

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents

Becoming

UCSA: University Chorus: Soprano/Alto Ensemble

UCTB: University Chorus: Tenor/Bass Ensemble

Treble Chamber Choir

University Chorus

Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *director*

Dr. W. Bryce Hayes, *director*

Elizabeth Williams, *collaborative pianist*

Linlin Uta, *collaborative pianist*

Thursday, October 30, 2025

7:30 pm

Concert Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission.

UCSA: University Chorus Soprano/Alto Ensemble

Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *director*

Elizabeth Williams, *collaborative pianist*

Lift Thine Eyes

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Forever is (Now)

Colin Cossi (b. 1999)

World Premiere

Tecolote (Song of the Little Owl)

Trad., arr. Victoria Abel-Sabo

Christina Santiago, *undergraduate conducting intern*

If the River Leaves Without Me

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Mya Garcia, Brigid Downs, Elizabeth Kugel, *soloists*

Lead With Love

Melanie DeMore (b. 1954)

Sarah Patunas, Gloria Cox, Erin Malloy,

Alejandra Velez Ocasio, *soloists*

The Climb

Jessie Alexander (b. 1976) and Jon Mabe (b. 1967)

Christina Santiago, *undergraduate conducting intern*

Swifter Than Flame

Elaine Hagenberg (b. 1979)

UCTB: University Chorus Tenor/Bass Ensemble

W. Bryce Hayes, *director*

Linlin Uta, collaborative pianist

Speak the Truth

Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980)

Wade in the Water/Motherless Child

Spirituals

Been in the Storm

Spiritual, arr. Humble & Rudo

Professor Michael Hadary, *baritone*

Unendliche Freude

Franz Schubert (1797-1829)

i carry your heart

David C. Dickau (b. 1953)

Fields of Gold

Sting, arr. Ethan Sperry

Ivan Godoy, *graduate conductor*

Colin Riley & Isaac Markow, *soloist*

- 15-minute intermission -

TCC: Treble Chamber Choir
W. Bryce Hayes, *director*
Elizabeth Williams, *collaborative pianist*

Noble and Glorious Women

Ave Generosa

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

Tota Pulchra Es, Op. 10

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

I had no time to Hate

Ellen Gilson Voth (b. 1972)

Leah Brown, *undergraduate conductor*

Flying

Rachel DeVore Fogarty (b. 1948)

Cady Litteral, *oboe*, Johnny Park, *violin*, Christopher Hall, *cello*

I'll Never Study

Paul David Thomas (b. 1981)

Yasmine Akoum, *soloist*

Bring Me Little Water, Silvy

Lead Belly, arr. Moira Smiley

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personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

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Program Notes

Lift Thine Eyes is a famous a cappella trio for women's voices from Felix Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*. It appears in Part II after the prophet Elijah has despaired and longs for death; the angels' music provides comfort and a sense of hope to the grieving prophet. The text paraphrases Psalm 121, which speaks of the Lord as a keeper who will not slumber; the angelic trio declares the message of Psalm 121 to look to the mountains for help that comes from the Lord, Maker of the heavens and earth.

UCSA is honored tonight to premiere **Forever is (Now)**, a fall 2025 composition by JMU DMA conductor and composer Colin Cossi. This work is based on the poem "Forever is Composed of Nows" by Emily Dickinson, which explores the nature of time, suggesting that eternity is not a separate time but is made up of an endless series of present moments. Cossi writes:...[this piece is a] musical reminder of the 'generous present' and our ability to experience the quantum field, no matter how many times we 'fall from grace.' Thank you, Colin, for this most beautiful gift.

Forever is composed of Nows —

'Tis not a different time, except for infiniteness and latitude of home.

From this, experienced here, remove the dates to these,

let months dissolve in further months, and years exhale in years.

Without certificate or pause or celebrated days,

as infinite our years would be as Anno Domini's.

A part of the publisher J.W. Pepper's *Spanish Lullaby Music for Young Singers Series*, composer/arranger Victoria Ebel-Sabo drew upon fond childhood memories when she chose to set this lovely Spanish lullaby. **Tecolote** (Song of the Little Owl) has a delightful lilting melody and a beautiful guitar-like piano part.

Using the metaphor of a river, Reena Esmail's motivational text encourages singers to embrace new opportunities and champion the bravery required to go against the flow and follow your own journey. **If the River Leaves Without Me** is sensitively written with rich, mature harmonies and stunning soprano solos. The homophonic choral parts are accompanied by a rippling piano part that takes on the character of the water.

If the river leaves without me, I'll flow on. I'll flow on.

Composed by Melanie DeMore, **One Foot in Front of the Other/Lead with Love** is a social activism call and response song that acknowledges the path of life lived in love, even when we are lost, alone, or afraid.

Deke Sharon's dynamic arrangement of Miley Cyrus's **The Climb** offers an inspirational message for people everywhere..."Ain't about how fast I get there; ain't about what's waiting on the other side; it's the climb!"

Composer Elaine Hagenberg writes: "**Swifter Than Flame** was inspired by the poetry of John Carl Bostelman, which vividly describes an exhilarating journey into the unknown. The composition features layered vocal entrances that create a sense of ascent, as if the music is climbing toward new possibilities. Through text painting, especially with the phrase 'upward into night,' I aimed to capture the awe and wonder of pushing beyond the limits of imagination. The racing rhythms of the piano accompaniment propel the music forward, launching the choir into an orbit of sound that evokes a thrilling sense of discovery. I hope singers feel the excitement of exploring the uncharted and realize their boundless potential if they dare to explore beyond the familiar."

Program Notes, con't.

Swifter than flame, prevailing tempests race. Along the lifted steel that bars their way.
From solid street up to the shore of space, each granite edifice transcends the day.
Tower on tower reach a final rung. From which winged feet step upward out of night—
To find again forgotten planets hung in orbits measuring a timeless flight.

Inspired by Native American proverbs, **Speak the Truth** emphasizes the importance of kindness and bravery. Commissioned by 20 lower voice choirs in 2014 by Minnesota based choral composer, Jocelyn Hagen. “Give me knowledge, so I may have kindness for all. The more you give, the more good things come to you.”

Wade in the Water and **Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child**, are two beloved African American spirituals, both with roots in America’s history of the enslavement of black bodies. Both spirituals played a role in both the underground railroad of the 19th century and the civil rights struggle of the 20th century. Tonight we explore both of these tunes layered together in a new arrangement developed by UCTB over the course of the semester. Our vocal quality here emulates renowned bass/baritone, Paul Robeson.

Been in the Storm was written for and by singers in the professional men’s ensemble, Cantus. The arrangers write, “Cantus’ arrangement of “Been in the Storm,” like many of our workshopped arrangements, began with a space in a program that required a very specific soundscape and message. We found the spiritual to be perfect, especially a very free and organic interpretation.” We are proud to feature JMU voice faculty Michael Hadary as our soloist.

Unendliche Freude is a setting of text by Frederick von Schiller (1759-1805) by German Classical/Romantic composer, Franz Schubert (1797-1828). The *a cappella* three-part writing highlights the text’s portrayal of Elysium, or heavenly afterlife:

*Unendliche Freude
Durchwaltet das Herz.
Hier mangelt der Name dem trauernden Leide,
Sanftes Entzücken nur heißt man Schmerz.
Unending joy*

fills the heart.
Here the mournful suffering lacks a name;
mere gentle delight is called pain.

Of i carry your heart composer David Dickau writes, “I have chosen to focus on the warm and abundant optimism and emotion reflected in the beloved e.e. cummings text.” This poem portrays a simple, pure emotion that is profound in its honest and directness. The depth of love is evident in the poem: “here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide.”

Fields of Gold is perhaps the most well-known song of Sting’s long career as a popular music singer-songwriter. It first appeared on his 1993 album *Ten Summoner’s Tales*. Despite not reaching the Top-10 in the UK or the Top-20 in the United States when it was released as a single from the album, it has become one of his most famous songs, with many cover versions by other artists. The arrangement heard tonight by Ethan Sperry was written for the University of Miami Men’s Glee Club.

Ave Generosa is a luminous chant composed by Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179), a visionary Benedictine abbess, mystic, and composer. Celebrating the Virgin Mary, the piece is rich in vivid, sensual imagery and reverent devotion. Hildegard’s unique melodic style stretches the boundaries of traditional plainchant, using soaring melodic lines and expressive intervals to evoke spiritual ecstasy. Unlike typical Marian texts, Ave Generosa praises Mary’s physical and divine beauty as the vessel of incarnation. This chant exemplifies Hildegard’s fusion of the sacred and the poetic, offering a transcendent experience rooted in both mysticism and deep theological insight.

*Ave, generosa,
 gloriosa et intacta puella.
 Tu pupilla castitatis,
 tu materia sanctitatis,
 que Deo placuit.
 Nam hec superna infusio in te fuit,
 quod supernum Verbum in te carnem induit.
 Nunc omnis Ecclesia in gaudio rutilat
 ac in symphonia sonat
 propter dulcissima Virginem
 et laudabilem Mariam,
 dei Genitricem.*

I behold you,
 noble, glorious and whole woman,
 the pupil of purity.
 You are the sacred matrix
 in which God takes great pleasure.
 The essences of Heaven flooded into you,
 and the Great Word of God in flesh.
 Now let all Ecclesia shine in joy
 and sound in symphony
 praising the most tender woman,
 Mary, the bequeather,
 seed-source of God.

Maurice Duruflé's **Tota Pulchra Es** (1960) is a motet based on an ancient Latin text honoring the Virgin Mary. Drawing from Gregorian chant, Duruflé weaves modal melodies with lush, modern harmonies to create a serene and contemplative soundscape. The piece reflects his signature style—deeply rooted in tradition yet colored with impressionistic beauty. The chant-like soprano line floats above gentle, flowing accompaniment, capturing the purity and grace of the text's praise.

*Tota pulchra es, Maria
 et macula originalis non est in te.
 Vestimentum tuum candidum quasi nix,
 et facies tua sicut sol.
 Tu gloria Jerusalem,
 tu laetitia Israel,
 tu honorificentia populi nostri.*

You are utterly beautiful, Mary
 And the original stain is not in you.
 Your garment white as snow,
 And your face just like the sun.
 You are the glory of Jerusalem,
 You are the joy of Israel,
 You are the honor of our people.

Composer Ellen Gilson Voth writes of her piece **I had no time to Hate**, “When I was given a book of Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) poetry, I had no idea how her succinct, deep reflections on life would inspire my work as a composer. I hope her words will be as inspiring and life-giving for everyone who comes in contact with this piece. Time is short. The time we find to Love is what gives our world hope. Keep making the most of the time you have, to be that beacon of hope.”

The text of **Flying** is based on the words of American aviation pioneer, Amelia Earhart (1897-1937), who famously disappeared over the Pacific Ocean during her attempt to become the first female pilot to circumnavigate the world. This setting is by Nashville based composer and Rachel DeVore Smith.

Prior to women earning the right to vote, a speech was given at the National Education Association that warned of the threat posed to women who studied algebra. For it was the opinion of the speaker that women could lose their very souls if they chose to pursue mathematics. In response, the feminist writer and suffragette Alice Duer Miller (1847-1942) wrote a satirical poem entitled “The Maiden’s Vow” in which she solemnly promised to “never study algebra, but keep my spirit pure.” In this playful composition **I’ll Never Study**, the choir begins by reiterating the warning to shun the naughty surd (an irrational number) but is eventually led astray by the allure of the Fibonacci sequence. Yet rather than leading to damnation, this knowledge leads to liberation and empowerment. This piece was composed in honor of the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing and protecting women’s constitutional right to vote.

It is a long-standing tradition for Treble Chamber Choir to sing “**Bring me Little Water, Sylvie**” at our opening concert of the fall semester every year. This year, we

are choosing to highlight the text, "Can't you see me comin', can't you see me now" as an inspirational message of what these young people will bring to the world!

JMU Ensemble Personnel

University Chorus: Soprano/Alto Ensemble

Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *director*

Elizabeth Williams *collaborative pianist*

Christina Santiago, *undergraduate manager/conducting intern*

Hailey Donithan, Lauren Motter, Brigid Downs, *undergraduate managers*

Alejandra Velez Ocasio	Gloria Cox	Megan Swann
Anna Bryant	Grace Dunn	Meppy Polley
Ava Quesenberry	Hailey Donithan	Molly Walsh
Brigid Downs	Jalei Sanchez	Mya Garcia
Brooklyn Dye	Jessica Spindler	Morgan Carney
Cadence Sims	Kate Silvey	Natalie Goodwin
Caroline Legere	Katie McGee	Nina Chen
Christiana Santiago	Kylie Charters	Rachel Griffith
Dalya Louh	Kyra Annoni	Reese Hageman
Donna Wampler	Laura Cook	Sarah Patunas
Elizabeth Houser	Lauren Motter	Saycia Szakonyi
Elizabeth Kugel	Leila Slye	Seven Zuschin
Emma Harvey	Libby van Meter	Talia Bushman
Emma Kamara	Lula McCain	Trista Coltellino
Erin Malloy	Mallory Billet	Zaynah Weems
Gianna Ortiz	Mariah Eakin	

University Chorus: Tenor/Bass Ensemble

Dr. W. Bryce Hayes, *director*

Linlin Uta, *collaborative pianist*

Ivan Godoy, *graduate conductor*

Dan Brown	Habib Kamara	Colin Riley
Jaz Bruner	Jonas Kerlin	Will Sanfilippo
Garrison Cornwell	Kevin Landry	James Smith
Alex Dickerson	Alex Lee	Jonah Tonn
Maddox Dubon	Marcelo Malferrari	Matt Underwood
Mark Fortune	Isaac Markow	Lamson Vo
Ivan Godoy	Jordan Matson	Devin White
Joshua Grimes	Miles Morley-Massado	Jake Williams
	Trent Oliver	

TCC: Treble Chamber Choir

Dr. W. Bryce Hayes, *director*

Elizabeth Williams *collaborative pianist*

Sofia Aikens	Hailey Donithan	Lauren Motter
Yasmine Akoum	Julia Egnot	Annea Phillips
Sheridan Anthony	Marija Grove	Allie Ranton
Katie Blackwell	Maya Habtamu	Savannah Rixon
Leah Brown	Emma Leudesdorff	Natalia Settipani
Aven Buchanan	Brooke Lindsay	Abby Smith
Kaylin Carsey	Kendra Liverman	Abby Sparks
Sarah Damon	Marin March	Megan Wong
	Kira Miller	

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Thank you for attending this School of Music performance, we appreciate your support! The QR code below will take you to a page where you can donate to the Marlon Foster Scholarship. Marlon Foster ('82, '95) served in the United States Air Force, taught in Harrisonburg City Public Schools for 26 years, and taught percussion in the JMU School of Music. Marlon was awarded Teacher of the Year from Harrisonburg City Public Schools, and he was inducted into the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association's Hall of Fame.

