
unlocked the heaven of better times to me.
You, beloved Art, I thank you for it!

Sih'r Khalaq (text by Jim Papoulis)

Creative magic;
Music inspires me.
Rhythm;
Music,
Inspiration.

Vide Cantas Credas (4th century text)

(translated from Latin)

See. Sing. Believe. Sing.

See that whatever you sing with your mouth, you believe in your heart,
and whatever you believe in your heart, your works affirm.

See. Sing. Believe. Sing.

The Singing Place (text by Lily A. Long)

Cold may lie the day,

And bare of grace;

At night I slip away

To the Singing Place.

A border of mist and doubt

Before the gate,

And the Dancing Stars grow still

As hushed I wait.

Then faint and far away

I catch the beat

In broken rhythm and rhyme

Of joyous feet,--

Lifting waves of sound

That will rise and swell

(If the prying eyes of thought

Break not the spell),

Rise and swell and retreat

And fall and flee,

As over the edge of sleep

They beckon me.

And I wait as the seaweed waits

For the lifting tide;

To ask would be to awake,--

To be denied.

I cloud my eyes in the mist

That veils the hem,--

And then with a rush I am past,--

I am Theirs, and of Them!

And the pulsing chant swells up

To touch the sky,

And the song is joy, is life,

And the song am I!

Over the edge of sleep

I bring but a trace

Of the chants that pulse and sweep

In the Singing Place.

O Music (text by Kahlil Gibran)

O music! In your depths we deposit our hearts and souls.

Thou hast taught us to see with our ears and hear with our hearts.

In your depths we deposit our hearts.

In your depths we deposit our souls.

Thou hast taught us how to see.

Thou hast taught us how to hear.

How Can I Keep from Singing? (Quaker hymn)

My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation.
I hear the real though distant song that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing.
It sounds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars, I hear the truth, it's living!
What though the darkness round me close, songs in the night it's giving!
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since I believe that love abides, how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble when they hear the bells of freedom ringing,
when friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell, in dungeon dark, our thoughts to them are winging.
When friends hold courage in their heart, how can I keep from singing?

Program Notes

When Music Sounds

Daniel Kallman

This piece is being jointly premiered this spring by both Vox Grata and by the Women's Choir of St. Mary's College, directed by Nancy Menk. Daniel Kallman is a Minnesota composer who writes in a variety of genres and ensembles, but who is especially gifted at setting texts and writing music for treble voices.

The piece was commissioned in memory of Eileen Hower, who served as a music education professor and the director of the women's ensemble at Bloomsburg University. Before she began teaching in college, Eileen was a highly-skilled and motivational middle-school teacher whose general music students would compose an opera each year and whose select choir was chosen as a demonstration choir at an ACDA National Conference. Eileen passed away at the age of 52 from cancer. She made such an impact on the faculty and students in her short time at Bloomsburg (as she did with everyone she met) that the choral department has commissioned a new choral work in her memory each year since her passing in 2012.

Be Like the Bird

Abbie Betinis

This five-part canon was composed in 2009, just after the composer completed a second round of cancer treatment. That year, it was included in her family's annual Christmas card, a tradition which began in 1922 by the composer's great-grandfather, Rev. Bates G. Burt and which was subsequently carried out by his son, Alfred Burt, composer of *Alfred Burt Christmas Carols*.

A graduate of St. Olaf College (B.A.) and the University of Minnesota (M.A.), Betinis lives in St. Paul, Minnesota where she is Adjunct Professor of Composition at Concordia University.

Jubilate Deo

Levente Gyöngyösi

Levente Gyöngyösi is a Romanian-born Hungarian composer. He moved to Hungary in 1989, when he was 14, one month before the Romanian Revolution. He received his musical training at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. Gyöngyösi has written an opera, four symphonies, and a number of choral works, many of them for women's voices.

Jubilate Deo is an absolutely raucous setting of this joyous text, with a fugal section as its centerpiece and a huge amount of rhythmic and melodic interplay between four vocal parts, two violin parts, and percussion.

Solitude

Stephen Smith

Composed for Elektra Women's Choir (Vancouver, BC), this piece takes its text from Canadian poet Lorna Crozier's poem of the same name. The title relates to the experience of solitude by a lake at night where one hears sounds carried on the water from the opposite shore. On each side of this scene, the poem describes a state of depression in which one is overcome by hopelessness and inertia. In its closing lines, the poem suggests that the sound of voices and music may have the power to reach someone in the grip of such emotion, awakening the will to "move through the dark" and to go on with life.

Stephen Smith is the accompanist for Elektra and has composed a number of works for women's chorus.

An Die Musik

Franz Schubert

Franz Schubert has been called the “first lyric poet of music,” largely because of his prolific output of German lieder. He wrote hundreds of part songs and lieder, often setting music to the poetry of his closest friend, Franz von Schober. *An die Musik* is one of his most famous lieder and this transcription remains faithful to Schubert’s musical lyricism, encouraging *bel canto* style singing. The song expresses the importance of art in the poet’s life. Schubert imbued this song with a tender, almost reverent quality, making it perhaps the most beautiful thank-you note ever written. The resulting credo is a statement of faith in the wondrous power of music.

Sih’r Khalaq

Jim Papoulis

Sih’r Khalaq explores the world of Arabic rhythm, textures and style in the interest of global fusion. The piece is based upon a scale involving a flat second, often prevalent in music from Arab countries. The title translated *Creative Magic* evokes the kind of magic that exists in art—magic that transforms and grows, permeating the soul. It is a power that is felt but difficult to articulate—literally *creative magic*.

Jim Papoulis is a New York-based composer whose distinctive musical style combines contemporary sounds with musical traditions from around the globe.

Vide Cantas Credas

Zebulon M. Highben

This piece is a musical meditation on the relationship between singing and believing. The text is considered a blessing for musicians and is associated with the 4th Council of Carthage. The piece was originally composed for SATB chorus and premiered by the Chapel Choir of the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival in 2011.

The Singing Place

Joan Szymko

Joan Szymko (born 1957) is a composer and choral conductor in the Pacific Northwest. Her choral music is characterized by abundant lyricism, rhythmic intensity and vigorous attention to text. Especially noteworthy is her significant contribution to the body of literature for women’s voices.

Her setting of *The Singing Place* captures the rapture the poet feels as she is carried away on “lifting waves of sound.” Szymko says, “I wanted to create a feeling of being both “in time” and “out of time” – both “rhythmic” and “floating.” This conveys the place described in the poem that some call “between worlds” – between conscious and subconscious awareness and which the poet calls “The Singing Place.”

O Music

David L. Brunner

David L. Brunner is Director of Choral Activities at the University of Central Florida. In addition to composing, he is a frequent guest conductor of choral festivals, honors choirs and workshops.

His setting of *O Music* is highly expressive, characterized by broad, arching melodic lines to depict the profoundly personal feelings associated with music.

How Can I Keep from Singing?

Gwyneth Walker

This song is based on an American Quaker hymn dating back to the 1800s. References to the persecution of Friends may be heard in the lyrics. Yet, faith and courage prevail. This setting emphasizes the celebratory and life-affirming aspects of the song.

Gwyneth Walker is a prolific American composer with over 300 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, choir and solo voice. Her music is imbued with energy, beauty, reverence, drama and humor. She nurtures a special interest in dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting and movement.