

UNCLOUDED DAY

Saturday, May 21, 2022

W83 Ministry Center
150 West 83rd St.
New York City

Welcome

It is with great joy that we welcome you to our first in-person concert since pre-pandemic times.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we gathered in this auditorium to support the work of the Sadie Nash Leadership Project and sing what would be our last concert before the world was stricken by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We quarantined ourselves in our New York apartments with the rest of the city. We were together in solidarity, yet separated. We rang our bells in support of heroic first responders and we committed ourselves to making music and supporting each other as best we could.

As time wore on, our city changed and Inspire changed. Many of our beloved friends switched jobs, started families, or moved out of town. Our commitment to each other and to our art pushed us to record a piece remotely, to gather together for a virtual cabaret, and to partner with interdisciplinary artists to provide educational webinars for our followers and all those interested in the power of choral music. But through it all, we yearned to make music together, to feel the joy that comes from sharing in this very personal art form, and to inspire others with the beauty of song.

For this, Inspire's return to the concert stage, we present some of our favorite pieces that captured the important and enduring work of our partner organizations who, throughout the pandemic, continued their tireless work to advance justice, peace, and unity. The songs we sing tonight are those that we sang to honor their work and that inspired us along our journey. We hope they will inspire you as well.

Tonight, we reaffirm our commitment to foster an enduring spirit of community engagement uplifted through song—a goal that is impossible without generous supporters such as you. Thank you for continuing to support us and for being part of this vision.

UNCLOUDED DAY

Please silence all electronic devices until the program concludes.

Heavenly Home: Three American Songs
Unclouded Day
Angel Band
Hallelujah

arr. Shawn Kirchner
(b. 1970)

Wanting Memories

Ysaye M. Barnwell (b. 1946)

Lay a Garland

Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856)

Poor Wayfaring Stranger
Laura Childers, soprano

arr. Alexander Lloyd Blake (b. 1987)

There Will Be Rest

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

We Walk in Love

Deanna Witkowski (b. 1972)

Her Beacon-Hand Beckons
from To the Hands

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Vision Chant
from Bawajigaywin

Andrew Balfour (b.1955)

Gitanjali Chants

Craig Hella-Johnson (b. 1962)

Let My Love Be Heard

Jake Runestad (b. 1986)

How Can I Keep from Singing?
Carrie Quarquesso, soprano

arr. Sarah Quartel (b. 1982)

Please join us for a short reception with pre-portioned food.

We Walk in Love

All are invited to stand as you are able
and join your voices with ours.

Words by Deanna Witkowski and Lemuel Colon

Music by Deanna Witkowski
New York, NY | 2017

Gospel 3 feel (♩ = 104)

C7sus F Gm/F F Gm7

1. We walk in love u - nit - ed in pur - pose. We
2. We cry for peace and rights for all peo - ple. We
3. We dream a world of jus - tice and kind - ness. We

A7 Dm7 G7sus G7 C7sus

join our hands and lift up one voice. We
wel - come friends from far - and near. We
build a bridge cre - at - ing new paths. We

Bm7(5) Bbm6 F/C F

speak the truth with strength and com - pas - sion re -
fight for those whose voic - es are si - lenced, re -
march with joy as all walk to - geth - er. Em -

Gm F/A Gm/Bb F/C C7sus C7 F

sound - ing with hope, with cour - age and joy.
sist - ing in faith un - til all are free.
brac - ing each one, we bold - ly stand.

Text & Translations

UNCLOUDED DAY

J. K. Alwood

O they tell me of a home far beyond the skies,
they tell me of a home far away;
and they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise,
O they tell me of an unclouded day.

Refrain:

O the land of cloudless day,
O the land of an unclouded sky,
O they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise,
O they tell me of an unclouded day.

O they tell me of a home where my friends have gone,
O they tell me of that land far away.
Where the tree of life in eternal bloom
sheds its fragrance through the unclouded day. **Refrain**

O they tell me of a King in His beauty there,
they tell me that mine eyes shall behold
Where He sits on the throne that is bright as the sun,
In the city that is made of gold. **Refrain**

ANGEL BAND

Jefferson Hascall

The latest sun is sinking fast, my race is almost run,
My strongest trials now are past, my triumph is begun.

Refrain:

O come, angel band, come and around me stand,
O bear me away on your snow-white wings to my eternal home.

I know I'm near the holy ranks of friends and kindred dear;
I've brushed the dew on Jordan's banks, the crossing must be near.

Refrain

I've almost gained my heavenly home, my spirit loudly sings.
The Holy Ones, behold, they come, I hear the noise of wings.

Refrain

HALLELUJAH

Charles Wesley

And let this feeble body fail,
And let it faint or die;
My soul shall quit this mournful
vale,
And soar to worlds on high,

Oh what are all my sufferings here,
If, Lord, Thou count me meet
With that enraptured host
t'appear,
And worship at Thy feet!

Refrain

Refrain:

And I'll sing hallelujah,
And you'll sing hallelujah,
And we'll all sing hallelujah,
When we arrive at home.

Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away,
But let me find them all again,
In that eternal day.

Refrain

WANTING MEMORIES

I am sitting here wanting memories to teach me
to see the beauty in the world through my own eyes.
I am sitting here wanting memories to teach me
To see the beauty in the world through my own eyes.
You said you'd rock me in the cradle of your arms.
You said you'd hold me 'til the storms of life were gone.
You said you'd comfort me in times like these
And now I need you and you are gone.
Since you've gone and left me, there's been so little beauty,
but I know I saw it clearly through your eyes.
Now the world outside is such a cold and bitter place.
Here inside I have few things that will console.
And when I try to hear your voice above the storms of life,
then I remember that I was told.

I think on the things that made me feel so wonderful when I was young.

I think on the things that made me laugh, made me dance, made me sing.

I think on the things that made me grow into a being full of pride. Think on these things, for they are true.

I thought that you were gone, but now I know you're with me.

You are the voice that whispers all I need to hear.

I know a "please", a "thank you", and a smile will take me far.

I know that I am you and you are me, and we are one.

I know that who I am is numbered in each grain of sand.

I know that I am blessed, again and over.

LAY A GARLAND

John Fletcher

Lay a garland on her hearse of dismal yew.

Maidens, willow branches wear, say she died true.

Her love was false, but she was firm

Upon her buried body lie lightly, thou gentle earth.

WAYFAIRING STRANGER

Traditional Spiritual

I'm just a poor wayfaring stranger

A-travelling through this world of woe.

But there's no sickness, toil, nor danger

In that bright land to which I go.

Refrain:

I'm goin' there to see my father,

I'm goin' there no more to roam.

I'm just a-goin' over Jordan,

I'm just a-goin' over home.

I know dark clouds will gather round me,

I know my way is rough and steep.

But beauteous fields lie just before me,

Where God's redeemed their vigils keep. **Refrain**

THERE WILL BE REST

Sara Teasdale

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
Over the roof-tops, crowned with snow,
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,
The music of stillness holy and low.
I will make this world of my devising,
Out of a dream, out of a dream, out of a dream
In my lonely mind.
I shall find the crystal of peace
Above me, stars I shall find.
I shall find the crystal of peace.
Stars I shall find.

WE WALK IN LOVE

Deanna Witkowski & Lemuel Colon

Please turn to page three and sing with us.

HER BEACON-HAND BECKONS

Caroline Shaw

Her beacon-hand beckons:
give to me those yearning to breathe free
tempest-tossed they cannot see
what lies beyond the olive tree
whose branch was lost amid the pleas for mercy
your tired fighters fleeing flying
I will be your refuge

(text by Caroline Shaw, responding to the 1883 sonnet "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus, which was mounted on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty in 1903)

VISION CHANT

Ojibway text

Babamadizwin
Windigo
Mishomis
Nokomis

Babamadizwin is an Ojibway word meaning journey.
A Windigo is a dangerous supernatural being belonging
to the spiritual traditions of the Ojibway people.
Mishomis and Nokomis are the Ojibway words meaning
Grandfather and Grandmother.

GITANJALI CHANTS

Rabindranath Tagore

Ever in my life have I sought thee with my songs.
It was they who led me from door to door,
and with them have I felt about me,
searching and touching my world.
It was my songs that taught me all the lessons I ever learnt;
they showed me secret paths,
they brought before my sight many a star on the horizon of my
heart.
They guided me all the day long to the mysteries of the country of
pleasure and pain,
and at last to what palace gate have they brought me at the end of
my journey?
You came down from your throne and stood at my cottage door.
I was singing alone in a corner, and the melody caught your ear.
You came down and stood at my cottage door.
Masters are many in our hall, and songs are sung at all hours.
But the simple carol of this novice, struck at your love.
One plaintive little strain, mingled with the great music of the world,
and with a flower for a prize, you came down and stopped at my
cottage door.

LET MY LOVE BE HEARD

Alfred Noyes

Angels, where you soar
Up to God's own light
Take my own lost bird
On your hearts tonight;
And as grief once more
Mounts to heaven and sings
Let my love be heard
Whispering in your wings

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

Robert Lowry

My life flows on in endless song; Above earth's lamentation,
I hear the the real tho' far-off hymn That hails a new creation;
Through all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul How can I keep from singing?

While though the tempest loudly roars, I hear the truth it liveth.
And though the darkness round me close, Songs in the night it
giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love is Lord of heaven and earth, How can I keep from
singing?

I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway smooths, Since first I learned to love it,
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, A fountain ever springing;
All things are mine since I am his How can I keep from singing?



Inspire: A Choir for Unity is a New York City-based chamber choir dedicated to cultivating compassion and action for diverse social issues through the power of song. In partnership with organizations seeking positive social change, we encourage individual and collective action on socially pressing issues. We seek to inspire a spirit of unity among our artists, audiences, and the wider community.



SOPRANO

Ellie Killiam
Carrie Quarquesso
Cindy Miranda
Laura Childers
Sofia Christensen

TENOR

Ben Keiper
Graham Bobby
David Orama
Ari Messenger

ALTO

Julia Knight
Christa Masson
Nadia Bovy
Amber Salladin
Lianna Portnoy

BASS

Jon Pohlmann
Charley Sullivan
Knox Sutterfield
Josh Alexander

Knox Sutterfield & Amber Salladin, co-artistic directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Katherine Austin-Evelyn, Chair
Andrea Stagg
Erin Holmes Smith
Petra Thombs
Troy Messenger

PRODUCTION TEAM

Susan Pohlmann
Justin Jalea
Megan Chartrand

DONATE

Thank you for supporting Inspire's work by coming here tonight! Please consider making a donation to contribute to our comeback season as we continue to build new relationships with new partners!



PAST PARTNERS

