



School of Music
University of Missouri

2023-2024 Series | Large Ensemble

When Giants Burn

Based on the novel by Beth Vrabel

Featuring
University Glee Club
University Treble Choir
Concert Chorale

Kari Adams, conductor

Paul Anderson II, Kacey Kennedy, Bomi Kim, Carmen Ramirez
Mary Shields, graduate assistant conductors

Bomi Kim, Austin Gaskin, Seda Balci,
Ludwing Espindola Mendoza, piano

Sam Whitty, cello | Isaac Foley, guitar

November 4, 2023 • 3:00PM
Broadway Christian Church

University Glee Club

Hayes

*“The sticky, sneaky thought I’m trying to scrape away is that someday I’m going to be alone.
Completely alone. Without anyone at all. Maybe not today, but someday.”*

**Cry Havoc! Rob Redei
William Shakespeare (1564-1616)**

Paul Anderson II, conductor

**The River (2019) Susan Labarr (b. 1981)
Bill Cairns (b. 1951)**

Carmen Ramirez, conductor | Isaac Foley, guitar

If You Heard My Voice (2018) Sherry Blevins

Bomi Kim, conductor | Sam Whitty, cello

University Treble Choir

Gerty

*I want to do both. I want to fight to be heard but I also want to run.
Pando is strong because of his connections.
And I don’t know anything about what that would be like.*

La Paloma (2007) Cristian Grases (b. 1973)

Isaac Foley, guitar

**They May Tell You (2019) Andrea Ramsey
Isabella Cook**

Mary Shields, conductor

**Storm Comin’ (2011) Andrea Ramsey
Ruth Moody**

Concert Chorale

The Journey to Pando

Longing for Connection

*I say, "I read that when you stand in Pando, the aspen leaves tremble.
They're shaped like coins, hanging from the branches.
No matter how light the breeze, they all quake.
A trembling giant.
I'll know what that sounds like. I'll know what it looks like."
Maybe I'll also know what it feels like to be rooted.*

City Called Heaven (1994)..... Josephine Poelinitz

Ronnie Wilson, soloist

Flight

*Hayes hoots, a grin shining on his face. He was so angry on the ground, but it's like he left that all behind
and now is something else. I think maybe he's proud of me, of us.
And suddenly we're laughing, and it feels like my heart is hovering outside my body, like
it's dancing.*

TaReKiTa (2021)..... Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Crash

*A high, keening sound rocks through me. Hayes.
He's screaming, his mouth an open cave. And the
side of the mountain is where the sky ought to be.
Yet my voice is steady when I shout, "Hold on!"
His arms wrap around my waist. I cover his
hands with mine as everything I built shatters
around us.
The ground is so hard, and I am too soft.*

**Invictus (2013) Joshua Rist
William Ernest Henley (1849-1903)**

Kacey Kennedy, conductor | Sammi Rogers and Karma Vaughn, soloists
Sam Whitty, cello

Wandering

*I'll never know what it's like to be so permanent, so anchored.
Everything I count on can crumble in a flame, in a crash, in a night.*

Super Flumina Babilonis..... Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525-1594)

*The dream of a burning ocean comes back to me every time I close my eyes.
Every choice I've made, every step I've taken, everything is about to burn around me.*

*Fire surrounds us, lapping against the border of dirt we carve.
My arm is a flame. I am burning, inside out.
Ash around me. Flames inside me. Everything fades.*

Fire (2018)**Katerina Gimon (b. 1993)**

Rooted

My cheeks burn when tears leak from my closed eyes. Mrs. Freid's hand curls around mine. It's sort of like having roots, her fingers overlapping mine and Nanny Pat's in my hair.

Gerty leans closer to me, our arms brushing. We can't see the roots below us, where they connect and tie. But above us the leaves tremble. The world shifts.

What We Need Is Here (2020) **James Deignan
Wendell Berry (b. 1934)**

Madeleine Cerneka, Katie Jones, and Isabel Murphy, soloists

Texts and Translations

Cry Havoc!

“Cry Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war!”
“The evil men do lives after them,
the good is oft interred with their bones.”

The River

I grew from boy to man along the river.
My roots grew tangled with the willow tree.
The rocks and sand and mud were my foundation.
I thought the water flowed only for me.
The old men always warned, “Don’t fight the river.
If you just give her time, she’ll bring you in.”
But times when you’re adrift you get real anxious.
And there’s a chance you won’t get home again.
The river holds the secrets of a lifetime.
Its depths and shallows swirl with mystery.
Through flood or drought the water follows one law – “Flow on” to the everlasting sea.
Part of that river still pumps deep inside of me.
But I need more to make my spirit whole.
Baptize me once again in river water.
Let river mud anoint my prodigal soles.
I grew from boy to man along the river.
My roots grew tangled with the willow tree.
The rocks and sand and mud were my foundation.
I grew from boy to man...
I will get home again.

If You Heard My Voice

If you heard my voice, what did I say?
Your words are like the night and mine like day
Does my tune ring hollow in your ear –
A melody that no one wants to hear?

Just listen with your heart and then you’ll know,
As winds of change around us start to blow,
That music comes by night as in the day,
And no one should wish either song away!
Sing on and on!

La Paloma

The Dove

¿Dónde estaba la paloma que el gavilán la
cogió?
¿Qué se hizo la paloma que el gavilán la
cogió?
En la puerta de Ramona Ay! Mira y fue que la
desplumó.
Todo en la vida es mentira solo la muerte es
verdá.
Porque ahí es donde se acaba la pompa y la
vanidá.
¿Cómo no voy a llorar a mi mamá cuando se
muera?
Ojalá que yo pudiera volverla a resucitá.
Ya me voy, ya me despido aunque la gaita
está muy buena.
Ya me voy, ya me despido aunque la gaita
está muy buena.
Dale duro a esa tambora pá que se anime mi
pena.

Where did the dove that the sparrow hawk
caught go?
Where is the dove that the sparrow hawk
caught?
At Ramona's gate, Oh! Look, I found it
plucked.
All in life is false, death is the only truth.
For there is where pomp and vanity run out.
Why wouldn't I cry when my mother dies?
I wish I could bring her back to life.
I'm leaving, Maria, I leave the dove there for
you,
Open its beak and make it eat, I'm leaving the
food there.
I'm leaving, I say goodbye even though the
gaita is very good.
Beat this drum hard so my sorrow cheers up.

They May Tell You

And they may tell you,
Mountain woman,
That you were never meant to rise this high
But you of the snowy eyes and purple skies were born to climb
Forget the rocky footing
You have nowhere to go but up.
And they may tell you,
River woman,
That your mouth would be prettier shut
But you of the swift words and clear currents were born to speak
Forget the icy stares,
From you source springs only truth
And they may tell you,
Meadow woman,
That you are not worth the air you breathe,
But you of the green roots and pure blooms,
Were born to grow,
Forget the empty hearts,
Everything you touch,

Opens up
But ocean woman,
Sometimes your waves will break,
The tides can't come in strong everyday and even the moon makes mistakes
So when your waters falter,
They may ask you
Who do you think you are?
And you can tell them
I am a woman,
I keep the company of others like me
Women of forest,
Women of fire,
Women of sunshine,
Women of sea,
And we lay claim to everything from coral reef to redwood tree,
They may tell you,
Don't get ahead of yourself
Ignore them
Go as far as you can

Storm Comin'

When that storm comes,
Don't run for cover,
Don't run from the comin' storm,
'cause there ain't no use in runnin'.
When that rain falls
Let it wash away
Let it wash away, that fallin' rain,
The tears and the trouble
When those lights flash
You hear that thunder roar
Will you listen to that thunder roar
And let your spirits soar?
When that love calls
Will you open up your door?
You gotta stand on up and let it in,
You gotta let love through your door
When that storm comes,(storm comin', yeah) Don't run for cover,
No, don't run from the coming storm,
Forget the empty hearts,
Everything you touch,

Opens up
But ocean woman,
Sometimes your waves will break,
The tides can't come in strong everyday and even the moon makes mistakes
So when your waters falter,
They may ask you
Who do you think you are?
And you can tell them
I am a woman,
I keep the company of others like me
Women of forest,
Women of fire,
Women of sunshine,
Women of sea,
And we lay claim to everything from coral reef to redwood tree,
They may tell you,
Don't get ahead of yourself
Ignore them
Go as far as you can
'cause you can't keep a storm from comin'

City Called Heaven

I am a pilgrim, a pilgrim of sorrow
I'm left in this wide world, this wide world alone
Ain't got no hope, got no hope for tomorrow
Trying to make it, make heaven my home
I am a pilgrim, a pilgrim of sorrow
I'm left in this wide world, this wide world alone
Ain't got no hope, got no hope for tomorrow
Trying to make it, make heaven my home
Sometimes I'm tossed and I'm driven, Lord
Heard of a city, a city called heaven
Trying to make it, make heaven my home
Heaven

TaReKiTa

Dha Tarekita,
Dhum Tarekita,
Nom Tarekita
Takadimitaka
Takadimi Takajanu

Takadimi Na

From the composer: "The text syllables are onomatopoeic vocalizations of the sounds made by Indian instruments."

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

Super Flumina Babilonis

Super flúmina Babilonis
illic sédimus et flévimmus,
dum recordarémur tui Sion.
In salícibus in médio ejus
suspéndimus órgana nostra

By the Waters of Babylon

By the waters of Babylon
We sat down and wept,
When we remembered thee, O sion.
As for our harps, we hanged them up
upon the trees that are therein.

What We Need Is Here

Geese appear high over us,
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,

as in love or sleep, holds
them to their way, clear
in the ancient faith: what we need
is here. And we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye,
clear. What we need is here.

Program Notes

When Giants Burn by Beth Vrabel tells the riveting and emotional story of two adolescents struggling to find their place in a world that often feels it is against them. It is a deeply moving story about loss, longing, and the search for connection to the self, friends, family, and nature. Vrabel's novel speaks to deep truths of the human experience, and it is our honor to bring it to life through song today.

Our program opens with character sketches of Hayes and Gerty. The two characters are placed together by the school in a counseling group as they struggle through past trauma that impacts their ability to find a place in their social world. Hayes, whose mother has just returned home following a period of incarceration, struggles with a deep-seated anger (*Cry Havoc*). He feels as though no one in his family cares about him, knows him, or hears him (*If you heard my voice*). As he navigates his developing identity and connection to family, he often recalls moments in nature with his family prior to his mother's incarceration (*The River*).

Gerty lives off-the-grid with her survivalist parents following a traumatic death in the family (*La Paloma*). Although she can't find a place of belonging with her peers, she is close with her grandmother, a Civil Air Patrol pilot who is helping Gerty build an ultralight aircraft that she will eventually fly. From her parents and her grandmother, Gerty is constantly reminded of the importance of nature to her survival and that she can be independent (*They may tell you*). Gerty is deeply passionate about Pando, a clonal organism known as the *quaking giant* that looks like a large aspen grove but is actually a single organism sprouting from a single root system. Her dream is to see Pando, just a few hours away from her home, before he dies. But when her parents tell her they are moving away from their home, from her grandmother, and from Pando, Gerty makes a plan to see it before she is taken away (*Storm Comin'*).

Hayes and Gerty meet, both longing for something they feel they cannot have and seeking a way to escape their current reality (*City Called Heaven*). Together, they decide to take Gerty's recently completed ultralight airplane to see Pando before it's too late. The euphoria they feel in flight (*TaReKiTa*) is quickly disrupted when a bird strikes the plane and they crash into the side of the mountain. Injured, alone, with no way for anyone to find them, Gerty immediately resolves to safely get them home using the skills she's learned from her survivalist parents (*Invictus*). The pair wander in the forest, facing various obstacles and battling injuries, hunger, and fatigue, all while a forest fire rages toward them (*Super Flumina Babilonis, Fire*). In the end, Hayes and Gerty realize that what they had been searching for, the connection and belonging they so desired, had been with them all along (*What We Need is Here*).

Woven throughout the story are themes of nature—our connection to it and our need to preserve it. Similar themes can be found throughout the texts we will sing today, including the nature imagery in *They May Tell You* (mountain woman, ocean woman, etc.), *The River*, *Super Flumina Babilonis*, and *What We Need is Here*. The final piece specifically alludes both to the connection we can find in one another and the resources that we can find in nature. Our relationships—with others and with nature—are symbiotic. We need each other to survive, and we must tend to and care for those connections.

Personnel

Soprano

Katelyn Bradshaw
Maggie Brown
*Apinporn Chaiwanichsiri
Anna Colletto
Emma French
Abby Gertsmeier
Emma Gilmore
Emma Hicks
Katie Jones
Zoe Kersey
Becca Larson
Ruth McCarron
Sarah Molitor
Sammi Rogers
Devin Scharer
Annika Schulstrom
*Mary Shields
Aili Sluga
Maria Thompson
Anna Tuley
Josephine Turner
Karma Vaughn
Madelyn Winter

Tenor

*Paul Anderson
Dorion Bailey
Trey Betler
Killian Boyd
Charlie Creely
Will Forbes
Joshua Goldman
Andrew Gwin
Nick Kanatzar
Apolo Midkiff
*Topher Otake
Bryce Ramsbottom
Ethan Welker
*Casey Wood
Chris Woodcock

Alto

Madeleine Cerneka
Faith Glasgow
Kelsey Hale
Margaret Hosking
*Kacey Kennedy
*Bomi Kim
Samara Lewis
Ellie Lin
Campbell Macy
Anna Moore
Isabel Murphy
Vivian Owens
Eliza Pierce
*Carmen Ramirez
Jessica Scarce
Laney Schaefer
Carlee Strauss
Kylie Tune
Sindhu Venkat
Olivia White
Chloe Wilson
Sarah Young

Bass

Roy Beeson
Graham Deterding
*Austin Gaskin
Aidan Gildehaus
Reece Hinton
Jonah Lanigan
Kael Miranda
Logan Nault
Henry Rusten
Miles Skaggs
Brady Walter

*School of Music Graduate Students