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Craig Hella Johnson + COMPANY OF VOICES

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advena: liturgies for a broken world





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CONSPIRARE CHRISTMAS HOUSE OF LOVE

Featuring Guest Artist **CARRIE RODRIGUEZ**

Presented in partnership with **Cactus Café** and **St. Luke's UMC**

DECEMBER 6 8 pm + 7 4 pm

HOGG MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM (Austin, TX)

Festival Choirs, hosted by the **Conspirare Symphonic Choir**:

December 6

Austin High Maroon Choir

Jackie Turner-Creel,

Choir & Classical Guitar Director

Round Rock High School Choirs

Frances Jimenez, Head Director

December 7

Liberal Arts and Science

Academy Concert Choir

Deric Lewis, MME, Choral Director

McCallum High School

Fine Arts Academy Meister Singers

Nathan Thompson, Director

DECEMBER 8 7:30 pm

ST. LUKE'S UMC (Houston, TX)

St Luke's UMC Chancel Choir and Professional Singers

Sid Da vis, Director

conspirare Craig Hella Johnson, conductor

Thank you to our concert sponsors





**This concert is offered with profound gratitude for every single
Conspirare listener and supporter — you keep us singing!**

Please reserve your applause for pauses marked with this symbol.



I. HOW TO HOLD ON

Stray Birds

Craig Hella Johnson

How to Hold On

Melanie DeMore

Wayfaring Stranger / Wonder as I Wander /

Traditional / John Jacob Niles / Trad.

Veni Emmanuel

as the swallow

Craig Hella Johnson

Miles Away

Carrie Rodriguez

Calling my Children Home

Doyle Lawson, CharlieWaller,
and Robert Yates

If I Needed You / Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Townes Van Zandt / Michael Praetorius

Angel Be

Craig Hella Johnson

Him Who Saved Me

Chip Taylor

Oye

Jim Papoulis



II. RE-KINSHIP (Everything Changes)

Lost Words Blessing

Arr. by Kerry Andrew and Jim Molyneux

Stream of Life

Christopher Tin

No Soy de Aquí, Ni Soy de Allá

Facundo Cabral

We Belong

Eric Lowen and Dan Navarro

Cambia Todo Cambia

Julio Numhauser

When We Love

Elaine Hagenberg

My Sweet Crushed Angel / My Funny Valentine

Craig Hella Johnson / Richard Rodgers

Not One Sparrow is Forgotten

Traditional arr. William Hawley

Cambia Todo Cambia

Julio Numhauser

People

Jule Styne

The Delight Song of Tsoai-talee

Traditional Native American

Cambia Todo Cambia

Julio Numhauser

III. THE HOUSE OF LOVE

Ubuntu / In Christ There is No East or West

Modimo

I Cry for Love

More Like Love

Pastures of Plenty / This Land is Your Land / Land

A Place for You / My Country, 'Tis of Thee

If I Had a Hammer

Working on a Building

Bless This House

Volver, Volver

Traditional Hymn

South African Traditional

Chip Taylor

Ben Rector

Woody Guthrie / Lila Downs

Melanie DeMore / Traditional

Pete Seeger and Lee Hays

Traditional arr. Tim O'Brien

May Brahe

Fernando Z. Maldonado



IV. SINGING TOGETHER

O Come All Ye Faithful

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Cold December Flies Away

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord, Are We

A La Nanita Nana

Laylat Al Milad

Los Peces en el Río

Al Shlosa

El Burrito Sabanero

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

Angels We Have Heard on High

Silent Night

Traditional Carol

Traditional Carol

Traditional

Johann Abraham Peter Schulz

José Ramón Gomis

Arabic Folk Song

Traditional Spanish Carol

Traditional Hebrew

Hugo Blanco

Arr. Willis A. Diekema

Traditional Carol

Franz Grüber



V. BEAUTIFUL WORLD

Beautiful World

We Clasp the Hands /

I Could Have Danced All Night

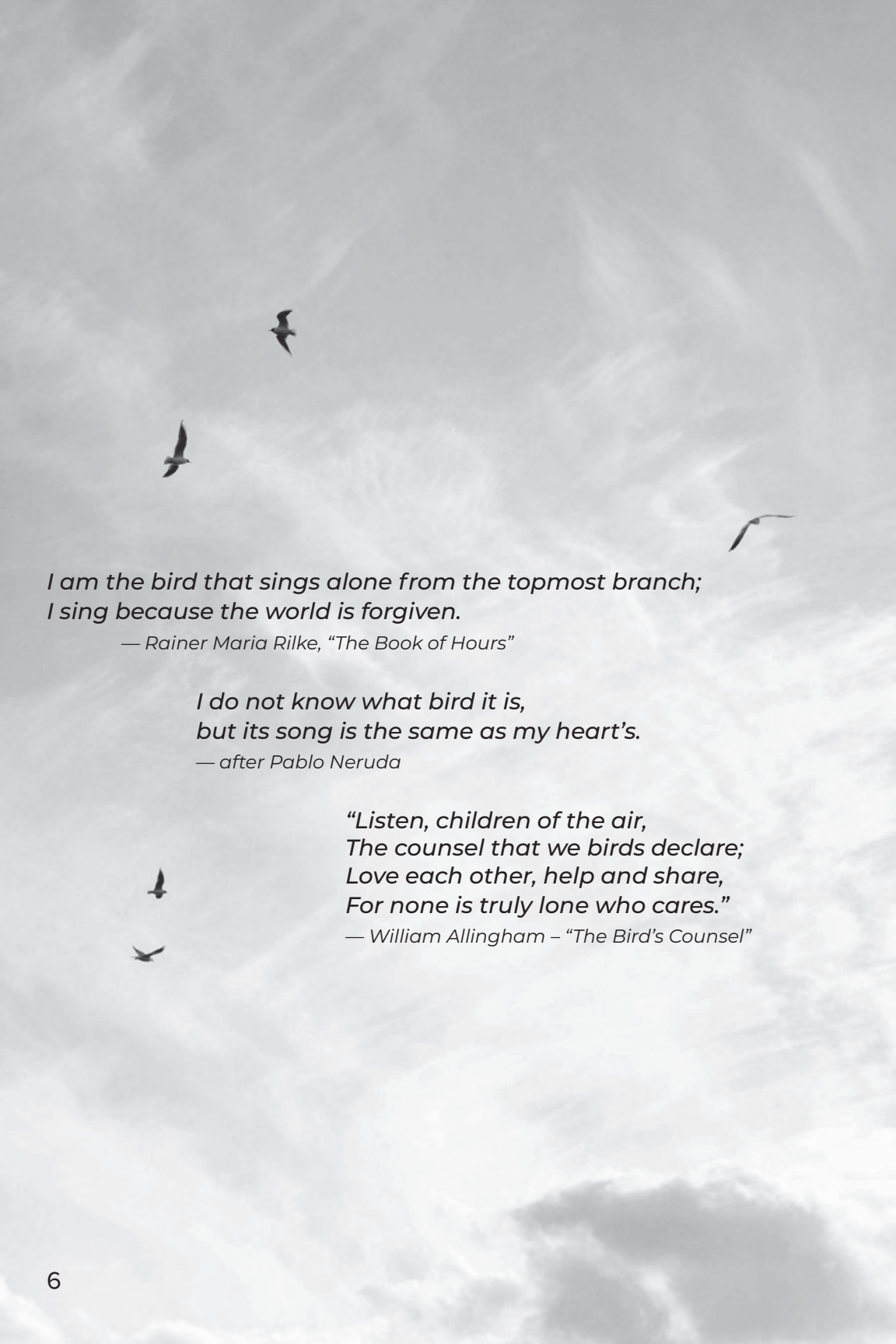
Eliza Gilkyson

Craig Hella Johnson

Frederick Loewe

arr. Craig Hella Johnson





*I am the bird that sings alone from the topmost branch;
I sing because the world is forgiven.*

— Rainer Maria Rilke, “The Book of Hours”

*I do not know what bird it is,
but its song is the same as my heart’s.*

— after Pablo Neruda

*“Listen, children of the air,
The counsel that we birds declare;
Love each other, help and share,
For none is truly lone who cares.”*

— William Allingham – “The Bird’s Counsel”

I. HOW TO HOLD ON

Stray Birds

*Stray birds of summer come to my window to sing and fly away.
And yellow leaves of autumn, which have no songs, flutter and
fall there with a sigh.*

Once we dreamt that we were strangers.....

We wake up to find that we were dear to each other.

— Rabindranath Tagore

How to Hold On

How to hold on,
How to hold on,
How to hold on in the storm,
How do you hold on?
How to hold on in the storm?

— Melanie DeMore

Wayfaring Stranger / Wonder as I Wander / Veni Emmanuel

I'm just a poor wayfaring stranger, I'm trav'ling through this world below;
There is no sickness, toil, nor danger, in that bright world to which I go.
I'm going there to see my father, I'm going there no more to roam;
I'm just a going over Jordan, I'm just a going over home.

*I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
how Jesus the Savior did come for to die
for poor ordinary people like you and like I;
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.*

*I know dark clouds will gather o'er me, I know my pathway's rough and steep;
But golden fields lie out before me, Where weary eyes no more shall weep.
I'm going there to see my mother, She said she'd meet me when I come;
I'm just a going over Jordan, I'm just a going over home.*

*O come, O Bright and Morning Star,
and bring us comfort from afar!
Dispel the shadows of the night
and turn our darkness into light.*

*O come, O God of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease
and be yourself our Prince of Peace.*

—Traditional

as the swallow

How beloved is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts,
my soul yearns,
my heart and my flesh cry out.
The sparrow found a house,
and the swallow her nest,
where she may raise her young.
they pass through the valley of Bakka,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

— poetic adaptation of Psalm 84

Miles Away

Elena no tengas prisa
Don't hurry, just wait, you'll see a great heron
Look on the horizon

The river, it stops for no one
Flowing without a reason to be
Holding our history

Let's turn the radio on, play a new corrido song
Tell me a story - something other than the news today
Let's feel our roots grow strong beyond the banks that roll along
The Río Grande - even when we're miles away...miles away

Guadalupe Hidalgo
The river it marked which way our fate would go
So many years ago

Igual por el otro lado
Grande o Río Bravo in name
The water's still the same

Let's turn the radio on, play a new corrido song
Tell me a story - something other than the news today
Let's feel our roots grow strong beyond the banks that roll along
The Río Grande - even when we're miles away...miles away

Elena no tengas prisa
Come sit in the shade right here beneath this tree
Why don't you talk to me

Mezquite y el huizache
Plenty of tales these árboles could tell
If we listen well

Let's turn the radio on, play a new corrido song
Tell me a story - something other than the news today
Let's feel our roots grow strong beyond the banks that roll along
the Río Grande - even when we're miles away...miles away

— Carrie Rodriguez

Calling My Children Home

Those lives were mine to love and cherish.
To guard and guide along life's way.
Oh God forbid that one should perish.
That one alas should go astray.

Back in the years with all together,
Around the place we'd romp and play.
So lonely now and oft' times wonder,
Oh will they come back home some day.

I'm lonesome for my precious children,
They live so far away.
Oh may they hear my calling...calling..
and come back home some day.

I gave my all for my dear children,
Their problems still with love I share,
I'd brave life's storm, defy the tempest
To bring them home from anywhere.

I lived my life my love I gave them,
to guide them through this world of strife,
I hope and pray we'll live together,
In that great glad here after life.

I'm lonesome for my precious children,
They live so far away.
Oh may they hear my calling...calling..
and come back home some day.

— Doyle Lawson, Charlie Waller, and Robert Yates

If I Needed You / Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

If I needed you, would you come to me?
Would you come to me and ease my pain?
If you needed me, I would come to you
I would swim the seas to ease your pain
Well, in the night forlorn, oh, the morning's born
And the morning shines with the lights of love
And you will miss sunrise if you close your eyes
And that would break my heart in two
Lady's with me now since I showed her how
To lay her lily hand in mine
Loop and Lil agree, she's a sight to see
A treasure for the poor to find

If I needed you, would you come to me?
Would you come to me and ease my pain?
If you needed me, I would come to you
I would swim the seas to ease your pain

—Townes Van Zandt

*Like the deer longs for the water-brooks:
so longs my soul after thee, O God.*

— Psalm 42:1

*(...like the flower needs the rain, you know, I need you;
like the winter needs the spring, you know, I need you)*

— Dewey Bunnell

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-gone was the night.

— 15th-century German, translated by Theodore Baker

I am what I am because of who we all are (Ubuntu)

Angel Be

(Love is the vine, we are the branches....

I am my sister's keeper! I am my brother's keeper!)

*Which angel will tell us
That life goes on
Which angel will
Come and lift
The stone from the tomb*

*Shall you for me
Will I for you
The Angels be*

*Which angel Will tell us
That life goes on
Which angel will come and lift
The stone from the tomb*

*Shall you for me
Will I for you
The Angel Be*

*Which angel Will show us
How to endure life
Which angel gives use yes
That we can see the fruit in the seed*

*Shall you for me
Will I for you
The Angel Be*

Gloria in excelsis Deo...

*Which angel opens ears
That comprehend mysteries
Which angel lends us wings
That we may look upon our heaven.*

*Shall you for me
Will I for you
The Angel Be*

Gloria in excelsis Deo

— Craig Hella Johnson

Him Who Saved Me

Him who saved me — save me again
him who made me — won't you be my friend
signs of danger — on the wind
him who saved me — save me again

Rock-a-bye baby — on the tree top
I'm a leaf on a tree — I'm fish on a rock
and I got no arms — I got no choice
would you sing for me — 'cause I got no voice
would you cry for me — would you make them pay
if they cut me down — if they hauled me away

Him who saved me...

Rock-a-bye baby — here we go
there's nothin' to feel — nothin' to know
there's no sound comin' from the saxophone
no Bible readings at the break of dawn
no God, no country, no forever friend
no enemy waitin' around the band
no parking tickets — no judge to see
no bills to pay — but nothin's free
there's no hands makin'; the sign of the cross
there's nothin' to lose — 'cause it's all been lost

Him who saved me...

— Chip Taylor

Oye

Está solo, llorando
En silencio, en la oscuridad
Está soñando, deseando
Con esperanza, por la oportunidad

Escúchalos, escúchalos, ellos te llaman

Escúchalos, míralos
Escucha lo que tratan de decir
Están en búsqueda del camino

Pequeñas voces llamándote.

Oye! Are you listening?
Oye! Can you hear them calling?
Oye! We are calling to you.
Oye! Are you listening?

Oye! Can you hear them calling?
Oye! Can you hear us?

— Jim Papoulis

Oye

*All alone, in the darkness
They are crying out for your help
They are hoping, they are dreaming
They are asking for a chance to be heard
Are you listening, can you hear their cries?
They are watching, they are listening
They are searching to find their way
Can you see them, can you hear them calling
What their voices are trying to say.*

II. RE-KINSHIP (Everything Changes)

Lost Words Blessing

Look to the sky with care, my love
 And speak the things you see
 Let new names take and root and thrive and grow
 And even as you journey on past dying stars exploding
 Like the gilded one in flight, leave your little gifts of light
 And in the dead of night, my darling
 Find the gleaming eye of starling
 Like the little aviator, sing your heart to all dark matter

 Walk through the world with care, my love
 And sing the things you see
 Let new names take and root and thrive and grow
 And even as you stumble through machair sands eroding
 Let the fern unfurl your grieving, let the heron still your breathing
 Let the selkies swim you deeper
 Oh, my little silver seeker
 Even as the hour grows bleaker, be the singer and the speaker
 And in city and in forest, let the larks become your chorus

 And when every hope is gone
 Let the raven call you home

— Julie Fowles, Karine Polwart, Seckou Keita, Kris Drever, Rachel Newton, Beth Porter, Jim Molyneux, and Kerry Andrew.

Stream of Life

The same stream of life that runs
 through my veins night and day runs
 through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.
 It is the same life that shoots in joy
 through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass
 and
 breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.
 It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle
 of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.
 I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world
 of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages
 dancing in my blood this moment.

— Rabindranath Tagore

No Soy de Aquí, Ni Soy de Allá

Me gusta el sol y
un caballero cuando llora
Las golondrinas y señoras sabias
Saltar paredes y abrir las ventanas

Y ver las lluvias en abril

Me gusta el vino tanto como las flores
Y los amantes, sobretodo los señores
Me encanta ser amiga de soñadores
Y las canciones en francés

No soy de aquí, ni soy de allá
No tengo edad, ni porvenir
Y ser feliz es mi color
De identidad

Me gusta estar tirado siempre en la arena
Y en bicicleta tomándolo con calma
Con todo el tiempo para ver las estrellas

Con mi Lucas en el trigal

No soy de aquí, ni soy de allá
No tengo edad, ni porvenir
Y ser feliz es mi color
De identidad

— Facundo Cabral, translation by C. Rodriguez

I Am Not from Here, I Am Not from There

*I like the sun and
a gentleman when he cries.
I like swallows and wise women
I like jumping over walls and opening
all the windows*

And watching the rains in April

*I like wine just as much as I like flowers
and lovers, especially the gentlemen
I love being friends with dreamers
And songs in French*

*I'm not from here, not anywhere
I have no age, no future there
My color of identity
Is happiness*

*I like lying in the sand forever
Riding my bike and taking it easy
With all the time in the world to see the stars.*

With my Lucas in the wheat field

*I'm not from here, not anywhere
I have no age, no future there
My color of identity
Is happiness*

We Belong

*We belong to the light
We belong to the thunder
We belong to the sound of the words
We've both fallen under
Whatever we deny or embrace
For worse or for better
We belong, we belong
We belong together*

— Eric Lowen and Dan Navarro



Cambia Todo Cambia

Cambia lo superficial
cambia también lo profundo
cambia el modo de pensar
cambia todo en este mundo

Cambia todo cambia
Cambia todo cambia
Cambia todo cambia
Cambia todo cambia

— Julio Numhauser

Everything Changes

*What is superficial changes
as does the profound
ways of thinking change
everything in this world changes*

*Changes, everything changes
Changes, everything changes
Changes, everything changes
Changes, everything changes*

When We Love

The towering tree spreads his greening canopy —
A veil between the soil and sky—
Not in selfish vanity,
But the gentle thrush to shade and shelter.
So it is with love.
For when we love,
Simply love,
Even as we are loved,
Our weary world can be transformed.
The busy thrush builds her nest below —
A fortnight's work to weave and set—
Not for herself alone,
But her tender brood to shield and cherish.
And so it is with love.
For when we love,
Simply love,
Even as we are loved,
Our weary world can be transformed
Into the Kingdom of God!

— Charles Anthony Silvestri



My Sweet, Crushed Angel / My Funny Valentine

You have not danced so badly, my dear,
Trying to hold hands with the Beautiful One.

You have waltzed with great style,
My sweet, crushed angel,
To have ever neared God's Heart at all.

So what if the music has stopped for a while.
So what if the price of admission to the Divine
Is out of reach tonight.
So what, my dear, If you do not have the ante to gamble for Real Love.

Have patience, my sweet crushed angel ,
You have not danced so badly, my dear,
Trying to kiss the Beautiful One.

You have actually waltzed with tremendous style,
O my sweet, O my sweet crushed angel.

My funny valentine
Sweet comic valentine
You make me smile with my heart
Your looks are laughable
Unphotographable
Yet you're my favourite work of art
Is your figure less than greek
Is your mouth a little weak
When you open it to speak
Are you smart?

But don't change a hair for me
Not if you care for me
Stay little valentine stay

*O my sweet, O my sweet crushed angel.
You have not danced so badly, my dear,
Trying to kiss the Beautiful One.*

Each day is Valentine's day

*Have patience, my sweet,
For He will not be able to resist your longing for long.*

But don't you change one hair for me
Not if you care for me
Stay little valentine stay
Each day is Valentine's day

*O my sweet, O my sweet crushed angel.
Stay with me.*

— Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky / — Lorenz Hart

Not One Sparrow Is Forgotten

Not one sparrow is forgotten,
 E'en the raven God will feed;
 And the lily of the valley
 From His bounty hath its need.
 Then shall I not trust Thee, Father,
 In Thy mercy have a share?
 And through faith and prayer, my Savior,
 Rest in Thy protecting care?

— Traditional

Cambia Todo Cambia

Cambia el clima con los años
 cambia el pastor su rebaño
 y así como todo cambia
 que yo cambie no es extraño
 Cambia el mas fino brillante
 de mano en mano su Brillo
 cambia el nido el Pajarillo
 cambia el sentir un amante
 Cambia el rumbo el caminante
 aunque esto le cause daño
 y así como todo cambia
 que yo cambie no es extraño
 Cambia el sol en su Carrera
 cuando la noche subsiste
 cambia la planta y se viste
 de verde en la primavera
 Cambia el pelaje la fiera
 Cambia el cabello el anciano
 y así como todo cambia
 que yo cambie no es extraño
 Cambia todo cambia...

— Julio Numhauser

Everything Changes

*The weather changes with the years
 the shepherd changes his flock
 and just as everything changes
 the fact that I also change isn't strange
 the finest diamond changes its luster
 as it moves from hand to hand
 the bird changes its nest
 as a lover changes how he feels
 the traveler changes his path
 Even if it proves harmful
 and just as everything changes
 the fact that I also change isn't strange
 the sun changes in its course
 to give way to the night
 a plant changes and dresses up
 in green for the spring
 the wild animal changes its fur coat
 as an old person's hair will change
 and just as everything changes
 the fact that I also change isn't strange
 Changes, everything changes....*

People

People
People who need people,
Are the luckiest people in the world
We're children, needing other children
And yet letting a grown-up pride
Hide all the need inside
Acting more like children than children
Lovers are very special people,
They're the luckiest people in the world
With one person, one very special person
A feeling deep in your soul
Says you were half, now you're whole
No more hunger and thirst,
But first be a person who needs people
People who need people
Are the luckiest people in the world...

— Bob Merrill

The Delight Song of Tsoai-talee

I am a feather on the bright sky
I am the blue horse that runs on the plain
I am the fish that rolls, shining, in the water
I am the shadow that follows a child
I am the evening light, the lustre of meadows
I am an eagle playing with the wind
I am a cluster of bright beads
I am the farthest star
I am the cold of dawn
I am the roaring of the rain
I am the glitter on the crust of the snow
I am the long track of the moon in a lake
I am a flame of four colors
I am a deer standing away in the dusk
I am a field of sumac and the pomme blanche
I am an angle of geese in the winter sky
I am the hunger of a young wolf
I am the whole dream of these things
You see, I am alive, I am alive
I stand in good relation to the earth
I stand in good relation to the gods
I stand in good relation to all that is beautiful
I stand in good relation to the daughter of Tsen-tainte
You see, I am alive, I am alive

— N. Scott Momaday

Cambia Todo Cambia

Pero no cambia mi amor
por mas lejos que me encuentre
ni el recuerdo ni el dolor
de mi pueblo y de mi gente
Lo que cambió ayer
tendrá que cambiar mañana
así como cambio yo
en esta tierra lejana
Cambia todo cambia...
Pero no cambia mi amor...

— Julio Numhauser

Everything Changes

*But my love doesn't change
no matter how far away I travel
nor the memory nor the pain
of my country and my people
What changed yesterday
will have to change tomorrow
just as I am changing
in this distant country
Changes, everything changes...
But my love doesn't change*



III. THE HOUSE OF LOVE

Ubuntu / In Christ There is No East or West

*I am what I am because of who we all are
I am because we are*

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of Love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

*I am what I am because of who we all are
I am because we are*

In Him shall true hearts ev'rywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord
Close-binding all mankind.

*I am what I am because of who we all are
I am because we are*

In Love now meet both East and West,
In Him meet South and North;
All Christly souls are one in Him
Throughout the whole wide earth.

— Colby Jeffers and AWU / — John Oxenham

Modimo

Modimo, re boka wena
Tsothle di entswe ke wena
Wanyamalala umthwalo wezono zam

— Traditional Sestho / isiZulu

Modimo

*God, we praise you
Everything is created by you
He took away our burden*

I Cry for Love

I bend I don't break
If I want I just take
If I cut I bleed
If I bleed I don't cry
Don't cry, don't cry

I cry for love
I cry for love

If I fall I get up
Am I tough, tough enough?
Well I bend I don't break
If I want I just take
If I cut I bleed
If I bleed I don't cry
Don't cry, don't cry

I cry for love
I cry for love

Want some of this
Want some of that
Some of what
Where it's at

If I fall I get up
Am I tough, tough enough?
Well I bend I don't break
If I want I just take
If I cut I bleed
If I bleed I don't cry
Don't cry, don't cry

I cry for love
I cry for love

— Chip Taylor

More Like Love

I used to think I needed all the answers
I used to need to know that I was right
I used to be afraid of things I couldn't cover up
In black and white

But I just wanna look more like love
I just wanna look more like love
This whole world is spinning crazy
I can't quite keep up
It's the one thing around here
That we don't have quite enough of
So I just wanna look a little more like love

I find the farther that I climb
There's always another line of mountain tops
It's never going to stop
And the more of anything I do
The thing that always ends up true
Is getting what I want will never be enough

So I just wanna look more like love
I just wanna look more like love
This whole world is spinning crazy
I can't quite keep up
It's the one thing around here
That we don't have quite enough of
So I just wanna look a little more like love
Like love

— Ben Rector

Pastures of Plenty / This Land is Your Land / Land

It's a mighty long row that my poor hands have hoed
My poor feet have traveled a long dusty road
Out of your dust bowl and westward we road
Your deserts was hot and your mountains was cold

I've worked on your orchards of peaches and prunes
Slept on the ground by the light of your moon
At the edge of your cities you will see us and then
We come with the dust and we're gone with the wind

When did you come to America the free
Who are your ancestors, what is your creed

Who is the father and the son and the we
Where is the spirit that sought liberty

When did you come to America
Long, long before when the buffalo walked
When did you hands burn like coal
The thing that made this land your pride and your joy

*When did you come to America
I came to help you grow to harvest your crops
I came to build your roads your cities and your thoughts
You say you don't need me, but you know what you've got*

This land is your land, and my land, and your land
From California to the New York islands
This land is my land, and your land, and my land
From California to the New York islands

This land is my land, and your land, and my land
From California to the New York islands
This land is my land, and your land, and my land, and your land too

Say you're American but what does that mean
You are the particle, the dust in the scheme
Now that you have all the things that you want
Did you ever look around and see who you forgot
When did you come to America
Garden of Eden, garden of rush
Blank hearts and comforts, the dream for what we fought
The crossroads is here now, we forget our debt too much

I really don't know who I am but I will
I know there's a purpose, there's a reason for me to be here still
Dust is to dust, heavy memory
Even if they grind me, still dust I will be

This land is your land, and my land, and your land
From California to the New York islands
This land is your land, and my land, and your land
From California to the New York islands
This land is my land, and your land, and my land
From California to the New York islands
This land is my land, and your land, and my land, and your land too

And it's always we ramble this river and I
All along your green valleys I'll work 'til I die
And this land I'll defend with my life if need be
For my pastures of plenty must always be free

— Woody Guthrie

When did you come to America the free?
Who are your ancestors, what is your creed?

— Lila Downs

A Place for You / My Country, 'Tis of Thee

Spirit made a place for you where everything is new (4x)

My country, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing

Love has made a place for you where everything is new (4x)

Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride

Grace has made a place for you where everything is new (4x)

From every mountainside let freedom ring!

Spirit's made / Love has made / Grace has made.

— Melanie DeMore / Samuel Francis Smith



Audience remains seated and sings:

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountainside
Let freedom ring!
Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

If I had a Hammer

If I had a Hammer
 If I had a hammer
 I'd hammer in the morning
 I'd hammer in the evening
 All over this land
 I'd hammer out danger
 I'd hammer out warning
 I'd hammer out love between
 My brothers and my sisters
 All over this land

If I had a bell
 I'd ring it in the morning
 I'd ring it in the evening
 All over this land
 I'd ring out danger ...

If I had a song
 I'd sing it in the morning
 I'd sing it in the evening
 All over this world
 I'd sing out danger...
 I'd sing out love between
 My brothers and my sisters
 All over this land

I got a hammer / And I've got a bell
 And I've got a song to sing
 All over this land / It's the hammer of justice
 It's the bell of freedom /
 It's the song about love between
 My brothers and my sisters
 All over this land

— Pete Seeger and Lee Hays

Working on a Building

Well if I was a sinner
 I tell you what I would do
 I'd quit my sinning and work on
 a building too

I'm working on a building
 I'm working on a building
 I'm working on a building
 For my Lord, for my Lord
 It's a holy ghost building
 It's a holy ghost building (hallelujah)
 It's a holy ghost building
 For my Lord, for my Lord

Well if I was a drunkard
 I'll tell you what I would do
 I'd quit my drinking and work on
 a building too

I'm working on a building...

Well, if I was a gambler
 I'll tell you what I would do
 I'd quit my gambling and work on
 a building too

I'm working on a building...

Well, if I was a preacher
 I'll tell you what I would do
 I would go on preaching
 And work on a building too

I'm working on a building...

— Traditional Spiritual

Bless This House

Bless this house O Lord we pray;
Make it safe by night and day;
Bless these walls so firm and stout,
Keeping want and trouble out:
Bless the roof and chimneys tall,
Let thy peace lie over all;
Bless this door, that it may prove
Ever open to joy and love.

— Helen Taylor

Volver, Volver

Este amor apasionado
Anda todo alborotado por volver.
Voy camino a la locura
Y aunque todo me tortura,
sé querer.

Nos dejamos hace tiempo
Pero me llegó el momento de perder.
Tú tenías mucha razón;
Le hago caso al corazón
Y me muero por volver.

Y volver volver Volver
A tus brazos otra vez;
Llegaré hasta donde estés;
Yo sé perder, yo sé perder;
Quiero volver, volver, volver.

Nos dejamos hace tiempo
Pero me llegó el momento de perder.
Tú tenías mucha razón;
Le hago caso al corazón
Y me muero por volver.

Y volver volver Volver
A tus brazos otra vez;
Llegaré hasta donde estés;
Yo sé perder, yo sé perder;
Quiero volver, volver, volver.

— Fernando Z. Maldonado

Return, Return

*This passionate love
Is all in turmoil to return
I'm on the road to madness
And although everything tortures me
I know how to love*

*We left each other a long time ago
But my time has come to lose
You were so right
I listen to my heart
And I'm dying to get back
And return, return, return
To your arms, again
I'll go to where you are
I know how to lose, I know how to lose
I want to return, return, return*

*We left each other a long time ago
But my time has come to lose
You were so right
I listen to my heart
And I'm dying to get back
And return, return, return
To your arms, again
I'll go to where you are
I know how to lose, I know how to lose
I want to return, return, return*



IV. SINGING TOGETHER



Audience stands as able to and sings:

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
 O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem
 Come and behold Him
 Born the King of Angels
 O come, let us adore Him
 O come, let us adore Him
 O come, let us adore Him
 Christ the Lord!
 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God
 All glory in the highest
 O come, let us adore Him
 O come, let us adore Him
 O come, let us adore Him
 Christ the Lord!



Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the new-born King!
 Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled."
 Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
 Join the triumph of the skies;
 With th' angelic host proclaim,
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
 Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the new-born King!"
 Hail! the heaven-born Prince of peace!
 Hail! the Son of Righteousness!
 Light and life to all he brings,
 Risen with healing in his wings
 Mild he lays his glory by,
 Born that man no more may die:
 Born to raise the son of earth,
 Born to give them second birth.
 Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the new-born King!"

Please be seated.

Cold December Flies Away

Cold December flies away at the rose-red splendor.
April's crowning glory breaks while the whole world wonders
at the holy unseen power of the tree which bears the flower.
On the blessed tree blooms the rose-red flower.
On the tree blooms the rose here in love's own garden,
full and strong in glory.

— Howard Hawhee

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord, Are We

Your little ones, dear Lord, are we
And come Your lowly bed to see;
Enlighten ev'ry soul and mind
That we the way to You may find.

— translated by Harriet R. Krauth Spaeth

A la Nanita Nana

A la nanita nana, nanita ea,
Nanita ea,
Mi Jesús tiene sueño.
Bendito sea, bendito sea.

A la nanita nana, nanita ea,
Nanita ea,
Mi Jesús tiene sueño.
Bendito sea, bendito sea.

Fuentecita que corre clara y sonora,
Rui señor que en la selva,
Cantando llora,
Callan mientras la cuna se balancea.

A la nanita nana, nanita ea,
A la nanita nana, nanita ea,

—Juan Francisco Muñoz y Pabón

A la Nanita Nana

*Come, let's sing a little lullaby,
Come, let's sing a little,
My Jesus is sleepy.
Blessed be, blessed be.*

*Come, let's sing a little lullaby,
Come, let's sing a little,
My Jesus is sleepy
Blessed be, blessed be*

*Little spring bubbling clear & loud,
Nightingale that in the forest,
Weeps as it sings,
Hush, while the cradle rocks.*

*Come, let's sing a little lullaby,
Come, let's sing a little lullaby*

Laylat Al Milad

ليلة الميلاد يتحى البغض

On the night of Christmas, hatred will vanish

ليلة الميلاد تزهى الارض

On the night of Christmas, the earth blooms

ليلة الميلاد تدفن الحرب

On the night of Christmas, war is buried

ليلة الميلاد ينبت الحب

On the night of Christmas, love is born

عندما نسقي عطشان كأس ماء نكون في الميلاد

When we offer a glass of water to a thirsty person, we are in Christmas

عندما نكسي عريان ثوب حب نكون في الميلاد

When we clothe a naked person with a gown of love, we are in Christmas

عندما نكتف الدموع في العيون نكون في الميلاد

When we wipe the tears from weeping eyes, we are in Christmas

عندما نفرش القلوب بالرجاء نكون في الميلاد

When we cushion a hopeless heart with love, we are in Christmas

— Traditional Arabic

Los Peces en el Río

La Virgen se está peinando
entre cortina y cortina.

Los cabellos son de oro
y el peine de plata fina.

ESTRIBILLO

Pero mira cómo beben
los peces en el río.

Pero mira cómo beben
por ver a Dios nacido.

Beben y beben
y vuelven a beber.
Los peces en el río
por ver a Dios nacer.

La Virgen lava pañales
y los tiende en el romero,
los pajarillos cantando,
y el romero floreciendo.

ESTRIBILLO

La Virgen se está lavando
con un poco de jabón.
Se le han picado las manos,
manos de mi corazón.

ESTRIBILLO

— Traditional

The Fishes in the River

*The Virgin is combing her hair
between the curtains.*

*Her hair is of gold
and the comb of fine silver.*

CHORUS

*But look at how the fishes
in the river drink.*

*But look how they drink
in order to see God born.*

*They drink and they drink
and they return to drink,
the fishes in the river,
to see God being born.*

*The Virgin washes diapers
and hangs them on the rosemary,
the little birds are singing
and the rosemary is blooming*

CHORUS

*The virgin is washing herself
with a little bit of soap.
Her hands have been irritated,
hands of my heart.*

CHORUS

Al Shlosha

Al shlosha d'varim ha-olam kayam

Al ha-emet v'al ha-din v'al ha-shalom

— Traditional

El Burrito Sabanero

Conmi burrito sabanero,

voy camino de Belén,

Conmi burrito sabanero,

voy camino de Belén,

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén,

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén,

El lucerito mañanero

ilumina mi sendero

El lucerito mañanero

ilumina mi sendero

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén,

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén,

Tuki tuki tuki tuki, tuki tuki tuki ta

Apurate mi burrito,

vamos a ver a Jesús

Apurate mi burrito,

vamos a ver a Jesús

Con mi cuatrico voy cantando,

mi burrito va trotando

Con mi cuatrico voy cantando,

mi burrito va trotando

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén,

Si me ven, si me ven,

voy camino de Belén

— Hugo Blanco

Al Shlosha

On three things the world stands:

On truth, on justice, and on peace.

El Burrito Sabanero

With my donkey of the savannah,

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

With my donkey of the savannah,

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

The morning light

illuminates my path

The morning light

illuminates my path

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

Tuki tuki tuki tuki, tuki tuki tuki ta

Hurry up, my little donkey,

we're going to see Jesus

Hurry up, my little donkey,

we're going to see Jesus

With my cuatro I go along singing,

my donkey goes a-trotting

With my cuatro I go along singing,

my donkey goes a-trotting

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

If anyone sees me, if you see me

I'm on my way to Bethlehem

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas,
 Everywhere you go;
 Take a look at the five-and-ten, glistening once again,
 With candy canes and silver lanes aglow.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas,
 Toys in every store;
 But the prettiest sight to see, is the holly that will be
 On your own front door
 A pair of hop-along boots and a pistol that shoots
 Is the wish of Barney and Ben
 Dolls that will talk and go for a walk
 Is the hope of Janice and Jen
 And Mom and Dad can hardly wait for school to start again.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas,
 Everywhere you go;
 There's a tree in the Grand Hotel, one in the park as well
 The sturdy king that doesn't mind the snow.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas,
 Soon the bells will start
 And the thing that will make them ring, is the carol that you sing
 Right within your heart.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas,
 Toys in every store;
 But the prettiest sight to see, is the holly that will be
 On your own front door.

— Merideth Willson



Audience remains seated and sings: **Angels We Have Heard On High**

Angels we have heard on high
 Sweetly singing o'er the plains
 And the mountains in reply
 Echoing their joyous strains
 Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
 Gloria, in excelsis Deo!



Silent Night

Silent Night / Holy Night
 All is calm / All is bright
 Round yon virgin / Mother and child
 Holy infant so tender and mild
 Sleep in heavenly peace
 Sleep in heavenly peace

V. BEAUTIFUL WORLD

Beautiful World

Beautiful world circling infinitely
fragment of sun marbled in blue
turning in time and tuned like a symphony
beautiful stars beautiful view
beautiful world intricate web of design
shadow and light playing out on the land
billions of years come down to a point in time
setting the stage for the folly of man
pitiful man
beautiful world beautiful world beautiful world...
beautiful trees breathing the air alive
beautiful leaves trembling and dry
beautiful bees moving from flower to hive
beautiful seas mirroring sky
beautiful sky
beautiful world beautiful world beautiful world

— Eliza Gilkyson

We Clasp the Hands/ I Could Have Danced All Night

We clasp the hands of those that go before us,
And the hands of those who come after us.
We enter the little circle of each other's arms
And the larger circle of lovers,
Whose hands are joined in a dance
And the larger circle of all creatures
Passing in and out of life,
Who move also in a dance,
To a music so subtle
And vast that no ear hears it except in fragments...

— Wendell Berry

On Christmas night we hear the angels singing...

I could have danced all night...

And still have begged for more

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright...

I could have spread my wings and done a thousand things

I've never done before

Gloria...

I'll never know what made it so exciting

Why all at once my heart took flight

I only know when he began to dance with me

I could have danced, danced, danced

All night.

— Alan Jay Lerner



Merger Poem

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind

And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will

And then all will be rich and free and varied

And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance

And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old

And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures

And then all will live in harmony with each other and the earth.
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again

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SOPRANO



Lillian Boessen
New Braunfels, TX



Gitanjali Mathur
Austin, TX



Kori Miller
Dallas, TX



Savannah Porter
London, England



Kathlene Ritch*
Santa Fe, NM



Tiana Sorenson
Chicago, IL



Emily Yocum Black
Paducah, KY

ALTO



Ana Baida
Atlanta, GA



Sarah Brauer
Eugene, OR



Angela Burns
Wilmington, NC



Grace Kiver
Washington, DC



Lauren McAllister
Cincinnati, OH



Laura Mercado-Wright*
Austin, TX

* Denotes Section Leader

TENOR



Haitham Haider
Montreal, Quebec



Mark Istratie
Austin, TX



Wilson Nichols*
New York, NY



**David Kurtenbach
Rivera**
San Francisco, CA



**Brendan Jacob
Smith**
Brooklyn, NY



Jason Vest
The Woodlands, TX

BASS



Drayton Eggleston
Sycamore, IL



Gregory Fletcher
Moreno Valley, CA



Rick Grabrillo*
Round Rock, TX



Robert Harlan
Austin, TX



Michael Hawes
Pflugerville, TX



Tim O'Brien
Austin, TX



John Proft
Austin, TX



GUEST ARTIST

CARRIE RODRIGUEZ,

a composer, violinist, and singer from Austin, Texas, finds beauty in the cross-pollination of diverse musical traditions. As a singer-songwriter, she has released five solo studio albums, including *Lola*, which was hailed as “the perfect bicultural album” and was included in NPR’s Best Albums of 2016, as well as Rolling Stone’s Best Country Albums of the Year. Carrie has performed on stages across North America and Europe and has appeared on programs

such as PBS’s *Austin City Limits*, *The Tonight Show*, and NPR’s *Tiny Desk Concerts*. In 2017, she founded *Laboratorio*, a highly acclaimed concert series hosted at Austin’s historic State Theatre that celebrates Latine culture through music, visual art, and storytelling. Her recent work includes that as a composer/lyricist was for the original musical *¡Americano!*, which had a six-week run off Broadway at New York City’s New World Stages in 2022 and earned her a nomination for a 2022 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Music. During the 2024–25 academic year, Rodriguez was named the official Songwriter-in-Residence at The University of Texas at Austin. As part of her residency, she composed and performed the music for *Postcards from the Border*, a full-length theatrical work that premiered with Texas Performing Arts in January ’25 and has been highlighted in both local and national press, including NPR’s Weekend Edition. Carrie lives in Austin with her husband and frequent artistic collaborator, Luke Jacobs, and their 10 year-old son, Cruz.

INSTRUMENTALISTS



Tom Burritt *percussion*
Leander, TX



John Fremgen *bass*
Austin, TX



Mitch Watkins *guitar*
Austin, TX

**Soprano**

Erika Bacon
 Katherine Best
 Kellie Bledsoe
 Ivy Cantu
 Claire Davis
 Amber Deem-Mullikin
 Afsonah Esfandiari
 Susan Fernandez
 Lee Ashlee Fletcher
 Jeanne Foels
 Margaret Henderson
 Amy Harris
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 Johnson
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 Jackie Turner-Creel
 Sarah Urías

Alto

Courtney Aguilar
 Brooke Beasley
 Jeannie Binder-Huet
 Karen Blizzard
 Audrey Bounds
 Ali Carraher
 Emily Chandler
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 Cheryl Fuller
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 Suzanne Mitchell
 Lindsay M. Nelson
 Barbara O'Brien
 Linda Blair Ramsey
 Heather Rosen
 Deborah Rupp
 Rina Saporantos*
 Liz Saunders
 Madison Shortes
 Krystina Speegle
 Paige Strackman
 Diana Stromme
 Agatha Torku
 Luisa Torres
 Cassidy Wallace
 Katherine White

Tenor

Geoffrey Adams
 Andre Clark
 Stevie Dugdale*
 Jon-Michael Eclar
 Nicholas A. Flott
 Loel Graber
 Mark Istratie*
 Levi Lebsack
 Jon-Michael Lees
 Jim Maxwell
 Tola Ojuri
 Niraj Hiro Pahlajani
 Randy M. Preston
 Nathan Rothe
 Omen Safavi
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 John Spence
 Ross Tarpley*
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Bass

Geoff Carlisle
 Devin Cornacchio
 Marshal Crenshaw
 Chris Deyo
 John Diaz
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 Robert Harlan*
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 Alex Rendahl
 Ivan Rodriguez
 Colby Schulz
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 Gil Zilkha*



conspirare

SYMPHONIC CHOIR

Craig Hella Johnson Artistic Dir. & Conductor

Joseph Choi Rehearsal Pianist

* Denotes Section Leader



CRAIG HELLA JOHNSON

Acclaimed for crafting thought-provoking musical journeys that create deep connections between performers and listeners, CRAIG HELLA JOHNSON is the founding artistic director and conductor of Conspirare. He has recently held leadership roles as Music Director for the Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble, Creative Partner at the Oregon Bach Festival, and is currently an Artist in Residence at Texas State University.

A celebrated guest conductor of choral and orchestral works, Hella Johnson is also a published composer, arranger, and educator. He was awarded the 2022 Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities at Texas State University and serves as editor of a choral series for Hal Leonard and E.C. Schirmer.

His concert-length composition, *Considering Matthew Shepard*, was premiered and recorded by Conspirare and continues to reach audiences nationally and internationally.

Hella Johnson's accomplishments have been recognized with numerous awards and honors. Notably, he and Conspirare won a 2015 GRAMMY® for Best Choral Performance. His other honors include Chorus America's Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral, Texas State Musician of the Year, the Matthew Shepard Foundation's Dennis Dougherty Award for Community Leadership, and most recently, Wartburg College's 2023 Graven Award.

CONSPIRARE is a GRAMMY®-winning choir and nonprofit performing arts organization that believes in the power of music to create transformation, healing, and connection. Conspirare was established in 1991 in Austin, Texas, by Craig Hella Johnson and a band of dedicated supporters.

Our Impact This Year

Every day, Conspirare brings life-changing music to Austin and beyond. We come together in Song — to create art, to take risks, to play, to express something unique — to breathe together. This year alone, we:

- Received our **12th GRAMMY®-nomination** for latest recording, ***advena: liturgies for a broken world***.
- Gathered with **5,898 audience members** through **14 performances** across 4 cities and 3 states and 1 country.
- Lifted the voices of **156 singers** and the artistry of **86 composers**.
- **570,772 listeners** streamed Conspirare's music **2,510,413 times on Spotify!**

Production Team

Technical Director & Co-Producer

Robert Harlan

Stage Manager

Viera Buzgova

Projection Design

Matt Shaddock

Audio Engineer

Juno Black

Assistant Stage Manager

Jonathan Fritzlen

Crew

Alyssa Blackwell

John Diaz

Levi McClung

Sarah Williams

Hogg Memorial Auditorium

St. Luke's UMC

House Manager (December 6)

Michelle Stone

House Manager (December 7)

Cheryl Harris

Audio Equipment

Nomad Sound

Lighting Equipment

Olden Lighting

Printed Program Design

Karin Elsener

With Gratitude to our Friends & Supporters

Hogg Memorial Auditorium

TLC Box Office

St. Luke's UMC

First Austin

Philip Overbaugh

Phyllis Oyama

Artist Hosts

Teresa Ringness

Larry & Fran Collmann

Sam & Anne Byars

Robert & Lisa Sanchez

Deborah Dobbs

Steve & DeeAnne Paulson

Karon Rilling & Judy Mattair

Greg Wooldridge & Lynne Dobson

Robert & Sandi Tomlinson

Richard & Susanna Finnell

Eric Collier & Tamra Shea Oatman

Russ & Janey Trowbridge

Conspire is grateful to our Artist Hosts for providing artist accommodations.

If you have a spare bedroom (or more!) and would like to learn more about hosting an artist, please contact **Meri Krueger** at mkrueger@conspire.org.

Ambassadors

Julie Adams

Janet Bezner

Linda Cameron

David Cameron

Susan Eason

Michelle Fisher

Stephanie Foster

Rod Howard

Virginia Hyde

Maureen Milligan

Sibylle Rhein

Deborah Salinas

Conspire is grateful to our Ambassadors for serving as ushers, providing office and storage assistance, and many other jobs that keep us singing!

To learn more about becoming an Ambassador, contact **André Trahan** at atrahan@conspire.org.

Emergency Exit Instructions In an emergency, please listen for instructions from the stage. Most patrons will exit towards the back.



Staff

- Artistic Director
Craig Hella Johnson
- Managing Director
Ann McNair
- Director of Development
Travis Fitzgerald
- Technical Director and Stage Manager
Robert Harlan
- Gifts Processing
Sam Henderson
- Artist Relations
Meri Krueger
- Executive Assistant to the Artistic Director
Melissa LeClair
- Director of Accounting
Jane Ramirez
- Production Assistant
Indri Schaelicke
- Grants Manager
Catherine Spainhour
- Front of House Coordinator
and Symphonic Choir Librarian
André Trahan

Performance Note

Conspire performs in a variety of venues designed to enhance choral sound. Choral music has a rich history in religious and cultural traditions. In performing such works and in such places, Conspire is committed to the vastness of human expression, belonging, and love. We value and celebrate the great diversity of religious, artistic, and human experiences that our musicians and audience members bring. All are welcome here. Come, create the space in which the music is held today.

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