FOC 130 Women's Vocal Ensemble Message ⁹ Peace Beloved Seasonal Gems Saturday, December 11, 2021 - 7:30 PM St. Perpetua Catholic Church 3454 Hamlin Road, Lafayette Sunday, December 12, 2021 - 5:00 PM St. Mary Magdalen Church 2005 Berryman Street, Berkeley

Mitchell Covington, Artistic Director • Edna Yeh, Assistant Conductor • Amy Belles, piano



About Today's Program

Mitchell Covington, Artistic Director

Welcome! Voci is so excited to be singing together again in rehearsals and in our first in-person performance in two years. We have missed being together and we have missed you, our community.

To celebrate this event, and our 30th Anniversary, we have selected an evening of audience favorites that centers around the themes of healing and peace-most welcome after a long season of division and disruption.

Tonight's program is also about variety. You will hear masterful settings of profound secular poetry (The Peace of Wild Things, Tree of Peace) woven together with recent and ancient music of the season from different faith traditions, a cappella and accompanied, by composers from the 16th century (di Lasso and Palestrina,) 19th century and 20th century (Britten, Debussy and others) and 21st century (Szymko, Walker and others).

Voci will be singing in English, French, Hebrew, Ladino^{*} and Latin. We'll be singing a variety of textures from the chant-like unison of Lullaby to 8 parts in Tree of Peace. In keeping with our tradition of championing music by women composers, you will find seven female composers on this program, all writing in their own unique compositional voices.

As you enjoy this rich and varied tapestry of music, listen for the threads of healing and peace that tie it all together. The members of Voci have been transformed by this music. It is our hope that you will be as well. Thank you for sharing this wonderful music with us.

* Ladino is a Romance language traditionally spoken by Sephardic Jews living mostly in Israel, the Balkans, North Africa, Greece, and Turkey. Ladino is nearly extinct in many of these areas. An archaic form of Castilian Spanish mixed with Hebrew (as well as Aramaic, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, French, Bulgarian, and Italian), Ladino originated in Spain and was carried by descendants of the Spanish Jews who were expelled from Spain after 1492. In response to the events of 9/11, Voci began to dedicate its fall season programming to the theme of peace. Drawing on a wide range of repertoire for women's voices, these concerts have aimed to inspire us on the path of peace in the spirit and harmony of the holiday season. This season marks Voci's 18th Voices in Peace concert, offering inspiring and soul-filling music to nurture us during these anxious and challenging times



Program

Message of Peace



Hodie Apparuit in Israel

(Love abounds in all things)

Orlando di Lassus Edited by Mitchell Covington

Hodie aparuit in Israel per Mariam Virginam est natus Rex. Today in Israel a King appeared, born of the virgin Mary.

Wolcum Yole! (Welcome Yule)

(The Angel said to the shepherds)

Benjamin Britten

Text: Anonymous, 14th century

Wolcum, Wolcum,	Welcome, Welcome,
Wolcum be thou hevenè king.	Welcome to You, our heavenly King.
Wolcum Yole,	Welcome Yule,
Wolcum, born in one morning.	Welcome, you who was born one morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!	Welcome, for You, shall we sing!
Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon.	Welcome, to you, Steven and John,
Wolcum Innocentes everyone.	Welcome all innocent children,
Wolcum, Thomas marter one.	Welcome, Thomas, the martyred one,
Wolcum, be ye, good Newe Yere,	Welcome, good new year,
Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both in fere.	Welcome Twelfth Day, both in fear

cum, Twelfthe Day both in fere. Welcome Twelfth Day, both in fear . . . *Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere.* Welcome Saints left and dear.

Candelmesse, Quene of bliss. Candle Wolcum bothe to more and lesse. Welco Wolcum be ye that are here. Welco Wolcum alle and make good cheer. Welco Wolcum alle another yere. Welco Wolcum Yole, Wolcum! Welco

Candle Mass, Queen of bliss, Welcome both to more and less. Welcome you that are here, Welcome all and make good cheer. Welcome all another year. Welcome Yule, Welcome!

Quem Pastores Laudavere

(Shepards left their flocks astraying)

Small Group: Kiera Gray, Kathy Walrath, Helene Byrne

Quem pastores laudavere,	Shepards left their flocks astraying
Quibus angeli dixere,	God's command with joy obeying
Absit vobis iam timere,	When they heard the angle saying
Natus est rex gloriæ.	Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Ad quem magi ambulabant,	Wisemen came from far and say him:
Aurum, thus, myrrham	Knelt in homage to adore him;
Immolabant hæc sincere	Precious gifts they laid before him
Nato regi gloriae	Gold and frankincense and myrrh
Christo regi, Deo nato,	Let us now in every nation
Per Mariam nobis dato,	Sing his praise with exaltation
Merito resonet vere	All the world shall find salvation
Laus honor et gloria!	In the birth of Mary's son.

Lullaby

Eve Beglarian

Offertory: Felix namque 13th century English plainchant English Text: Janet Lewis

Soloist: Edna Yeh

Plainchant (chorus)

Felix namque es sacra virgo Maria Et omni laude dignissima quia ex te ortus est Sol justie Christus Deus noster Alleluia

Soloist Lullee, lullay, I could not love thee more If thou wast Christ the King. Now tell me, how did Mary know That in her womb should sleep and grow The Lord of everything?

Lullee, lullay, An angel stood with her who said, "that which doth stir like summer in thy sideshall save the world from sin. Then stable, hall and inn shall cherish Christmas-tide."

Lullee, lullay, And so it was that Day. And did she love him more because an angel came To prophesy his name? Ah no, not so, She could not love him more, But loved him just the same.

Eleanor Daley Text: Christina Rosetti

Soloists: Amy Belles, Terry Meyers, Lisa Sanders

Herself a rose, who bore the Rose, She bore the Rose and felt its thorn. All loveliness new-born Took on her bosom its repose, And slept and there night and morn. Lily herself, she bore the one Fair Lily; sweeter, whiter, far Than she others are: The Sun Righteousness her Son, She was morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace, He was the Fountain, she the rill: Her goodness to fulfill And gladness, with proportioned pace He led her steps through good and ill.

Claude Debussy

Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison

(Christmas Carol for Homeless Children)

Nous n'avons plus de maison!	We have no houses anymore!
Les enemis ont tout pris,	The enemy has taken everything,;
Jusqu'à notre petit lit!	Even our little bed!
Ils ont bruîe l'école et notre maître aussi.	They burned the school and our teacher too.
Ils ont bruîe l'église et monsieur Jésus Christ,	They burned the church and Mr. Jesus Christ,
Et le vieux pauvre qui n'a pas pu s'en aller.	And the poor old beggar who could not escape!
Bien suîr! Papa est à la guerre,	Of course! Daddy has gone to fight,
Pauvre maman est morte!	Poor Mama is dead!
Avant d'avoir vu tout ca	Died before having to see all of this.
Qu'est c'que l'on va faire?	Oh! What shall we do now?
Noei! Petit Noei!	Noël, little Noël, don't visit them,
N'allez pas chez eux,	Do not go to them,
N'allez plus jamais chez eux,	Never go back to them,
Punissez-les!	Punish them!
Vengez les enfants de France!	Avenge the children of France!
Les petits Belges, les petits Serbes,	The little Belgians, the little Serbians,
et les petits Polonais aussi!	and the little Polish children too!
Si nous en oublions, pardonnez-nous.	Forgive us if we forget some.
Noeï! Noeï! Surtout, pas de joujoux,	<i>Noel! Noel!</i> Do not give us toys!
Tachez de nous redonner le pain quotidien.	Give us back our daily bread.

Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison (continued)

Nous n'avons plus de maison... We have no houses anymore!...

Noeï! Écoutez-nous,	Noell Listen to us,
Nous n'avons plus de petits sabots	We no longer have our little wooden shoes;

Mais donnez la Victoire aux enfants de France!

Magnificat from "Magnificat Quarti Toni"

Giovani Pierluigi da Palestrina

Conducted by Edna Yeh

Magnificat anima mea Dominum Et exultavit spiritus meus And my spirit rejoices In Deo salutari meo!

My soul magnifies the Lord In God my Savior

Bring victory to the children of France!

Durme, Durme

(Sleep, Sleep)

Arr. Alice Parker Traditional Ladino Folk Song

Ensemble: Amy Belles, Angie Doctor, Samantha Graff, Terry Meyers, Nicky Reed, Karla Sagramoso, Lisa Sanders, Adina Sera, Edna Yeh

Durme, durme hijiko de Madre Durme, durme, s'in ansio y dolor; Sienti joya palavrikas de tu Madre Las palavras di Shema Yisrael Durme, durme hijiko de Madre Con hermozura di Shema Yisrael

Sleep, sleep, mother's little one, Sleep, sleep free from worry and grief; Listen, my joy, to your mother's words, The words of Shema Yisrael Sleep, Sleep, mother's little one, With the beauty of Shema Yisrael



Jerusalem

Traditional Irish

Soloists: Amy Belles, Angie Doctor, Lori Rizzo-Cummings

CHORUS: Jerusalem, our happy home When shall we come to thee? When shall our sorrows have an end? Thy joys when shall we see?

<u>Solo</u>

Ma Navu

(How Pleasant)

There's cinnamon that scenteth sweet	Fair Magdalene, she hath less moan
There palms spring from the ground	Likewise there she doth sing
No tongue can tell, no heart can think	The happy saints in harmony
What joys do there abound	Through every street doth ring
Forever more the trees bear fruit	Fair Magdalene hath dried her tears
And ever more they spring	She'll weep no more to thee
And ever more the saints are glad	Nor wet the ringlets of her hair
And ever more they sing	To wash her savior's feet
Regina Coeli from "Magnificat" (Queen of Heaven)	Katherine Dienes
Regina coeli, laetare, alleluia,	O Queen of heaven, be joyful, alleluia,

Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,For He whom you have humbly borne for us,
alleluia,Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia,
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.Has arisen, as He promised, alleluia,
Offer now our prayer to God, alleluia

Joseph Spivak Arr. Barbara Wolfman

Conducted by Edna Yeh

Ma navu al heharim rag'le ham'vaser ho! Mash'mia y'shua mash'mia shalom.

How pleasant on the mountains Are the feet of the messenger of good tidings! Proclaiming salvation, Proclaiming peace.

Joan Szymko Text: Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world and am free.

The Tree of Peace

Gwyneth Walker

Adapted from the poem O Brother Man, John Greenleaf Whittier

O, my sister and my brother, all who walk upon this earth, fold to your hearts each other.

Where mercy dwells, the peace of the Lord is there. To live rightly is to love one another each kindness a gift, each deed a prayer.

> O, my sister and my brother, fold to your hearts each other. Listen to one another, fold to your hearts each other.

Walk with reverence in the steps of those who have gone before, where forgiveness and wisdom have stood. So shall the wide earth become our temple, each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

> Then shall all shackles fall. The violence of war over the earth shall cease. Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its ashes plan t a tree of peace.



Composers

(In order of appearance in the program)

The prolific and cosmopolitan Flemish composer **Orlando di Lasso** (1532–1594)—also known as Orlandus Lassus, Roland de Lassus, and Roland de Lattre—was one of the most influential musicians of the late Renaissance. As a child, di Lasso was kidnapped three times by rival choirs for the beauty of his singing

He wrote over 2,000 works in French, German, Italian and Latin, and in all vocal genres of his time, but he achieved his greatest fame as a composer of religious motets, such as *Hodie apparuit in Israel. Hodie* was performed on Voci's first concert in December 1991 and again in November 2015.

English composer, conductor, and pianist **Benjamin Britten** (1913–1976) wrote many sacred works for voice and organ, and also many operas. *A Ceremony of Carols* was written in 1942 while Britten was crossing the Atlantic from the United States to England aboard a Swedish cargo vessel. At a stop in Canada, Britten purchased a copy of *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*, the source of many of the carols. The work's 11 movements are sung in Middle English, Latin and early modern English. *"Wolcum Yole!* is the second movement, welcoming everyone to celebrate. Performed by Voci December 1992, 1995, and 2018.

Contemporary British composer **John Rutter** (b.1945) is known for his choral music, and especially his Christmas music. *Quem Pastores Laudavere* was performed by Voci in its first concert in December 1991.

Eve Beglarian (b. 1958) is a contemporary New York City-based composer, performer, audio producer, and adventurer described by the LA Times as a "humane, idealistic rebel and musical sensualist." She writes for chamber, choral, and orchestral ensembles; musical theater; and dance. Her four-month kayak/bicycle journey down the Mississippi River spawned BRIM: Songs from the River Project. *Lullaby* is part of her *Rethinking Mary* series and intertwines a poem by Janet Lewis and a Latin chant against the irregular rhythms of chimes (not played today) and piano. Voci performed *Lullaby* in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Eleanor Daley (b. 1955) is one of Canada's most prolific choral composers, with a published catalogue of more than 140 choral works that are widely performed and recorded. She is also an organist and choral director. Many of her works have been written for Toronto's Fairlawn Avenue United Church, where she has been Director of Music since 1982. Her melodic skill and interweaving of text with music are highlighted in *Herself a Rose, Who Bore the Rose* performed by Voci today and in December 2010.

One of the most influential composers of his time, is French composer **Claude Debussy** (1862-1918). His music defines the transition from late Romantic to 20th-century modernist music. In today's performance, *Noe'l des enfants qui n'ont plus de maisons (Christmas Carol for Homeless Children)* is an angry and urgent work. Debussy composed both the music and the words in 1915 as a plea for vengeance against the countries that unleashed the horrors of World War I upon Europe. It is his last song. He died in Paris in 1918 as the city was under bombardment This work was performed by Voci in December 1994 and 2007.

Katherine Dienes (b. 1970) also known as Katherine Dienes-Williams is a New Zealand-born organist, conductor, and composer. She is currently Organist and Master of the Choristers at Guildford Cathedral and is the first woman to hold the most senior musical post in a Church of England cathedral. *Regina Coeli* is the opening movement of her larger work, *Magnificat*, which Voci sang in December 2003.

The music of Italian composer **Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina** (1525–1594) is often viewed as the culmination of Renaissance polyphony. Born in the town of Palestrina, near Rome, Palestrina spent most of his career there as an organist, choirmaster, and music director. He died in Rome and was reportedly buried beneath the floor of St. Peter's Basilica; however, attempts to locate his grave have been unsuccessful. Famous in his day, Palestrina's reputation increased after his death for his mastery of contrapuntal composition. Palestrina's *Magnificat Quarti Toni* is one of thirty-five settings of this prayer that he composed. Tonight, we present the opening section of the longer work. This piece was sung by Voci in December 1991, 2003, and 2017.

American composer **Alice Parker** (b. 1925) has arranged many spirituals, hymns, and folk songs, says that she sang before she spoke. She has devoted most of her own compositions to the human voice: operas, cantatas, hymns, and anthems. *Durme, Durme* is a folk lullaby written in Ladino, the language of the Sephardic Jews of Spain. The mother sings to her child, asking her to listen to the Shema Yisrael, a central Jewish prayer which declares the belief in one God. Performed by Voci in November 2004 and 2014.

Irish composer, **Michael McGlynn** (b. 1964) is founder and director of the world-renowned choral group Anúna which he created in 1987. His harmonic language combines elements of the traditional heritage of his homeland and the modality and energy of medieval music with a particular contemporary musical language. Michael's music has been recorded and performed by such vocal ensembles as Rajaton, The Dale Warland Singers, The BBC Singers, The National Youth Choir of Great Britain, Conspirare and Chanticleer. Today Voci performs *Jerusalem*, his arrangement of a traditional Irish piece for the first time.

Israeli **Yossi (Joseph) Spivak** is a contemporary composer of songs based on folk music. *Ma Navu* is inspired by folk dance, with lyrics from the Book of Isaiah. Tonight's arrangement is by Barbara Wolfman, a Wisconsin-based singer, dancer, and pianist. Voci sang *Ma Navu* in December 2015 and 2018.

Joan Szymko (b.1957) is a composer and conductor from the Pacific Northwest. Szymko is widely regarded as an outstanding composer of choral music in America today. Abundant lyricism, rhythmic integrity and exquisite attention to text are hallmarks of her diverse and distinctive choral writing as evidenced in today work, *The Peace of Wild Things*. With a catalog of over 100 published choral works, her music is frequently heard at regional, national, and international choral festivals and competitions. Voci sang this work in May 2017.

Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer **Gwyneth Walker** (b. 1947) is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. A composer since age two, Gwyneth Walker has always placed great value on writing in a broad array of genres. The setting f the poem "O Brother Man" *The Tree of Peace* epitomizes Ms. Walker's sense of text and voicing. First performed in December 2012, Voci is delighted to be presenting this work again.



About Voci Celebrating 30 years of beautiful singing Founded in 1991, **Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble** is recognized as one of the finest choral groups in the Bay Area. The Ensemble continues to thrive 30 years later, holding fast to its mission of championing music written for women and by women, from all parts of the world and every century. Voci is dedicated to musical excellence in the performance of new and innovative music, as well as treasured repertoire within the classical choral tradition. It enjoys a reputation among Bay Area audiences and critics for its adventurous programming and elegant, passionate sound. Voci has performed with a wide range of artists and choruses at concerts, festivals, and benefits and has commissioned and premiered over 30 new works.



Artistic Director Mitchell Covington is an accomplished choral and orchestral conductor who has led many exquisite ensembles over a 30-year career. He has directed choirs and orchestras in performances in the United States and throughout Europe. Mitchell received a Bachelor of Music degree from San Francisco State university, where he studied choral conducting with Byron McGilvray and orchestral conducting with Lazlo Varga. He received a Master's degree in

Conducting from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, graduating with honors. At USC he studied choral conducting with Rod Eichenberger, orchestral conducting with Hanz Beer and choral arranging with Morten Lauridsen. He was the founding director of Voci (then Voci Women's Chamber Choir) from 1991–1995, directed the Bay Choral Guild from 1995–2001 and led a seven-choir music program with over 300 participants at First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley for 23 years. Mitchell has served on the Executive Board of the American Choral Director's Association—Western Division. He frequently serves as guest conductor and clinician for church and school choirs throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and as an adjudicator and clinician for choir festivals and conferences. He is also an award-winning composer, whose compositions include works for orchestra, chorus, stage, film and television. After a 23-year break Mitchell returned as guest conductor for the spring 2017 season and was appointed artistic director in summer 2017.



Assistant Conductor Edna Yeh joined Voci in spring 2008. She is the founder and former director of the Pacific Women's Chorus (San Diego)

and Concentus Women's Chorus (Rochester, New York). Edna currently serves as assistant conductor for Sacred & Profane Chamber Chorus and performs with the Dulcet Four, an *a cappella* quartet performing repertoire from the Great American Songbook and other classics. In addition to her work as a conductor, Edna is an award-winning composer. Premieres in the 2021-2022 season include performances by Chicago a cappella, Sacred & Profane, and Voci. She received her Master of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where she studied conducting with Morris Beachy and Craig Hella Johnson.



Voci Accompanist Amy Belles joined the UC Berkeley Music Department staff in 2018, having worked on the CSU East Bay Music Department staff under Dr. Buddy James from 2012–17. In addition to Voci, her choral accompanying includes work with Cantare Con Vivo, Cantabile Youth Singers, Oakland Symphony Chorus, Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, and the Mt. Eden and Monte Vista High School choirs. A lover of musical theater, she has also worked as vocal director for Woodminster Amphitheater. Favorite performances include

Schumann's Symphonic Etudes, harpsichord in Handel's Messiah, alto in Brahms' German Requiem and accompanying in Davies Symphony Hall. Amy studied piano privately at post-graduate level with Zita Sandor and is a member of the Music Teachers Association of California.

Voci Singers



Liz Binning Barbara Brenner Buder Helene Byrne Rachel Decker Angie Doctor Jeanne Eberhard Vicky Faulk Samantha Graff Kiera Gray Alissa McClean Terry Meyers Nancy Nicholson Nicky Reed Lori Rizzo-Cummings Karla Sagramoso Lisa Sanders Susan Sands Adina Sara Victoria Skerritt Kathy Walrath Marsha Wehrenberg Edna Yeh

Sing with Voci!

Voci seeks experienced women choral singers in all voice parts to join the Ensemble for spring 2022 and beyond. Auditions will be held through December 20 or until all positions are filled. Visit our website (*VociSings.org*) to learn more. Contact Artistic Director Mitchell Covington at *mcovington@vocisings.org* to schedule an audition.

Voci is supported by your generous individual donations; the Alameda County Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts Program; the Alameda County Arts Relief Grant Program; and the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program, Nonprofit Cultural Institutions Program.

> Voci is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization and welcomes contributions. Please visit our website for more information: VociSings.org



Voci Board of Directors

Terry Meyers (President), Lisa Sanders (Treasurer), Victoria Skerritt (Secretary), Rachel Decker, and Nicky Reed, Mitchell Covington & Edna Yeh (ex officio)

Voci Staff

Artistic Director: Mitchell Covington Assistant Conductor: Edna Yeh Accompanist: Amy Belles

Chorus Manager: Nicky Reed Marketing: Rachel Decker (lead), Helene Byrne, Barbara Brenner Buder, Susan Sands, and Kathy Walrath Graphic Design: Edna Yeh Concert Production: Terry Meyers, Lisa Sanders, and Victoria Skerritt Program: Lori Rizzo-Cummings Librarians: Marsha Wehrenberg and Adina Sara Website: Rachel Decker, Lisa Sanders, Kathy Walrath, and Edna Yeh House Staff: John Gibbins (Box Office) and Lisa Muniz (House Manager) *Crew Lead:* Liz Binning

Thank you to St. Mary Magdalen Church, St. Perpetua Church, Orinda Community Church, Faith Fellowship Church, and to all the friends, family and members of Voci who volunteer countless hours of work to make our performances possible!

A special thanks to our wonderful community for supporting our 30th anniversary season!

Save the Date



Watch Voci's 30th Anniversary Celebration video, highlighting favorites from the past 30 years plus interviews with past directors. Find it on our YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/VociSings1

