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YOUTH CHOIRS

RESILIENCE

Dec. 8, 7:00pm | Dec. 9, 4:00pm • Middleton Performing Arts Center



Featuring artist-in-residence
TONY MEMMEL

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MADISON
YOUTH CHOIRS

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ABOUT THESE CONCERTS



*Though my soul may set in darkness, it will rise in perfect light;
I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night.*

—Sarah Williams (1837–1868)

When my brother, David, was born, cerebral palsy wasn't something my parents had ever heard of. But it became part of our everyday conversation in the months after May 4, 1977. He was slow to do everything physical: crawling at eighteen months, taking his first assisted steps at age three. But those potential obstacles were irrelevant to him. He wanted to be involved in the things everyone was doing. And you can be sure I didn't cut him any slack.

He has had to be resilient throughout this life; some things just take him much longer than other people. But he did not let those potential setbacks slow him down; he walked, he ran, he learned to drive, he went to college, he got married. My experience growing up with my brother taught me that limitation can often spur great ingenuity, in both life and art.

When we chose this semester's theme, *Resilience*, the meaningful connection between our incredible guest artist, Tony Memmel, and the idea of exploring both the effort needed to overcome

potential obstacles and also the ability to bounce back from potential setbacks seemed clear. And we spent time drawing those connections with our singers both through our conversations and rehearsals with Tony and with the music we were studying. We worked harder, dug deeper for meaning, spent extra time peeling back layers. We studied music that came out of historical instances of resilience: the Holocaust, the African-American diaspora, and more.

Our singers found, like Tony, David, and many others, that they too were resilient. They found times when they wanted something so much that they would not be held back. They discussed experiences in which they didn't succeed and needed to deal with those setbacks, often finding a new path forward they wouldn't have discovered otherwise. We hope this weekend's concerts move you to consider the ways we all face both visible and invisible challenges, and that the music we share today helps you recognize the reservoir of strength that lies inside each of us.

Michael Ross
Artistic/Executive Director

Special Thanks

Our winter concert series, now named the Diane Ballweg Winter Concerts, has been permanently endowed by Diane Ballweg. Her incredible gift supports the production costs of presenting a winter concert series each year in perpetuity. We are grateful to Diane for her long-time support of MYC. If you are interested in learning more about creating a concert endowment, please contact us. We'd love to talk to you more about how an endowment gift can make a significant impact on the wonderful young musicians you will hear today.



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Please silence or turn off all electronic devices. If you are attending with young children and they are having trouble enjoying the concert quietly, thank you for stepping out into the lobby.

Thank you for your cooperation.



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RESILIENCE

7:00pm • Saturday, December 8
Middleton Performing Arts Center



FEATURING

Tony Memmel, guitar
Lesleigh Memmel, piano

PURCELL

Margaret Jenks, conductor
Sarah Gehrenbeck, piano
Eliav Goldman, choir intern

BRITTEN

Randal Swiggum, conductor
Steve Radtke, piano

HOLST

Margaret Jenks and Randal Swiggum, conductors

RAGAZZI

Michael Ross, conductor
Steve Radtke, piano

MADISON BOYCHOIR WITH TONY MEMMEL



Clenched Hands, Brave Demands

Tony Memmel

*We have a dream when we are young -
we act it out, we love to run.
Along the way some hear the sound.
I hope I never come around.
I wanna see
Like everything is still unseen.
It burns inside
And I am so alive.*

*We saw the light, we called it dawn
Some kids, they put sunglasses on.
And in the planes, they pull the shade.
I hope I never get that way.
I wanna see
Like everything is still unseen.
It burns inside
And I am so alive.*

*And when we're young, we love to sing.
The children's chorus voices ring.
And I remember where I stood
When my voice sang like it could.
I wanna sing
Like there is something left to sing.
It burns inside
And I know....*

I've never felt like this before.

MADISON BOYCHOIR



Though My Soul May Set in Darkness

Composer unknown

*Though my soul may set in darkness, it will rise in perfect light;
I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night.*

Welsh poet Sarah Williams (1837–1868) lived only thirty years, but had published several short works and a volume of poetry during her lifetime. Shortly after her death, a second volume of poetry was published and in it was a poem that would later become her most well-known work, “The Old Astronomer.” The excerpt above has

been widely quoted and used as an epitaph for many a scientist. The poem is from the perspective of the old astronomer who, on his deathbed, is talking to his younger pupil and encouraging him to work with integrity for the good of science, rather than caring about popularity or the opinions of those that may scoff at his work. He takes a longer perspective on his work, as well as his predecessors, and notes that many great ideas are not recognized in their time. The legacy of the elder scientist is one of resilience in the face of scorn. In choir, we have often thought about the darkness, and how our own “stars” build a spirit of resilience in us.

PURCELL



Who Can Sail?

Scandinavian Folk Song
Arranged by Jeanne Julseth-Heinrich

“What is difficult?” and “What hope do you cling to?” are two understandings that are part of being resilient humans. This piece addresses the latter question in expressing the sorrow involved in losing someone that you really love. On the surface, this may not seem to fit with resilience, but as the Purcell members noted, “Sometimes it helps you to keep going when you realize that you aren’t alone in feeling a certain way.”

Hine Ma Tov

Sung in Hebrew

Hebrew Folk Song
Arranged by Henry Leck

הנה מה טוב ומה נעים שבת אחים גם יחד.
*Behold how good and how pleasing,
if brothers (people) could sit together in unity.*

In asking Purcell members to reflect on how this piece fit with our current theme of resilience, they had a lot to say. One member made this poignant statement: “We have to be resilient and keep working because we aren’t there yet.”

BRITTEN



Jerusalem

Sir Hubert Parry (1848–1918)
Poem by William Blake (1757–1827)

Although England has no official national anthem, “Jerusalem” has long been considered its most beloved patriotic song, known to every school-child and sung at official occasions, sporting events, and as a processional or recessional in cathedrals and churches across the land. Many Americans first heard it in the closing scene of the 1981 film *Chariots of Fire*, whose title came from the song’s lyric, “Bring me my chariot of fire.”

William Blake’s cryptic poem of 1804 alludes to an ancient legend that Jesus as a young man visited England with his uncle Joseph of Arimathea. Jerusalem is a metaphor not only for a heavenly, eternal city (as in the Book of Revelation) but a place of universal peace and brotherhood. In contrast to the “dark satanic mills” of England’s industrial revolution, Jesus created, briefly, a heaven in England—a spiritual vision that Blake summons forth from his English countrymen, calling them to create such a country again.

The poem was relatively obscure for nearly one hundred years, until it was included in an anthology of patriotic verse in 1916, during a dark period of World War I when morale in England was low. Sir Hubert Parry—at the time England’s most prominent composer—was asked to set the poem to “suitable, simple music that an audience could sing” for a political Fight for Right campaign. It has become the traditional ending of that most British of musical events: the Last Night of the Proms, held in London and broadcast live all across the nation.

This Little Babe (from *A Ceremony of Carols*)

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

What good fortune that back in 1971, when director Carrel Pray named the choirs in the newly-formed Madison Boychoir, she chose Benjamin Britten as one of the composers to be so honored, for it would be hard to find a British composer—or any composer—who wrote so consistently and well for the unique sound of boys’ voices.

One of Britten’s most celebrated pieces to showcase the boychoir sound is *A Ceremony of Carols*, written on shipboard in 1942, as Britten was returning to England from America, drawn home by his patriotism and British identity in the dark days of World War II. For this work, Britten chose texts from medieval English carols, Elizabethan poetry, and Gregorian chant.

The thrilling high point and most famous piece from the work is “This Little Babe,” based on a text by Robert Southwell (1561–1595), a Jesuit poet who defied Queen Elizabeth’s ban on Catholic priests in England and was eventually captured and executed. The text is allegorical, with the helpless infant Jesus fighting Satan and the gates of hell. A martial, warlike melody suits its allegorical text which draws ironic analogies between the babe in the manger and the spiritual battle against Satan which the Incarnation will launch. The most ingenious aspect of the piece is its canonic structure—it is essentially a round like “Are You Sleeping?”—which expands in texture and intensity from unison, to two and then three-parts, before a dazzling, rapid-fire climax.



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HOLST



Keep Your Lamps

Traditional spiritual
Arranged by André Thomas

Based on the parable of the wise and foolish maidens waiting for the Bridegroom (Gospel of Matthew), this song was, like “Shosholoza” below, meant to encourage patience, persistence, and clinging to a hopeful vision of a future reality—a reality that could only be seen in the mind’s eye, in faith—and not necessarily in the burden of present-day struggles.

Out of the Deep

John Wall Callcott (1766–1821)

*Out of the deep have I cried unto thee, O Lord.
Hear my voice, give ear unto my words, O Lord. (from Psalm 130)*

John Callcott was considered the greatest English composer of the late 18th century. Callcott’s fame rested on his successful writing for amateur singers, especially glees and catches. These were short, unaccompanied partsongs for three or four voices, sung exclusively by men with leisure time. Organizations like The Noblemen and Gentlemen’s Catch Club in London offered substantial prizes for the best catch, glee, and canon, and Callcott’s career was launched when he won three prizes simultaneously in 1785. In fact, Callcott’s virtual monopoly on these annual prizes may have prompted the Club to abolish them in 1793.

Most catches and glees were frivolous or satiric, with subjects of drinking, tobacco, and schoolboy humor, but this is a notable exception—a double canon of deep pathos and dark, haunting beauty. The way the melody rises “from the deep” and “sighs” with harmonic tension shows the influence of Callcott’s composition teacher, Joseph Haydn.

Shosholoza

(sung in Ndebele and Zulu)

Traditional song from Zimbabwe
Arranged by Albert Pinsonneault

*Go forward, go forward
On these mountains.
Train from South Africa.
You are running away.*

“Shosholoza” is one of the most fascinating examples of a song whose life and meaning has been constantly reinvented. Originally a miner’s song, there is some dispute about whether it describes the journey by Ndebele men to work in the mines of South Africa, or their journey home to Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia). “Shosholoza” means “go forward” but the sound “sho-sho” also imitates the steam train (“stimela”). The song’s strong rhythm helped men swing axes together but also to face the overwhelming boredom, heartache, and stress of a crushing job, far

from home. Nelson Mandela recalled singing the song at Robben Island prison, and compared the apartheid struggle to an “oncoming train.” In a post-apartheid South Africa, the song lives on as a song of solidarity, sung by activists and athletes alike to show hope in the face of struggle. It became especially famous at the 1995 Rugby World Cup which South Africa won, and can often be heard sung by South African athletes as they come onto the field.

MADISON BOYCHOIR



Angels’ Carol

John Rutter (b. 1945)

TONY MEMMEL



Selections to be announced

Tony Memmel

RAGAZZI



Wie Melodien (Op. 5, No. 1)
(sung in German)

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

*Thoughts, like melodies, steal softly through my mind,
Like spring flowers they blossom and drift away like fragrance.*

*Yet when words come and capture them and bring them before my eyes,
They turn pale like grey mist and vanish like a breath.*

*Yet surely in rhyme a fragrance lies hidden,
Summoned by moist eyes from the silent seed.*

Klaus Groth’s enigmatic poem describing the relationship of memory and language is set here by Brahms in three strophes, each containing evocative text painting. A rising opening line begins each verse and then branches into unexpected harmonic territory to finish each stanza.

The Chemical Worker’s Song

Ron Angel (1931–2014)
Arranged after Great Big Sea

Joe Bernstein, bodhrán

This song, popularized by the Newfoundland band Great Big Sea, speaks of working conditions in pre-World War I Scottish chemical factories, where twelve-hour days and seven-day weeks were common. Workers endure harsh conditions including internal injuries due to exposure to fumes and burned cartilage, for extremely low pay.



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Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980)

Greg Hinz, snare drum

Vachel Lindsay's 1914 poem depicts the ghostly figure of a departed Lincoln restlessly roaming the streets of Springfield, burdened by the persistent tragedy of war. Betinis sets the text as a quasi-film score, with a lone snare drum part evoking the sounds of war and an undulating piano accompaniment highlighting Lincoln's unrest. In the poet's imagination, Lincoln's *head is bowed. He thinks of men and kings. Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?*

MADISON BOYCHOIR WITH TONY MEMMEL



America To Go

Tony Memmel

*I am tryin' now just to remember
what this meant to me when I was young.
The city was a beacon in the valley,
a place where we could run...
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.***

*Some days feel like more than I can handle,
Sometimes I stop, but then I think of you.
I've got to believe this is all for something,
I do the best that I can do.
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.***

*And the wheels keep turning, open up the floodgates
to test what I've become.
If I'm still standing, sure as I am speaking
The hardest part is done,
The hardest part is done.*

*I sometimes get the feeling we were born
far from where we're really meant to be.
If circumstance is only just a mindset,
then why can't that be me?
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.***



RESILIENCE

4:00pm • Sunday, December 9
Middleton Performing Arts Center



FEATURING

Tony Memmel, guitar
Lesleigh Memmel, piano

CHORALIERS

Lisa Kjenvet, conductor
Joseph Ross, piano
Meghan Stecker, choir intern

CAPRICCIO

Lisa Kjenvet, conductor
Joseph Ross, piano

CON GIOIA

Carrie Enstad, conductor
Andrew Johnson, piano
Marie McManama, conductor
Steve Radtke, piano

CANTILENA

Margaret Jenks, conductor
Andrew Johnson, piano
Eliav Goldman, choir intern

CANTABILE

Michael Ross, conductor
Steve Radtke, piano

COMBINED CHOIRS WITH TONY MEMMEL



Clenched Hands, Brave Demands

Tony Memmel

*We have a dream when we are young -
we act it out, we love to run.
Along the way some hear the sound.
I hope I never come around.
I wanna see
Like everything is still unseen.
It burns inside
And I am so alive.*

*We saw the light, we called it dawn
Some kids, they put sunglasses on.
And in the planes, they pull the shade.
I hope I never get that way.
I wanna see
Like everything is still unseen.
It burns inside
And I am so alive.*

*And when we're young, we love to sing.
The children's chorus voices ring.
And I remember where I stood
When my voice sang like it could.
I wanna sing
Like there is something left to sing.
It burns inside
And I know....*

I've never felt like this before.

CHORALIERS



Be Like a Bird

Arthur Frackenpohl (b. 1924)
Text from Victor Hugo (1802–1885)

*Be like a bird who, halting in her flight
On a limb to slight, feels it give way beneath her,
Yet sings, sings, knowing she has wings.*

With its universal theme of hope, Victor Hugo's poem inspires courage in the face of adversity and affirms the courage and determination that lives in us all. The singers discussed what it means to "have wings" in our own lives: to be confident and secure that we can overcome obstacles that might come our way as we pursue our dreams.

Art Thou Troubled

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Amber Dolphin, violin; Mary Shin, violin;
Marie Pauls, viola; Alex Chambers-Ozasky, cello

Art Thou Troubled is a *da capo* aria from George Frideric Handel's opera *Rodelinda*, written for the Royal Academy of Music in 1725 when Handel was living in London. An adaptation of the aria "Dove sei, amato bene" with lyrics by W.G. Rothery, the vocal line is an education in the art of melodic architecture. The text reminds us that music can provide comfort during troubled times and encourage resilience.

Blustery Day

Victoria Ebel-Sabo (b. 1957)

Has a little blustery weather ever presented you with a challenge and caused you to change your plans? Choraliers has enjoyed sharing many fun stories about challenges with our Wisconsin weather! In this composition, the composer presents the singers with a rhythmical challenge to portray the singer's struggle with the weather. Listen for the repeated shifts from 6/8 to 3/4 meter, where the singers must feel duple subdivisions against triple subdivisions in the piano accompaniment.

CON GIOIA



Bist du bei mir (sung in German)

from the notebook of Anna Magdalena Bach (1701–1760)

*Be thou with me, and I'll go gladly
To death, and on to my repose.
Ah, how my end would bring contentment,
If, pressing with thy hands so lovely,
Thou wouldst my faithful eyes then close.*

This beautiful and lasting Baroque aria was found in 1725 in the notebook of Bach's wife, singer Anna Magdalena. The text speaks to the resilience of love strong enough to bring joy to one who is in the final moments of life. Treasured by singers for nearly 300 years, this soaring melody is in constant motion, always compelling us forward. It begins on 'sol' and doesn't cadence on 'do' until the A section comes to a close 18 measures later.

I Heard a Bird Sing

Cyndee Giebler (b. 1958)

*I heard a bird sing in the dark of December,
A magical thing, and sweet to remember,
"We are nearer to spring than we were in September."
I heard a bird sing in the dark of December.*

Oliver Herford (1863–1935), a British-born, American writer, humorist and illustrator was known for his quick wit and big personality. In this poem, he offers us a glimpse of introspection, with these words of resilience that are particularly familiar to those of us living here in the midwest. Wisconsin composer Cyndee Giebler pairs his poem with a melody whose contours follow the text, rising with the hope of the promise of spring, and falling back into the darkness of the December from which it began.

Ask the Moon (from *Three Settings of the Moon*)

Ron Nelson (b. 1929)

Greg Hinz, marimba; Jen Streit, flute

With "Ask the Moon," composer Ron Nelson has set sixteen of Thomas Ahlburn's poems to music. In it, Ahlburn portrays winter metaphorically through various images in nature. We first meet Old Man Winter as a tree, where we see and hear hungry animals making shadows in the moonlight. Nelson brings this imagery to life musically with driving staccato eighth notes in mixed meter. Next, we hear Winter as the moan in the trees and the echo of a voice around the lake, before finally we are invited to join him on the journey toward spring. Though it is a long, slow climb, we are reminded that 'when there is less to see, we may see more. And see it there more clearly.' Resilience is developed on any journey, and there is much to ponder in mining the cold, barren landscape of this nature scene for its beauty, solitude, liveliness, and expansiveness. We enjoyed our journey with this music and text.

I'll Overcome Someday We Shall Overcome

C. A. Tindley (1851–1933)

Arranged by McManama and Con Gioia

Known as the anthem of the Civil Rights Movement, "We Shall Overcome," is a simple song with a complex history. We began our study with learning the hymn that inspired the familiar tune we know today. This invited a rich discussion of the history of the Civil Rights Movement and why, despite a 150-year-old law, are we still faced with the similar issues today. How did such a simple text become such a powerful anthem for civil rights? What aspects of the Civil Rights Movement are still evident today? Who are today's activists and does this song still apply? We also explored the resilience required when writing your own arrangement, especially as a group where there is bound to be disagreement and conflicting ideas. Ultimately, we decided together on which verses to use, in what order, and where the harmony (and also the unison) is the most powerful. Each verse means something personal to every singer and by working together we experienced the power of resilience first hand.

E.E. Cummings' poem *i shall imagine life* examines the relationship between perseverance and surrender. There is always a way to only see life's thorns, even in the most beautiful scenarios. It's also possible to see every weed as a rose and find the beauty in the seemingly mundane, though that often takes more effort. This text is perfectly set with a jubilant melody juxtaposed with unexpected and thorny intervallic jump, emphasizing again that physical beauty can fade but not the beauty of one's conviction and optimism.

South African National Anthem E.M. Sontonga (1860–1904) and
(sung in Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans, and English) M. L. de Villiers (1885–1977)

Xhosa:
Lord, bless Africa
May her spirit rise high up

Zulu:
Hear thou, our prayers
Lord bless us, your family

Sesotho:
Descend, O Spirit,
Save our nation.
End all wars and strife,
Bless South Africa

Afrikaans:
Ring out from our blue heavens,
From our deep seas breaking round;
Over everlasting mountains
Where the echoing crags resound

English:
Sounds the call to come together
And united we shall stand
Let us live and strive for freedom
In South Africa our land!

Finally adopted as the official national anthem of South Africa in 1997, this song combines years of history and culture in one of the world's most unique national anthems. It invited an exploration of pre- and post-Apartheid South Africa and how it compares to American history and culture. The "hybrid song" uses the five most widely spoken South African languages (Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans, and English) and pairs the pre-Apartheid national anthem with the 19th century hymn "God Bless Africa." One of the few national anthems that changes key, this song celebrates the unity and freedom that came from all the facets of South African life.

**Resilience**

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980)

Composer Abbie Betinis, a native of Wisconsin, writes: "Resilience is a mindset born in the hardest days, when you're scared or sad or tired, when progress toward your goal is slow, and the barriers seem impenetrable...and yet you keep going, because somewhere deep down you know that what you're fighting for will be so much better." As a three-time cancer survivor, she continues to learn about resilience. This three-part street call was written last year for the Justice Choir in the Twin Cities.

Be Like the Bird

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980)

A setting of the same text presented by Choraliers, this hauntingly beautiful melody was composed in 2009, just after the composer completed cancer treatment for the second time. Her family sent it out as their Christmas card that year which continued a tradition started in 1922 by her great-grandfather and passed to her great-uncle Alfred Burt, now famous for carols like "Caroling, Caroling." Betinis writes: "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. May High Rocks continue to educate, empower, and inspire each girl to know that 'she hath wings.'"

Esurientes (from *Magnificat in G minor*)
(sung in Latin)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

Born in Venice, Antonio Vivaldi was known as 'il prete rosso' (the red priest) for his hair color and the fact that he was an ordained priest. His only career, however, was that of a musician. Most of his sacred music, including this cheerful duet, was written during his time as the *maestro di violino* at the Ospedale della Pietà, an orphanage for girls which trained the musically gifted. Written in typical Baroque style, the elaborate melismas are held together by a constant three-note motive in the accompaniment.

And Ain't I A Woman!

Susan Borwick (b. 1946)

John Mesoloras, bass

The powerful text of this piece is adapted from Sojourner Truth's famous speech at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in 1851. Known for her resilience and unwavering faith, Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), born into slavery in New York State as Isabella Baumfree, was an active and powerful public figure in the Abolition and Women's Rights movements of the mid-19th century. Despite the physical and psychological punishment she had endured, Truth turned pain into triumph by helping others recognize their worth and left behind a legacy of courage in her fight for racial and gender equality.

TONY MEMMEL



Selections to be announced

Tony Memmel

CANTILENA



Vanitas vanitatum
(sung in Latin)

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

With a text that basically says, “nothing on earth really matters”, Sweelinck, a Dutch Calvinist composer of the late Renaissance, presents a rather interesting irony. The “nothing matters” message is treated with a beautiful, uplifting, rather complex four-part canon that appears to be at odds with the nihilistic text. In many ways, this is the human experience in the face of bleakness—we can find inspiration in something lovely even while feeling hopeless.

Chant for A Long Day

Stephen Hatfield (b. 1956)

Based on two monophonic chants traditionally sung by women—the Mersiyet from Pakistan and the “waulking songs” from the island of Barra in the Hebrides (islands to the west of Scotland)—Hatfield draws elements of physical, mental, and spiritual survival common to people across time periods and cultures. The Cantilena singers were immediately intrigued by the many questions of the mysterious texts and sounds, and the bundle of contradictions presented in the piece. It is both very simple and complex, speaks of loneliness in a powerfully confident way, and depicts both isolation and power in numbers. In essence, we found the story of resilience in women past, present, and future.

Wir eilen mit schwachen doch emsigen Schritten (from BWV 78)

(sung in German)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

*We hurry with faltering but eager footsteps to you, O Jesus, O Master.
You faithfully look for the sick and straying.
Ah hear, as we raise our voices to pray for help! May your gracious
countenance give us joy!*

Bach is a master of pairing text in a meaningful way with the music. Listen for running melisma patterns to portray “hurrying,” a static pattern that feels “stuck” to show how we falter, short imploring and sighing melodic patterns that beg for help, and passages that seem to wander out of the given key tonality to show the “sick and straying.” In this duet from Cantata 78, we see how the idea of resilience is played out

musically in the Baroque style; the present feeling of despair and longing, often paired with expectant joy and anticipation.

The Storm is Passing Over

Charles Albert Tindley (1851–1933)

Arranged by Barbara Baker

As the author of over 60 hymns and gospel songs, including “I’ll Overcome Someday” (which later became the famous civil rights anthem), Rev. Charles Tindley is considered one of the fathers of modern Black gospel music. An overriding characteristic of Black gospel is the focus on a critical, single message through repeated melodies and texts. In this case, the clear message is “The storm IS passing over!”—in other words, hard times will pass away, so don’t lose hope (be resilient!). Vocal improvisation, bending of pitches, freedom to change the form and structure of the overall work and attention to rhythmic articulation are some of the things that Cantilena singers analyzed and studied as they became more familiar with this style.

CANTABILE



Ich weiß nicht (Op. 113, No. 11)
(sung in German)

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Text by Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866)

*I know not why the dove coos in the grove.
Does she lament, like my soul, waiting for the friend
who has strayed away from her?*

A complex melody with unique twists and turns becomes an impactful four-part canon in the hands of an accomplished composer.

Widmung (Op. 25, No. 1)

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Text by Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866)

*You my soul, you my heart; you my bliss, o you my pain,
You the world in which I live; you my heaven, in which I float,
O you my grave, into which I eternally cast my grief.
You are rest, you are peace, you are bestowed upon me from heaven.
That you love me makes me worthy of you; your gaze transfigures me.
You raise me lovingly above myself, my good spirit, my better self!
You my soul...*

In the 19th century, Robert Schumann was one composer who was perfecting and revolutionizing what we now call an art song: A piece of music, newly composed, with a text usually written by a known poet, that weaves together a solo vocal line and integral piano accompaniment to support the ideas inherent in the words. In this piece, Schumann contrasts a soaring piano part for the open section (*You my soul...You my*

heart, you my bliss, o you my pain) with an unsettling rhythmic tug of war between piano and voice in the middle section (*You are rest, you are peace*).

I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Charles Davidson (b. 1929)

It All Depends On How You Look At It
The Butterfly
Birdsong

This work uses texts drawn from the poems of children who lived in or passed through Terezin, a “model ghetto” in what was Czechoslovakia during World War II. 33,456 people died in that ghetto. 88,202 people were transported from Terezin (called Theresienstadt in German) to the Eastern death camps. Of the 15,000 children deported from Terezin to Auschwitz, only 100 survived, none under the age of fourteen.

Davidson sets these texts with great care. *It All Depends On How You Look At It* sets a poem by Miroslav Košek (1932–1944), taking us through the monotonous daily ghetto life through repetitive musical ideas, the marching of feet through the streets through a half-step focused rhythmic pattern, and ultimately, the contradiction of Terezin still being “full of beauty.” *The Butterfly* sets the iconic text by Pavel Friedman (1921–1944) with the angst of “I never saw another butterfly” depicted in the melody that reaches just beyond an octave in yearning. Finally, *Birdsong* (Anonymous text, 1941) ends on a powerfully simple note (*to be alive...*).

We are indebted to our friend Hilde Adler for sharing with us her childhood experience in Germany. Our evening together, which took place a mere 24 hours after the mass killing at a Pittsburgh synagogue, was not a time we will ever forget.

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America To Go

Tony Memmel

*I am tryin' now just to remember
what this meant to me when I was young.
The city was a beacon in the valley,
a place where we could run...*
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.**

*Some days feel like more than I can handle,
Sometimes I stop, but then I think of you.
I've got to believe this is all for something,
I do the best that I can do.*
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.**

*And the wheels keep turning, open up the floodgates
to test what I've become.
If I'm still standing, sure as I am speaking
The hardest part is done,
The hardest part is done.*

*I sometimes get the feeling we were born
far from where we're really meant to be.
If circumstance is only just a mindset,
then why can't that be me?*
**And now, we're on the road,
San Francisco to New York City, and just America to go.**

TONY MEMMEL

is a **singer-songwriter, speaker,** and **teacher** with unique charisma and creativity. Though he was born missing his left hand, he taught himself to play guitar by building a special cast that he designed out of Gorilla Tape.

He's toured all over the world and extensively in the United States, sharing his music and his message of **hard-work, determination,** and **resilience.**

His work ranges from composing symphonies, to writing and arranging music for children, visiting schools, hospitals, and churches, to performing in historic concert venues, and helping people with hand/limb-differences (like his) to develop their own adaptive methods that allow them to make music a part of their lives.

Tony grew up in Waukesha, Wisconsin, and now resides with his wife and son in Nashville, Tennessee. He enjoys playing basketball, the Packers, Bucks, and Brewers, swimming and hiking, and cooking/trying new foods...especially if hot sauce is involved.



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Anonymous (2)
Anonymous
in honor of Randy Swiggum
Heather Peterson Blachowski
Linda and Thomas Boll
Steve Borgwardt
Timothy L. Brown
Bob Bruch
Mary Chancellor
Nicole Cody
Joan Delsrude
Jill Dutcher
Henry J. Elling
Sharyn Gardill
Sarah and Robert Gehrenbeck (P)
Lona George
in memory of Elyn Williams
Don and Anne Gillian-Daniel (P)
Diana Howles (P)
Kim Huff (A)
Calli Ingebritsen
Kristine Jacobson
Noah Johnson (A)
Craig and Sarah Jordan (P)
Karen Kaminsky
Ann Kuipers
Stephen and Nina Laubach (P)
Gretchen Lehmann
Peter Leschke
Chris Lucas
Kate Mahr
Eliza McPike (A)
Jon Meyer
Eric Miller
Katie Murray
June Petrie
Jim Pickering
Diane Puchta
Susan Rathke
James and Elizabeth Rotering (P)
Jenny Saffran and Seth Pollak (P)
Leyla Sanyer
Lauren Schell (A)
Leah Schultz
Marc and Claire Siegrist (P)
Daryl Silberman
Carter Simmons
Shirley Sundquist
Nathaniel Taft
Jodie and Brian Thill (P)

Ellen Tracy
Janet Tweed
Karen and Jeff Vandenberg (P)
Margaret Walters
Tim Whalen
Katie Wink
Marsha Edblom Zich

In Kind

Capitol Lakes
Crump Tech
EVP Coffee
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Linda E. Gerke
Nancy Lawson
Lake Edge Lutheran Church
Midvale Lutheran Church
Brian Mott Piano Services
Christian Wallen

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