

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents

VMEA SHOWCASE CONCERT

featuring



Brass Band

Kevin Stees, *conductor*

The Madison Singers

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

Amy Robertson, *collaborative pianist*

Nikos Myrogiannis-Koukos, *graduate conductor*

Addison Walton, *graduate conductor*

Devonte Garcia, *tenor*

TJ Oxbrough, *tenor*

Roman/Klaus Leonard, *bass*

John Meshreky, *cello*

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

8 pm

Concert Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission

Program

The JMU Brass Band Kevin Stees, *conductor*

And Straight On 'Til Morning Joel Collier
(b. 1989)

World Premiere

Fanfares and Love Songs Gavin Higgins
(b. 1983)

- I. Bold and to the fore
- II. Expressive
- III. Brightly

O Magnum Mysterium Morten Lauridsen
(b. 1943)
arr. Philip Littlemore

Explorers on the Moon Paul Raphael
(b. 1973)

Space • Nightmare Land • The Journey Home

Intermission

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

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of this production is strictly prohibited
in adherence with Federal copyright laws.

Program

The Madison Singers
Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *director*
Amy Robertson, *collaborative pianist*

~Chiaro~

Light Enrico Miaroma
(b. 1962)
Addison Walton, *graduate conductor*

Missa Pura Voce (Mass for the Pure Voice) Nick Gomez-Colon
(b. 1999)
IV. *Sanctus*

~Scuro~

Coronation *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) Tarik O'Regan
(b. 1978)
Nikos Myrogiannis-Koukos, *graduate conductor*

Cruelty Has A Human Heart Gavin Higgins
(b. 1983)
Text by William Blake
(1757-1827)

John Meshreky, *cello*



The Fire and the Rose Eric Guinivan
(b. 1984)
Text by T.S. Eliot
(1888-1965)

Hentakan Jiwa (The Beat of the Soul) Ken Steven
(b. 1993)
TJ Oxbrough, *tenor*
Roman/Klaus Leonard, *bass*

Bridge Over Troubled Water/
Don't Trouble the Water Aretha Franklin
arr. Damien Sneed
Devonte Garcia, *tenor*

Program Notes

And Straight On 'Til Morning - Joel Collier

“Second star to the right and straight on till morning” are directions to Neverland given by Peter Pan to Wendy in J.M Barrie’s novel Peter Pan, which has been adapted for both stage and screen, most famously in 1953 by Walt Disney Animation. This concert work by JMU alumnus Joel Collier represents the thrill and exuberance of John, Wendy, and Michael as they escape their nursery and fly with Peter and Tinker Bell to Neverland.

Fanfares and Love Songs - Gavin Higgins

This three-movement work was commissioned by the National Children’s Brass Band of Great Britain for their 2009 summer course. It is traditional in structure: an exciting fanfare opening is followed by an expressive love song. The final movement revisits the fanfares of the first movement whilst a fast-paced dance brings the work to a triumphant and breathless close. The band had the pleasure of working with the composer this October, as he was the featured composer of the 42nd annual Contemporary Music Festival at James Madison University.

O Magnum Mysterium - Morten Lauridsen/arr. Philip Littlemore

Originally composed as a vocal motet, Lauridsen’s adaptation of this Gregorian plainchant has become standard fare for both vocal and instrumental groups since its debut in 1994. The text describes the birth of Jesus and his placement in a manger surrounded by sheep and their shepherds. The text (translated from Latin to English) reads:

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord, Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!

Explorers on the Moon - Paul Raphael

The sequel to Paul Raphael’s (Cory Band Music Director Phillip Harper’s pen name) 2017 work Destination Moon, Explorers on the Moon was premiered in 2019, commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the first moon landing in 1969. It is based on Belgian author Georges Remi’s (known by the pen name Hergé) cartoon, Tintin, which rather accurately predicted the happenings of the real-world moon landings, despite being written in 1950. The piece is composed in three interconnected movements:

SPACE begins with the ending motif “Earth calling Moon Rocket... do you receive me?” that concluded Destination Moon. The protagonists begin to wake, having fallen unconscious during liftoff, and realizing to their amazement that they are hurtling through space towards the moon. Our heroes become the first humans to see the Earth in all its majesty from space before attempting the dangerous landing on the moon.

In NIGHTMARE LAND, Tintin becomes the first human to set foot on the moon, describing it as “a nightmare land, a place of death, horrifying in its desolation.” To pay off his gambling debts, engineer Frank Wolff (represented by the euphonium) sabotages the rocket he helped build under orders from sworn enemy of Tintin and uninvited stowaway, Col. Boris Jorgen.

After the mutiny is uncovered, THE JOURNEY HOME begins and Jorgen is dealt with; however, it is discovered that there is too little oxygen for everyone on board and tensions rise. Overcome with guilt, Wolff decides to sacrifice himself by abandoning the rocket and floating to his death. With just enough oxygen and against all odds, the explorers make a triumphant return to Earth.



The lemniscate...the infinity symbol...the journey of *chiaroscuro*, the light and dark, gifting and receiving, and finding the center, the still point where the mystic spiral begins anew, where ‘the fire and rose are one.’ This has been our semester’s journey as TMS has sung at our JMU-hosted SCHEV Conference dinner, the Contemporary Music Festival, our showcase concert and, of course, the honor of singing this November at our state Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) Conference. Thank you for journeying with us, through the light and dark, to the center, where we are all one.

Composed in one day in 2017, at his home in the Italian Alps, Enrico Miaroma’s **Light** employs a harmonic landscape that depicts the golden light surrounding him while bringing Tagore’s text to life. Renowned Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 “because of his profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse, by which, with consummate skill, he has made his poetic thought, expressed in his own English words, a part of the literature of the West.”

Light, my light, the world-filling light, the eye-kissing light, heart-sweetening light!

Ah, the light dances, my darling, at the center of my life;

the light strikes, my darling, the chords of my love,

the sky opens, the wind runs wild, laughter passes over the earth.

The butterflies spread their sails on the sea of light.

Lilies and jasmines surge up on the crest of the waves of light.

The light is shattered into gold on every cloud, my darling, and it scatters gems in profusion.

Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling, and gladness without measure.

The heaven's river has drowned its banks and the flood of joy is abroad.

Program Notes, *continued*

Of his *Missa Pura Voce* (Mass for the Pure Voice), composer Nick Gomez-Colon writes: *When reflecting on the experiences that have contributed the most to my musicianship, one of the biggest of those... was singing in my local church choir in high school. Not only was I singing alongside like-minded individuals of my Christian faith, but I was singing alongside individuals who pushed me to grow musically... So, I wanted to put a piece together that represents the positive takeaways from that experience.* Setting the five movements of the Mass Ordinary, the meditative fourth movement *Sanctus* (Holy, holy, holy) is initiated by two contrasting ostinati in the treble voices and features ‘walls of sound’ built upon by both choirs leading to the works’ one perfect authentic cadence.

Premiered on May 6, 2023, and met with uniform critical praise, Tarik O'Regan's *Coronation Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) was one of five new works presented in the coronation service of Charles III and Camilla in Westminster Abbey. O'Regan said of the piece, “I wanted to explore influences from my own varied heritages within the context of the Agnus Dei in the British choral tradition: a unison melody is slowly fragmented to create myriad timbres, much as one might hear in some Arab or Irish traditional music. This melodic shifting is also reminiscent of ‘phase music,’ strongly connected with San Francisco, where I wrote this work. Finally, there is an alternating verse anthem structure: a nod to Orlando Gibbons, who became Organist of Westminster Abbey exactly 400 years ago.”

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Composer Gavin Higgins recounts, “*Cruelty Has A Human Heart* was written as a response to ‘How falsely doth the world accuse,’ Chorale 38 from Bach’s St. Matthew Passion.” With text taken from William Blake’s poem “A Divine Image” from *Songs of Experience*, Higgins fashions his response as an exploration of the human shadow, as expressed through angular homophonic writing that, combined with harmonic density, rhythmic tension, and a mournful cello obbligato, magnify the painful nature of Blake’s writing.

Cruelty has a Human Heart and Jealousy a Human Face

Terror the Human Form Divine, and Secrecy, the Human Dress.

The Human Dress, is forged Iron, the Human Form, a fiery Forge.

The Human Face, a Furnace seal'd, the Human Heart, its hungry Gorge.

The Fire and the Rose: Extracted from multiple verses in *Little Gidding*, the last poem in T. S. Eliot’s epic *Four Quartets*, fire, and roses are central main images of this poem. Roses, a traditional symbol of English royalty, also represent divine love and mercy. In the poem’s broader context, fire represents the spiritual power capable of either destroying or purifying the human soul and bringing understanding.

Guinivan’s use of organizational tempi, the wordless, musing theme in $\frac{3}{4}$ time that reappears at key moments throughout the work, and the masterful and seamless modulations all underscore the alchemical mysteries and messages of Eliot’s celebrated poetry. Eric Guinivan’s *The Fire and the Rose* is made possible by the generous support of the JMU 2021-2022 Shirley Hanson Roberts ’56 and Richard D. Roberts Endowment for Faculty Excellence.

from *Little Gidding* by T. S. Eliot (1942)

What we call the beginning is often the end and to make an end is to make a beginning.

The end is where we start from.

Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning.

Every poem an epitaph. And any action is a step to the block, to the fire, down the sea’s throat,

Or to an illegible stone: and that is where we start.

We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

And all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well.

When the tongues of flame are in-folded into the crowned knot of fire

And the fire and the rose are one.

Ken Steven’s **Hentak Jiwa**, an exploration of sounds with the human voice, is taken from the terminology used for various Malay traditional dance movements, melding with music inspired by an exotic Indonesian Malay scale and depicts a modern staging of Malay traditional dance that translates into a vibrant sound experience through the variety of colors of vocal quality produced by the ensemble. Hailing from Medan, composer Ken Steven is known for his fusion of Indonesian colors and elements with modern choral techniques and harmonies.

The Madison Singers Personnel

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Amy Robertson, *collaborative pianist*

Nikos Myrogiannis-Koukos, *graduate conductor*

Addison Walton, *graduate conductor*

Cara Ainge, TJ Oxbrough, Ashley Seminaro, *TMS Managers*

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Abby Wilson	Addison Walton	Drew Dodson	Daniel Klein
Annie Urmanski	Ashley Seminaro	Devonte Garcia	Darien Roby
Cara Ainge	Eva Pierce	Nick Gomez-Colon	DeJuan Woods, Jr.
Gillian Saunders	Erica Taylor	Ricky Goodwyn	Elijah Keyes
Hailey Williams	Georgia Orfanides	TJ Oxbrough	Mac Creswick
Josephine Suwanpoh	Meredith Scarborough		Nikos Myrogiannis-Koukos
Kaylea Manners	Nicole Dudley		Roman Leonard
Madi Gilleland	Sophia Castro		
Meghan Willey			
Millie Morris			
Morgan Brown			

JMU Brass Band Personnel

Principal Cornet	Olivia Ellsworth
Soprano Cornet	Owen Brown
Solo Cornet	Max Parrish
	Logan Hayungs
	Bryson Naftel
	Carter King
Repiano Cornet	Jocelyn Moyer
2nd Cornet	Theo Young
	Micah Wingfield
3rd Cornet	Jacob Fujioka
	Taylor Lowry
Flugel Horn	Steffi Tetzloff
Solo Horn	Ashlyn Craig
1st Horn	Finn Marks
2nd Horn	Jacob Taylor
	Anthony Burnett
1st Baritone	Jake Cuppernull
2nd Baritone	Jackson Varga
1st Trombone	Willie Commins
2nd Trombone	Nikhil Argade
Bass Trombone	Peyton Barrett
Solo Euphonium	Andrew Ribo
2nd Euphonium	Ben Fuller
	Daisey Kludt
Eb Bass	Logan Davis
	Henry Taylor
Bb Bass	John Kelley
	Andy Helvey
	Jackson Lee
Percussion	Shelby Shelton
	Blaze Benavides
	Brian McDermott
	Olivia Miller
	Jonathan Ramirez