

**Manchester Choral Society and Orchestra
Season 61**

Song of Praise

Symphony #2, "Lobgesang"
Felix Mendelssohn

Ruminations

On Poems of Rumi
Jennifer Higdon

Dan Perkins, music director

Susan Consoli, soprano

Michael Dodge, tenor

Janet Poisson, soprano

May 21, 2022—Ste. Marie Parish—Manchester, NH



PROGRAM

Queen City Youth Choir

Susan Wilkes and Adriana Ruiz, directors

Give Us Hope

Jim Papoulis

Arr. Francisco J. Nuñez

Listen to the sound of my voice
Can you feel the beat of my heart?
Listen to the questions I have.
Listen to me. It's all very simple to see what we need.
Give us hope. My voice is calling,
Can you see? Look in my eyes.
Can you feel? My hand is reaching.
Give us hope and we'll show you the way.

The QCYC, Queen City Youth Choir, was developed in 2021 as an educational outreach project based in the Manchester Choral Society. Children in grades 3-5 have free access to the group which rehearses at the Manchester Community Music School as well as local elementary schools. For more information, please contact ensembles@mcmusicschool.org

QCYC Singers

Zoey Bernier
Ethan DeJesus
Brantley Greenwood
Sophia Jobin
Viva Lee MacLeod
Theo Martey
Davan Muir
Jayden Pierre
Lily Platt
Anuhya Tamang
Scarlett Vincente

Manchester Choral Society and Orchestra

Ruminations [17"]

Jennifer Higdon

On Poems by Rumi (1207-1273)

1. Water From Your Spring
2. Today, like every other day
3. Drum
4. All day and night
5. Where Everything Is Music
6. Flowers open
7. In Your Light

Soloists: Liz Sheil, Kirsten Mohring, Joel Sadler, Bill Farquhar

Water From Your Spring

What was in that candle's light
that opened and consumed me so quickly?
Come back, my friend! The form of our love is not a created form.
Nothing can help me but that beauty.
There was a dawn I remember
when my soul heard something from your soul.
I drank water from your spring and felt the current take me.

Today, like every other day...

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened.
Don't open the door to the study and begin reading.
Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

Drum

In this drumbeat moment of red flowers opening
and grapes being crushed,
the soul and luminous clarity sit together.

All desire wants is a taste of you,
two small villages in a mountain
valley where everyone longs for presence.

We start to step up. A step appears.
You say, I am more compassionate
than your mother and father.
I make medicine out of your pain. From your chimney smoke

I shape new constellations.
I tell everything, but I do not say it,
because my friend, it is better your secret be spoken by you.

All day and night, music...

All day and night, music,
a quiet, bright reed song. If it fades, we fade.

Where Everything is Music

Don't worry about saving these songs!
And if one of our instruments breaks, It doesn't matter.
We have fallen into the place where everything is music.

The strumming and the flute notes rise into the atmosphere,
and even if the whole world's harp should burn up,
there will still be hidden instruments playing.

So the candle flickers and goes out.
We have a piece of flint, and a spark.

This singing art is sea foam.
The graceful movements come from a pearl
somewhere on the ocean floor.
Poems reach up like spindrift
and the edge of driftwood along the beach, wanting!

They derive from a slow and powerful root
that we can't see.
Stop the words now.
Open the window in the center of your chest,
and let the spirits fly in and out.

Flower open every night...

Flowers open every night
across the sky, a breathing peace
and sudden flame catching.

In Your Light

In your light I learn how to love.
In your beauty, how to make poems.
You dance inside my chest,
where no one sees you,
but sometimes I do,
and that sight becomes this [singing] art.

— Rumi, trans. Coleman Barks

“Ruminations is like a small book of meditative thoughts on the relationship of music to life. Like Rumi’s poems, they are short and to the point, hopefully maintaining the beautiful poetic qualities so aptly captured by translator Coleman Barks. These are like tiny musical snapshots; declarations of harmony, beat, and melody.

I’ve designed the flow of this piece to be like a book of Rumi’s poems: moving quickly and succinctly from one to the next, without elaboration...getting to the point immediately. There are 7 poems, and the “inner poems” (numbers 2, 4, and 6) feature soloists from the choir.

The last two poems use very similar chord progressions to represent how, in truth, these poems are all linked in the same way that music is a shared experience amongst us all.

---Jennifer Higdon

—PAUSE—

Symphony No. 2, “Lobgesang,” Op. 52

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Part One [30”]

1. Sinfonia

- Maestoso con moto
- Allegretto un poco agitato
- Adagio religioso

—PAUSE—

Part Two [35”]

2. Chorus and Soprano: All that have breath, praise the Lord!

Janet Poisson

3. Tenor Recitative and Aria: Say that you are redeemed

Michael Dodge

4. Chorus

5. Soprano Duet and Chorus: I waited for the Lord

Janet Poisson and Susan Consoli

6. Tenor Aria and Recitative: The shadows of death

Michael Dodge

7. Chorus: The night has passed

8. Chorale: Now let us all thank God

9. Soprano and Tenor Duet: I sing your praises with my song

Michael Dodge and Susan Consoli

10. Chorus: Ye nations, give glory and power to the Lord

Texts (English translation)

2. Chorus and Soprano Solo

All that have breath, praise the Lord!
Hallelujah, praise the Lord! (Psalm 150)
Praise the Lord with stringed instruments,
Praise him with your song! (Psalm 33)

And let all flesh praise his holy name. (Psalm 145)
Praise the Lord, my soul and all that is within me,
His holy name!
And forget not the goods things he has done for you. (Psalm 103)

3. Tenor Recitative and Aria

Say it that you are redeemed by the Lord,
he has delivered them out of trouble, (Psalm 107)

of severe tribulation, from shame and bondage
captives in the darkness,
all which he hath redeemed from distress. (no specific source)

Say it! Give thanks to him and praise ye, His goodness! (Psalm 107)
He numbers our tears in our time of need,
he comforts the afflicted with his word. (Psalm 56)
Say it! Give thanks to him and praise ye his kindness.

4. Chorus

Say it that you are redeemed by the Lord out of all tribulation.
He numbers our tears in our time of need.

5. Soprano Duet and Chorus

I waited patiently for the Lord,
and He inclined to me and heard my supplication.
Blessed is the man whose hope is in the Lord!
Blessed is the man whose hope is in him! (Psalm 40)

6. Tenor Aria and Recitative

The sorrows of death encompassed us
and fear of hell had struck us,
We wandered in darkness. (Psalm 116)
He saith, Awake! you who sleep,
arise from the dead, I will enlighten you! (Ephesians 5:14)
We called in the darkness, Watchman, will the night soon pass?
But the Watchman said:
if the morning comes soon, it will yet again be night;
and if you ask, you will return
and ask again, Watchman, will the night soon pass? (Isaiah 21:11–12)

7. Chorus

The night has passed, but the day has come.
So let us cast off the works of darkness,
and put on the armor of light,
and take up the armor of light. (Romans 13:12)

8. Chorale

Now let us all thank God with hearts and hands and voices,
who in all adversity will be merciful to us,
who does so much good, who from childhood
has kept us in his care and done well to all.
Praise, honor, and glory be to God the Father, and the Son,
and his Holy Spirit on heaven's highest throne.
Praise to God, three in one, who separated night and darkness
from light and dawn, give thanks to him with our song.

(Evangelical Church Hymnal, text Rinckart v. Martin, 1636)

9. Soprano and Tenor Duet

I sing your praises with my song forever, faithful God!
And thank you for all the good you have done to me.
Though I wonder in the night and deep darkness
and enemies beset me all around
I will call upon the name of the Lord,
and he saved me by His goodness.

10. Chorus

You nations! Offer glory and power to the Lord!
You kings! Offer glory and power to the Lord!
May the heavens offer glory and power to the Lord!
May the earth offer glory and power to the Lord! (Psalm 96)
All thanks to the Lord!
Praise the Lord and exalt his name
and praise his glory. (I Chronicles 16:8–10)

All that have breath , praise the Lord!
Hallelujah, praise the Lord! (Psalm 150)

Felix Mendelssohn composed the *Symphony No. 2 , Op. 52* for the celebrations in Leipzig of the 400th anniversary of the invention of the printing press. He entitled his second symphony "Lobgesang" (Song of Praise) and described it as a "symphony-cantata." The symphony bears a similarity to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* in that it begins with three instrumental movements and closes with a cantata-like structure featuring solo voices and chorus, though on a much smaller scale.

BIOS

American Soprano Susan Consoli has led an active and versatile career throughout the United States and abroad from Bach to Harbison to Gershwin. She has worked under such notable conductors as Grant Llewellyn, Paul Goodwin, Harry Christophers, Bruno Weil, Laurence Cummings, Odaline (Chachi) de la Martinez, David Angus, Craig Smith, John Harbison, and John Finney. Additional collaborations include directors/choreographers Chen Shi-Zheng, Tero Saarinen and Betsi Graves, composers Euan Tait, Carson Cooman, Peter Child, David Patterson and John Harbison Boston premiere *A Clear Midnight and Vocalism*. Festivals include: Festival CLASSIQUE au vert, Boston Early Music Festival, Movimentos Internationales TanzFestival, LAOKOON Festival, Ribeauvillé Festival de Musique Ancienne, Carmel Bach Festival, Rome Opera Festival, Great Waters Music Festival. Appearances with Boston Camerata & Tero Saarinen Dance Company include: *Borrowed Light* in Paris Théâtre National de Chaillot, Berlin, Hamburg, Wolfsburg, Oulu, Tampere, *An American Vocalist*, *Saw ye my hero* in Paris, *Travellin' Home* in Ribeauvillé. Ms. Consoli made her Carnegie Hall debut performing Handel *Messiah*. Emmanuel Music highlights include: Beethoven *Ah perfido!*, Servilia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Handel *Apollo e Dafne*, Bach *Mass in B Minor*, Handel *Alexander's Feast*, Bach *Phoebus and Pan* with Urbanity Dance, Bach *St. Mark Passion*, Bach *St. Matthew Passion* and over seventy Bach cantatas. Ms. Consoli was the Lorraine Hunt Lieberson Fellow for the 2010-2011 season. Ms. Consoli's recordings include Handel & Haydn Society All is Bright Avie Records and David Patterson Loon's Tail Flashing Albany Records. Ms. Consoli is pleased to be returning to MCS with a past performance of Mendelssohn *Vom Himmel Hoch*.

Soprano Janet Poisson is a soloist and ensemble singer throughout New England. Recent solo appearances include New Hampshire Music Festival in Bernstein *Mass*, Concord Community Chorale in Handel *Messiah*, Concord Chorale in Arnesen *The Christmas Alleluias* and Finzi *In Terra Pax*, Manchester Choral Society in Haydn *The Seasons* and Orff *Carmina Burana* and Nashua Choral Society in a concert version of Purcell *Dido and Aeneas* as Belinda and Haydn *Mass in time of War*. Janet will be making her debut with the Upper Valley Baroque Chamber Choir, a recently formed professional ensemble, performing Bach *B Minor Mass* this May. Janet is also staff singer at First Church Nashua where she has appeared as soloist in Pergolesi *Stabat Mater* and Bach *Cantata No. 147*. Janet received a Masters in Music in Vocal Performance from The Boston Conservatory and a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education from Plymouth State University.

American Tenor Michael Dodge is a singer of art song, oratorio and opera based in Toronto, Ontario. Michael has appeared on the opera and concert stages of North America with organizations such as Baltimore Lyric Opera, Opera Atelier, Baltimore Concert Opera, Charm City Baroque, Bel Cantanti Opera, Toronto Beach Chorale, Mississauga Choral Society, Opera Northwest, New Hampshire Music Festival, Aspirare Vocal Collective and more. As a scholar of music theory and musicology, Michael has presented papers at conferences in North America and Europe on topics including the vocal music of Tchaikovsky, Swedish Romance and the works of Ivor Gurney. He holds degrees from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, the Glenn Gould School in Toronto and Plymouth State University in New Hampshire. When he is not singing, Michael enjoys good craft beer and pursuing his quest to visit every country in the world.

Dan Perkins, music director/conductor, is Professor Emeritus at Plymouth State University, where in 2007 he was appointed the first Stevens-Bristow Distinguished Professor. He is music director of the Manchester Choral Society and Orchestra and founder and music director of the New Hampshire Master Chorale. Perkins is a frequent conductor of the New Hampshire Friendship Chorus. He was principal guest conductor for the Vietnam National Opera and Ballet in Hanoi and was also on the faculty of the Bassi Brugnattelli International Conducting and Singing Symposium in Robbiate, Italy. He is an international guest conductor and choral clinician with past engagements including South Korea, Ecuador, South Africa, Chile, Hong Kong, and Vietnam. Perkins is also the director and pianist for Trio Veritas, a chamber music ensemble whose configuration changes with unique and varied repertoire. He holds the degrees Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music in Choral Music from the University of Southern California, and Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from Brigham Young University. He continued his studies as a Fulbright scholar in Helsinki, Finland.

Charles Blood, collaborative pianist, is in his 36th year as Manchester Choral Society's collaborative pianist. He is a summa cum laude graduate of the University of New Hampshire where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in music education and a Master of Arts degree in music. An active accompanist and freelance musician, Mr. Blood served for many years as a collaborative pianist at Plymouth State University and throughout the region for choral workshops, festivals, recitals and musical theater productions. He has also served as accompanist for numerous international tours, most recently traveling to Bulgaria with the New Hampshire Friendship Chorus. In addition, he has served as a collaborative pianist for the New Hampshire All-State Music Festival Mixed Choruses, the All New England Festival Choirs, New Hampshire Music Festival Choruses, Lakes Region Music Festival Choirs, and for National Association of Teachers of Singing competitions. Throughout his career, Mr. Blood has been an active church musician, serving as Minister of Music at South Main Street Congregational Church in Manchester and, for 25 years, at Bethany Covenant Church in Bedford. Mr. Blood is currently an adjunct piano instructor and collaborative pianist at Southern New Hampshire University and is music director of the New Castle Congregational Church.



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Violin 2	Subaiou Carter Lisa Hollis Dimitar Krastev Nadejda Krasteva
Viola	Sam Kelder Jayna Leach Rosie Samter
Cello	Harel Gietheim Nathaniel Lathrop
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Bass	Jacob Kalogerakos
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Oboe	Casey Kearney Amy Dinsmore
Clarinet	Amy Advocat Matthew Marsit
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Timpani/ Percussion	Mike Williams
Piano/Organ	Charles Blood

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Collaborative Pianist: Charles Blood
Assistant Music Director Intern: Emily Hoover (PSU '22)
Stage Manager: Bill Farquhar

ABOUT US

The Manchester Choral Society is committed to sharing and promoting the best in choral music through performance, collaboration, and educational outreach. Established in 1961, the Manchester Choral Society is a non-profit, auditioned community chorus whose long-standing reputation for excellence and dedication to the performance of quality literature of all periods and styles has made it a magnet for serious singers throughout the region. Members of MCS are multi-generational, ranging from talented high school students to mature singers with over 50 years of choral singing experience. They come from all over New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts and represent a wide variety of professions and walks of life.

Vibrant Performances — Collaboration — Educational Outreach

MISSION

The Manchester Choral Society is committed to sharing and promoting the best choral music of a variety of styles and periods through vibrant performances, collaboration, and educational and community outreach.

The organization is committed to diversity and inclusion through collaboration with artists, as well as the performance and commissioning of works by composers from BIPOC communities (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color).

VISION

- ◆ To seek relevance and hope through music
- ◆ To bring communities together
- ◆ To promote a sense of unity and peace

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Sasha Kuftinec and Mark Schwartzberg

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Johanna Publow