



School of Music
University of Missouri

2024-2025 Series | Large Ensemble

UNIVERSITY SINGERS FALL CONCERT

So Breaks The Sun . . .

Dr. Brandon A. Boyd, conductor

Bomi Kim and Ronnie Wilson, assistant conductors

Seda Balci and Bomi Kim, collaborative pianists

Dr. Megan Arns, Carson Allen, Anders Harms,
Luke Haymon, Zachary Simpson, percussionists

Kyrsten Wehner, flutist

October 18, 2024 | 7:00pm
First Presbyterian Church

Program

Carmina Mei Cordis **Abbie Betinis**

- 1. Aeterna lux, divinitas (Eternal light, divinity)
- 2. Angele Dei (Prayer to a Guardian Angel)

Grace Gard, soprano | Aubri Stewart, mezzo soprano

Underneath My Feet **Jennifer Lucy Cook**

Dr. Megan Arns, marimba
Seda Balci, piano

I thank You God for most this amazing day **Christopher Aspaas**

Bomi Kim, piano

Words of the Sun **Zhou Long**

Connor Statton, tenor
Ronnie Wilson, conductor

Listen **Ralph Johnson**

Saeya Saeya (새야 새야) **Byung Hee Oh**

Andrew Miller Alka , tenor
Dr. Megan Arns, Anders Harms, Luke Haymon, percussionists
Kyrsten Wehner, flutist
Bomi Kim, conductor

So Breaks the Sun **Shavon Lloyd**

Morning **Hans Bridger Heruth**

Hans Bridger Heruth, guest composer and pianist

Gede Nibo **arr. Sten Källman**

Katie Jones, soprano
Dr. Megan Arns, Carson Allen, Anders Harms,
Luke Haymon, Zachary Simpson, percussionists

Come and Go **arr. Brandon A. Boyd**

Andrew Miller Alka, tenor | Ronnie Wilson, tenor | Carlee Strauss, soprano
Luke Anderson, trap set | Anders Harms, bass

Program Notes

Our fall concert presents a collection of choral works that connect themes of our spiritual reflection, the beauty of nature, and the hope of renewal and promise. Each piece on this program, rooted in distinct cultural and historical contexts, invites you to explore profound emotional landscapes and shared human experiences.

The concert opens with *Carmina mei cordis* (Songs of my heart), featuring two short pieces by Abbie Betinis. The first, *Aeterna lux, divinitas*, is a hymn from the *Liturgia Horarum* that celebrates the unity of the Trinity through intricate modal transitions. The piece masterfully connects its voices together in a canon, reflecting the oneness of faith and spiritual community. The second piece in this set, *Angele dei*, often attributed to Reginald of Canterbury, serves as a personal invocation for peace, influenced by the choral composers like Poulenc and Messiaen.

Following these works, e.e. cummings' poem "i thank You God for most this amazing" challenges us to have a deep appreciation for life and nature set to music by Christopher Aspaas. The speaker's gratitude for the natural world's beauty resonates with the earlier pieces, emphasizing the interconnectedness of spirituality and the environment and how important it is for us to acknowledge what has been provided for us in this life. The texts' vivid imagery and theme of renewal suggests an awakening to the divine wonders around us, paralleling the prayerful sentiments of the preceding works.

As we continue exploring the beauty of nature, "Words of the Sun" by Zhou Long suggests the morning's hope tinged with melancholy. Ai Qing's poetry, born from a turbulent political history, reflects a yearning for freedom and resilience. This sentiment echoes throughout the concert, as the listeners are invited to share in the anticipation and emotional complexity of new beginnings.

The piece "Listen," dedicated to the late conductor Sigrid Johnson, highlights the legacy of mentorship and the enduring impact of those we cherish. It serves as a tribute not only to Johnson's contributions to music but also to the powerful connections forged through shared artistic experiences. She served as the Associate Conductor of VocalEssence for nearly 25 years and for 10 years before that as Assistant Conductor of the Dale Warland Singers. Tragically, Sigrid passed away in March 2022 after a brief battle with cancer. S.t Olaf alumnus Ralph Johnson composed "Listen" for the S.t Olaf Choir based on the poem that David Bengtson (long time family friend of Sigrid Johnson) created and read at the memorial service celebrating her life. This work is presented in loving memory of a beloved colleague, pedagogue, mentor and friend who was known as the "best ears in the field."

"Saeya Saeya," which translates to "Birds, Birds, Bluebirds," is one of the most iconic melodies in traditional Korean folk tunes, and serves as a reminder of cultural resilience and hope amidst historical struggles. Byunghee Oh incorporated some melodies from the Gregorian chant to convey the text effectively for this piece. The dialogue with the bird symbolizes a longing for freedom, resonating deeply with the spiritual themes of the concert. According to tradition, mothers left widowed by the revolution later sang this tune as a lullaby to their children. This piece is written for three choirs, with percussion, flute, piccolo, and tenor soloist. Splitting into three choir settings depicts well their crying even more, echoing throughout the space and despair.

The concert concludes with our concert theme, "So Breaks the Sun," and "Morning," celebrating the beauty of dawn. These pieces reflect the promise of renewal and light, inspiring a sense of peace and inviting listeners to embrace the transformative power of each new day. Throughout the semester, we have been thankful to the

Creator for waking us up this and every morning, as each day is a precious gift that offers new chances for growth, joy, and connection. This gratitude helps us maintain a positive attitude and reminds us to appreciate life's blessings, big or small.

Finally, the traditional Black spiritual "Come and Go with Me" captures our main theme of this concert, which is hope. It reflects the strong faith and resilience of people of color who have faced tough times. This piece reminds us of the human spirit's ability to overcome challenges, echoing the diverse themes of the concert. We hope you will join in as we celebrate the victory over many struggles and hardships experienced in this life.

Through tonight's program, we hope you have taken you on a journey of reflection spiritually, emotional resonance, appreciation for the beauty of life and nature, and celebrating the victory moments in your own journey—an exploration that celebrates our shared humanity and the impactful connections we share through music and poetry.

Mizzou University Singers

SOPRANO 1

Maya Anand
Elise Cressey
*Grace Gard
Katie Jones
Vaysia Knust
Karma Vaughn
+Melissa Montoya

SOPRANO 2

Anna Colletto
Alyssa Counts
Miranda Devers
+*Kampbell Hemeyer
Molly Hume
Molly Symmonds
Carlee Strauss

ALTO 1

*Erin Brage
Lauren Bruss
Madeleine Cerneka
Layla Friend
Bomi Kim
Carmen Ramirez
Joey Turner

ALTO 2

*Kennedy Kinnick
Emma Brown
Campbell Macy
Maggie Hosking
Sydney Laird
Grace Rieder
+Aubri Stewart

TENOR 1

+*Andrew Miller Alka
+Dorion Bailey
Patrick Ferguson
Connor Stratton
Ronnie Wilson

TENOR 2

Paul Anderson II
Brock Bordenkircher
Andrew Gwin
Josh Goldman
Aidan Gildehaus
Dagan Joiner
*Casey Wood

BASS 1

Jack Grant
Kaden Green
Diego Halbeck
Jonah Lanigan
*Sam Romine
+Trey Thompson

BASS 2

Graham Deterding
Ja'wan Footman
Michael James Hark
Miles Skaggs
*Carter Thiemann
Garrett Tucker

** Section Leaders*

+ Singers Leadership Team