



HEAR ME



Saturday, May 7, 2022, 7:00 PM

Hear Me

Sing Joyfully

William Byrd

Let My Love Be Heard

Jake Runestad

Heaven-Haven

Connor Koppin

For the Beauty of the Earth

NordKor

John Rutter

Psalm 100

NordKor

René Clausen

O Sing to Me of Heaven

Jonathan Kobs

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied

Johann Sebastian Bach

Intermission

Alleluia, I Heard A Voice

Thomas Weelkes

Baritone: Lawrence Guadagnoli

The Voices

Dale Warland

Cello: Ken Bahls

In Sound, In Silence

William Backlin

Ode to Peace

NordKor

Arr. Jill Galina

Trumpet: Asher Morrow & Brody Morrow

Trombone: Cecelia Clark & Charlotte Lollar

Baritone: Mike Ostrander

A Silence Haunts Me

Jake Runestad

Cover Art: Stock photo of a nautilus shell

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Hear Me

A Letter from Dennis

I built this concert around its final piece, *A Silence Haunts Me* by composer Jake Runestad and poet Todd Boss; it vividly reenacts Ludwig van Beethoven's descent into deafness through an adaptation of an 1802 letter Beethoven wrote to his brothers. Now known as the Heiligenstadt Testament, this letter confesses the composer's bewilderment and outrage that God would be taking from him the gift and ability he most prized – his music. The loss of his hearing torments Beethoven to thoughts of suicide. The letter was never sent; it was found among his effects after his death fourteen years later. During that interval, Beethoven penned some of his most enduring masterpieces, including his Ninth Symphony with its exultant chorus, Ode to Joy. Though he could not possibly have known it at the time he wrote this letter to his brothers, Beethoven would triumph creatively in the very hearing loss he most feared, challenging conventions and claiming his pivotal position within the Western musical tradition.

The message of *A Silence Haunts Me* both inspires and unnerves me, because hearing loss is a fact of life for me. On July 4, 2017, I was enjoying the expanded legalization of fireworks in the state of Iowa. In the course of the fun, a mishap occurred, and a very small bottle rocket reversed course from its trajectory and flew back toward its launch point and went off very near my right ear. It was not close enough to burn or even feel heat from the report, but it was close enough to cause instant pain and ringing in my right ear. I figured the pain and ringing would subside after a short time, but it persisted for days and resulted in permanent, pronounced hearing loss above 4000 Hz in my right ear.

Damage to hearing can result from chance accidents or long-term exposure to environmental causes. Scientists speculate that Beethoven's deafness resulted from exposure to lead in the plates and cookware of the period. While we now have regulation that ensures lead cannot be used in cooking vessels or dishes, hearing loss is a reality for many of us. Musicians, particularly instrumentalists, are at risk. George Riesen's father served in Vietnam and slept in the room with the generators that kept his base, including the hospital, functioning; Joe has lived with tinnitus since. Farmers and anyone who has worked with machinery or engines could be dealing with some degree of hearing loss. It's important that we protect our hearing.

Hearing Associates, P.C., is partnering with Una Vocis as presenting sponsor for tonight's concert. Alex Crippin is General Manager of Hearing Associates' main office, which happens to be located in the Mason City Clinic; it's where I went to have my hearing checked after my accident. Alex is a musician himself; he sings with the River City Barbershop Chorus. Alex and the group were really receptive to our idea for this concert and for raising public awareness about hearing-related challenges.

This concert is not about hearing loss per se but "sound, silence, and hearing" in a larger sense. Beethoven triumphed over the challenges he faced. In the final analysis, this concert is an exploration and a celebration of the human spirit. We chose the nautilus as the cover art for this concert because it resembles the cochlea of the ear and because its growth progresses along the Fibonacci series, "a sequence of numbers and a corresponding ratio that reflects various patterns found in nature, from the swirl of a pinecone's seeds to the curve of a nautilus shell to the twist of a hurricane." <https://science.howstuffworks.com/math-concepts/fibonacci-nature.htm> Bill Backlin's *In Sound, In Silence* uses this series to express growth of personal understanding and blooming of spirit. Whatever the challenge, the human spirit can triumph.

Dennis Lee, Artistic Director
Una Vocis Choral Ensemble

Building on the musical heritage of North Iowa, the mission of Una Vocis Choral Ensemble is to cultivate and celebrate the connections among audience, singers, and composers. This diverse community entertains, educates, and uplifts through innovative programming and artistic distinction.

Hear Me

Please silence your phone.
We recommend the wearing of masks.

Sing Joyfully

William Byrd

Scholars are unsure of the exact composition date of Byrd's *Sing Joyfully* based on Psalm 81.1-4, but agree that it falls somewhere between 1580 and 1590. William Byrd (c. 1539-1623) was living during the tumultuous Tudor period, spanning the surety of Medieval Catholicism and incipient Protestant Reformation in England. Politics and religion were intimately tied. Byrd was born during the reign of Henry VIII, who in 1520 had been awarded the title Defender of the Faith by Pope Leo X; by 1528, however, Henry sought a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, with whom he'd failed to beget a surviving son. At the time, women were not in the line of succession. Leo X's successor, Clement VII, needed the political support of Catherine's uncle and refused Henry his divorce. Henry separated from the Catholic Church, dissolved the monasteries to add their wealth to the royal treasury, and married Anne Boyelyn. Though Mary (Catholic daughter of Catherine) and Elizabeth (Protestant daughter of Anne) survived childhood, it was not until the birth of Edward (Protestant son of Jane Seymore) that Henry considered his line secure; Henry would marry three more times, but produced no more children. Edward took the throne at nine years of age, ruled for six, and passed away at fifteen. Mary, his sister and heir, swung the country back to Catholicism and services in Latin; Elizabeth succeeded her sister in 1559 and once again made the country Protestant, but a less fervently and intolerant Protestant than her brother's sensibilities or the Catholicism of her sister, bringing the "middle way" and greater stability to England. And through all this religious turmoil, with martyrs on both sides, William Byrd became one of the most prolific and respected composers of his time.

Though a devout Catholic, Byrd's religious beliefs "did not prevent him from contributing memorably to the repertory of Anglican Church music." *Britannica Online Encyclopedia* One of his most popular pieces and written late in his career, *Sing Joyfully* is scored for six voice parts: two sopranos, two altos, one tenor and one bass and employs English rather than the Latin.

Listen for Byrd's use of word painting. Hear the brass fanfare in "Blow the trumpet in the new moon" and hear the plucking of strings in "the pleasant harp" and the more smooth bow strokes of "the viol." Incidentally, a viol is not a violin. A "viol, also called *viola da gamba* (da gamba meaning between the legs) [is a] bowed, stringed musical instrument used principally in chamber music of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The viol shares with the Renaissance lute the tuning of its six strings (two fourths, a major third, two fourths)." It is about the size of a viola, but played vertically like a cello. A timbrel is an ancient Middle Eastern instrument similar to a tambourine.

Sing joyfully to God our strength;
sing loud unto the God of Jacob!
Take the song, bring forth the timbrel,
the pleasant harp, and the viol.
Blow the trumpet in the new moon,
even in the time appointed,
and at our feast day.
For this is a statute for Israel,
and a law of the God of Jacob.

"Considered 'highly imaginative...with big ideas' (Baltimore Sun) and 'stirring and uplifting' (Miami Herald), award-winning composer Jake Runestad (b. 1986) has received commissions" from ensembles around the world. "Dubbed a 'choral rockstar' by American Public Media, Jake is one of the most frequently performed composers in the U.S.A. Jake Runestad holds a Master's degree in composition from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University where he studied with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts. He has also studied extensively with acclaimed composer Libby Larsen. A native of Rockford, Illinois, Runestad currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota." (*Notes from inside cover of the piece*)

Poet Alfred Noyes (1880-1958) penned the text to *Angels, where you soar* in the aftermath of the First World War. He moved his family to Princeton, New Jersey, in 1914 to accept a position teaching English Literature; Noyes criticized the writings of modernists such as James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and William Faulkner; he in turn was criticized for failing to embrace the modernist movement in literature. Noyes is most familiar to general audiences for having written *The Highwayman* (1906) in which a young woman shoots herself with her abductor's gun to warn her highwayman lover that he is in danger of ambush.

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.

Heaven-Haven

Connor Koppin

In 2014 Una Vocis commissioned Connor to write a piece, and *Heaven-Haven* is now one of our favorite pieces! Mason City native "Connor J Koppin (b.1991) is a composer living and working in Southern California. His compositional output consists primarily of choral music but also includes works for instrumental ensembles, film scores, and songwriting. Koppin's music has been selected for performance by choirs on an international level. He has music published with Walton Music, GIA, and Santa Barbara, but now publishes his own works. He is currently working on commissions and has premieres scheduled in Texas, Illinois, and Oregon in the coming months. He is married and enjoys spending time with his wife and their two dogs." www.connorkoppin.com

Biographical material on *Heaven-Haven* poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) reveals a brilliant, social young man who, as a student at Oxford, turned from society to asceticism. In 1866 he converted from Anglicanism to Catholicism, an act that estranged him from family and many friends; he ceased writing poetry to study theology. Hopkins wrote *Heaven-Haven* in 1864 and prefaced the poem with *A nun takes the veil*. Hopkins may have been considering his conversion and possible priesthood while writing *Heaven-Haven*. He was contemplating an act similar to a nun's taking the veil — he would be committing himself for a lifetime, turning his back on the world and its pleasures, in the hopes of eternal joy in heaven. Hopkins adopts the voice of a woman who has "desired to go where springs not fail...and no storm come" to a place away from the harsh and painful storms of earthly life, where one is no longer subject to the unpleasant hazards and unhappinesses....Thinking of heaven as 'fields' is a concept as old as the ancient Greeks, with their Elysian Fields. It is a place where "the green swell" (the rising and falling waves of the sea of life) are 'in the havens dumb.' 'Dumb' here is used in its old sense of 'silent,' and it modifies not 'havens,' but rather 'the green swells.' In other words, 'Where the green, swelling waves are quiet in the havens.' In a haven, the great waves found on the sea become small and calm, because the haven is a port...a place 'out of the swing of the sea,' out of the great motions and upheavals of the waves on the open sea. So in essence, *Heaven-Haven* is a brief poem about a nun who takes the veil permanently, joining convent life and leaving the temporary pleasures and many pains of the material life behind in hope of the simple and pure and protected joys of the spiritual life, ultimately of heaven. <http://hokku.wordpress.com>

*I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.*

*And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.*

English composer John Rutter (b. 1945) is perhaps most universally known for his collaboration with Sir David Willcocks of the *Carols for Choirs* series, but he is a prolific composer in his own right. Rutter was at Highgate School with another composer Una Vocis favors, John Tavener. Rutter went on to study music and composition at Clare College, Cambridge. If you find yourself at loose ends after tonight's concert, visit John Rutter's official website and read his bio -- it's self-deprecating and quite amusing. In 1978, Rutter set Folliett Sandford Pierpoint's familiar hymn text *For the Beauty of the Earth* to an original, flowingly lyric tune. <https://johnrutter.com/>

Englishman Folliett Sandford Pierpoint (1835-1917) was 29 when he was inspired by the beauty of his native Bath to pen the poem that would later, when coupled with the tune *Dix*, become an anthem in the Anglican Church. The original refrain "Christ, our God, to thee we raise; This our sacrifice of praise" anticipated the elevation and fraction (breaking) of the host at the culmination of the Eucharistic Prayer. Later editions of the text emphasize the thanksgiving aspect of the verses. hymnary.org

For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flow'r
Sun and Moon and stars of light

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For the joy of human love
Brother, sister, parent, child
Friends on earth and friends above
For all gentle thoughts and mild

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For each perfect gift of Thine
To our race so freely given
Graces human and divine
Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

Psalm 100

NordKor

René Clausen

René Clausen (b. 1953) is an American composer and conductor. Described as 'eloquent,' 'subtle and thought-provoking,' Clausen's music is known for its dramatic, emotional sweep and highly sensitive approach to text setting. A graduate of St. Olaf College and holding a doctorate from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Clausen retired in 2020 from teaching at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where he had directed the internationally renowned Concordia Choir.

René Clausen's classic setting of Psalm 100 is a masterpiece of contemporary choral writing for treble voices. The voices are supported by two pianos, working together to create a thicker, more orchestral sound. The catchy mixed-meter *Allelluia* refrain punctuates various contrasting episodes.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord,
serve the Lord with gladness,
Come into His presence with singing, Alleluia.

Know that the Lord is God,
it is He who made us,
Not we ourselves, Alleluia.

We are His people,
the sheep of His pasture,
Alleluia, Alleluia, and we are His.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving,
and His courts with praise,
Give thanks to Him and praise His holy name,
Alleluia!

For the Lord is good,
His mercy endures forever,
And His faithfulness endures,
from generation to generation,
from age to age. Alleluia! Amen!

Composer Jonathan Kobs (b.1995) graduated in 2017 from Luther College in Decorah with plans to be a vocal music teacher and composer. The members of Una Vocis first sang Kobs' *O Sing to Me of Heaven* for the Iowa Choral Directors Association summer symposium in 2016 when it won an ICDA composition contest. In August of that year, Una Vocis sang the piece in a celebration of life concert for a beloved former member of our group, Gail Meyer. *O Sing to Me of Heaven* holds a special place in our hearts and repertoire.

Mrs. Mary Dana Shindler penned the text and tune of *O Sing to Me of Heaven* in 1840; notes in the *Sacred Harp* mention: Mary Dana Shindler (1810-1883) "wrote several hymns besides [*O Sing to Me of Heaven*, which was] written in 1840 on account of the death of a pious friend of hers." *traditionalmusic.co.uk/sacredharp/*

*O sing to me of heaven
When I am called to die;
Sing songs of holy ecstasy*

to waft my soul on high.

*There'll be no sorrow there;
In Heav'n above, where all is love,
There'll be no sorrow there.*

*Then to my ravished ear,
Let one song be giv'n,
Let music charm me last on earth,
and greet me first in Heav'n.*

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied

Johann Sebastian Bach

Kudos to Dr. Alexandra Amati-Camperi, the program notes writer for the San Francisco Bach Choir, which performed *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied* in 2006. Her concert notes form the basis for this blurb. We close the first half of this evening's concert with "Bach's monumental *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*. Set for two SATB choirs, it was meant to be performed with instrumental doubling, or at least a basso continuo accompaniment. The word "motet" usually referred to a sacred composition in Latin, to be performed either during worship or Mass or in a non-liturgical setting. Bach's motets are in German and are thought to have been composed mainly for burial services, with the possible exception of *Singet*. This motet was composed in Leipzig sometime between June 1726 and April 1727. The texts of Bach's motets are usually biblical quotations or chorale passages. The text of *Singet* includes quotations from Psalms 149 and 150, a stanza from a hymn by Johann Gramann (*Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren*, c. 1530 -- its customary tune is used), and, in the motet's aria, a new text.

"Like all Bach's motets, *Singet* unfolds in several movements that contrast in technique and texture, each exploring the antiphonal possibilities of the double choir. The first and third movements are like a concerto in the alternation of different forces and sonorities; the second juxtaposes an aria and a chorale and concludes with a grand fugue. This form, together with the mystery of what occasion the motet was intended for, has led the eminent Bach scholar Christoph Wolff to suggest that Bach might have composed it as a choral etude for double choir, to show his pupils how the composition and study of such pieces fit into the lives and duties of choral scholars.

"In the opening movement, the two choirs first alternate singing chords against a set of flourishes for the word *singet* (sing) and then trade phrases back and forth. An elaborate fugue at *die Kinder Zion* constitutes the second part of the movement. After this contrapuntal flurry comes the comparatively peaceful second movement, in which the foursquare chorale in one choir matches and alternates with the lyrical aria in the second choir. Bach left a slightly enigmatic note in one of the sources instructing the performers to sing this movement twice, with the two choirs swapping roles the second time through. [Una Vocis is grateful that our Artistic Director has taken the more conservative approach of singing this portion only once!] The third movement is again a lively, imitative, contrapuntal, and antiphonal one, concluding with a renowned and marvelous fugue for two choirs in unison (*Alles was Odem hat lobt den Herrn*, let everything that breathes praise the Lord). *sfbach.org/programs/*

Special thanks to Una Vocis tenor Ken Mechler, who speaks German and aided the choir with both translation and understanding, and to UV Vocal Coach Melissa Shallberg for drilling pronunciation!

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied

Coro I & Coro II

*Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied,
Die Gemeinde der Heiligen sollen ihn loben.
Israel freue sich des, der ihn gemacht hat.
Die Kinder Zion sei'n fröhlich über ihrem Könige,
Sie sollen loben seinen Namen im Reihen;
mit Pauken und mit Harfen sollen sie ihm spielen.*

Coro I Coro II

*Wie sich ein Vater erbarmet
Gott, nimm dich ferner unser an,
Über seine junge Kinderlein,
So tut der Herr uns allen,
So wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.*

*Er kennt das arm Gemächte,
Gott weiß, wir sind nur Staub,
**Denn ohne dich ist nichts getan
Mit allen unsern Sachen.***

*Gleichwie das Gras vom Rechen,
Ein Blum und fallend Laub.*

*Der Wind nur drüber wehet,
So ist es nicht mehr da,
**Drum sei du unser Schirm und Licht,
Und trägt uns unsre Hoffnung nicht,
So wirst du's ferner machen.***

*Also der Mensch vergehet,
Sein End, das ist ihm nah.
**Wohl dem, der sich nur steif und fest
Auf dich und deine Huld verlässt.***

Coro I & Coro II

*Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten,
lobet ihn in seiner großen Herrlichkeit!
Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn Halleluja!*

Sing to the Lord a new song

Choir I & Choir II

Sing to the Lord a new song,
The congregation of the saints should praise him.
Israel rejoices in the one who made him.
Let the children of Sion be joyful about their king,
They should praise his name in their dances
With drums and harps they should play for him.

Choir I Choir II

As a father feels compassion
God, going forward, take us to yourself
For his young little child,
So does the Lord for all of us,
So we feel pure childlike awe,

He knows the poor creatures,
God knows that we are but dust.
**for without you nothing is accomplished
With all our affairs.**

Like grass before the rake,
A flower or falling leaf.

The wind has only to blow over it
and it is there no more.
**Therefore be yourself our protection and light,
And if our hope does not deceive us,
Then going forward you will do this.**

And so man passes on,
His end is near him.
**Happy are those who firmly and steadfastly
Rely on you and your grace.**

Choir I & Choir II

Praise God in his works,
Praise him in his great glory!
Let all that has breath praise the Lord, Hallelujah !

Intermission

In April of 1539, the first edition of the *Great Bible* appeared; also known as “the ‘chained *Bible*’ because it was chained to the pulpits [to ensure every church, and by extension even the illiterate masses, had access to the *Bible* in English], the *Great Bible* helped rekindle the desire to own a personal copy of the Word of God, and sparked a flame in the hearts of those who would later translate the *Geneva Bible*, the *Bishop’s Bible*, and the *King James Version*.” Interested parties can purchase a leather-bound, twenty-pound facsimile of *The Great Bible*, reputed to be the most beautiful Bible ever produced, for a mere \$900. biblicalheritageexhibit.com

Thomas Weelkes (1576-1622) sets the text of Revelation 19.1. John of Patmos (traditionally accepted author of Revelation, the final book in the Christian *Bible*) is the “I” bearing witness to the Angelic Hosts sounding a fanfare of exultation from the heavens.

English composer and organist Weelkes is considered one of the finest Tudor composers, known for madrigals and anthems. Weelkes studied the Flemish polyphonic technique used by William Byrd, but became familiar with the Italian madrigal used by Thomas Morley. Despite his talent Weelkes was fired from jobs for habitual drunkenness and absence from duties. He was known as a notorious swearer and blasphemer. After 1608 Weelkes published no more madrigals, but devoted his energies to church music, such as the anthem *Alleluia, I heard a voice*. Of the composers of his time Weelkes wrote the greatest number for Anglican services. In 1622 Weelkes’ wife died, leading him to drink more heavily. He died in 1623 the day after making a will that included pay for meat, drink, and lodging to the friend in whose home he died. kennedy-center.org/artists/

Alleluia, I heard a voice as of strong thund’rings, saying: Alleluia. Salvation and glory and honour and power be unto the Lord our God and to the Lamb for evermore. Alleluia

The Voices

Dale Warland

Dale Warland (b. 1932), “celebrated American musician, has made an indelible impression on the landscape of contemporary choral music both nationally and internationally. During his time with the Dale Warland Singers, he shaped a vocal ensemble known for its exquisite sound, technical finesse, and stylistic range” graphitepublishing.com/composer/dale-warland/. In *The Voices*, Warland marries his compositional talents to the words of gifted poet Michael Dennis Browne, retired professor of poetry at the University of Minnesota and frequent collaborator of Paulus. *The Voices* speaks to the community of singers as a source of strength and joy, of courage and hope. The immediacy of the choral experience is invoked by the first person, singular “I” who speaks of both personal and collective experience of listening to and trusting the other voices, even as “I” adds his own to the joyful mix and himself becomes part of the song.

In 2014 Una Vocis was a member of a commissioning consortium of 22 choirs who joined to purchase *The Voices* to benefit Chorus America, the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field.

I would never go into the dark
without the voices,
I have come to rely on how they mend us
among the ruins
of what we have hoped for.

Doubt was never the root of us,
doubt winds itself, again and again,
around our doing,
but it was never the source,

joy is the source, foliage of joy:
always the light, the shadows,
always the leaves.

From where I stand now,
I cannot see every singer,
but looking out across the years,
listening in ways learned
only from them,
I can hear all the song.

Backlin was in the fifth grade when he composed his first piece. A graduate of Mason City High School, Backlin taught K-12 music at Nora Springs-Rock Falls from 1979 to 1986 and was the vocal music director at MCHS from 1986 to 1992. Dr. Bill Backlin currently serves as Academic Dean of Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina.

A prolific composer, Backlin often “writes the music before finding the words.” He wrote *In Sound, In Silence* in response to a friend’s personal struggle as a minister in a local congregation. In the depths of the despair of the first of the three pieces, this pastor questions the very existence of God, even as he cries out to Him for reassurance and comfort. *Out of Unresolve* reveals his struggle to cease his attempt to control the situation and place blame; he determines to dwell in trust and in ambiguity — and even marvels at the beauty and hope to be found in this unresolved state. *As I Am* celebrates the pastor’s triumph, not so much over his circumstances but over his inward focus. He has traveled through the wilderness and emerged on the other side, once again able to sing the praises of his Lord and rejoice in the surety of His presence. Backlin feels that, while the details may differ, the theme of struggle, growth, and triumph is intuitively and universally understood; he wishes each performance to be the unique expression of that particular moment in the life of the choir and its director.

Backlin’s set is written as an art song, a style usually reserved for solo voice. An art song showcases the performer’s range and interpretive style and features a range of dynamics and tempos. The Fibonacci sequence is a series of numbers in which each number is the sum of the two that precede it. Starting at 0 and 1, the sequence is: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, and so on into infinity. Backlin incorporates this series “(especially in movements 2 & 3) with the 2/4, 3/4, 5/4, and 8/4 time signatures. This happens somewhat in movement 1, but is not as intentional as in movements 2 & 3. Also, the Golden Mean (.61803398875) shows up in all three movements. In movement 3, for example, the Golden Mean occurs in measure 16 at “live and thrive” which is .61803398875 of the 25 measures of the movement. Same thing happens in movements 1 & 3 as well.”

In Sound, In Silence

In sound, in silence

I pause to know that You are near.

When life’s cares attempt to tell me You’re not there;

I trust in Your Word.

I cry out “Abba!”

I cry out “El Elyon, Yahweh Jireh, El Olam, Yahweh Shaddai; Yahweh Shammah.”

Hold me in Your arms, embrace me in Your tender love.

All I want is You, oh Adonai; Yahweh Shalom, Sabaoth.

I lay my life within Your care.

Out of Unresolve

Wonders are not to change the events of daily living.

They begin in God’s almighty hand and desire to sustain through moments harsh.

“On this day, Lord, I will cease demanding You should mend
the matters in my life, in my heart.

I should be thankful You’ve helped me to go on.

I dare to think or even believe that out of unresolve comes loveliness.

As I Am

I look up, Lord.

There I saw the beauty and bounty of Your sky.

It’s shifting shadows moved me to perceive that I must change, than to remain. . .

as I am I humbly seek Your face and stand in faith to go beyond

just one more day, just one more hour, so as to live and thrive.

I shall walk in my faith and not be led by only what I see.

I shed my sense of place and human frailty.

And my lips shall sing of praise and of life to You alone, my God.

This piece is based on the final movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. Jill Gallina has created a partner song, adding original lyrics and an original counter-melody to Beethoven's *Ode To Joy* and conveying a hopeful message of world peace.

Gallina was an elementary school music teacher before becoming a full time composer. The music she and husband Michael have written has been featured and performed on the Disney Channel, The World's Largest Concert, PBS, The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, Sing for the Cure, The New York Philharmonic, The Boston Pops, and in a documentary on children's rights for the United Nations.

Joyful, joyful, lift your voices all creation ev'rywhere	We sing proudly in unity one heart, one voice, one mind.
Hearts and hands 'cross sea and land, come join us in our fervent prayer.	We're all sharing a common dream of peace and love for humankind.
Ev'ry land and ev'ry nation, strong, and mighty, meek and mild,	Ev'ry nation, all creation come share the dream we're dreaming of.
Help to build a world of peace for ev'ry woman, man, and child.	And side by side cross oceans wide we'll build a world of peace and love.

A Silence Haunts Me

Jake Runestad

In 2017, Jake Runestad travelled to Germany and found himself in the Haus der Musik Museum in Vienna, where he encountered a facsimile of Ludwig van Beethoven's Heiligenstadt Testament.

It was the first time he had read the famous text, which is almost equal parts medical history (including Beethoven's first admission to his brothers that he was going deaf), last will and testament, suicide note, letter of forgiveness, and prayer of hope. Runestad was flabbergasted and found himself thinking about Beethoven, about loss, and about the tragedy of one of the greatest musicians of all time losing his hearing. Beethoven put it this way, "Ah, how could I possibly admit an infirmity in the one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than others, a sense which I once possessed in the highest perfection, a perfection such as few in my profession enjoy or ever have enjoyed."

While researching Beethoven's output around the time of the letter, Runestad discovered that Beethoven wrote a ballet, *Creatures of Prometheus*, just a year before penning his testament. "Beethoven must have put himself into Prometheus' mindset to embody the story," Runestad noted. "Just as Prometheus gifted humankind with fire and was punished for eternity, so did Beethoven gift the fire of his music while fighting his deafness, an impending silence. What an absolutely devastating yet inspiring account of the power of the human spirit. In the moment of his loss —when he wrote the Heiligenstadt Testament — he had no idea how profound his legacy would be."

Because of the length of the letter, a verbatim setting was impractical; Runestad turned to his friend and frequent collaborator, Todd Boss, to help. Boss's poem, entitled *A Silence Haunts Me - After Beethoven's Heiligenstadt Testament* creates a *scena* — a monologue in Beethoven's voice for choir. The poem is both familiar and intimate; Boss has taken the fundamentals of Beethoven's letter and spun it into a libretto that places the reader/listener into the same small, rented room as one of the most towering figures of the Romantic Era.

A Silence Haunts Me sounds more like a self-contained monologue from an opera than a traditional choral piece. He sets the poetry with an intense, emotional directness and uses some of Beethoven's own musical ideas to provide context. Stitched into the work are hints at familiar themes from the *Moonlight Sonata*, the *3rd*, *6th*, and *9th Symphonies*, and *Creatures of Prometheus*, but they are, in Runestad's words, "filtered through a hazy, frustrated, and defeated state of being."

A Silence Haunts Me, cont.

About the text, from poet Todd Boss

"This loose adaptation of Beethoven's famous Heiligenstadt Testament was unusually difficult to write. I invented many things that don't appear in the letter. The plea "Take my feeling, take my sight," occurred to me as a way of declaiming the terrible irony of Beethoven's loss, a momentary bargaining as happens as a stage of grief. "A bell" tolls at the end of this letter, and it might be he suddenly hears one, it might be his tinnitus, or it might be a figurative acknowledgement of a newfound hope.

The poem is set in italics to mimic handwriting and arranged against ragged margins to look like a letter. I've isolated the letter "i" whenever it appears, and further isolated nouns that refer to people (I, You, me, brothers, etc.) with nine spaces on either side to isolate them, in recognition of Beethoven's isolation from himself and others, and in honor of his nine completed symphonies. No punctuation is utilized. All these odd typological choices force the reader to read the poem with a halting brokenness, just as one might read very old handwriting, but they also attempt to relay the halting and broken frame of mind Beethoven must have been in when he wrote his very sad letter to his brothers."

*Hear me brothers I 've a confess i on pa i nful to
make S i x years I have endured a curse that deepens every
day They say that soon I 'll cease to hear the very
mus i c of my soul What ought to be the sense most perfect
i n me fa i ls me shames me taunts me*

*A s i lence haunts me They ask me Do you
hear the shepherd s i ng i ng faroff soft They ask
me Do you hear a d i stant flut i ng danc i ng
joyously aloft No I th i nk so No I th i nk so No
God am I Prometheus ex i led i n cha i ns for g i ft i ng*

*humank i nd my f i re Take my feel i ng Take my
s i ght Take my w i ngs m i dfl i ght but let me hear
the sear i ng roar of a i r before I score the ground Why S i lence
i s God 's reply and so I beg me take
my l i fe when lo I hear a grace and feel a r i ng i ng*

*i n me after all So now as leaves of autumn fall I
make my mark and s i gn my name and turn aga i n to
touch my flame of mus i c to the world a broken man as best
I can As ever Fa i thfully Yours A bell A bell
Hear me and be well*

Coming December 2022

Una Vocis is releasing a Christmas CD!

Prairie Christmas

featuring works by
Midwestern Composers

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as well as
pieces from our December 2022 concert
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Una Vocis is grateful for their support!

Artistic Leadership

Dennis Lee, Artistic Director

Dennis Lee grew up in Mason City and graduated from NIACC with an associate's degree in pre-engineering and from Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in vocal music performance. In addition to founding and directing Una Vocis, Dennis served as Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church from 1997 to spring 2022, during which time he produced and directed eight performances of Handel's *Messiah*. In 2007-2008 he served as an adjunct music faculty at Waldorf College directing Sangkor, the collegiate women's choir. Dennis has led several performances of choral works for the North Iowa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and, in 1997, served as Music Director for the Mason City Community Theatre and Stebens Children's Theatre production of *Fiddler on the Roof*; in 2011, Dennis directed a Mason City Community Theatre production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*.



Before moving back to Mason City in 1995, Dennis and his wife, Camille, lived in Seattle and sang with the Seattle Symphony Chorale. Dennis and Camille have two sons, Tristyn and Skyler. When not performing and directing music, Dennis enjoys singing, waterskiing, and spending time with his wife and sons.

Photo courtesy of D. Delperdang 2014



Mary Jane Crail, Accompanist

Mary Jane Crail grew up in West Des Moines and studied piano with Lulu Anderson, who was Roger Williams' first piano teacher. Mary Jane accompanied in the vocal music department of Valley High School until her graduation in 1964. She majored in organ/church music at Drake University, studying with Russell Saunders, Arthur Poister, and Carl Staplin.

Mary Jane has served as organist at United Methodist churches in West Des Moines, Webster City, and Clear Lake, where she is in her 43rd year. She has been conference organist for the UMC annual conferences, recitalist for the "Organists of Iowa" series at Iowa State University, and served as organist for the UMC bishop's installation. Mary Jane is a past Dean of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists and teaches private piano and organ.

Mary Jane lives in Clear Lake where she loves to read, compose, and watch golf "when there's time." Four grandchildren further brighten her life.

Guest Instrumentalists

Ken Bahls, Cello -- *The Voices*

Ken Bahls is long time resident of Mason City. He began playing cello when he was seven years old and majored in cello performance and music education at Drake University where he studied with John Ehrlich. Later he majored in computer science at UNI and today works as the IT Director for Cerro Gordo County. He is married to his amazing wife Megan and has four creative children Julia, Meira, Isaiah, and Elijah. He teaches cello and plays in various ensembles in the North Iowa area.



Anna McCluskey, Flute -- *For the Beauty of the Earth*

Asher Morrow, Trumpet -- *Ode to Peace*

Brody Morrow, Trumpet -- *Ode to Peace*

Cecilia Clark, Trombone -- *Ode to Peace*

Charlotte Lollar, Trombone -- *Ode to Peace*

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Performing in Tonight's Concert

Dennis Lee, Artistic Director

Mary Jane Crail, Accompanist

Soprano

Holly Briggs

Klaire DeVos

Leah Groh

Jodi Korth

Maria Meyer

Melissa Shallberg

Alto

Judy Delperdang

Camille Lee

Laurie Lichman

Joan Murray

George Riesen

Tenor

Jeff Hines

Noah Hoffman

Kent Mechler

Mark Ostrander

Mike Ostrander

Bass

Matt Gender

Lawrence Guadagnoli

Bill Haun

Mark Johnson

Anthony Riesen

Bill Riesen

Stan Sundberg

NordKor Members

Performing in Tonight's Concert

Melissa Shallberg, Director

Sarah Betz, Accompanist

Born and raised in North Iowa, Melissa Shallberg and family moved back to the area in 2011 and joined Una Vocis that autumn. Melissa holds a bachelor's degree in Music Education from Iowa State University and a master's degree in Vocal Pedagogy and Music Education from the University of Kansas. Melissa's years of teaching and familiarity with youth repertoire as well as her boundless energy and enthusiasm have successfully launched NordKor, the premiere non-school affiliated youth choir in our area. In addition to directing NordKor, Melissa teaches at Waldorf University in Forest City and serves as vocal coach for Una Vocis.

Clarke Beard

Harper Boyle

Brian Lollar

Kaylee Ostrander

Arianna Bly

Cecelia Clark

Charlotte Lollar

Sydney Schilling

Elizabeth Bly

Lauryn Coleman

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Una Vocis Premieres

All are world premieres unless otherwise noted.

*Denotes works commissioned by Una Vocis Choral Ensemble.

2005 -- A Century of Choral Music
The Sixty-Seventh Psalm -- Stephen Paulus

2008 -- Composers' Gift
enter no -- Geoff Delperdang
your little voice -- Geoff Delperdang
If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem

(U.S. Premiere) -- Nimrod Borenstein

Idols -- Nimrod Borenstein
The Voice of Melody -- Nimrod Borenstein
Unresolve -- William Backlin
As I Am -- William Backlin
Fear Not, My Flock -- Maedeane Sappenfield

2009 -- ICDA Guest Choir
A Fantasia of French Carols -- Carl Staplin

2010 -- Out of the Depths
**De Profundis Clamavi* -- William Backlin
Meteorological Madrigal -- William Backlin

2011 -- ICDA Guest Choir
Etchings of Time -- Ralph Kendrick

2012 -- Goodnight Moon
**Goodnight Moon* -- Eric Whitacre

2012 -- Alleluia
**Away in a Manger* -- Mary Jane Crail

2013 -- The Voices
In the palm of your hand -- Britlin Lee Losee
The Silver Lining -- Britlin Lee Losee
**The Voices* (Iowa Premiere) -- Dale Warland

2014 -- We Will Be Glad!
**Trust and Kindness* -- Alice Parker

2014 -- Emerging Sound
**Heaven-Haven* -- Connor Koppin
A Clear Midnight -- Michael Betz

2015 -- Nexus
**Negative Spaces* -- Ola Gjeilo

2015 -- My Lord Has Come
Ave Maria (SATB premiere) -- Britlin Lee Losee

2016 -- This Child, This Light
**Joseph* -- Timothy Takach

2017 -- Eternal Bloom
**Each Morning She Walks* -- Charles Anthony Silvestri

2019 -- Joy to the World!
If You Want -- Nathan Elsbernd

2020 -- Una Vocis Online Fundraiser
**Turning Twilight* -- Amelia Ouverson

2021 -- Frank Lloyd Wright celebration
**To Build a Home* -- Amelia Ouverson

We invite you to designate memorial or celebratory tributes to the Una Vocis Commissioning Fund. Your gift will support Una Vocis in fulfilling its goal to cultivate and celebrate the connections among audience, singers, and composers.

Music Dedications

One way the community can support Una Vocis is through the donation of music. The selection of our repertoire is in the hands of Artistic Director, Dennis Lee. Below is the list of dedications and donors for **Hear Me**.

<i>Sing Joyfully</i> William Byrd	<i>Given to Una Vocis</i> by Jenny Cooper
<i>Let My Love Be Heard</i> Jake Runestad	<i>Given in honor of Maria</i> by Don & Kris Meyer
<i>Heaven-Haven</i> Connor Koppin	<i>Commissioned</i> by Una Vocis
<i>For the Beauty of the Earth</i> John Rutter	<i>Available for sponsorship</i>
<i>Psalm 100</i> René Clausen	<i>Available for sponsorship</i>
<i>O Sing to Me of Heaven</i> Jonathan Kobs	<i>Given to Una Vocis</i> by Tim & Laurie Lichman
<i>Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied</i> Johann Sebastian Bach	<i>Given in celebration of choral singing</i> by Mark & Rachel Johnson
<i>Alleluia, I Heard a Voice</i> Thomas Weelkes	<i>Given in memory of John Nolan, Tenor II</i> by the members of Una Vocis
<i>The Voices</i> Dale Warland	<i>Commission consortium funded in part</i> by Una Vocis
<i>In Sound, In Silence</i> William Backlin	<i>Given to Una Vocis</i> by Ann MacGregor
<i>Ode to Peace</i> Arr. Jill Galina	<i>Available for sponsorship</i>
<i>A Silence Haunts Me</i> Jake Runestad	<i>Given in celebration of the power of the human spirit</i> by Bill & Karon Haun

Follow Una Vocis on FACEBOOK!

We will continue to get the word out through traditional media sources, but you can get breaking news by LIKING Una Vocis on FACEBOOK. Scan our Facebook Quick Response Code (QR Code) with an app like RedLaser on your smart phone and LIKE Una Vocis to receive updates as they happen!



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If you discover an error, please contact George Riesen at 641-424-2904 so the correction can be made. Thank you!

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Dennis and Camille Lee design our posters, tickets, advertising, and program cover art.

First Citizens Bank posts concert information on their electronic sign boards.

George Riesen researches and writes the programs.

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