

Assumption University Chorale & VOCE present:

Fables and Stories



November 13, 2021 - 4:00 pm
Jeanne Y. Curtis Performance Hall
Worcester, MA

Program Note

First, we want to extend a huge welcome as you return to Curtis Hall for today's concert, *Stories & Fables*. It has been almost two years to the day since our choirs publicly performed together on this campus, and we are thrilled to see you here. We give a special welcome to the families of first and second year students who might be joining us for their first on-campus event!

Today's concert focuses on the stories that we tell each other, real or imagined, as ways to reflect and empathize with the experiences and realities of others.

VOCE begins the concert with a series of pieces calling for action. The first piece **Rise** was written in 2017 for the Justice Choir Songbook, a new series of protest songs, and speaks powerfully to the collective force people rising together. This is immediately followed by the juxtaposition of **La Mia Stella** which takes us on a journey visioning the experience of a refugee family amidst the literal and figurative waves of their life.

Trilo, is a setting of a famous traditional Swedish song that was used by wives standing at the waters edge to encourage and call their partners back home from the water, filled with longing and hope for safety. VOCE finishes with **When Thunder Comes** which reflects on the resilience of a number of civil rights leaders like Harvey Milk, Helen Zia, Freedom Summer's soldiers, and Sylvia Mendez. VOCE is then joined by the tenors and basses to sing a text inspired by the words of Gandhi and Matthew 6:22-24 in **Eye for Eye**.

The next piece of the concert has been almost a year in the making as we debut our collaboration with the Worcester Children's Chorus, **River of Hope**. We began working on this piece together in February via Zoom when the two choirs met multiple times to have discussions reflecting on ideas of hope and community during struggle. The outcome is today's piece written by composer Grace Brigham with significant text from WCC singer Hope DeLuca. The piece was recorded in early October on the Assumption campus by Brett Maguire when the two choirs could finally come together to meet in person. We are looking forward to many more collaborations with WCC!

A Silence Haunts Me is a dramatic interpretation of the experience of Beethoven as he struggled with the loss of his hearing. The choir has explored the writing of Beethoven from this period of his life and this piece was written using musical themes from several of Beethoven's compositions around the same time.

Following this intense reflection, we experience a lighter poetic reflection in the work of Bob Chilcott setting four of **Aesop's Fables**. These works offer brief and charming literary vignettes supported by clever writing for the piano. These are followed by a rollicking and lilting work **All Too Soon** written using folk melodies of Nova Scotia and reflecting on a rural community that is slowly losing its population as the younger generation moves away. Today's concert finishes with the popular folk rock anthem **Crowded Table**, as we look forward to gathering together in community again soon.

Fables and Stories

November 13, 2021 - 4:00p

The Assumption University Chorale and VOCE

Brad Dumont, Director of Choral Activities

Brett Maguire, Collaborative Pianist

VOCE

Rise

La Mia Stella

Trilo

When Thunder Comes

Eye for Eye

Arianne Abela

Ivo Antognini

Arr. A. Möller

Mari Esabel Valverde

Shawn Kirchner

Poems in *Trilo* and *Eye for Eye*
written and recited by Victoria Richardson '25

Chorale & Worcester Children's Chorus

River of Hope *commission premiere

Grace Brigham

Naomi Cruz Tejada & Lorilei Jones, soloists; Emma Wilburn & Jack MacPherson, spoken word

Grace Brigham, violin & Ilana Cady, pianist

Pam Mindell, WCC Artistic Director

Chorale

A Silence Haunts Me

Jake Runestad

Aesop's Fables

Bob Chilcott

I. The Hare and The Tortoise

II. The Mountain in Labour

III. The Fox and The Grapes

IV. The Goose and The Swan

All Too Soon

Stephen Hatfield

Crowded Table

The Highwomen

Rise

I will rise with all my daughters, I will rise against my foes
I will rise with all the mothers, I will carry all their woes
I will rise to fight for freedom, I will rise though faced with fears
I will rise against all hatred while my eyes are veiled with tears

I will rise for religious freedom, for a rich diversity
I will rise for all the weary, for each lonely refugee
I will work for all our women who deserve equal pay
I will work for all our children who await a better day

Oh, stand with me
Rise up hand in hand
Oh, stand with me
We will rise to spread love across this bitter land

I will rise for love & justice that we may see a better day
I will rise in peace & service for our world in disarray
I will rise with all my brothers for all those who cannot stand
I will rise with all our fathers who have lost a home & land

I will rise to build up bridges for this broken world we see
I will tear down walls between us that divide you & me / Brothers

Arianne Abela

AU Chorale is Going on Tour!

Santa Fe, May 2022

Learn more by asking your student for the tour itinerary
and information sheet. Registration will be open in
December with initial deposits due by Dec. 22!

La Mia Stella

translated from the original Italian

Look up to that star, my father said.

Follow its light, it will lead you into a world without wars, where you will be free to play.

Come on my son, close your eyes, and see if you can dream.

I am cold, my father said. Look out for the wave; it will come back.

In this boat adrift in the sea, who knows how many nights

we will have to wait for a new world, a new life.

See how big the wave is, my father said. Hold on tight! It will not sweep you away

as it did your mother, who now sleeps on the bottom of the sea.

Do not open your mouth, my son, and do not breathe.

I'm going to join your mother, my father said. You are a big boy now and you can stay.

I know you won't be afraid and soon will find

another land, world, and another life will begin.

And my star up in the sky, will soon send a savior for us all.

And for those the sea has taken away...Nyota yangu

But what are you doing? Where are you?

My little star, up in the sky, let me see you

and let me find you up in the sky...

Oh, nyota yangu. I have found my star! Up in the sky...Nyota yangu.

Ivo Antognini

Save the Dates:

December 11, 8:00p - Mechanics Hall

with Massachusetts Symphony

tickets at masymphony.org

April 3, 4:00p - Curtis Hall

Music for Guitar and Choir

with Dr. Peter Clemente, guitar

More Choir Events TBA!

When Thunder Comes

The poor and dispossessed take up the drums
For civil rights - freedoms to think and speak,
Petition, pray, and vote. When thunder comes,
The civil righteous are finished being meek.
Why Sylvia Mendez bet against long odds,
How Harvey Milk turned hatred on its head,
Why Helen Zia railed against tin gods,
How Freedom Summer's soldiers faced the dread
Are tales of thunder that I hope to tell
From my thin bag of verse for you to hear
In miniature, like ringing a small bell,
And know a million bells can drown out fear.
For history was mute witness when such crimes
Discolored and discredited our times.

J. Patrick Lewis

Eye for Eye

Eye for eye and the world goes blind
And how deep the darkness, and the light nowhere to find.

Life for life and the killing goes on
And how deep the darkness, like a night without a dawn.

Hate feeds hate in a bitter feast
And how deep the darkness;
turns humankind into a hungry beast.

Gives us light, that we may see.

Shawn Kirchner

River of Hope

Unity seems impossible so far apart,
but it is not broken just unfinished.

*The things that we lost are still important to you,
but you see that you've come out on the other side.*

*The conflict is part of the story, and you can accept it,
and now it's our story to tell and we can move forward.*

No sun rays, but we still dealt with the drought.
Only cloudy days, while we drown in our doubt.
But look at the present, tied in a red bow.
Focus on the now, see where this river flows.

The river of hope will lead you home.
Take a deep breath and let it all go.
Nothing is certain, but here's my hand to hold.
Just know you're not alone, follow the river of hope.

We were always scared to dream big.
But once you've been through enough,
there's nothing to lose so why not take a jump
into the river of hope.

The river of hope will lead you home.
Take a deep breath and let it all go.
Nothing is certain, but here's my hand to hold.
Just know you're not alone, follow the river of hope.

Unity seems impossible so far apart,
but it is not broken just unfinished.

Hope DeLuca and Other Singers from AU and WCC

The lyrics for River of hope were written with a majority of the text contributed by WCC singer Hope DeLuca. Other texts were created from conversations the choirs had together on Zoom in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic as we dreamed about our communities coming together again.

A Silence Haunts Me

after Beethoven's Heiligenstadt Testament

by Todd Boss

Hear me brothers I have a confess i on pa i nful to
make S i x years I have endured a curse that deepens every
day They say that soon I 'll cease to hear the very
mus i c of my soul What should be the sense most perfect
i n me fa i ls me shames me taunts me

A s i lence haunts me They ask me Do you
hear the shepherd s i n g i n g faroff soft They ask
me Do you hear a d i stant flut i n g danc i n g
joyously aloft No I th i n k so No I th i n k so No
God am I Prometheus ex i led i n cha i ns for g i ft i n g

humank i nd my f i re Take my feel i n g Take my
s i ght Take my w i n g s m i dfl i ght but let me hear
the sear i n g roar of a i r before I score the ground Why S i lence
i s God 's reply and so I beg me take
my l i fe when lo I hear a grace and feel a r i n g i n g

i n me after all So now as leaves of autumn fall I
make my mark and s i gn my name and turn aga i n to
touch my flame of mus i c to the world a broken man as best
I can As ever Faithfully Yours A bell A bell
Hear me and be well

A Silence Haunts Me is a musical and dramatic re-telling of Beethoven's famous *Heiligenstadt Testament*. A letter that he wrote while losing his hearing which was not read or discovered until after his death. While researching Beethoven's output around the time of the letter, composer Runestad discovered that Beethoven wrote a ballet, *Creatures of Prometheus*, just a year before penning his testament. "Beethoven must have put himself into Prometheus' mindset to embody the story," Runestad noted. "Just as Prometheus gifted humankind with fire and was punished for eternity, so did Beethoven gift the fire of his music while fighting his deafness, an impending silence. What an absolutely devastating yet inspiring account of the power of the human spirit. In the moment of his loss —when he wrote the *Heiligenstadt Testament* — he had no idea how profound his legacy would be." *A Silence Haunts Me* quotes several musical themes of Beethoven, but they are, in Runestad's words, "filtered through a hazy, frustrated, and defeated state of being." - excerpted from Dr. Jonathan Talberg.

Aesop's Fables

The Hare and the Tortoise

A Hare one day ridiculed the short fee and slow pace of the Tortoise, who replied, laughing: 'Though you are swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race.' The Hare, believing her assertion to be simply impossible, assented to the proposal; And they agreed that the Fox should choose the course and fix the goal.

On the day appointed for the race the two started together.
The Tortoise never for a moment stopped,
but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course.
The Hare, lying down by the wayside, fell asleep.

At last waking up, and moving as fast as he could,
he saw that the Tortoise had reached the goal,
and was comfortable dozing after her fatigue.
'Slow but steady wins the race.'

The Mountain in Labour

A mountain was once greatly agitated.
Loud groans and noises were heard,
and crowds of people came from all parts
to see what was the matter.

While they assembled in anxious expectation of some terrible calamity,
out came a mouse.
'Don't make much ado about nothing.'

The Fox and the Grapes

A famished Fox saw some clusters of ripe black Grapes
hanging from a trellised vine.
She resorted to all her tricks to get at them,
but wearied herself in vain, for she could not reach them.

At last she turned away, hiding disappointment and saying:
"The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought."
'Sour Grapes.'

The Goose and the Swan

A certain rich man bought in the market a Goose and a Swan.

He fed the one for his table and kept the other for the sake of its song.

When the time came for killing the Goose, the cook went to get him at night,
when it was dark, and was not able to distinguish one bird from the other.

By mistake he caught the Swan instead of the Goose.

The Swan, threatened with death, burst forth into song
and made himself known by his voice, and preserved his life by his melody.

'Music can delay death.'

Aesop

translated by George Fyler Townsend

All Too Soon

No one's in doubt that the children singing
All too soon shall be women and men
And the bonny new land
That we shaped with our hand
It'll roll to the ocean again.

No one's in doubt that the tale we're bringing
Can't turn time back to where he was then
For the old ways they change
But the new is so strange
Will it ever be simple again?

No one's in doubt that the children singing
All too soon shall be women and men
And the canny old land
That we never could command
It'll roll to the ocean again.

Grandpa was in the war, and when he came back to Nova Scotia
He had a bride in tow, who had no English but Yes and No Sir
What made her leave her home to be with someone she hardly knew?
How she must have hated to feel alone,
she must have cried when the day was through

Oh and this was a part of earth
Where you could hold onto one another
This was a line of work
A-where the whole town was like your brother

Ah but now it's getting hard to stay
The children move to a bigger city
And there is really nothing you can say
But what a shame, and what a terrible pity

Haven't got a notion, how to stop the motion, rolling to the ocean, that's the magic potion

They say, The world is getting smaller every day, oh every day
But to make it pay, Well everybody has to move away, so far away

You know, How much a Maritimer hates to go, and isn't it so,
Just how much we owe To the land that watched our parents grow
When life was oh, so deep and slow
And hard, but deep, and proud
Was the life we once were allowed,
We knew our soul never could be bowed,

Dealing with the ocean, when you're Nova Scotian, turns into a sign of family devotion

Stephen Hatfield

Crowded Table

You can hold my hand
When you need to let go
I can be your mountain
When you're feeling valley-low
I can be your streetlight
Showing you the way home
You can hold my hand
When you need to let go

If we want a garden
We're gonna have to sow the seed
Plant a little happiness
Let the roots run deep
If it's love that we give
Then it's love that we reap
If we want a garden
We're gonna have to sow the seed

I want a house with a crowded table
And a place by the fire for everyone
Let us take on the world while we're young and able
And bring us back together when the day is done

The door is always open
Your picture's on my wall
Everyone's a little broken
And everyone belongs
Yeah, everyone belongs.

Natalie Hemby, Lori McKenna, Brandi Carlile

Singers

Soprano

Brenna Aylward*
Kayla Baron
Magalin Carroll*
Rebecca Craine
Naomi Cruz Tejada*
Sara Flayhan*
Jillian Fredricksen*
Karin Fredricksen
Lenore Gauna
Laura Goyette*
Roseanna Insingo
Lorilei Jones*
Maria Lepak*
Gabriella Lindhurst*
Brianna Michael*
Shelby Moccio*
Katie Pauloz
Hannah Pennings
Christina Raposo
Isabella Ricciardi*
Victoria Richardson*
Madison Roy*
Emily Sill
Leah Spillane
Amanda Tebbetts
Molly Torres*
Emma Wilburn*

Alto

Kelly Blecker*
Isabelle Boyd
Shaeleigh Boynton
Megan Canney
Grace Crowley
Briana Curran
Ashley Hamparian
Kyara Heredia
Mia Hoyos Murray*
Emilie Janelle
Tatiana Martinez
Maria Murphy
Leah Scontras*
Mikayla Williams

Tenor

David Alexander
Alexander Boligan
Ella Chomiak
William D'Avino
Mitchel Hurley
Andrew Leger
Jack MacPherson
Joey Sawicki

Bass

Christian Cotton
Sebastiano D'Angelo
Nicholas Dulling
Eric Lachapelle
Brian Leger
John Roper
Andrew Sneeringer

Choir Leadership

Kelly Blecker, President
Emma Wilburn, Vice-President / Choral Assistant
Mia Hoyos Murray, Secretary / Section Leader
Laura Goyette, Section Leader
Gabriella Lindhurse, Section Leader
Jack MacPherson, Section Leader
Roseanna Insingo, Leader
Tatiana Martinez, Leader
Isabella Ricciardi, Leader
John Roper, Leader
Madison Roy, Leader

*denotes VOCE singer

Brad Dumont, Director of Choral Activities

Brad is a passionate arts advocate working to create and support artistic projects that contribute to cultural improvement and community-based arts education. As a conductor, he believes in the power of choral singing to build empathetic communities — providing space for those who may otherwise not be heard. Brad is committed to a process-oriented approach of music-making which allows for artists to explore broad themes within the topics of equity and justice.

He serves as Director of Choral Activities at Assumption University, Music Director of the Salisbury Singers in Worcester, MA, and Director of Music at First Parish Church of Stow & Acton, U.U. Additionally, Brad serves on the artistic planning team for the Boston-based choir VOICES 21C where he helps develop creative staging and narrative driven programs. Brad is also an orchestra contractor for ensembles throughout New England, Resident Conductor with the Connecticut Children's Chorus, vice-chair of the Greater Boston Choral Consortium, and a producer for The Choral Commons co-leading Engender, a podcast focusing on gender diversity in choral music. He has previously served organizations like Emmanuel Music, Boston Lyric Opera, New Hampshire Master Chorale, and New Hampshire Music Festival as an executive & artistic producer, special projects & production manager, and/or artistic consultant and advisor.

Brad is currently working towards a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting at the University of Hartford's Hartt School studying with Dr. Anthony Trecek-King. Brad received a Master of Music in Choral Conducting at Boston University and graduated from Plymouth State University in 2013 earning a B.S. in Music Education K-12 and a B.A. in Music: Vocal Performance and Pedagogy.

Brett Maguire, Collaborative Pianist

Brett is a musician, yoga teacher, and rock climber. As an organist, he frequently performs with the Boston Pops and Boston Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood. He has played in recital at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, and in 2005 he won First Prize and Prize of the Audience in the Andr Marchal International Organ Competition in Biarritz, France. Brett has been practicing yoga since 2006. He is a Kripalu-certified yoga instructor and maintains a Mysore-style Ashtanga practice in Brookline, MA. A traditional rock climber, Brett has climbed in Joshua Tree, CA; Red Rocks, NV; and Indian Creek, UT, in addition to the many excellent cliffs scattered throughout New England. He is presently Director of Music at Hadwen Park UCC in Worcester and is the accompanist for the Assumption University Chorale.

The **ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY CHORALE** is an academic concert choir comprised of artists who are studying for professions in all walks of life and who share an interest in the joy of choral singing and the community that comes with it. The Chorale performs music from across generations and styles, using music as a tool to explore and communicate more effectively. In University Chorale, we all contribute fully to the process of learning and creative expression by engaging in a process-oriented experience where the performances are a byproduct of the learning that takes place in the rehearsal room. **VOCE** is a select group of soprano and alto singers who have identified themselves as artists willing to commit more time to preparing advanced music, staging, improvising, and community outreach.

Acknowledgement of Land

The land upon which we sit, stand, and live is the land that we have been accustomed to thinking as our land. However, we are all on the original unceded, inalienable homelands of tribal nations whose languages, musics, and cultures we have systematically erased. We acknowledge the painful history of forced removal of indigenous people from this territory and the territories of all settler nations and we honor and respect the many diverse indigenous peoples who remain connected to their lands.

Here in Worcester, MA, we are living and working on the traditional and unceded territory of the Nipmuc peoples.

Special thanks to:

Brett Maguire, Thomas Burke, Jacqueline Chlapowski, Dr. Toby Norris, Dr. Peter Clemente, Dr. Deb Cady Melzer, Br. Daniele Caglione A.A., Chorale Student Leadership, Grace Brigham, Worcester Children's Chorus & Pam Mindell, Assumption University Music Faculty, and all others who contributed to today's event.



**Assumption
University**

Department of Art & Music