

After the Rain

Music for the Journey

May 4, 2024

The logo features the letters 'CW' in a large, light blue, serif font. The 'C' and 'W' are partially overlapping. To the right of the 'W', the words 'Concord Women's Chorus' are written in a smaller, dark blue, serif font. Below this, the tagline 'THE POWER OF WOMEN'S VOICES' is written in a small, dark blue, sans-serif font.

Concord
Women's Chorus

THE POWER OF WOMEN'S VOICES

Concord Women's Chorus

presents

**After the Rain:
Music for the Journey**

Jane Ring Frank, Artistic Director

Daniel Goldsmith, Piano

Program Notes

This afternoon's program, *After the Rain: Music for the Journey*, represents a straightforward concept: "The journey not the arrival matters." (T. S. Eliot). Although the word "journey" may be overused today, it fits our program, which begins and ends where it started. We use a frame of storytelling to put an eye to the textures and vicissitudes of the journey.

Storytelling is central to human existence. We build journey narratives every day, attempting to make sense of our lives: Little Red and her journey to Grandma's house; Hansel and Gretel and their crumbs on the path; Dorothy in Oz; Alice in Wonderland; Cymbeline; Dante; Odysseus; Luke Skywalker; Harry Potter. Poet Charles Wright reminds us, "The journey is always into the unknown, into the mystery and darkness..."

Today we offer a program of hope for the heroine's journey. Our concert begins with a stunning piece by Jocelyn Hagen, *This Sky Falls*. The poetry by Julia Klatt Singer uses our worst fear, "the sky falling," as the catalyst for a beautiful journey, and, ultimately, for flight, for freedom. Gwyneth Walker's *Maid of Constant Sorrow* is based on the familiar American folk song, *Man of Constant Sorrow*. This is a very simple melody, but the message is a mournful one. The soul is troubled – a restless sojourner, at best. Inspired by the empowering poem by Rabbi Ruth Sohn, Elaine Hagenberg's *Song of Miriam* describes the journey of a young woman who finds bravery amid uncertainty and fear. Middle Eastern harmonies paint an expansive desert landscape, while the voices search for faith and risk taking the first step.

Stephen Chatman's *In the Glow of the Moon* sets the delightful poetry of Tara Wohlberg. The piece is evocative, romantic, and calm. Setting the stage for relationship and for connection, the moon bathes the journey in glowing and brilliant light. *Love Is a Rain of Diamonds* features poetry by May Swenson and is set to music by New England composer Gwyneth Walker. Weaving piano and voices, the piece is cleverly scored to sound like pinpricks of light reflecting off of the many facets of a diamond. Harriet Prescott Spofford's poem *By Night*, set by Hagenberg, depicts a young woman who discovers a bold new world of thrilling and awe-filled wonder when she ventures beyond her familiar walls.

Setting words by Chief Dan George, Sarah Quartel's *After the Rain* optimistically reminds us that there is beauty to be found in times of trouble and that difficult days will not last forever. This sensitive piece uses triplets against duplets to give a sense of fluidity to the melodic phrasing. The Spiritual, *I'm on My Way*, was made famous by the great Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. The repeated phrase, "I'm on my way to Canaan Land," represents the journey of enslaved peoples toward hope, healing, and freedom – either in this life or the next. Anthony Trecek-King crafted this arrangement to honor Jackson's accomplishments, and to share this powerful message with the world. And finally, we return to *This Sky Falls*. That most frightening thing has happened, but a falling sky provides the springboard for flight achieved, basking

in the freedom of a glorious, sustained glide.

I'll end where I started, with a T. S. Eliot quote:

“We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.”

Thank you for joining us today. As always, we are grateful to each one of you for walking the journey with Concord Women's Chorus. I look forward to greeting you at the reception on the patio in front of the church!

With gratitude and best wishes,
Jane Ring Frank
Artistic Director, Concord Women's Chorus



Concord Women's Chorus

THE POWER OF WOMEN'S VOICES | JANE RING FRANK, DIRECTOR

A Ceremony of Carols

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Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Church
81 Elm Street, Concord, MA

For tickets and information: www.concordwomenschorus.org

Today's concert is offered in memory of beloved
long-time member Debbie Clark (1928-2024)

Concert Program

After the Rain: Music for the Journey

Jane Ring Frank, Artistic Director
Daniel Goldsmith, Piano

The Journey Begins

"This Sky Falls" from *Flight*

Music: Jocelyn Hagen (b.1980)
Text: Julia Klatt Singer

Maid of Constant Sorrow

Music: Gwyneth Walker (b.1947)
Traditional

Song of Miriam

Music: Elaine Hagenberg (b.1979)
Text: Rabbi Ruth Sohn

Along the Way

In the glow of the moon

Music: Stephen Chatman (b.1950)
Text: Tara Wohlberg

Love is a Rain of Diamonds

Music: Gwyneth Walker (b.1947)
Text: May Swenson (1913-1989)

Michele Abroff, Linde Dynneson, Kathleen Molony, Laura Weiss
soloists

By Night

Music: Elaine Hagenberg (b.1979)
Text: Harriet Prescott Spofford (1835-1921)

“Notturmo” from *Six Pieces for Piano*

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Rebirth

After the Rain

Music: Sarah Quartel (b.1982)
Text: Chief Dan George (1899-1981)
from “Words to a Grandchild”

I'm On My Way

Traditional spiritual
arr. Anthony Trecek-King (b.1975)

“This Sky Falls” from *Flight*

Hagen/Singer



Our Special Thanks To:

Rick Krug, printing
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The Rev. Nancy J. Hagner, Rector,
Robert Barney, Director of Music, Trinity Episcopal Church,
and Patrons who generously support us

*Please join us on the patio in front of the church following
the concert for refreshments and conversation.*

Program Texts

"This Sky Falls" from *Flight*

Music: Jocelyn Hagen (b.1980)

Text: Julia Klatt Singer

The sky
Looks like it is fire
The lake, silver
And I wonder
What my skin tastes like
After seeing something
Like this.
I watch as the night
Swallows the curve of the sun
Buttons up the darkness,
Leaving us lone
pinpricks of light.
For surely
This sky falls, sinks
Beneath my skin
Just as the cold does, just
As the snow. Just as the moon
Does, when it is waning
Just as the clouds do
When they can't help but break.
Some moments I am nothing more
Than driftwood, fox prints, flight.

Maid of Constant Sorrow

Music: Gwyneth Walker (b.1947)

Text: Traditional

I am a maid of constant sorrow,
I've seen trouble all my days.
I'm going back to my New England,
Place where I was born and raised.
All through this world I'm bound to ramble,
Through sun and wind, through driving rain.
I'm going to ride the Northern Railway.
Perhaps I'll take the very next train.
O fare thee well my gentle lover.
I'll never see your face again.
I'm bound to ride these tracks forever.
Perhaps I'll die upon this train.
Maybe your friends think I'm a stranger.
And I'll return to you no more.
But there is one promise given,
I know we'll meet on God's Golden Shore.

Song of Miriam

Music: Elaine Hagenberg (b.1979)

Text: Rabbi Ruth Sohn

I, Miriam, stand at the sea
and turn
to face the desert
stretching endless and
still.
My eyes are dazzled
The sky brilliant blue
Sunburnt sands unyielding white.
My hands turn to dove wings.
My arms
reach
for the sky
and I want to sing
the song rising inside me.
My mouth open
I stop.
Where are the words?
Where the melody?
In a moment of panic
My eyes go blind.
Can I take a step
Without knowing a
Destination?
Will I falter
Will I fall
Will the ground sink away from under me?
The song still unformed—
How can I sing?
To take the first step—
To sing a new song—
Is to close one's eyes
and dive
into unknown waters,
For a moment knowing nothing risking all—
But then to discover
The waters are friendly
The ground is firm.
And the song—
the song rises again.
Out of my mouth
come words lifting the wind,
And I hear
for the first time
the song
that has been in my heart
silent
unknown
even to me.

In the glow of the moon

Music: Stephen Chatman (b.1950)

Text: Tara Wohlberg

In the glow of the moon the stars play a tune,
that can flicker and shine,
with a blink of their brilliant eyes,
it will bathe us in gentle surprise.
In the glow of the moon the sky sings a tune,
that is tender and smooth, so smooth
as it rings through the night,
we can bask in its charming delight.
In the glow of the moon the earth hears a tune,
that shy lovers can hum in a sweet honey'd kiss,
they will whisper each sigh with a wish.
In the glow of the moon my loves hums a tune,
it will linger aloud in its stillness so deep
and the silence will drift into sleep.

Love is a Rain of Diamonds

Music: Gwyneth Walker (b.1947)

Text: May Swenson (1913-1989)

Love is a rain of diamonds in the mind
the fruit of the soul sliced in two
a dark spring loosed at the lips of light
under-earth waters unlocked from their lurking
to sparkle in a crevice parted by the sun
a temple not of stone but cloud
beyond the roar of the heart and all violence
blue permanence

By Night

Music: Elaine Hagenberg (b.1979)

Text: Harriet Prescott Spofford

She leaned out into the midnight,
 And the summer wind went by,
The scent of the rose on its silken wing
 And a song its sigh.
Deep in the tarn the mountain
 A mighty phantom gleamed,
Shadow and silver and floating cloud
 Over it streamed.
And, in depths below, the waters
 Answered some mystic height,
As a star stooped out of the depths above
 With its lance of light.
And she thought, in the dark and the fragrance,
 How vast was the wonder wrought
If the sweet world were but the beauty born
 In its Maker's thought.

After the Rain

Music: Sarah Quartel (b.1982)
Text: Chief Dan George (1899-1981)
from "Words to a Grandchild"

The grass will shed its moisture, the fog will lift from the trees,
a new light will brighten the sky and play in the drops that hang on all things
after the rain.

Heed the days when the rain flows freely,
in their greyness lies the seed of much thought.

Heed the days when the sky hangs low
and paints new colours on the earth.

After the rain.

Your heart will beat out a new gladness, if you let it happen.

I'm On My Way

Traditional spiritual
Arr. Anthony Trecek-King (b.1975)

On my way to Canaan land,
glory hallelujah, on my way.
Well, I'm on my way, oh, to Canaan land,
glory hallelujah, on my way.
If-a you won't go, don't ya hinder me.
On my way, glory hallelujah, on my way.
I'm falling and rising, but I'm on my way,
glory hallelujah, on my way.

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Kevin Leong, *Music Director*



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See concordchorus.org for information.



The Concord Chorus gratefully acknowledges the support of the Mass Cultural Council and the local cultural councils of Acton-Boxborough, Bedford, and Concord, which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Jane Ring Frank, Artistic Director

Jane Ring Frank is pleased to be in her 30th year as Artistic Director of the Concord Women's Chorus, a 50-voice ensemble based in Concord, Massachusetts. The chorus prides itself on rehearsing and performing challenging, new music written especially for women.

From professional CD recording projects to workshops for professional conductors and singers, Ms. Frank continues to direct some of Boston's best musical ensembles. For twelve years, she was the critically acclaimed Artistic Director and Founder of Boston Secession – one of Boston's premiere professional choral ensembles.



Ms. Frank began her conducting career at California State University, Long Beach, where she became associate conductor of the premiere 70-voice University Choir, staff pianist, lecturer, and musical director/conductor for the Department of Theatre Arts. She also worked as a *répétiteur* with professional opera companies in Los Angeles, including the Los Angeles Music Center Opera and the Long Beach Opera Company. Other artistic mentors include the late Randall Behr (former conductor and music director, Juillard Opera Center, and former resident conductor, Los Angeles Music Center Opera), the late Michael Carson (conductor, Lake George Opera), and Menahem Pressler (Beaux Arts Trio).

Ms. Frank moved to Boston in 1991 to conduct at Harvard University; five years later she founded Boston Secession. She is currently the Minister of Worship and the Arts at First Congregational Church, Winchester. She spent 21 years as a Senior Resident Scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis University. From 2011-2022, Ms. Frank served as Artistic Director of the North Shore's Cantemus Chamber Chorus. She produced the late composer and fellow Brandeis Scholar Ruth Lomon's *Shadowing*, a critically acclaimed recording of her piano works. She co-produced and co-edited three recordings with Laury Gutiérrez and her exhilarating early music fusion ensemble, Rumbarroco. From 2011-2017, she served as part-time resident guest conductor at the Gitameit Music Centre in Yangon, Myanmar.

For a number of years, she served as Conductor of E.C.S. Publishing Company's professional recording choral ensemble, Philovox, as well as a 10-year faculty member at Emerson College. She has guest conducted and taught at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, as well as Andover's Essex Chamber Music Players, a professional instrumental chamber ensemble.

Frank has conducted and produced two CDs with Boston Secession. "Afterlife: German Choral Meditations on Mortality" and "Surprised by Beauty: Minimalism in Choral Music." Both CDs were outstandingly reviewed by the New York Times, Gramophone, and American Record Guide, along with many other journals, magazines and blogs.

Daniel Goldsmith, Pianist

Daniel Goldsmith is a Boston-based pianist, educator, conductor, and music director. As a versatile musician with decades of experience, Daniel is equally comfortable performing in symphony halls and jazz clubs, whether behind a keyboard and with a baton in his hands. Formerly based in California, Daniel has enjoyed a vibrant career as a freelance pianist and has served as music direc-



tor for Cabrillo Stage and the Santa Cruz Actors' Theatre in numerous productions including *Company*, *Into the Woods*, *The Producers*, and *La Cage Aux Folles*. Daniel is a founding member and conductor of The Santa Cruz Opera Project, an organization whose goal is to bring high quality, accessible, and free opera performances to the residents of Santa Cruz County. He was previously a long-standing member of the Santa Cruz/San Francisco Bay Area Hip Hop Fusion band, Nobody's Own, and served as keyboardist and co-producer on their debut album *Freak Show*.

Daniel holds a BM in Piano Performance from the University of the Pacific, where he studied under Professor Frank Wiens and Dr. Rex Cooper. He is currently pursuing a MM in Collaborative Piano at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

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THANK YOU!



This program is supported in part by grants from the Acton-Boxborough, Carlisle, Westford, and Concord local cultural councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

The Chorus

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Jane Fisher*, Elizabeth Hoermann*, Jane Luckner, Ellen Materne,
Bonnie Mohr, Kathleen Molony*, Pamela Schweppe, Bozena Smith,
Jeannette Taylor, Laura Weiss

Soprano II

Michele Abroff, Sara Ballard, Lee Ann Cohen, Suellen Davidson,
Linde Dynneson, Allison Jones, Jennifer Kobayashi, Judi Kotanchik,
Lori Locascio*, Denise McNamara, Susan Mills*, Lisa Pohl,
Emilie Stuart

Alto I

Susan Avery, Sue Beck*, Amy Davis, Suzanne Frank, Faxon Green,
Barbara Keller, Rowena Nelson, Stephanie Smith*, Cynthia Sorn,
Diane Taraz, Emily Teller*

Alto II

Liz Berk, Carole Bundy, Pamela Dritt, Jane Farber, Cynthia Nunan,
Judy Perkins, Lisa Sandeen

*indicates member of Board of Directors



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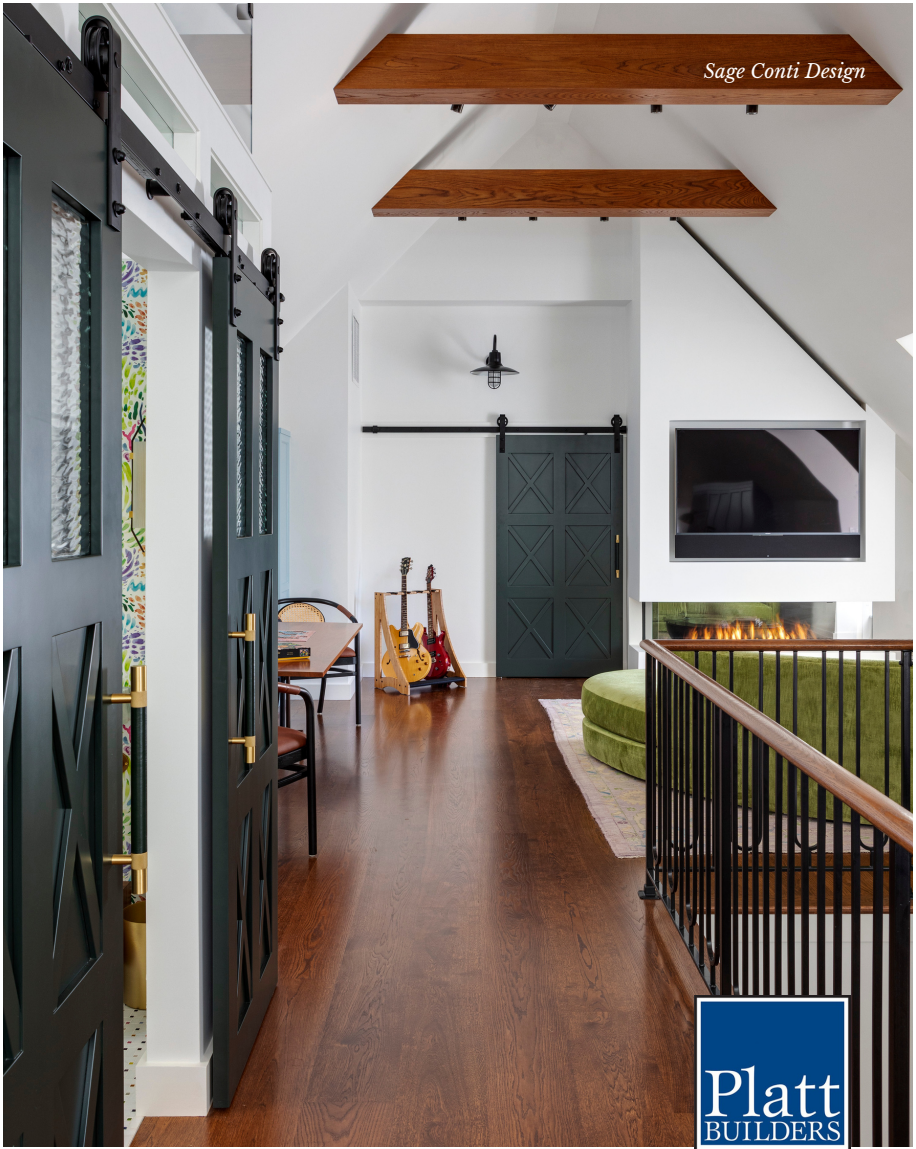
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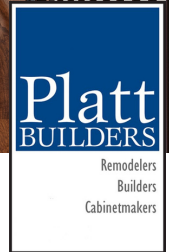
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