



Program Notes & Translations

and passed on by oral tradition, and the subject of water became a common theme. Not only was water viewed as a means of spiritual cleansing and purification, but it also served as a means of covering the trail of an escaping slave. Hence, slaves would often make reference to water images in their songs in the hope that they would become free.

The Mi'kmaq Song is based on a First Nations chant, the "I'ko Song," an ancient gathering song of the Mi'kmaq peoples of Eastern Canada. There are several stories of its origins. Some say that it has Mohawk origins while others say that it is a song of peace between the Mi'kmaq and the Mohawk. The text does not provide any clues as it is entirely comprised of vocables, spoken syllables that have no real meaning or translation. Many such vocables were intended to express emotion rather than actual words. This arrangement uses humming as a special effect to create a wilderness atmosphere representing the chaos of nature, with animal calls and the human voice honoring the traditions of the Mi'kmaq peoples. Arranger Lydia Adams is conductor of the Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto, Canada and the Conductor and Artistic Director of the Elmer Iseler Singers since 1998.

Jordan's Angels is an original Gospel song by Rollo Dilworth which quotes the spiritual "All Night, All Day." "Written in a "testifying" style, it tells the story of a child who receives comfort from a vision of being surrounded by a "band of angels." Similar to the water images found in other spirituals ("Deep River, Wade in the Water"), the Jordan River symbolically represents safety, peace and freedom."

Tonight's program features two world premieres! **The Caged Bird**, composed by senior chorister Katherine Waugh, is set to the exquisite words of Maya Angelou. A contemporary piece, it highlights the constant struggle for freedom in a world where many are not free. Complex harmonies, mode changes, and dissonance and resolution throughout the piece represent the emotions of struggling for, and eventually obtaining, freedom.

Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans? Our Chamber Singers will begin to find the answer when we travel to the Big Easy from June 24 - 28 for the Crescent City Choral Festival! This classic jazz song was first heard in 1947 in the movie "New Orleans" where it was performed by Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday.

Shine on Me, one of Rollo Dilworth's most popular and well-known arrangements, "is built on a pentatonic scale, and it utilizes a text that has multiple meanings. The original text of this spiritual can be found in the opening chorus: *Shine on me. Shine on me. I wonder if the lighthouse will shine on me.* The second line of the text metaphorically represents a search for guidance and direction on both a physical and a spiritual level. The additional text and melodies in this arrangement are partnered with the original melody so as to create harmonic progressions consistent with the African American singing tradition."

Great Camp Meeting, arranged by Rollo Dilworth, was commissioned by the Young Voices of Colorado for the Sing A Mile High Festival. FCCC Chamber Singers attended this festival in June 2015 and performed in its world premiere. Two traditional spirituals, "Walk Together, Children" and "There's Going To Be a Meeting Here Tonight," are featured in this piece. Spirituals were songs passed down from earlier and darker times of African American enslavement and were pleas for survival and community support. Some spirituals kept the pace while walking or working (walk together children, don't you get weary). Others depicted celebration, perhaps at a revival meeting, or expressed the hope of an easier life in Heaven (great camp meeting in the promised land). Both of these spirituals combine in an uplifting celebration of emotion and joy.



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The process of commissioning new works for our choir has many exciting and wonderful aspects. Involving the choristers allows them to consider the creative process in a new way, which has led some to try their own hand at composition. Commissioning new music adds to an ever-growing body of repertoire for children's choirs and provides an opportunity for this music to be performed in public. Certainly we have benefited from the music commissioned by many other groups around the country and all over the world, while numerous FCCC commissions have now been published and are being performed by choirs everywhere.

Through the act of commissioning we have supported the creation of new music and contributed to the ability of talented people such as Rollo Dilworth, Nick Page, David Brunner, Rob Hugh, Anthony Piccolo and others to make a living by composing for children's choirs. Finally, it is a privilege both for the performer and the audience to be a part of music that is being performed and experienced for the very first time in public. What a pleasure for all of us present today!

Our second world premiere of the evening is **Noah**, commissioned by the FCCC from Rollo Dilworth for this concert. It is based on two African American spirituals, "Who Built the Ark" and "Let the Dove Come In," also known as "Open the Window, Noah." The tale of Noah and the ark is one of the most well-known Bible stories, from which there are many lessons that may be derived, for example, the importance of living a pure life and the cleansing power of water (*note previous references to symbolism of water*). Both spirituals also refer to the dove. In the story, Noah sent a dove to scout the earth for dry land, and when the dove returned with an olive leaf in its beak, he knew the flood had subsided. Doves have been used ever since as a symbol of peace.

"Noah" begins with the familiar refrain of "Who built the ark?" The verses are accompanied by a foreboding dissonance suggesting the impending flood. As we hear the beginning of "Let the Dove Come In," Dilworth introduces a "rhythmic movement which symbolizes the notion that music making and movement are never separate acts when performing songs rooted in African traditions. Movement was used to accompany labor, and it accompanied all types of songs (religious songs, game songs, ceremonial songs)." In the case of "Noah," the movement accompanies the task of hoisting the window. We then have a series of key changes along with movement, escalating the drama of the story as both melodies come together in an exuberant celebration. Finally, "the slowing down in the last few measures is meant to symbolize the cessation of the floodwaters. The rising vocal lines on the final "Noah" is the lifting of the window."

Dr. Rollo Dilworth

Rollo Dilworth is Professor of Choral Music Education and Chair of the Department of Music Education and Therapy at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance in Philadelphia, PA. He has served on the faculty since 2009. Prior to his position with Boyer College, he taught music education and was the director of choral activities for 13 years at North Park University in Chicago, where he prepared and conducted numerous extended and choral-orchestral works. Before teaching at the college level, Dilworth also taught choral and general music at the middle school level in his hometown of St. Louis, MO. Dilworth holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education from Case Western Reserve University, a Master of Education degree in Secondary Education and Music from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and a Doctor of Music degree in Conducting Performance from Northwestern University.

Throughout his career, Dilworth has written or arranged African American spirituals, gospel songs, Broadway selections, art songs, vocal exercises, and a musical-all of which are frequently performed by school, church, community, university and professional choirs in the United States and abroad. The majority of Dilworth's choral scores are works commissioned by community and professional ensembles. Over 150 of his choral



Dr. Rollo Dilworth continued

compositions and arrangements have been published-many of which are a part of the Henry Leck Creating Artistry Choral Series. He has authored 3 books of choral warm up exercises intended for elementary and secondary choral ensembles. A frequent presenter at local, state, regional and national conferences, Rollo Dilworth has conducted 43 all-state choirs at various levels (elementary, middle school, highschool), and has conducted 6 regional honor choirs and 4 national honor choirs (ADCA, OAKE and NafME). He has most recently appeared as guest conductor for international choral festivals and master classes in Australia, Canada, Taiwan, Ireland, and China. For the 2015-2016 season, he has been invited to conduct all-state choirs in North Carolina, Oklahoma, Ohio, Arizona and Massachusetts. He will also conduct honor choirs for the Central and Southwest regions of the American Choral Directors Association. International festival and clinic invitations include Canada, Singapore, Austria and France.

Dilworth is currently National Board Chair for Chorus America. He is an active life member of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). He also holds memberships with several other organizations, including the National Association for Music Education (NafME), the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM) and the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP).

Special Recognitions

We honor a number of special friends at tonight's concert. First, the Board of Directors of the FCCC is proud to present the FCCC High Notes Award, to be given to an individual or group that has had a significant impact in Connecticut as an advocate of the arts, a musician, music educator or music leader. This award will be presented tonight to Carol Kolonay-Spangler.

Carol Kolonay-Spangler began her career in 1965, teaching fourth grade, then music and movement in grades PreK-12. Well known as a master music educator, she presented workshops and courses dealing with the use of music and movement activities in the district and throughout the country at local, state and national levels. She then became a Principal in the Fairfield Public Schools, serving in that role from 1993-2008. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate of the arts in education. Carol joined the FCCC Board of Directors in 1996 where she has served numerous terms as President and Vice-President and has been a guiding light in the successful operation of the choir. To thank her and to celebrate her twenty years of service we are honored to present her with the FCCC High Notes Award. Bravissima Carol!!

We honor our graduating seniors, Choral Scholars Jared Bovine, Tara Kotulsky, Vandy Sampson, Katherine Waugh, Chris Fusco, Sarah Kryspin, along with Patrick Agonito, Emmanuel Chinyumba, Eliza Elliott, Rose Giannicchi, Lauren Smith and Nicole Violone. We wish them the best of luck as they move on to the next exciting chapter in their lives.

We sincerely thank our Parent Coordinator, Ellen Waugh, for her many years of service and dedication to the choir. Ellen, along with daughter Katherine, has given so much to the FCCC for the past nine years.



Fairfield County Children's Choir

P.O. Box 110588 Trumbull, CT 06611 • 203 414-4292 • SingFCCC.org



Fairfield County Children's Choir

PRESENTS

The Spirit of Spring

Introducing a world premiere by Special Guest

Dr. Rollo Dilworth

Celebrated choral composer, conductor and music educator.

7pm Saturday

May 7, 2016

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Fairfield County Children's Choir

presents our 21st Annual Spring Concert

The Spirit of Spring

7pm Saturday, May 7, 2016
Quick Center for the Arts
Fairfield University

Special Guests

Dr. Rollo Dilworth

Rodger Bryan – Bass & Cello
Peter Hohmeister – Percussion
Nina Crothers – Violin
Sofia Nangle - Violin
Maggie Andrade – Viola
Leslie Waddell – Flute
Sheila Doherty – French Horn

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PROGRAM

Fairfield County Youth Choir

Gloria Ola Gjeilo
Soon and Very Soon Andraé Crouch,
arr. Rollo Dilworth

Chorus

The Little Birch Tree Russian Folk Song,
arr. Mary Goetze
I Am Melanie Horne
Joy in My Heart arr. Rollo Dilworth

Chorale

Sing Me A Song Leonard Enns
Shenandoah American Folk Song,
arr. Rollo Dilworth
Let Me Fly Traditional Spiritual,
arr. Rollo Dilworth

Concert Choir

How Lovely Are the Messengers . . . Felix Mendelssohn,
arr. Russell Robinson
Down to the River to Pray Traditional, arr. Sheldon Curry
Take Me To the Water Rollo Dilworth

Chamber Singers

The Mi'kmaq Song arr. Lydia Adams
Jordan's Angels Rollo Dilworth
The Caged Bird Maya Angelou/Katherine Waugh

World Premiere

Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?
– DeLange/Alter –

Combined Choirs

Shine On Me Traditional Spiritual,
arr. Rollo Dilworth
Great Camp Meeting arr. Rollo Dilworth
Special Presentation by Dr. Rollo Dilworth
Noah arr. Rollo Dilworth
World Premiere Commission



Program Notes & Translations

Welcome to the twenty-first annual Spring Concert of the Fairfield County Children's Choir! This evening's concert features the music of Dr. Rollo Dilworth, as well as folk songs, classical pieces, jazz music and two world premieres. While Dr. Dilworth composes and arranges music of many styles, it is in the genre of Gospel and Spirituals that he is most well known. In addition, we have an outstanding cast of performers, including many guest musicians and three hundred of the most talented and dedicated young singers in Connecticut!

Tonight you will hear Gospel music, Spirituals and Gospel-style arrangements of Spirituals. Spirituals are folk songs and therefore, by definition, they have no known composer. They have been handed down aurally through many generations, originating with African American slaves who combined African music with European styles they encountered here. The earliest "concert" performances of spirituals date back to 1865 when the Fisk Jubilee Singers of Fisk University toured Europe and the United States. This tour was met with enormous success and led to the wide popularity of choral arrangements in this important oeuvre of music. Gospel music originated in the Black churches of the urban north in the 20th century. Gospel songs have a known composer with a tradition descended from spirituals and urban blues, infused with improvisation and instrumental accompaniment.

We begin, however, in the realm of contemporary music. The *Gloria* by Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978) was written for the Manitou Singers of St. Olaf College in Minnesota, one of the seminal schools of choral music in the United States. Gjeilo (Yay-lo) is a Norwegian-born composer and pianist currently living in Manhattan. Through the centuries many composers have set the text of the *Gloria* from the Roman Catholic Mass. Gjeilo offers a new and fresh setting, including the ethereal opening, an exuberant final *Amen*, and the most thrilling fanfare on the *Laudamus te*. The FCCC Chamber Singers performed this piece last summer under the direction of our guest, Rollo Dilworth, at the Sing A Mile High Festival in Denver, CO.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax
hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*

*Laudamus te; benedicimus te;
adoramus te; glorificamus te.*

*Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.*

*Glory be to God in the highest.
And on earth peace
to men of good will.*

*We praise Thee; we bless Thee;
we worship Thee; we glorify Thee.*

*Together with the Holy Ghost
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

Soon and Very Soon by Andraé Crouch (1942-2015) is a Gospel classic and was the opening song performed at Michael Jackson's Memorial service. Andraé Crouch was one of the most renowned and widely respected pioneers of contemporary Gospel music. He collaborated with such acclaimed pop artists as Elvis Presley, Quincy Jones and Madonna, and received a total of nine Grammy Awards and an Academy Award nomination. He also contributed to the soundtracks of such movies as *The Lion King*, *The Color Purple* and *Free Willy*. This arrangement by Rollo Dilworth captures the feeling and spirit of the best in Gospel music.

The Little Birch Tree, arranged by Mary Goetze, is a traditional Russian Folk song. The birch tree, or "bereza," is an important symbol in Russian culture, representing spring, light and beauty. Ancient Russians believed that birch trees had special "spirits" that would protect them so they planted them around their villages. Tchaikovsky included this popular folksong in the last movement of his Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36, written in 1877-1878.

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Program Notes & Translations

"I Am the sun so bright. I am the sweet butterfly. I am the field and the sky." This piece by Melanie Horne reminds us all that we are a natural part of the wonderful world in which we live. In it you will hear two soloists begin the piece. After that the choir sings three verses and two different refrains in unison. These refrains will be sung together the very last time to create contrast, interest and harmony.

Joy In My Heart is a choral celebration of the joy that comes from believing in oneself. The first theme you will hear is an adaptation of "I've Got That Joy, Joy, Joy," written in the style of a "jubilee." Jubilees have their roots in the African American spiritual tradition and are characterized by a brisk tempo and major tonality. The next verse begins with a quote from the famous civil rights freedom song "Ain't Gon' Let Nobody Turn Me Round," which expresses the determination of the people who were fighting for what they believed in – equal rights and justice for all.

Leonard Enns (b. 1948), a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, is active as a composer, teacher and choral director. He is on the faculty at Conrad Grebel College at the University of Waterloo and is the founding director of the Da Capo Chamber Choir. He has written works for many choirs in Canada, including *Sing Me A Song*, an upbeat jazz piece composed for the Niagara Children's Chorus.

Shenandoah is a traditional American folk song of uncertain origin, dating at least to the early 19th century. There are many interpretations of this song. One story tells of a pioneer's nostalgia for the Shenandoah River Valley in Virginia, another of a Confederate soldier in the American Civil War, dreaming of his country home in Virginia. Others suggest that it is of Native American origin, telling the tale of the daughter of the Indian Chief Shenandoah who is courted for seven years by a white Missouri river trader. American folklorist Alan Lomax suggested that "Shenandoah" was a sea-shanty and that the "composers" quite possibly were French-Canadian *voyageurs*. Regardless of these discrepancies, "Shenandoah" remains an American classic – described by one writer as "the most beautiful song in the English language." In this setting by Rollo Dilworth, "Shenandoah" receives a fresh, gospel-flavored interpretation, with bluesy harmonies and a laid-back rhythmic groove.

In his program notes for *Let Me Fly*, Rollo Dilworth writes, "African-American slaves dreamed of the day they would be free. Even if freedom on earth seemed impossible, these people knew, through their faith and convictions, that they would ultimately find freedom in the heavenly realm. Similar to other spirituals, the chariot becomes a symbol for freedom. In the earthly sense, the chariot represents the Underground Railroad."

Felix Mendelssohn wrote *How Lovely are the Messengers* for his oratorio *St. Paul*. An oratorio is very much like an opera, in that it is a large work with soloists, choir and orchestra. However, the oratorio is always based on religious text, in this case Romans 10: 15, 18. Mendelssohn is considered one of the finest writers of the early Romantic period in music.

Popularized by Alison Krauss' performance in the 2000 film "O Brother, Where Art Thou," *Down to the River to Pray* continues to resonate with audiences today. Its origin is considered to be from the folk song tradition, either as a spiritual, Appalachian song or a hymn tune. In this arrangement, the composer maintains the traditions of those genres by using formal elements such as call and response and traditional harmonies, providing ample variety without losing the profoundly simple "folk" quality of the song.

Take Me to the Water is a contemporary gospel style piece that incorporates quotes from two African-American spirituals, "Down by the Riverside" and "Wade in the Water." Throughout the period of slavery, many of these religious folk melodies were composed