

Choir of the West
Flecks of Light and Dark

Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
The College of Professional Studies and School of Music, Theatre & Dance present

Choir of the West
Flecks of Light and Dark
Brian Galante, *conductor*
Amy Boers, *collaborative pianist*

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Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment, and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

I.

A Mighty Fortress is Our God **Martin Luther (1483-1546)**
arr. W.B. Olds

II.

Gloria (2025)..... **Nilo Alcala**

*Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace to all those of good will.
We praise you. We bless you.
We worship you. We glorify you.
We give thanks to you according to your great glory.
Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father almighty.
Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You who take away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
You who take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
You who sit at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For you alone are holy.
You alone are Lord.
You alone are the most high, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

III.

Beloved of the Sky (2025)Tawnie Olson

Isabella Wilkins and Claire Schwartz, *soloists*

I. I went down deep into myself and dug up. (*June 24, 1937*)

II. I woke with this idea. Try using positive and negative colours in juxtaposition. Complementary are negative to positive. Try working in complementaries; run some reds into your greens, some yellow into your purples. Red-green, blue-orange, yellow-purple. (*February 7, 1934*)

III. Oh, that lazy, stodgy, lumpy feeling when you want to work and you're dead! Is it liver, I wonder, or is it old age, or just inertia, or something from which the life has gone forever, that just belongs to youth? (*January 11, 1931*)

IV. The subject means little. The arrangement, the design, colour, shape, depth, light, space, mood, movement, balance, not one or all of these fills the bill. There is something additional, a breath that draws your breath into its breathing, a heartbeat that pounds on yours, a recognition of the oneness of all things. (*January 17, 1936*)

God, God, God! Oh, to realize so completely that you could utterly let go and passionately throw your soul upon the canvas. (*January 29, 1954*)

V. I made a small sketch and then worked a larger paper sketch from it. The woods were in quiet mood, dreamy and sweet. No great contrasts of light and dark, but full of quiet flowing light and fresh from the recent rain, and the growth full, steady and ascending. [Whitman's Still (sic) Midnight sang in my heart] "This is thine hour, O soul, thy free flight into the wordless." (*September 7, 1933*)

– From the journals of Emily Carr (1871-1945)

IV.

The Fruit of Silence (2013) Pēteris Vasks

The fruit of silence is prayer
The fruit of prayer is faith
The fruit of faith is love
The fruit of love is service
The fruit of service is peace.

– Mother Teresa

O Love (2016)Elaine Hagenberg

O love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Joy that seeks me through the pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

– George Matheson (1842-1906)

My Harbor, My Home (2025)Dominick DiOrio

My harbor, my home.
In the sea you split, in the heart you honed,
Twines silent strength within.
You, Seeker.

We, Ones who seek.
Hallelu. Hallelu. Hallelu.
Hallelu. Hallelu.
Hallelujah.

—Sanctuary, Jacqueline Goldfinger

V.

I am Spirit (2026) David C. Dickau

Pablo Arellano Cárdenas, *violin* • Marisa Robbins, *cello*
Emily Morse, *soprano*

I am spirit, its crackle
when love awakens it,
nerve ends lit up
with the ferocity
of your dignity.
I am spirit fizzing
When love infuses it.

My heart is pierced,
suffering with:
Child, I do not forget you!
I do not reject you!
I do not hate you!

Who told us so?
I met you
On the edge
Of chance;
Your glance
Your suffering, your name,
more than the margin
of my forgetting city,
but living, remembered,
the centre of me.

– Euan Tait

Give Me Your Stars (2025).....Lucy Walker

PEACE flows into me
As the tide to the pool by the shore;
It is mine forever more,
It ebbs not back like the sea.

I am the pool of blue
That worships the vivid day;
My hopes were heaven-high,
They are all fulfilled in you.

I am the pool of gold
When sunset burns and dies,—
You are my deepening skies,
Give me your stars to hold.

– *Peace*, Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

V.

Lucis Creator Optime (2025) Marques L.A. Garrett

*O blest Creator of the light,
Who makes the day with radiance bright,
And over the forming world did call
The light from chaos first of all.*

*Whose wisdom joined in meet array
The morn and eve, and named them Day:
Night comes with all its darkling fears;
Regard thy people's prayers and tears.*

– attrib. St. Gregory the Great

Recognition of Graduating Seniors

**Beautiful Savior..... Silesian Folk Song
arr. F. Melius Christiansen**

Program Notes

Gloria. In the Bible, a great company of heavenly angels appeared to shepherds praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.” With this declaration the angels announced good news for everyone all over the world, from east to west. This *Gloria* is my way of integrating both Eastern and Western elements in a choral setting of a traditionally Western prayer. The work features several layers of intricate rhythms and modal scales characteristic of my Eastern (specifically Filipino/Southeast Asian) heritage. Still, the form, musical idioms, and ethos of the work pay homage to the Western tradition of setting this text as part of a concert mass.

– Nilo Alcala

Beloved of the Sky. Although she is not well known in the U.S., artist and author Emily Carr is a Canadian icon. She spent most of her life in Victoria, British Columbia, where she created rapturous, ecstatic paintings inspired by the landscapes and indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. *Scorned as Timber, Beloved of the Sky* (1935) is one of her most famous paintings. It shows an impossibly tall pine, alone amid a clear-cut, haloed by light and clouds. Like many others, I see this painting as a kind of self-portrait of the lonely, eccentric, brilliant artist, her way of affirming her own value in the face of a world that did not immediately recognize her worth. As I read through Carr’s journals, I was particularly struck by her descriptions of the creative process. Waking up in the morning with a fresh idea, struggling with the discouraging lies that a creative block foments in her brain, catching her breath as she discovers the image she’s looking for, becoming totally absorbed in a quiet day of steady work; I think these are experiences that most of us can relate to in some form, to some degree. I set these texts because I wanted to explore and celebrate the creative process and the search for beauty, however defined. And because when I went down deep into myself, I found that they rang true. This work was commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University for The Crossing, Seraphic Fire, and the BYU Singers. It was completed while I was at Copland House, Cortlandt Manor, New York, as a recipient of the Copland House Residency Award.

– Tawnie Olson

The Fruit of Silence. Mother Teresa often surprised by offering a short poetic text in place of a visiting card. In 2013, Pēteris Vasks set one of these prayers for peace to music. The text reflects on silence and prayer, moving through themes of faith and love, before concluding with the words, ‘and the fruit of service is peace.’ This moving choral work, with its compactly interwoven, elegiac musical flow, makes use of the *tintinnabulation* technique created by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. As such, the piano part mimics the sound of bells, as the choir moves slowly and meditatively through the text.

O Love was inspired by the words of Scottish minister, George Matheson in 1882. Blinded at the age of nineteen, his fiancée called off their engagement and years later, as he remembered his heartache and loss, he penned the words to this hymn. My setting has given his words a fresh melody, which uses hopeful ascending lines representing renewed faith. Even though there are lingering dissonances, they remind us of past heartache, the beautiful promise remains: “morn shall tearless be.”

– Elaine Hagenberg

My Harbor, My Home. This work wears its heart of its sleeve, an unabashed “I want” song. The music teems with optimism and possibility, assurance and comfort. This is music for a time of rebirth, for a new chapter of hope. Poet Jacqueline Goldfinger is a poet, playwright, librettist, and dramaturg who grew up with a love of music and storytelling. Today, they are an artist who seeks out unique collaborations, working across disciplines to create singular works of theater and opera. Composer Dominick DiOrio has been recognized with The American Prize in both Choral Composition and Choral Performance. He is chair of the choral conducting department at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he leads the select, new music chamber chorus NOTUS. He is also the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia.

I Am Spirit is a new work written by David Dickau in response to the ICE shootings in Minneapolis and Portland. It is the second in a series with texts by Euan Tait about maintaining a compassionate heart in an angry world. The work is scored for violin, cello, soprano solo, and SATB chorus.

Give Me Your Stars, commissioned by VOCES8 to mark their 20th anniversary, is a setting of Sara Teasdale’s *Peace*. The poetry is lyrical and romantic, rich in natural imagery, first of the ocean and its tide, then of the skies and stars beyond. The opening melody, which becomes a musical anchor as it recurs throughout the piece, is a gentle, fluid arc that mimics the movement of waves. The first stanza is built on this principle, gradually expanding and intensifying to a chromatic

pinnacle before ebbing away with a melody which mirrors the opening. Like the text, the music is structured in three stanzas with parallel melodies presented in different harmonic and atmospheric guises in each repetition. The second stanza explores a new, brighter key area, featuring the melody in the solo tenor, now at the base of the texture. With upper vocal ranges and soaring lines, the music here matches the skyward gesture of the poetry. We return to the home key for the final stanza, which begins with an introspective soprano line. Departing from the familiar melodic path, the music builds to a rich and energized climax: “my deepening skies.” The final line of the poem, which gives the piece its title, provides a tender and wistful ending, and, as the music fades, with a comforting and distant sense of cyclicity, we hear the opening notes for a final time.

– Lucy Walker

Lucis Creator Optime, commissioned by The Des Moines Choral Society, is loosely based on the spiritual, “Let the Heaven Light Shine on Me.” There’s a percussive drive that accompanies elongated chant melody which is also harmonized by the voices around it.

– Marques L.A. Garrett

The CHOIR of the WEST

Brian Galante, *conductor*
Amy Boers, *collaborative pianist*

Soprano

Leila Bauer
Claire Cilley
Lily Dadole
Maggie Dobbins
Kyra McCloud
Emily Morse^
Claire Schwartz

Alto

Gracie McDanold
Ashley Midlo
Josie Mae Sanders
Mariana Vargas^
Isabella Wilkins
Anna Yee
Madison Zantello

Tenor

Sam Brown*
Coleton Davis
Marco Diez
David Garfia
Joaquin Makinster^
Gabriel Stadtmueller
Giacobbe Whitworth

Bass

Nate Clay
Hudson Groom
Xen Johnson
Kai Kindem^
Cooper Perez
Matthew Roe
Liam Schmidt
Cade Tate

*Choir President

^Section Leader