

Se Oye Mi Voz

Tyler Todd Kimmel, Marshall Lombard, Justin Birchell, Anjali Chudasama,
Leah Wyman, conductors
Dominico Reyes, collaborative pianist

University Singers

Kasar Mie la Gaji

Alberto Grau (b. 1937)

Kasar mie la gaji

Tired is the earth

We begin the concert with this haunting piece, brought to us from Venezuela by composer, Alberto Grau, who composed this for an international mobilization to save the earth and conscientious effort regarding the problems of the environment. The inhabitants of the African Sahel say: "Kasar mie la gaji," which means "tired is the earth". Though this particular language and dialect are not specified by Mr. Grau, the Sahel region is a multi-cultural intersection of Africa and is heavily influenced by French and Arabic. This piece uses whispers and haunting speech-like vocal techniques, stomps and claps, and repetitive syncopated rhythms. The faster the rhythm becomes the more it sounds like a dance...a dance that will continue until it gets its point across. Our earth is tired, and so are its people! We open our show tonight with this cry of pain, begging for justice, rebirth, and growth.

Avuleki' Amasango

South African traditional
arr. Marshall Lombard

Avuleki' Amasango
Amen

The gates of Heaven have been opened
Amen

This is a traditional Xhosa and Zulu hymn that was also used as an expression of relief to the end of the Apartheid regime. "The gates of Heaven have been opened", is also a symbol of freedom from the bonds and atrocities of Apartheid. We hope that this expression of freedom from oppression and the hope of new possibility can be felt in solidarity with the experiences of the students from the Leadership Center, even from a different time and place.



Someday

from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

Alan Menken (b. 1947)

Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

(b. 1948)

Someday when we are wiser
When the world's older
When we have learned
I pray someday we may yet live to live and let live
Someday life will be fairer
Need will be rarer
And greed will not pay
God speed this bright millennium on its way
And let it come someday

Someday our fight will be won then
We'll stand in the sun then
That bright afternoon
'Til then, on days when the sun is gone
We'll hang on
We'll wish upon the moon,
Let it come
One day, someday
soon

Though Disney's 1996 animated feature *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* was not widely popular, its music has become widely known as one of the most beautiful and poignant scores in animation history. The end credits song, *Someday*, was later put in the second act of the stage version of the film, and is sung by the persecuted gypsy, Esmerelda. As she is thrown in prison, she keeps her faith and sings this song. Its lyrics paint a beautiful picture of the future, a future that many of us still desire to see and believe we will see. We sing these lyrics tonight for oppressed women and people who live in situations that have continually trapped them from opportunities and living into their identities. "When we are wiser...when we have learned." Our desire is that something is learned from the music this evening. Listen to the stories. Learn what is happening. Ask how you might be someone that brings reconciliation, peace, opportunity, and prosperity to those who need it most. All of us have an opportunity to help turn someday into today!



This is Me

from *The Greatest Showman*

Taylor Buehler, Zoë Cooper, Katherine Lai, Stephanie Lam, Christins Lao, Elly Lee, Stephanie Liu, Adrian Wong, Angelica Wu, soloists

Benj Pasek and Justin Paul

I am not a stranger to the dark
Hide away, they say
'Cause we don't want your broken parts
I've learned to be ashamed of all my scars
Run away, they say
No one'll love you as you are

But I won't let them break me down to dust
I know that there's a place for us
For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown 'em out
I am brave, I am bruised
I am who I'm meant to be, this is me
Look out 'cause here I come
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me

Another round of bullets hits my skin
Well, fire away 'cause today,
I won't let the shame sink in
We are bursting through the barricades and
Reaching for the sun, we are warriors
Yeah, that's what we've become

I won't let them break me down to dust...

And I know that I deserve your love
There's nothing I'm not worthy of,

When the sharpest words...

In light of our theme this quarter for UW Sings, uplifting the voices of those who are not often heard, we offer this song as an anthem representing identity, self-love, self-determination and solidarity.



UW Glee Club

Little Flower, I See You

poetry and music by Gabrielle Rosse (b. 1982)

*world premiere

Little flower, your petals are bruised and torn.
Your leaves are dry and grey.
But you are the most beautiful flower
I have ever seen.

Little flower?
Tell me your name.
What is the sound of your heart?

Is it a waterfall?
Is it a river?
Is it your blood,
Flowing through your veins?

Tears like rain flowing through your veins.
Little Flower,
I see you.
I see you.

Little Flower,
You're enough just the way you are.
Flower, there are worlds inside your heart.

Tears like rain flowing through your veins.
You don't have to turn away,
Or hide any more from the sun.
I am here with you.
I see you.

You don't have to hide.
There are worlds inside you.
I love them all.

Little Flower,
You are free.
You're enough, Little Flower.
You're enough just the way you are.

Composer's Note:

In February 2022, my friend Justin Birchell invited me to collaborate on a choral work inspired by themes of women's leadership. He told me of his partnership with LMI, Leadership Mission International, an organization that provides education and training programs to women in Honduras, preparing them to join an existing and growing legacy of Honduran feminist leaders and community builders.

In my search for a text to reflect the spirit of strength, nurturing, and endurance shared by so many women leaders, I came across the poetry of young Honduran girls who are survivors of abuse, abandonment, and neglect, published in *Counting Time Like People Count Stars: Poems by the girls of Our Little Roses, San Pedro Sula, Honduras*, edited by Spencer Reese (Northwestern UP, 2017).

The girls of Our Little Roses courage to write about their loss, abandonment, and desire for freedom and love resonated strongly with me. I saw in their strength the next generation of our leaders together with the women of LMI.

Our leadership work begins with ourselves, with self-love and nurturing so we can pour love into our communities. Honoring this inner work, and the women and children who grow compassion in the midst of pain, I wrote a poem to my inner child of all the words I wanted to hear growing up. May these words of kindness be a letter to the heart of whoever hears them.

Mira a Honduras

Que no te tapen los ojos
Ojo con la corrupción y la incomprensión
La indiferencia y la delincuencia
Que con frecuencia ninguno se encuentra
en esta nación
Ponele mucha atención a esta canción
de corazón
Es mas lo bueno que aquí tenemos
Mas los que queremos creemos en esta tierra
Es una bendición

Mira a Honduras con otros ojos
Que esta es tu tierra
Descubrí que al mirarla con otros ojos vas
a merecerla
Mira a Honduras con otros ojos
Tienes que quererla
Descubrí que al mirarla con otros ojos vas
a merecerla

Que no te tapen los ojos
La deforestación y contaminación
La pobreza injusticia y bajeza
Que con frecuencia ninguno se encuentra
en esta nación
Ponele mucha atención a esta canción
de corazón
Es mas la riqueza grandeza nobleza y
mas la belleza
Que hay en esta tierra
Es una bendición

Mira a Honduras is a pop tune by Honduran musician and soccer player, Polache. "This is a country with low self-esteem," Polache said. "I wanted to write a song that said even if we have thousands of problems, we have many good things that need to be recognized." We seek to uplift women and the organizations that help to empower them and give them a voice in their societies. These lyrics beg the listener to look closely and consider the country and its people with potential and dignity, but it transcends the Honduran situation. Polache reminds us that it is a choice to look at anyone and any situation with different eyes. This is also a call to have global eyes! It is fitting that Mira a Honduras is performed as an upbeat tune with a shout chorus- the catchy melody and dance-like rhythms invite the listener to join in. What we have learned in singing songs like this is that the more we do so, the more the lyrics become part of us, and we begin to believe and desire to change ourselves! Please sing along!

Polache (b. 1977)

*Do not cover your eyes
Beware of corruption and misunderstanding
Indifference and crime
That often none is found in this nation
Pay close attention to this song from the heart
It is more the good that we have here
More the ones we want we believe in this land
It is a blessing*

*Look at Honduras with different eyes
This is your land
I discovered that by looking at it with other eyes
you will deserve it
Look at Honduras with other eyes
You have to love it
I discovered that by looking at it with other eyes
you will deserve it*

*Do not cover your eyes
Deforestation and pollution
Poverty, injustice and lowliness
That often none is found in this nation
Pay close attention to this song from the heart
It is more wealth, greatness, nobility and more
beauty
What is on this earth
It is a blessing*

UW Treble Choir

Be Like the Bird

Abby Betinis (b. 1980)

Be like the bird that,
Pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight,
Feels them give way beneath her,
And sings, and sings, and sings
Knowing she hath wings.

From the composer:

'This canon was composed in 2009, just after I'd completed cancer treatment for the second time. My parents and I sent it out as our Christmas card that year... This particular canon, inspired by my own struggle, is dedicated to High Rocks for Girls, an innovative school for middle and high school girls, founded by Susan Burt in the mountains of rural West Virginia...to continue to educate, empower, and inspired each girl to know that 'she hath wings.'

The students at the Leadership Center, who inspired this concert, the singers in the Treble Choir, as well as the students for whom Betinis wrote this piece may share the experience of finding the systems of support and justice inadequate. We celebrate the ways in which each individual finds uses their wings, even when when the bough gives way.

Wild Embers

Melissa Dunphy (b. 1980)

Poetry by Nikita Gill

Ava Cairns, Carrie Lin, Helen Li, *dancers*

Hadi Yusri, *choreographer*

We are the descendants
of the wild women you forgot
We are the stories you thought
would never be taught.

They should have checked the ashes
of the women they burned alive.
Because it takes a single wild ember
to bring a whole wildfire to life.

Nikita Gill's powerful text draws each of us- listener, singer, and dancer- into the lineage of generations of women who have endured violence, oppression, and erasure. Dunphy's provocative setting begins with the sizzling the embers of an almost-extinguished fire, with lines of text wafting from the remains. Through the twisting of intermingled melodic motifs, Dunphy coaxes the fire to life again with colorful chromatic melismas. Stomps accompany the proclamation, "they should have checked the ashes", insisting that the voices of women past and their representatives present are heard. Through the leadership and vision of Hadi Yusri and the improvisation of Carrie, Ava, and Helen, the dancers give physical form to both the women of the song and the fire they create.

Soy Mujer*

Shirley Paz

Hilvanando historias de ciprés,
Me dieron cuarto pa' las diez.
Contando segundos de café,
Me puse una flor en el pelo y lo logré.

Puedo sentir mi Alma,
Que ahora es libre hasta el alba.
Tomo los colores en mano,
Mi vida es un lienzo y pinto lo que amo.

Sueño y quiero
Puedo porque me tengo
Se oye mi voz.
Y me gusta mi canto
Vivo porque puedo
Soy la esencia de la Creación.

Tienes ese vientre de diamante
Virtuosa mujer, coraje andante.
La fuerza y dignidad son sus vestidos,
Corazón que danza en sus latidos.

Puedo sentir mi alma,
Que ahora es libre hasta el alba.
Tomo los colores en mano,
Mi vida es un lienzo y pinto lo que amo.

Sueño y quiero
Puedo porque me tengo
Se oye mi voz.
Y me gusta mi canto
Vivo porque puedo
Soy la esencia de la Creación.

Soy mujer y me gusta mi ser
Soy mujer y me gusta mi ser.

Sueño y quiero
Puedo porque me tengo
Se oye mi voz.
Y me gusta mi canto
Vivo porque puedo
Soy la esencia Creación.

*Stitching stories of cypress,
They gave me room for ten.
Counting seconds of coffee,
I put a flower in my hair and I managed.*

*I can feel my Soul,
Which is now free until dawn.
I take the colors in hand,
My life is a canvas and I paint what I love.*

*I dream and I desire,
I can because I have myself
My voice is heard.
And I like my song
I live because I can.
I am the essence of Creation.*

*You have that diamond belly
Virtuous woman, walking courage.
Strength and dignity are their clothes,
Heart that dances through its beats.*

*I can feel my Soul,
Which is now free until dawn.
I take the colors in hand,
My life is a canvas and I paint what I love.*

*I dream and I desire
I can because I have myself
My voice is heard.
And I like my singing
I live because I can.
I am the essence of Creation.*

*I am a woman and I like my being
I am a woman and I like my being*

*I dream and I desire
I can because I have myself
My voice is heard.
And I like my singing
I live because I can.
I am the essence of Creation.*



Shirley Paz is a Honduran singer, songwriter, composer, cellist, producer and activist who's innovative music often focuses on the empowerment of Honduran women and calls for unity and love for her country and its culture. This particular piece was suggested to us by the students and teachers on the campus of the Leadership Center when we asked them for songs that they felt represented their perspective and desires to an audience that may not be familiar with Honduran music or culture. The title of this concert, "Se Oye Mi Voz" (my voice is heard) is taken from the chorus of this piece, proclaiming that there is deep value in the personhood of each woman, and the expression of these inner lives should be heard! Paz utilizes images of painting, singing, and dancing to express the fullness of thought and creativity in the inner lives of her-- and all women-- ending with the exultant statement, "I live because I can, I am the essence of Creation!" It is this well of possibility that each student at the Leadership Center draws from to create their community initiatives to contribute and revitalize everything from education to water access to infrastructure reform. It is also our hope as singers and conductors as we disperse into a huge variety of spaces and professions, that we can learn to recognize this value within ourselves and use it to enrich our communities.

*"Soy Mujer" translates to "I am a Woman", a powerful proclamation in a culture that does not always value femininity. However, in the Treble Choir, we do not all identify as women. As artists, we wish to use our voices to represent and affirm the voices of the female artists and entrepreneurs featured in this program, and recognize the necessity of uplifting a demographic that has been frequently silenced. Many of us, if socialized as women, have experienced similar, or different but still unjust, forms of prejudice as those addressed in this song and on the program as a whole. This artistic choice does not, however, negate the importance of each individual gender identity of the singers on stage, who identify as female, non-binary, gender fluid, and male.

Columbia Choirs

Earth Song

Frank Tcheli (b. 1958)

Sing, Be, Live, See.

This dark stormy hour,
The wind, it stirs.
The scorched earth
Cries out in vain:

O war and power,
You blind and blur,
The torn heart
Cries out in pain.

But music and singing
Have been my refuge,
And music and singing
Shall be my light.

A light of song
Shining Strong: Allelulia!
Through darkness, pain, and strife, I'll
Sing, Be, Live, See...

Peace.

"Earth Song sprang out of an intense weariness of war and a wish for peace. The second half of the poem talks about music as a comforting force and a refuge. When I was bullied as a kid, music was my refuge. I often thought about bullies in relation to this piece as well, because that's where violence starts. But music is a place where people can find acceptance and love – and it can often be their saving grace. And it's not just choir that people can find that comfort – it's band, it's orchestra... it's just people coming together to make music." - Frank Tcheli

Combined Ensembles

Threads of Joy

Dale Trumbore (b. 1987)

Poetry by Laura Foley

I have noticed joy,
How it threads below
the darkness.
Have you seen it too?

And have you heard it,
how it speaks
the unspeakable,
the bliss?

A kind of silence, a light
beneath pain.
Have you noticed?

It rises like fingers
and then-- look!
it presses through.

From the composer:

"I've always loved when songs about happiness are set in a minor key—think Nina Simone singing "Feeling Good"—and the harmonic language acknowledges that we can't have joy without recognizing its opposite. Threads of Joy has similar undertones, and this setting of Laura Foley's text by the same name is not just an exultation of happiness. Rather, it recognizes how we emerge from darkness and pain back into light, and the music captures this duality in ever-shifting, prismatic harmonies."

While we celebrate the ingenuity and perseverance of the students and alumni of The Leadership Center, we acknowledge that change is not brought about without pain. Musically, we have chosen to end with a slightly nebulous view of joy, rather than a triumphant proclamation of victory. The work for revitalization and equity continues, and we are often left yearning for resolution. In Trumbore's piece, she keeps the listener on the hook, subverting opportunities for harmonic release until the final chord, when joy finally breaks through.



University Singers

Zaref Anderson
Rania Awad
Sophie Aziza
Jane Baird
Penny Baltimore
Madi Berglund
Ekaterina Bogdanova
Martha Bosma
Kendall Braschler
Taylor Buehler
Lyla Cain
Hannah Carpenter
Chloe Chapman
Zoë Cooper
Nathnael Damtew
Eric Wu
Athena Forsythe
Giovani Golloti
Zinghang Guo
Anika Harding
Natalie Heitkamp
Katherine Lai
Stephanie Lam
Yiquing Lao
Emily Lee
Katherine Lee
Dominic Levenseller-Watland
Vanessa Link
Ewan Lister
Lauren Lofgren
Heidi Longwell
Runya Ma
Anyal Malhotra
Maychelle Manzano
Paisley Maschmeier
Marley Ray
Rachel Redman
Jaiden Reese
Tyler Roberts
Hope Jenkins
Cassie Smith
Kevin Wang
Noelle Wenceslao
Trevor White

Adrian Wong
Castcante
Angelica Wu
Ziyang Xin
Janet Yale
Betty Yuan
Richard Zhang
Yuhan Zhang

Glee Club

Guanyan Chen
Nathaniel Meyer
Shira Quincoses
Jesse Reidy
Hao Shen
Alex Trias
Eric Wu
Bryn Zeman-Witzel
Katharine Agent
Zaref Anderson
Harrison Brown
Ryan Mauery
Nollen Utayde
Tony Wang
Toby Weng

Treble Choir

Rania Awad
Adrianna Ballard
Isamar Chavez
Isabel Falkin
Terry Glenn
Mansi Gokani
Margaret Josephson
Maddie Keating
Lexi Koperski
Heidi Lee
Karissa Longo
Swati Padmanabhan
Brianna Rosen
Hannah Sullivan
Lauren Whiteside
Emily Muttersprauh
Charla Rosenberg
Aurora Wu

Brynn Miller
Avi Anderson
Cori Davidson
Sandra Fachiol
Gina Goble
Sophie Hall
AJ Illuri
AJ Johnson
Aparna Krishnan
Brianna Lattin
Milena Matthews
Tina Nguyen
Willow Robinson
Jackie Smith
Sophia Williams
Lucy Ross
Zoe Cooper
Venus Feigelson
Ashna Hille
Aspen Katla
Kelly Sweeney
Bifeng Xiao
Hallie Masten
Reina Alaniz
Hayley Chu
Kaku Cosmos
Geervani Daggupati
Phoenix Ershov
Takoda Jessen
Lucia Olt
Olive Parrish
Marley Ray
Misha Robinson
Kelli Rockwell
Kelly Shi
Priscilla Shih
Anna Stephenson
Fangzhou Xie
Caroline Kasman
Fanchon Li
Yichen Liang
Anne Lin
Heidi Liu
Emma Lund-Curran
Madi Wolpert

Columbia Choirs

Alexe Butler
Alice Gilson
Camille Brennan
Charlotte Fithian
Emily Pinneo
Mary Avery
Abi Jalso
Angela Lane
Annika Rasmussen
Elizabeth Carter
Helena Kaikkonen
Izabela Hays
Megan Villafranca
Lars Hausermann
Ryan Woodhead
Vishnu Mangipudi
Asher Devine
David Nicolle
Gabriel Frank
Kellen Hoard
Miles Carter

Wild Embers Dancers

Hadi Yusri,
choreographer
Carrie Lin
Ava Cairns
Helen Li,
dancers