



Program Notes & Translations

Johannes Ockeghem wrote this haunting and expressive canon over 500 years ago. The Hebrew text was likely added centuries later. **Hava Nashira** proclaims the joy of singing. *Hava nashira, shir' haleluia! Let us sing together, sing alleluia!*

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. **Feel Good** is a contemporary Gospel song, one of many in the FCCC repertoire.

Come, Follow Me first appeared in John Hilton's *Catch That Catch Can: A Choice Collection of Catches, Rounds, and Canons*, first published in London in 1652. The song was originally about a gang of rogues or thieves that one day might get caught and hanged. At some point the words were changed from 'gallows tree' to the more pastoral 'greenwood tree.'

Early As I Was Walking is an English round first published in 1609.

Bernstein's **Chichester Psalms** is one of the major works for choir and orchestra of the 20th century. The Chamber Singers performed the entire twenty-minute piece with the Greater Bridgeport Symphony under the baton of Eric Jacobsen in March. The work was commissioned for the Southern Cathedrals Festival at Chichester Cathedral, England. Bernstein wrote the piece in April and May of 1965 while living in Fairfield. For this evening's concert we will perform excerpts from the second movement, including major portions in canon, with the Hebrew text from Psalm 23.

<i>Adonai ro-i, lo ehsar.</i>	<i>The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.</i>
<i>Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini,</i>	<i>He maketh me to lie down in green pastures,</i>
<i>Al mei m'nuhot y'nahaleini,</i>	<i>He leadeth me beside the still waters,</i>
<i>Naf'shi y'shovev,</i>	<i>He restoreth my soul,</i>
<i>Yan'heini b'ma'aglei tsedek,</i>	<i>He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness,</i>
<i>L'ma'an sh'mo.</i>	<i>For His name's sake.</i>
<i>Gam ki eilech</i>	<i>Yea, though I walk</i>
<i>B'gei tsalmavet,</i>	<i>Through the valley of the shadow of death,</i>
<i>Lo ira ra,</i>	<i>I will fear no evil,</i>
<i>Ki Atah imadi.</i>	<i>For Thou art with me.</i>
<i>Shiv't'cha umishan'techa</i>	<i>Thy rod and Thy staff</i>
<i>Hemah y'nahamuni.</i>	<i>They comfort me.</i>
<i>Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan</i>	<i>Thou preparest a table before me</i>
<i>Neged tsor'rai</i>	<i>In the presence of mine enemies,</i>
<i>Dishanta vashemen roshi</i>	<i>Thou annointest my head with oil,</i>
<i>Cosi r'vayah.</i>	<i>My cup runneth over.</i>
<i>Ach tov vahesed</i>	<i>Surely goodness and mercy</i>
<i>Yird'funi kol y'mei hayai</i>	<i>Shall follow me all the days of my life,</i>
<i>V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai</i>	<i>And I will dwell in the house of the Lord</i>
<i>L'orech yamim</i>	<i>Forever.</i>



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Next we have two selections that will be featured when we travel to Ireland in June. **Danny Boy** is a ballad by Frederic Weatherly set to an enchanting ancient Irish melody, *Londonderry Air*. It has proved irresistible as a song of love and loss - a lament for those missing home and each other. Published as *Danny Boy* in 1913, a year before the First World War, it resonated with millions of people who were finding themselves having to say goodbye to people who they hoped against hope that they might one day see again. The theme of longing also struck a chord with many Irish emigrants who headed to America to escape the famine back home.

Mo Ghile Mear was written by Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill in the 18th century and was composed in the convention of Aisling poetry, meaning a dramatic description or representation of a vision. This song is a lament by the Gaelic goddess Éire for Bonnie Prince Charlie, who was then in exile.

<i>'Se mo laoch mo ghile mear</i>	<i>My dashing darling is my hero</i>
<i>'Se mo chaesar; ghile mear</i>	<i>My dashing darling is my Caesar</i>
<i>Ni fhuaras fein aon suan ar sean</i>	<i>I have had neither sleep nor good fortune</i>
<i>O chuaigh i gcein mo ghile mear.</i>	<i>Since my dashing darling went far away.</i>
<i>Bimse buan ar buairt gach lo</i>	<i>I am perpetually worried every day</i>
<i>Ag guí go crua 's ag tuar na ndeor</i>	<i>Wailing heavily and shedding tears</i>
<i>Mar scaoileadh uaim an buachaill beo</i>	<i>Since my lively boy was released from me</i>
<i>'S na ríomhtar tuairisc uaidh, mo bhron.</i>	<i>And there is no word of him, alas.</i>
<i>Ni haoibhinn cuach ba suairc ar ndeoin</i>	<i>Once I was a gentle maiden,</i>
<i>Tuid fíorchaoín uasal ar uathne sport</i>	<i>But now I am a spent, worn-out widow,</i>
<i>Tuid saoithe suaithe i mhuairet 's i mbron</i>	<i>My consort strongly plowing the waves</i>
<i>O scaoileadh uaim an buachaill beo.</i>	<i>Over the hills and far away.</i>

Sumer Is Icumen In is the oldest known musical round with English words. The manuscript was probably written at Reading Abbey in the mid-13th century. The text is about surviving the winter and making it through the lean period when, in medieval times, food could be scarce and life could be hard. Originally written in Middle English, we will perform a modernized version that keeps a few of the original words. The poem is a joyous celebration of the arrival of summer – the bullock starting, the cow lowing after its baby calf, and a cavorting stag, all shouting loudly and triumphantly, like the song of the cuckoo, that summer is here.

<i>Sumer is icumen in,</i>	<i>Summer is a-coming in,</i>
<i>Lhude sing cuccu!</i>	<i>Loudly sing, Cuckoo!</i>
<i>Groweth sed and bloweth med</i>	<i>Groweth seed and bloweth mead</i>
<i>And springth the wode nu,</i>	<i>And springeth wood anew,</i>
<i>Sing cuccu!</i>	<i>Sing, Cuckoo!</i>
<i>Ave bleteth after lomb,</i>	<i>Ewe bleateth after the lamb</i>
<i>Lhouth after calue cu.</i>	<i>Low'th after the calf the cow.</i>
<i>Bulluc sterteth, bucke uerteth,</i>	<i>Bullock starteth, buck too verteth,</i>
<i>Murie sing cuccu!</i>	<i>Merrily sing, Cuckoo!</i>
<i>Cuccu, cuccu, wel singes thu cuccu;</i>	<i>Cuckoo, cuckoo, well singst thou, cuckoo;</i>
<i>Ne swik thu nauer nu.</i>	<i>O cease thou never now!</i>
<i>Sing cuccu nu!</i>	<i>Sing cuckoo now!</i>



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Lowell Mason's round **O Music, Sweet Music** can be found in *The American Tune Book*, published in Boston in 1869. Mason was an important figure in both church music and music education. He is known as the first public school music teacher in the United States after convincing the Massachusetts School Board that vocal music instruction should be made part of the primary school curriculum. In 1838, the board voted to include music in public elementary schools, marking the first time in American history that music was officially given a place in public education.

William Boyce (1711-1779) was an English composer and organist. He produced a generous quantity of music which combines Baroque style with forward looking Classical elements. His **Alleluia** is a stunning example of three-part Baroque counterpoint.

Vine and Fig Tree is a beautiful Israeli song of peace. We will perform it first in Hebrew and then in English, with a descant composed by Nick Page. The text comes from the Old Testament Prophet Micah, in the fourth chapter:

*Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation will not lift up sword against nation
And never again will they train for war.
And each of them will sit under his
Vine and under his fig tree,
With no one to make them afraid.*

Moja Numba is an African round which roughly translates from the Swahili to "Hey, hey! We are number one!"

Ah, Poor Bird is from Eastern Europe where the bird is a symbol of freedom.

Make New Friends is a traditional round often learned in summer camp. Our version is taken from the vocal group *Sweet Honey in the Rock*.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat is an English nursery rhyme and popular children's song. The earliest printing of the song is from 1852.

To honor Mother's Day we sing the beautiful lullaby, **Tell Me Why**.

Over the Rainbow is a ballad, with music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by Yip Harburg. It was written for the movie *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and was sung by Judy Garland. The song won the Academy Award for Best Original Song and became Garland's signature song, as well as one of the most enduring standards of the 20th century. Yip Harburg's great-granddaughter was a member of the FCCC many years ago!



Fairfield County Children's Choir

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

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FCCC High Notes Awards
Kevin Cotellese and Heidi Vanderwal

The FCCC High Notes Award for 2017 is presented to two individuals who have had a significant impact on the Fairfield County Children's Choir. Congratulations to Kevin Cotellese and Heidi Vanderwal!

FCCC is a member of Chorus America.


PROGRAM

Fairfield County Youth Choir

How Can I Keep From Singing? ... Rev. Robert Lowry, arr. Rob Hugh
 O Sifuni Mungu Maddux, McCall, MMunga,
 arr. Emerson
 Non Nobis Domine William Byrd
 Frere Jacques French Round

Chorus

Oh How Lovely is the Evening ... Traditional German Round
 Laughing, Singing Cesar Bresgen
 Go To Joan Glover Traditional English Round
 Old Abram Brown Benjamin Britten
 Riversong Andy Beck

Chorale

I Love the Mountains Traditional Camp Song
 Music Alone Shall Live Shirley McRae
 This Pretty Planet Tom Chapin/John Forster
 Hotaru Koi Japanese Folk Song
 My Favorite Things Rodgers & Hammerstein,
 arr. Hirokawa

Concert Choir

Musica Dei Donum Optimi Rolande de Lassus
 White Sand and Grey Sand Traditional English Round
 White Coral Bells Traditional Round
 Hava Nashira Johannes Ockeghem,
 arr. Liebergen
 Feel Good Tyson & Scott, arr. Baker

Chamber Singers

Come, Follow Me John Hilton
 Early As I Was Walking English Round
 Chichester Psalms Leonard Bernstein
Movement Two excerpts
 Danny Boy Irish air, Fred Weatherly
 Mo Ghile Mear Gaelic Folk Song,
 arr. Desmond Early

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PROGRAM

FINALE - Combined Choirs

Sumer Is Icumen In 13th Century English Round
 O Music, Sweet Music Lowell Mason
 Alleluia William Boyce
 Vine and Fig Tree Shalom Altman
 Moja Numba African Round
 Ah, Poor Bird Eastern European Round
 Make New Friends Traditional Round
 Row, Row, Row Your Boat Traditional Round
 Tell Me Why Traditional American Folk Song
 Over the Rainbow Harold Arlen/Yip Harburg

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Welcome to the twenty-second annual Spring Concert of the Fairfield County Children's Choir! Our final regular season concert will again focus on community, this time featuring classic folk songs and many beloved rounds, as well as standard choral repertoire. With selections from the 13th century through today, you will experience sparkling gems that will warm your heart and masterpieces that will inspire your soul. In addition, we have an outstanding cast of performers, including guest musicians and three hundred of the most talented and dedicated young singers in Connecticut!

The hymn **How Can I Keep From Singing** was originally written by American Baptist minister Robert Lowry (1826-1899). This setting is by Rob Hugh, a music educator and composer from West Hartford who has been our frequent guest. Rob has woven into this simple pentatonic melody one verse of the beloved song *Amazing Grace*. The text speaks of how singing elevates us above the suffering of "tumult and strife," darkness, storms, prisons and tyrants. As long as we keep singing we can find love and peace in our souls.

Highlighting the compositional technique known as "call and response," **O Sifuni Mungu** is a perfect example of community music-making. This African style song by the vocal group First Call is an upbeat piece sung in Swahili and English featuring many soloists with a variety of percussive instruments as accompaniment.

*Viumbe vyote vya mungu wetu
 Na mfalme wetu
 Viumbe vyote vya mungu wetu
 Na mfalme wetu
 Pazeni sauti ili nasi mwimbe
 Pazeni sauti ili nasi mwimbe
 Watu wote, viumbe vyote
 Awaye yote, sifu mungu*

*All creatures of our God and King
 Lift up your voice and with us sing
 Thou burning sun with golden beam
 Thou silver moon with softer gleam
 All men, all creatures
 Everybody, Praise the Lord.*

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Program Notes & Translations

Non Nobis Domine by William Byrd (1543 – 1623) is a gem from the late Renaissance. It is a three-part "canon at the fourth." Its genius lies in the fact that it is comprised of only two short phrases, which combine in intricate ways to produce a fully contrapuntal masterpiece. It is based on text from Psalm 115.

*Non nobis Domine, non nobis,
 Sed nomine Tuo da gloriam.* *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
 But unto thy name give glory.*
 (King James Version)

A close cousin of *Non Nobis Domine* is **Frere Jacques**, arguably the most famous round in the world. The song is about a friar who has overslept and is urged to wake up and sound the bell for matins, the very early morning prayers for which a monk would be expected to wake.

O, How Lovely is the Evening is a German round found in the book 55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing, published in 1917.

Laughing, Singing (originally *Lachend, Lachend kommt der Sommer*) is a German round written in the twentieth century but in a classical style.

Go To Joan Glover is an English round first published in 1609.

Benjamin Britten's **Old Abram Brown** is one of the most well known canons composed in the twentieth century. Set with a text from Walter de la Mare's *Tom Tiddler's Ground*, the canon is the last movement of Britten's song cycle *Friday Afternoons*.

Andy Beck's **Riversong** features fluid vocal lines in this nature-inspired piece. Musical quotes from familiar "river" songs are a noteworthy surprise at the end.

I Love the Mountains is originally a traditional camp song. If you listen carefully, you can hear the melody and harmony from "Heart and Soul."

Music Alone Shall Live, composed by Shirley W. McRae, is a contemporary setting of the phrase from the German round: *All things shall perish under the sun. Music alone shall live, never to die.*

This Pretty Planet, written by John Forster and Tom Chapin, was played to wake up the astronauts aboard the space shuttle!! The FCCC performed the song in concert with Tom Chapin in 2012.

The traditional Japanese children's song **Hotaru Koi** has been a favorite of FCCC and was featured in both our 15th and 20th anniversary concerts. The text translates "*Come firefly, come! Over there the water is nasty; over here the water is sweet.*"

The John Coltrane recording of **My Favorite Things** inspired this arrangement by our friend Joy Hirokawa. It is considered a jazz waltz, and the addition of the bass and drums add tremendously to the overall authenticity of the jazz style.

Musica Dei Donum Optimi is from one of Rolande de Lassus' last motets (1594). *Musica est Dei donum optimi. Music is God's greatest gift.*

White Sand and Grey Sand is a traditional English round first published in 1790. In the 18th century, before blotters were invented, sand was sprinkled over a freshly written page to dry the ink. The sand was then returned to a small container to be saved and used again. White to begin with, it gradually became grey with use. The sand sellers would buy back the grey sand and resell it at a discount to those who did not wish to buy the more expensive pure white sand.

White Coral Bells describes beautiful white flowers. The earliest citation of this song is 1916 but its style suggests 19th century England.