

Vox Grata

WOMEN'S CHOIR

presents



Conducted by Jeanette MacCallum,
Susan Kelly and Ashley Vance
Delana Easley, Accompanist

To donate to Epic Girl, please visit <https://www.epicgirl.net/vox-grata-giving-page>

Meet **Stacia Freeman**, Founder and Executive Director of **Epic Girl** and the conductors and singers of **Vox Grata Women's Choir**, immediately following the virtual concert at 6:00 PM

<https://vanderbilt.zoom.us/j/94455107802?pwd=YVIObHk2V2grMFBiSExLeFR1Q3BwUT09>

Sing to Me of Home

Stars in Your Bones	Joan Szymko
Closer to Home	Dale Trumbore
The Lake Isle of Innisfree	Eleanor Daley
Mornings With You <i>Soloists: Susan Wood, Amy Finka, Angelica Dunsavage, Mareike Sattler Jane Kirchner, flute; Emily Bowland, clarinet; Jennifer Kummer, french horn</i>	Christina Whitten Thomas
Music in My Mother's House	Stotts/Moore
All the Way Home	Sarah Quartel
Homeward Bound <i>Brittany Smith, soloist</i>	Keen/Althouse
We Are Home <i>Alan Fey, percussion</i>	Jenni Brandon

Vox Grata Women's Choir

Sopranos

Jan Allison, Bailey Anderson, Allison Asarch, Hannah Baisley, Amy Finka, Susan Kelly,
Janice Kemp, Terry Maroney, Diana Neely, Anne Osborne, Sandra Shepherd,
Brittany Smith, Ashley Vance, Kelly Walsh, Susan Wood

Altos

Annabelle Absar, Sara Chang, Kelly Christie,
Angelica Dunsavage, Jane Kirchner, Suzie Lane, Sylvia Leins,
Jeanette MacCallum, Janet Salyer, Mareike Sattler, Rosie Smith

Vox Grata is grateful for our many friends and supporters who have sustained us, especially during the pandemic! You can become a *Friend of Vox Grata* by donating here: <https://voxgrata.com/donate/> or by mailing a check to Vox Grata Women's Choir, P.O. Box 159028, Nashville, TN, 37215.

Vox Grata is grateful to John Semingson and the staff and congregation of Westminster Presbyterian Church for providing rehearsal space for us each week!

Song Texts/Poetry Credits

Stars in Your Bones

by Alla Bozarth

The small plot of ground
on which you were born
cannot be expected
to stay forever the same.
Earth changes,
and home becomes different
places.
You took flesh
from clay
but the clay
did not come
from just one
place.
To feel alive,
to feel important, and safe,
know your own waters
and hills, but know
more.
You have stars in your bones
and oceans
in blood.
You have opposing
terrain in each eye;
you belong to the land
and sky of your first cry,
you belong to infinity.

Closer to Home

by Dale Trumbore

To the garden full of lavender,
the woods just over the fence,
the trickle of a river that's just past the dead end,
to the dog in the yard and the worn-out floors
and the toys packed away down the hall
it would've been easier not to come back at all.

And you're closer to home than you've ever been before,
leaving the garden, leaving the halls,
leaving the woods and the river and all.
You're closer to home than you've ever been before,
And you've never wanted to stay here more.

But the memories you made here
are only half the life you've lived,
and you have no choice. The woods and the garden
have given all they had to give,
and still you wonder if you'll ever learn
how to leave a place not knowing if you'll return.

To the garden full of lavender,
the woods just over the fence,
the trickle of a river that's just past the dead end –
it would have been easier not to come back this time,
to leave the woods, the garden, the river and all behind.

But you're closer to home than you've ever been before,
though it isn't the woods and it isn't the garden,
it isn't the house or the dog in the yard –
you're closer to home than you've ever been before
as you realize home isn't here,
you finally realize home isn't here anymore.

Now it's time to close the door
on a house where you had a garden, a river;
you couldn't have asked for better or more.
And maybe you'll return someday, somehow,
but it's time to go back to the life you're living now.

It's time to go home to a life you won't outgrow.
Leaving the garden, leaving the halls,
leaving the woods and the river and all,
it's time to go home, for finally you know
that home will be waiting for you,
home will follow wherever you go.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

by W. B. Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
and a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
and live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
there midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
and evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
while I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

Mornings With You
by Pam McAllister

Waking beside you, I am as grounded
as this morning's coffee beans,
as centered as our planet's rising sun,
as refreshed as the breeze that awakens
the landscape of blue curtain.
A cat purrs in the dawning of our arms, and night dreams scatter.

The alarm has missed its dramatic entry.
It tries to jar our day, but you slap it silent
and roll to kiss my swollen lips.
Our laughter drips into the room,
warm and golden like honey on toast.
When we rise, our slippered feet
pad through puddles of sunlight.

But the minutes of our lives, independent and bold,
are already spinning us apart.
At the door we kiss goodbye.

Then, I am lost for awhile,
a castaway
drifting
in the cold ocean
without land in sight.

I am a misplaced bookmark slipped
from a story I can't remember,
a page ripped
from the diary of my life.

Where was I?

Now I know how the moon feels in its listless wandering,
and why the lamb followed sweet Mary to school each day,
and what Orpheus knew in his desperate pursuit of Eurydice.
Outside, Brooklyn will awaken, and I
will find my way back into my life,
my little day,

now and then thinking of you.

Music in My Mother's House
by Stuart Stotts

There were wind chimes in the window, bells inside the clock,
an organ in the corner, tunes in the music box.

We sang while we were cooking, or working in the yard,
we sang although our lives were really hard.

There was music in my mother's house,
there was music all around,
there was music in my mother's house,
and my heart still feels full with the sound.

She taught us all piano, but my sister had the ear;
She could play the harmony to any tune she'd hear.
Now I don't have much talent, but I always loved to play,
and I guess I will until my dying day.

Those days come back so clearly, although I'm far away.
She gave me the kind of gift I love to give away.
And when my mother died, and she'd sung her last song,
we sat in the living room singing all night long.
Singing "la la la la la..."
Singing the front porch songs, singing the old torch songs,
singing the hymns to send her home.

All the Way Home
by Radcliffe Ladies' Choir

Sing to me comfort, sing to me home;
sing to me friendships I have known.
sing me a place where I belong;
joyful, with harmonies sing me

all the way home with a song in my heart.
All the way home;
brighten my path and carry me on,
all the way home.

There's a beautiful pow'r in what we bring;
there's strength in the glorious song we sing.
Easing all troubles, calming all fears;
joyful, with harmonies sing me...

Evening brings a shining star,
her ancient anthems from afar.
Silence below, her song in the sky;
joyful, with harmonies sing me...

Homeward Bound
by Marta Keen

In the quiet misty morning
when the moon has gone to bed,
when the sparrows stop their singing,
and the sky is clear and red;
when the summer's ceased its gleaming;
when the corn is past its prime;
when adventure's lost its meaning,
I'll be homeward bound in time.

Bind me not to the pasture;
chain me not to the plow;
set me free to find my calling
and I'll return to you somehow.

If you find it's me you're missing;
if you're hoping I'll return;
to your thoughts I'll soon be list'ning;
in the road I'll stop and turn.
Then the wind will set me racing
as my journey nears its end,
and the path I'll be retracing
when I'm homeward bound again.

We Are Home
by the women of Vox Femina, Los Angeles

We are
singing for the soul and songs our mothers taught us.
We are
dancing in between passion, love, and empathy.
We are
finding comfort in things
far more vast and eternal than us.

We are everything possible.

We are
impassioned, thoughtful, kind, and strong.
We are
woman, friend, chosen sisters.

We are
a kaleidoscope of women's voices,
offering serenity and comfort.

We are home,
a safe haven,
refuge from the outside world;
sanctuary.

We are home.

Vox Grata is grateful for operational and program support from:



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Save the date!

**Vox Grata celebrates its TENTH anniversary with
“You Belong to Infinity”
May 10 and May 12, 2022**

Program Notes

Stars in Your Bones

Joan Szymko

The opening chords and exuberant opening unison suggest the “big bang” – the singular explosion theorized by astronomers as the origin of our expanding universe. The piano ostinato that follows consists of a 5-note 16th-note pattern over a steady quarter-note 5/4 pulse, lending an unstable, fluctuating quality to the lyrics: “Earth changes...” As the underlying rhythm in the accompaniment settles, the lyrical quality of the setting takes hold, building toward a galvanizing, uplifting expression of “belonging.”

Closer to Home

Dale Trumbore

From the composer: “In Fall 2017, my parents sold my childhood home within a day of putting it up for sale. I barely had time to come visit one last time. Although I hadn't lived there in twelve years, this was a place that I still thought of as home, in the way that you can leave the place where your life actually is—in my case, Los Angeles—to go ‘home’ to New Jersey, and then, on the flight back to California, say once again that you're returning home. The person who bought this childhood home planned to tear it down and build another, bigger one in its place, and knowing that I'd never see the house again made it even harder to leave. I did go back one last time, and that experience was the inspiration for *Closer to Home*. The place described in the text is real; there really are two acres of woods ‘just over the fence,’ and there's a river two houses down.”

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

Eleanor Daley

Originally composed for Canada's St. Mary's Children's Choir, this gem is a deliciously languid, yet eloquent and noble setting of a poem by Irish poet William Butler Yeats. The poet, living in a city, is longing to live alone in a peaceful lakeside cabin, listening to the buzz of bees in his well-tended garden and the lapping of the lake on the shore, while admiring the glimmer of the lake at midnight and the purple glow at noon. Daley's music, opening in unison, and using choral harmony sparingly throughout, is nevertheless full of integrity and opportunity to find meaning and expression in each phrase. Pay close attention to the role of the piano, as there are many treasures here that mirror the words.

Mornings With You

Christina Whitten Thomas

Mornings With You is the first of a four-movement song cycle of the same name, set to the words of Brooklyn poet Pam McAllister. This opening movement is a melodramatic reflection on that moment when your love leaves for the day.

Christina Whitten Thomas is particularly committed to writing for the voice and is passionate about working with contemporary poets and original texts. Her setting of Naomi Shihad Nye's poem *Kindness* is a favorite of Vox Grata.

Music in My Mother's House

Stotts/J. David Moore

Music in My Mother's House is a song of thanks for the gift of music passed from parent to child. The piano accompaniment imitates a music box and includes a brief section in a ragtime style.

All the Way Home

Sarah Quartel

The text for *All the Way Home* was written and inspired by members of the Radcliffe Ladies' Choir as they reflected on their motto, “friendship through singing.” The lilting vocal lines are underpinned by a delicate piano part, and the opening performance instructions “contentedly rocking” describes the overall nature of the piece: peaceful, content, and easygoing.

Homeward Bound

Keen/Jay Althouse

In her own words, Ms. Keen describes the intentions behind this hauntingly beautiful work: “Finding your true calling in life; knowing that those who love you trust that you will return... I wrote this song for a loved one who was embarking upon a new phase of life's journey, to express the soul's yearning to grow and change. It was premiered by a Seattle Irish tenor, but soon after was beautifully arranged by Jay Althouse and published by Alfred Music. It has been performed by choirs of all ages throughout the English-speaking world and many Asian countries.”

We Are Home

Jenni Brandon

From the composer: “Vox Femina commissioned this piece for a particular concert that spoke of ‘home.’ I asked the director to have the women write me stories, poems, haikus, and anything that helped describe what ‘home’ meant to them in singing with the choir. What I got was an incredible collection of texts, from the heart, about their experiences and the joy that came from belonging to this singing community. I began to take phrases, words, and ideas from these texts and draw them together to create the text that is used in this piece. Although I wrote the final text, it is a compilation of the voices of these women. More universally, however, I believe that this piece reflects what it means to be part of a community – to share something important and to come ‘home.’”