

PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS | SPRING 2021

WE HAVE A VOICE!

Virtual Concert

Saturday, May 15, 2021
4pm PDT | 7pm EDT



FROM THE INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome, and thank you for joining us this afternoon. As the Interim Artistic Director of the Peninsula Women's Chorus this spring, I'm thrilled to share the Chorus' artistry and hard work during this virtual time with you!

This season, the PWC took on the task of responding to the past year's moments of hardship and joy through the way we best know how: our voices.

We Have A Voice is comprised of six diverse American works that speak directly to our current moment in history.

We reflect on darkness and isolation with Randall Thompson's "Come In," and we join the national conversation around justice and equity, facing fear, and speaking out with Moira Smiley's percussive "I Have A Voice." We were so grateful to be able to work virtually with Moira, as she helped us adapt the body percussion and movement for virtual choir, and more importantly, reminded us that although we've been virtual for the past seasons, we *do* have a voice.

We also take time to reflect on themes of community, connection and hope through Caroline Shaw's "Dolce Cantavi," the stirring call for solidarity by west-coast based duo Mamuse, "We Shall Be Known," and the gospel anthem "The Storm Is Passing Over." Through Sarah Quartel's stunning "God will give orders" (in collaboration with fabulous cellist Emil Miland), we speak to the need we have felt for family, and the importance of looking to future generations to lead our way.

Along with these six pieces, we've collaborated with four incredible American female poets whose works, primarily written during the past year, fit perfectly into our program. Along with their readings, we've included their full poems in the program.

Now, I invite you to take a moment to reflect on this past year *with* us. Our hope is that this music, poetry, and prose reflect some of our shared human experiences—our global heartbreak and resilience during the pandemic, and that you take a moment out of your full lives to mark the passing of this year.

We have returned to the essential and are so grateful that you, too, have reaffirmed that the arts, indeed ***choral music is essential***. We have, are, and will continue to make music with you, for you, and with your support.

With gratitude and song,



Dr. Corie Brown
Interim Artistic Director

The Peninsula Women's Chorus Presents

WE HAVE A VOICE!

A Virtual Concert

Saturday, May 15, 2021 @ 4pm PDT | 7pm EDT

Dr. Corie Brown, *Interim Artistic Director*

Margaret Fondbertasse, *Accompanist*

I

Come In **Randall Thompson (1899-1984)**

Margaret Fondbertasse, *piano*
Ray Furuta, *flute*

Will We Desire Touch • Loretta Diane Walker

After the COVID-19 kryptonite
is discovered, will we desire touch—
that primitive longing
swaddled in our lives before birth?
Will it be more desirable
than clasping light between our teeth
in a world darkening with dread?
Before this phantom smuggled
panic into our lives,
beliefs broke friendships,
family relationships,
kind words became crushed bricks,
crumbled from the weight
of anger's battering.

Curious how this fear forces wide
the circle of distance,
how the invisible separates us.

And those souls who depend on a stranger's touch
for comfort: a brush of fingertips from the grocery clerk,
a bump from the waitress burdened with too many trays,
a pat on the back from the worker at a soup kitchen,
the volunteer who rocks an orphaned child
in the neonatal intensive-care unit.
Is there a surrogate for the warm arch of flesh?

Oh! To fill air and lungs, lives and loneliness
with the dust of crushed kind words.
Let their film cover computer,
telephone, television screens.
Let their residue stick to hands flush against glass
as they reach for companionship from the pit of isolation.
And for those whose hands cannot reach
beyond cardboard boxes, may they hear
friendly voices echoing from heart-to-heart
in this dark season of distancing.

Michele Abroff, Sara Asher, Jeanne Benioff, Jenn Davidson Kim,
Lynne Haynes-Tucker, Martha Morgan, & Katie Sanwick, *soloists*

Sheltering in Place: A Praise Poem • Harmony Harrison

Praising the world—
praising the skyscape,
praising the spangled waters,
and the people upon the waters
and on the land and in the sky,
praising the deep-grained wonder
of faces mapped by the roads
that all have traveled,

praising the barking seal,
and the owl's silent wing-launch,
and every interlinked tree,
and interlinked life,
and the cat's great roundness,
and the yes in the grin of a dog—
praising the day even as the night
wraps her arms around us.

Praising
the electricity of smiles,
the long-lived light in an elder's eyes,
the dark chords of minor keys
and every bright major,
the hands—oh the hands—
and their elegant dance
beneath the water's pouring stream,
and the slick-luscious soap as it glides on skin—
praising the gift of breath that gentles
and opens the miracle of lungs—

praising all of this,
we stay home,
just for now,

so we may save the lives of our people,
so more may thrive. We let praise
build within us, bubbling joy,
and when we stride free,
we'll ignite with the light
of ten thousand thanks,
of the ten thousand glories
that always lie close at hand.

Michele Abroff, Jeanne Benioff, Martha Morgan, Debbie Romani,
Lynne Haynes-Tucker, Deanne Tucker, *soloists*
Deanne Tucker, *floor toms*
Moira Smiley, *body percussion audio*

II

Waltz for Young Daughters • Diane Frank

In the rocking chair of a dream,
white lace ribbons of memory.
A waltz for young daughters,
aspens leaves shimmering in
the shoulder of the wind.

Open the edges of your body
to the wings of a floating swan.
Collision of a blue star
with the grace of an angel.

On the cello, even playing the scales
sounds like honey. Weave a new song
on your grandmother's loom.
The attic is filled with boxes of old lace,
light slanting from a high window,
netting and roses on hats
from an earlier century.

Heirloom roses are blooming in the garden
pink as the cadence of your singing.
Open the painted boxes, carry the yellow silk
of your ribbons into the world.
Fill the new century
with the shimmering of your dreams.

God will give orders/Sweet child **Sarah Quartel (b. 1982)**

Sara Asher, *soprano*
Emil Miland, *cello*
Margaret Fondbertasse, *piano*

For the Asking • Barbara Saxton

Ask priests or the moon what sings behind the night's curtain,
ask mosquitoes or sadists the purpose of torment,
ask liars or red maples where to drip sticky sweetness.
Ask babies or cats why they pummel soft objects,
ask nurses or doves how to mourn complete strangers,
ask children or sparrows what blackberries taste like.
Then, arrange all their answers
in a box lined with stars, wistful tears, and soft wool.
Leave the whole parcel out for the dustman's collection
of pandemic nightmares and dreams.

We Shall Be Known **Karisha Longaker (MaMuse), arr. Corie Brown**

The Storm Is Passing Over **Charles Albert Tindley (1851-1933)**

Margaret Fondbertasse, *piano*

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Come In, Randall Thompson (1899-1984), poem by Robert Frost (1874-1963)

As I came to the edge of the woods,
Thrush music — hark!
Now if it was dusk outside,
Inside it was dark.
Too dark in the woods for a bird
By sleight of wing
To better its perch for the night,
Though it still could sing.

The last of the light of the sun
That had died in the west
Still lived for one song more
In a thrush's breast.

Far in the pillared dark
Thrush music went —
Almost like a call to come in
To the dark and lament.

But no, I was out for stars;
I would not come in.
I meant not even if asked;
And I hadn't been.

Dolce Cantavi, Caroline Shaw (b. 1982), poem by Francesca Turina Bufalini Contessa di Stupinigi (1544-1641)

Vago augellin, che per quei rami ombrosi
dolce cantavi a minüir mie pene,
di sentirti al mio cor gran desir viene
per fare in tutto i giorni miei giocosi.

Deh vieni, e teco mena i più famosi
cantor che quella selva in sen ritiene,
ché goderete in queste rive amene,
ed a l'estivo di starete ascosi.

Il boschetto vi attende, e 'l bel giardino
là dove in fra le fronde e l'onda e l'ora
gareggian mormorando a me vicino.

A cantar sorgeremo in sul mattino:
io con le Muse invocarò l'aurora,
e voi col vostro gorgheggiar divini.

*Lovely little bird, who, among those shady branches,
used to sing so sweetly to mitigate my sorrows,
a great desire comes to my heart to hear you again,
to make my days complete in their joy.*

*Come, and bring with you the most famous singers
that the forest nurtures in its breast,
for you will have the pleasure of these fair waters
and be hidden away from the heat of the summer day.*

*The little wood awaits you, and the lovely garden where,
among the leaves, the ripples and the breeze
compete in their murmuring beside me.*

*We will rise together before sunrise:
I will herald the dawn with the Muses,
and you with your warbling divine.*

I Have A Voice, Moira Smiley

Listen, Speak Out, Listen, Sing
Take the space, make a sound.
I have a voice
It trembles and it shakes like thunder.
You have a voice.
We have a voice...a voice inside, buried inside.
A sound!
Wake the sleeping lioness.

Thunder catches my heart!
Thunder fills my lungs!
Thunder takes my breath!
Thunder fills my lungs!

I can listen to you now,
And I can hear you without fear
I can speak clearly now, and
I know that love is near.
I am not afraid. I am not alone.
I have a voice
You have a voice
We have many voices
We...have a voice
Listen, Speak Out, Listen, Sing
To speak out, and sing and sing and sing!



Photo: Alexandra DeFurio

God will give orders/Sweet child, Sarah Quartel (b. 1982)

God will give orders to his angels about you,
And all his angels, all his armies sing: "ah!"
Do not think poorly of these little children.
All of them have an angel in heav'n,
And all their angels can see the face of the Father.
All your angels see the face of your Father.

Sweet child, hear my song.
Sweet child, I will guard you.
Sweet child, you're the future.
Love and mercy show to others.

Faith, like a child, can hear the song,
A song that falls on ears of those who wait,
Like a child, for peace to come.
And trust that we will learn to show them love,
Like a child, who knows no wrong
From being loved by those who've taught them
Faith, like a child, forever strong. The circle goes on.

We Shall Be Known, Karisha Longaker (MaMuse), arranged by Corie Brown

We shall be known by the company we keep,
by the ones who circle 'round to tend these fires.
We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
the seeds of change, alive from deep within the earth.

It is time now,
It is time now that we thrive,
It is time we lead ourselves into the well.
It is time now, and what a time to be alive
in this great Turning we shall learn to lead in love.

The Storm Is Passing Over, Charles Albert Tindley (1851-1933), arranged by Barbara W. Baker

Have courage my soul
and let us journey on.
Though the night is dark
and I am far from home.
Thanks be to God
the morning light appears.

The storm is passing over.
The storm is passing over.
The storm is passing over.
Halleluia!



Photo: Kyle Cavallaro



Since 1966, the Peninsula Women's Chorus (PWC) has become synonymous with artistic excellence in choral music. Known for its adventuresome programming and recognized as one of the leading women's choruses in the U.S. and beyond, the PWC is dedicated to commissioning new works, discovering rarely performed works, and keeping classical choral masterpieces for treble voices alive. Comprised of a diverse group of auditioned singers who share an enthusiasm for challenging repertoire, the PWC has commissioned 35 new works and released seven CD recordings over the last ten years. Among PWC honors are: winner of The American Prize in Choral Performance in 2015, and second place winner in 2011; third prize in the 2006 Béla Bartók 22nd International Choir Competition, in Debrecen, Hungary; two Chorus America/ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming (2003 and 1999); finalist in the 2000 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence; and second prize at the 1994 Tallinn International Choral Competition in Estonia. Other noted performances include four appearances (in 2016, 2001, 1993, and 1987) at American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) conferences. In addition to extensive performances throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, the chorus has been heard on National Public Radio, and has appeared on television both nationally and internationally. With its commitment to exciting outreach programs PWC adds to its reputation as a dynamic force in music making and community building. In 2008, PWC was among the founding choirs of the New Music for Treble Voices (NMFTV) festival, which brings together diverse local and national choruses in the study and performance of innovative contemporary works. Assuming production of the festival in 2013, PWC has participated in all nine iterations of it. The 10th NMFTV was to have taken place on March 14, 2020. The PWC also offers a Mentorship Program to provide outstanding local high school women singers an opportunity to study and rehearse challenging works, culminating in a performance in the NMFTV festival. After celebrating its 50th anniversary season in 2016-17, the PWC dived right into another 50 years of enriching its community with vibrant music.

Chorus Members	Soprano 1	Soprano 2	Alto 1	Alto 2
	Jeanne Benioff Mardie Daul Jennifer Davidson Kim Katharina Huang Andra Marynowski Mercedita Navarro Katie Sanwick Elina Smith-Leitch Jane Walker	Michele Abroff Sara Asher Vicki Brown Jan Cummins Eithne Pardini Diane Wingfield Helen Yu	Ann Crichton Harmony Harrison Holly Liberatore Kathy McLaury Ann Miller Debbie Romani Hoai-Thu Truong Deanne Tucker	Morgan Ames Tricia Baldwin Lisa Collart Lynne Haynes-Tucker Valerie Hornstein Yiting Jin Martha Morgan Susan Rooke Barbara Saxton Barbara Zoeller

MEET THE ARTISTS



Dr. Corie Brown, *Interim Artistic Director*

Corie Brown is the Interim Artistic Director of The Peninsula Women's Chorus for the Spring 2021 Season. She also serves as Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education at San José State University where she leads the SJSU Concert and Treble Choirs, and brings diverse teaching experience in both public and community settings. Prior to moving to California, and graduate studies in Colorado and Oregon, Dr. Brown taught in Colombia with the Fundación Nacional Batuta from 2012–2014, where she aided in the creation of the El Sistema-based organization's choral department and mentored choral conductors throughout the country. She also previously taught in public schools in Chicago and Michigan.

As a mezzo-soprano, Dr. Brown has appeared with the Ad Astra Music Festival and Oregon Bach Festival Choirs, as well as the award-winning University of Oregon Chamber Choir, University of Colorado Boulder University Singers, and the prestigious Chicago Chorale. She has sung under the batons of Helmuth Rilling, Matthew Halls, Sharon Paul, and Andrea Ramsey, among others, and has toured internationally throughout Argentina, Colombia, and Europe.

As a conductor, Dr. Brown was a semifinalist in the Southwest American Choral Directors Association Conducting Competition and enjoys performing everything from early music to contemporary works, especially by marginalized composers. She strives to elevate treble voices and repertoire, recently publishing a treble arrangement with Hal Leonard in the Andrea Ramsey Choral Series. Dr. Brown is active nationally and internationally as a clinician and guest conductor. Most recently, she served as faculty at the Kula Kāko'o Virtual Choral Conducting Institute in Hawai'i, adjudicated the Santander Choral Festival in Colombia, presented at the California State Music Educators Conference, and conducted the Ad Astra Music Festival High School Honor Choir in Kansas.

Dr. Brown holds degrees in Choral Music Education from Alma College, in Choral Conducting from the University of Oregon, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting and Literature from the University of Colorado Boulder. She is an active member of the American Choral Directors Association, California Music Educators Association, and National Association for Music Education, and serves on the boards of the California Choral Directors Association and California Music Educators Association Bay Area.



Margaret Fondbertasse, *Accompanist*

Margaret Fondbertasse has devoted her adult years to finessing the arts of accompanying, chamber music and teaching. A former student of John McCarthy, Anne Crowden and Janet Guggenheim, she earned a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Chamber Music from the University of California, Berkeley, where she was the recipient of the Eisner Prize for piano performance. This was followed by an auspicious grant, the Hertz Fellowship, which enabled her to pursue postgraduate studies with John Wilson at the Royal College of Music in Manchester, United Kingdom.

Margaret made her solo orchestral debut playing Beethoven's Choral Fantasy with the Coastside Community Orchestra. In addition to the PWC, she accompanies the Skyline College Concert Choir under the direction of Jude Navari. A former staff accompanist at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, she currently serves as Faculty Accompanist at Skyline College, collaborates with mezzo-soprano Meghan Dibble as Katzenduo, and is the proud mother of her science nerd son, Zachary.

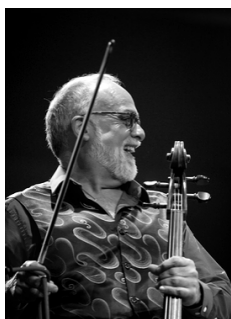


Ray Furuta, Flutist

Dubbed "The Rockstar of the Flute" by the *Informador de Guadalajara* (Mexico), Mexican-Japanese American flutist Ray Furuta has appeared worldwide as a commanding and versatile artist within the classical, contemporary, world, jazz, and pop sectors. He has performed with Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad Ensemble and The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, at The Juilliard School and The United Nations.

Founder in 2015 of the Más Amor Arts Initiative, Furuta runs projects in local juvenile detention centers, organizes programs for homeless women, delivers music education to young people in the disenfranchised districts of Tijuana, and has performed for Syrian refugees in the Middle East. These experiences underlie his development of the Music & Social Justice curriculum for the Music Department at Santa Clara University, where he is a Lecturer in Performance Practice, as well.

The winner of SVCCreates' 2018 X-Factor Arts Prize and its 2019 "On the Stage" Artist Laureate, Furuta is the curator/AD for both Chamber Music Silicon Valley and Santa Clara University's weekly Music@Noon concert series. In addition, he is an alumnus of the Multicultural Artist Leadership Institute (MALI), and a recipient of the Staller Scholar and 40 Under Forty Alumni awards from Stony Brook, where he earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree.



Emil Miland, Cellist

Cellist Emil Miland is an acclaimed soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. He made his solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony at 16, the same year he was selected to perform in Rostropovich Master Classes at the University of California in Berkeley. A graduate of the New England Conservatory, he has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and Chamber Music America. A member of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since 1988, he served as founding Principal Cellist of the New Century Chamber Orchestra for a decade.

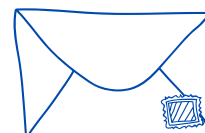
His many recital collaborations include performances with Jamie Barton, Catherine Cook, Sasha Cooke, Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Marilyn Horne, Ann Moss, Frederica von Stade and the late Zheng Cao and Lorraine Hunt-Lieberson. Ms. von Stade asked Miland to play for her at her farewell recital in Carnegie Hall.

He is featured on numerous recordings, the latest being *Violins of Hope - Live at Kohl Mansion* on Pentatone. He has had many new works written for him including those by Ernst Bacon, David Carlson, Eric Choate, David Conte, Shinji Eshima, Candace Forest, John Grimmett, Jake Heggie, Lou Harrison and James Meredith. Mr. Miland performs on a cello made by Giovanni Grancino in Milan, 1718.

Be on our mailing list!

Sign-up on our website at

www.pwchorus.org





Loretta Diane Walker

Loretta Diane Walker, a musician/tenor saxophonist, a daughter navigating a new world, a teacher who still likes her students, a breast cancer survivor, and an artist who has been humbled and inspired by a collection of remarkable people and poets, is an award-winning and nine-time Pushcart Nominee, a Best of the Net Nominee, and a member of the Texas Institute of Letters. Loretta won the 2021 William D. Barney Memorial Chapbook Contest, sponsored by the Fort Worth Poetry Society, and the 2016 Phillis Wheatley Book Award for Poetry, for her collection *In This House*. Her manuscript *Word Ghetto* won the 2011 Bluelight Press Book Award. Her work has appeared in various literary journals, magazines, and anthologies throughout the United States, Canada, India, Ireland, and the UK. Loretta has published five collections of poetry.

<https://sites.google.com/ecisd.school/loretta-diane-walker/home>



Harmony Harrison

Harmony Harrison is a poet and visual artist living in the green woods of Oregon. Her poems explore nature and spirituality, the pleasure and dissonance of love, and the sensual experience of being alive. She's serving as a poet-in-residence with the Mythica Foundation and can be found online at www.harmonyharrison.com.



Diane Frank

Diane Frank is author of eight books of poems, three novels, and a photo memoir of her 400 mile trek in the Nepal Himalayas. She is author/editor of the bestselling anthology *Fog and Light: San Francisco through the Eyes of the Poets Who Live Here*. Coming soon, *While Listening to the Enigma Variations: New and Selected Poems* (Glass Lyre Press). Diane lives in San Francisco, where she dances, plays cello, and creates her life as an art form. She teaches at San Francisco State University and Dominican University, and plays cello in the Golden Gate Symphony. *Blackberries in the Dream House*, her first novel, won the Chelson Award for Fiction and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

www.dianefrank.com



Barbara Saxton

Barbara Saxton engages in a wide range of interests and activities: performing classical, folk and Eastern European music, teaching, dancing, hiking, traveling—not to mention creating poetry and short fiction. Her chapbook *Dual Exposure* was published in 2015 by Blue Light Press and another book is under construction. Her work has appeared in the Haight Ashbury Literary Journal, *Nature Pictures*, *Poetry Breakfast*, *Slippery Elm*, *River of Earth and Sky: Poetry for the Twenty- First Century* and many other literary journals and anthologies. Barbara has sung in PWC on and off (mostly on) since 1989.

www.bhspoetry.wordpress.com



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in honor of Betsy Landergren
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and George Wortiska
in honor of Lady Bug 33
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