

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

present

Corporeality in Choral Sound:

**The Elements of Consonant Diction that Shape
Pre-Expressive Presence, Listener Perceived Clarity,
and Expression in English-Language Choral Music**

the doctoral lecture recital of
Addison Walton, *conductor*

with

The Madison Chorale
Adam Shenk, *collaborative piano*

Tuesday, October 14, 2025
7:30 pm
Concert Hall



Program

Introduction and Overview

Need for the Study
Purpose of the Study
Review of Literature

Diction in the Performing Choral Arts: Interview with Gabriel Crouch

Methodology

Analysis and Survey: Results and Findings

Pedagogical Recommendations: Unaccompanied Repertoire

Diction pedagogy, scaffolding, and sequencing for repertoire:

- a. Consonant Length & Poetic Onomatopoeia
Demonstration #1: Hear My Prayer
- b. Pedagogical Imagery: Intermediary Vowel Kaleidoscope
Demonstration #2: The Lamb

Performances

Hear My Prayer

Moses Hogan (1957-2003)

The Lamb

John Tavener (1944-2013)

Pedagogical Recommendations: Unaccompanied Repertoire

- c. The “Goldilocks Tempo”
Demonstration #3: The Blue Bird

Performance

The Blue Bird (Op. 119 No. 3) Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Pedagogical Recommendations: Accompanied Repertoire

- a. Oral Geography and Kissed Consonants
Demonstration #4: How Do I Love Thee?
- b. Breath Through Diction
Demonstration #5: Measure Me Sky!

Summary of Findings

Performance

How Do I Love Thee?

Eric Nelson (b. 1959)

Avenues for Further Research

Acknowledgements

Performance

Measure Me Sky!

Elaine Hagenberg (b. 1979)

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.
Addison Walton is from the studio of Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy.*

Program Notes

Moses Hogan (1957-2003) was a renowned 20th-century American conductor, arranger, and pianist whose arrangements of traditional spirituals have become a bedrock of contemporary choral literature. Hogan's earliest musical influences came from his childhood in the African American Baptist church and continued in his formal studies. He was one of the first graduates from the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and spent time at Oberlin College and Juilliard. In 1980, Hogan began arranging choral music, aiming to revitalize interest in traditional spirituals through new versions. He founded the Moses Hogan Chorale in 1993 and had his first published piece, *Elijah Rock*, released in 1994. Hogan published 80 choral works in his lifetime, including *The Battle of Jericho*, *Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit*, and *My Soul's Been Anchored In the Lord*.

Moses Hogan's **Hear My Prayer** is a composed spiritual dedicated to fellow composer, choral conductor, and actor Jester Hairston. It features the text of a prayer for safety and a glorious afterlife, with the music showing Hogan's characteristic multi-part vocal divisi to create intricate, powerful harmonies. **Hear My Prayer** follows a hymn-like arrangement style and incorporates four to six vocal lines, thick textures, and unaccompanied singing. The piece blends a traditional spiritual structure with complex, modern arranging techniques to convey the text's journey from supplication to triumphant hope.

Hear My Prayer

O Lord, please hear my prayer, in the morning when I rise.
It's your servant bound for glory, O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.
O Lord, please hear my prayer, keep me safe within your arms.
It's your servant bound for glory, O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.
When my work on earth is done, and You come to take me home.
Just to know I'm bound for glory, and to hear You say, "Well done!"
Done with sin and sorrow. Have mercy, mercy. Amen.

Based on William Blake's poem of the same name from the *Songs of Innocence* collection, **The Lamb** was composed from seven notes in one afternoon in 1982 for John Tavener's then 3-year-old nephew Simon and remains one of Tavener's most treasured choral works. Shortly after completion, *The Lamb* was performed at the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge in December 1982. The concert was broadcast on national TV, so the piece received international recognition very quickly. Tavener wrote about **The Lamb**: *Blake's child-like vision perhaps explains The Lamb's great popularity in a world that is starved of this precious and sacred dimension in almost every aspect of life.*

Metaphorically, the speaker might be a child on a farm hugging and playing with a newborn, springtime lamb, a loving a mother caring for her newborn baby, or the Virgin Mary, singing to the infant Jesus underneath a night sky filled with stars. As such, *The Lamb* is often sung around Christmastime as well as throughout the year due to its continued popularity with audiences and choirs alike.

The Lamb – William Blake

Little lamb, who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight, Softest clothing, woolly, bright;

Program Notes, con't.

Gave thee such a tender voice, Making all the vales rejoice.
Little lamb, who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?
Little lamb, I'll tell thee, Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name, For he calls himself a Lamb,
He is meek and he is mild. He became a little child.
I, a child, and thou a lamb, We are called by his name.
Little lamb, God bless thee! Little lamb, God bless thee!

Charles Villiers Stanford's 1910 setting of Mary Elizabeth Coleridge's poem, *L'Oiseau Bleu*, **The Blue Bird** (Op. 119 No. 3), depicts a blue bird in flight over a serene lake. It is known for its ethereal, magical atmosphere and the masterful way Stanford combines words and music to evoke a fleeting, tranquil natural moment. **The Blue Bird** is set in G-flat major and is scored for an SAATB ensemble, although the soprano line is often sung as a solo or solo group, with the soprano and alto in the choir singing the first and second alto lines, respectively. The soprano part plays a crucial role in portraying the blue bird itself. Dibble interprets the wide range of the soprano line as illustrating "the bird's free flight across the lake," and the repeated instances of the word "blue" on an E-flat as the bird "hovering." The final cadence is a seventh chord based on the supertonic (A-flat), while the soprano's final "blue" is suspended. This deliberate absence of resolution creates, in the words of musicologist and Stanford specialist Jeremy Dibble, "an inimitable version of the eternal."

Long heralded as a masterwork of English choral music, **The Blue Bird** was widely performed by choral societies in England during Stanford's lifetime and is considered one of the finest English part-songs ever written. In an address at Stanford's centenary, renowned British composer Herbert Howells remarked how **The Blue Bird** in particular was widely performed among choral societies across the country, and how it formed an "essential beauty in the hearts of unnumbered singers."

The Blue Bird (*L'Oiseau Bleu*) – Mary E. Coleridge

The lake lay blue below the hill, o'er it, as I looked, there flew,
Across the waters, cold and still, a bird whose wings were palest blue.
The sky above was blue at last, the sky beneath me blue in blue,
A moment, ere the bird had passed, it caught his image as he flew.

Eric Nelson (b. 1959) is a composer, choral conductor, and clinician who currently serves as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at Emory University and conductor and Artistic Director of Atlanta Master Chorale. His choirs have performed all over the world, and he has conducted and presented workshops for many organizations, including ACDA, the Music Educators National Conference, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. Dr. Nelson's composition closely follows the poem How Do I Love Thee?, one of the most well-known sonnets by poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861). Perhaps a love letter to her husband, the poem enumerates the many ways she loves him, ranging from the mundane ("everyday's most quiet need") to grand and abstract ideas ("as men strive for Right"). Additionally, Barrett Browning includes

Program Notes, con't.

sadness in her enumeration of love and “touches on the early sorrows, but only to pass lightly over them. ‘I love thee’ the poem repeats, and the mood of that quiet, confident statement is reflected technically.”

How Do I Love Thee, scored for SATB and piano, is characterized by multiple key changes throughout - the song begins in F major and then immediately transitions to D major, followed by movement to Ab major, Db major, Eb major, G major, D major, F major, D major, E major, and Db major. Three soaring “I love thee” passages mark transitions between phrases and denote a shift in color and emotional subtext. The wide range in dynamics supports the narrative arc of the piece: tender and flowing, reaching two dramatic climaxes, and settling into the gravity of the final section “I shall [but] love thee better after death.” – *Program notes by Kijana Knight-Torres*

Sonnets from the Portuguese 43: How do I love thee? – Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Measure Me, Sky! inspires singers and listeners to take hold of their limitless potential. Ascending vocal lines stretch across a driving accompaniment, as if reaching out to grasp the expanse depicted in Leonora Speyer's rapturous poem. Eliane Hagenberg writes: *The effect of the poetry in Measure Me, Sky! is instantaneous. It's as if one's arms have been cast wide, and their eyes turned to the heavens to take in the expanse both around and above. By opening with accented arpeggios that immediately rise into billowing triplet figures, I wanted to launch singers into flight and invite listeners into the same breathless exclamation. I was also inspired to learn that Leonora Speyer first started writing poetry in her forties, not as a young girl. By composing an ascending key change for the final refrain, a new harmonic world is revealed, calling us to venture into the unknown to discover our limitless potential.*

Measure Me, Sky! – Leonora Speyer

Measure me, sky! Tell me I reach by a song. Nearer the stars; I have been little so long!
Weigh me, high wind! What will your wild scales record?
Profit of pain, Joy by the weight of a world!
Horizon, reach out! Catch at my hands, stretch me taut,
Rim of the world: Widen my eyes by a thought!
Sky, be my depth. Wind, be my width and my height,
World, my heart's span; Loveliness, wings for my flight! Measure me, sky!

Personnel

The Madison Choral

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

Adam Shenk, *collaborative pianist*

Addison Walton, Colin Cossi, *DMA conductors*

Ivan Godoy, *MM conductor*

Leah Brown, Mac Creswick, Alex Dickerson, Kelly Donlan, Emmie Stepp, *managers*

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Abby Spencer	Addison Walton	Anthony Bassett	Alex Dickerson
Allie Ranton	Ciara Theisz	Brian Garmendia	Colin Cossi
Christina Santiago	Grace Hollowell	Jacob Walton	Ian Amos
Emalee Stepp	Isabelle Rhodes	Garrett Gass	Dan Klein
Emma Jones	Jackie Copeland	Jeffrey Ruiz	Habib Jaafar
Helen Albiston	Jaya Whaley	Joshua Nieves-Arbaiza	Ivan Godoy
Izzy Layman	Katy Lange	Luke Brooks	Johnny Park
Kimberly Aikens	Kelly Donlan	Mac Creswick	Kevin Landry
Marlow Lewis	Leah Brown	Thomas Stachelski	Michael Tsougranis
Nancy Walker	Madeleine Parr		Roman Leonard
Natalie Carter	Olive Poole		Takoma Williams
Paige Driver	Rebecca Imbasciani		Will Palestrant
Sophie Osmani	Savannah Whitley		
Sydney Ashworth	Sydney Parow		

Patrons are reminded to turn off all pagers, cell phones, personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

The unauthorized videotaping or any other recording of this production is strictly prohibited in adherence with Federal copyright laws.

FA '25 JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY CHORAL AREA

Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy
Director of Choral Activities, Co-Coordinator of the Ensemble Area
Professor of Choirs, Conducting, and Choral Music Education

Dr. W. Bryce Hayes
Associate Director of Choral Activities
Professor of Choirs, Choral Music Education

Colin Cossi, *DMA Choral Conducting Graduate Student*
Addison Walton, *DMA Choral Conducting Graduate Student*
Ivan Godoy, *MM Choral Conducting Student*
Marlow Lewis, *Choral Librarian*
Rebecca Imbasciani, *Poster & T-shirt Design*

JMU CHORAL COLLABORATIVE PIANISTS

Adam Shenk, *The Madison Chorale*
Elizabeth Williams, *TCC and UCSA*
Linlin Uta, *UCTB*

UNDERGRADUATE ENSEMBLE MANAGERS/CONDUCTING INTERNS*

Leah Brown, Mac Creswick, Alex Dickerson, Kelly Donlan, Emmie Stepp, *TMC*
Leah Brown*, Jackie Copeland, Allie Ranton, *Treble Chamber Choir*
Hailey Donithan, Brigit Downs, Lauren Motter, Christina Santiago*, *UCSA*
Josh Grimes, Kevin Landry, *UCTB*

EXECUTIVE BOARD: JMU CHAPTER OF THE ACDA

Sophie Osmani, *president*; Christina Santiago, *vice-president*;
Helen Albiston, *secretary*; Alex Dickerson, *treasurer*;
Rebecca Imbasciani, *historian & public relations, poster & t-shirt design*

CHECK OUT THE JMU CHORAL AREA YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND INSTAGRAM

JMU VOICE AREA

Dr. Sonya Baker, *soprano*
Dr. Kirsten Blair, *soprano*
Dr. Bridgid Eversole, *soprano*
Professor Brenda Witmer, *soprano*
Dr. Jamison Walker, *tenor*
Professor Michael Hadary, *baritone*
Professor David Newman, *baritone*
Professor Joshua Borths, *Director of Opera Theatre*
Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *Director of Choral Activities*
Dr. W. Bryce Hayes, *Associate Director of Choral Activities*

Friends of the Arts and Design

Thanks to our generous Friends of the Arts and Design scholarship donors whose support allows our students to continue to create, perform, and inspire.

Arts and Design Hero (\$5,000+)

James McHone Jewelry • Ann & Mark Siciliano

Arts and Design Champion (\$1,500 - \$4,999)

Rubén Graciani & Matt Pardo • Hotel Madison • Kathy Moran Wealth Group

Mack & Towana Moore • Shannon Tierney

Arts and Design Advocate (\$500 - \$1,499)

Beth and Jim Cahill • Nancy Davis •

Matthew Duffy & Christine Jimenez-Duffy • Energy Windows LLC

Jonathan Fox • Holly Haney and Bob Kolvoord • Matchbox Realty

Barbara & William Mayo • Ron Pugh • Scott & Wren Stevens

Matthew & Sarah Von Schuch

Arts and Design Ally (\$250 - \$499)

Paul Ackerman & Weldon Bagwell • John Allemeier • Elizabeth Alspaugh

Jerry Benson & Martha Ross • Stephen Bolstad & Stephanie Wasta

Robert & Suzanne Bothamley • Jared & Jenny Burden

David & Jennifer Campfield • Jennifer Copeland • Myron Dickerson

Len & Miriam Discenza • Rhonda Dolan • Hillary Ellis

Joe & Rose Estock • Bob & Linda Failes • Johnny & Phyllis Garber

Quillon Hall & Karin Tollefson-Hall • Holly Haney & Bob Kolvoord

George & Marilou Johnson • Jamie & Tim Miller

John Keightley & Tammy Mannarino • Brenda & Ronald Krablin

Kristi Lewis • Kathryn & Michael Loy • Nick Swartz • Kristee Jo Trumbo

Cecelia Wolf • Melinda Wood

Marlon Foster Scholarship

How you can make a difference!

Dear Patron,

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.

