



The Norman Singers gratefully acknowledge the contributions the Oklahoma Arts Council has made to our organization and this performance.

In Our 42nd Year

Since 1979, the Norman Singers have provided the choral musicians of our community a way to come together and share the love, joy, and fellowship that is singing.

Come sing with us!



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The
Norman Singers
present



Earth

SUNDAY, JULY 11th, 2021

3:00 p.m.

St. Michael's
Episcopal Church
1601 W. Imhoff Road

Stephania Abell, Director
Joshua Chism, Conducting Intern
Susan Babcock, Accompanist



Our Leaders

STEPHANIA ABELL, Music Director

Stephanie Abell is currently in her 22nd year of teaching in Oklahoma—she has been at Norman High School since 2008—and has been the director of The Norman Singers for 5 years. She is active as both adjudicator and clinician, judging concert contests as well as solo and ensemble and serving as clinician for festivals throughout the state. Prior to earning her BA in Vocal Music Education from OU in 1999, Ms. Abell served in the US Air Force, performing and traveling extensively with the elite troupe “Tops in Blue”. She is also an alumnus of Oklahoma’s own Canterbury Choir. Stephanie is a former Vocal Jazz Repertoire and Research Chair for the Oklahoma Choral Director’s Association, and it’s current President. She has served as Vocal Vice President for Oklahoma Music Educator’s Association.



Stephanie and her husband Chuck live in Norman and are the proud parents of Zach and Ben.



JOSHUA CHISM, Conducting Intern

In his third semester as Conducting Intern, Joshua Chism (b. 1987) holds a BME degree and a BM-Composition degree from Missouri State University in Springfield (2010). He also holds an MM in Choral Conducting from the University of Missouri-Columbia (2019). He is currently a doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma pursuing a PhD in Choral Pedagogy and Conducting. He has a wide range of professional experiences that include teaching in the K-12 setting, composing, performing, researching, and conducting. His music education philosophy hinges on the centrality and quality of the music making process and its transformative power. He is also an avid church musician serving in numerous capacities in houses of worship. In his spare time, he likes to compose, travel, garden, eat sushi, and play board games. Joshua, his wife Natalie, and their young son Jacob currently reside in Norman. Visit www.joshuachism.com for more information.

SUSAN BABCOCK, Accompanist

Susan Babcock is a native of Oklahoma City who earned both her Bachelors and Masters degrees from the University of Oklahoma. In addition to having accompanied The Norman Singers for many years, she is in popular demand as an accompanist for instrumentalists, choirs, and vocalists from local high schools and universities.



Program Notes continued....

believer to Christ through baptism and the deep relationship with God, in Christ. Tony-award winning songwriter and lyricist Jack Feldman has collaborated with a great diversity of artists....from Kermit the Frog to Alan Menken and Itzhak Perlman.

By the time of his death in 1993, Michael Hennagin had been recognized as one of the country’s leading composers of choral music. In setting to music Walt Whitman’s *Give Me the Splendid, Silent Sun* – especially striking in vivid, lovely imagery – Hennagin produced one of his most well-known and oft-performed pieces – **Sunrise**.

Written and recorded by the artist Sting, **Fields of Gold** was written to put into words the setting of his 16th century manor house in England. “In England, our house is surrounded by barley fields, and in the summer it’s fascinating to watch the wind moving over the shimmering surface, like waves on an ocean of gold. There’s something inherently sexy about the sight, something primal, as if the wind were making love to the barley. Lovers have made promises here, I’m sure, their bonds strengthened by the comforting cycle of the seasons.”

Gospel music is a very important style within the historical context of American music; in the African-American tradition, it is even more important because of its religious significance in the church. **City Called Heaven** is a “sorrow song”, usually performed in the style of “surge-singing” (a combination of improvised glissandos and rhythm risk-taking). Josephine Poelinitz, an Elementary Music Resource Specialist for the Chicago Public Schools, arranged this version of the song in 1994.

Well-known to choral music enthusiasts the world round, composer John Rutter set the first four stanzas of the beloved hymn **For the Beauty of the earth** to a new tune in 1978. The text itself was originally composed in 1864 by Folliott Sandford Pierpoint; the poem describes the poet’s experience of feeling particularly blessed as he gazed at the countryside near Bath, England, during a walk one bright spring day.

The Norman Singers

SOPRANOS

Anna Allen
Debra Baggett
Joan Baird
Samantha Boutin
Sabrina Harrell
Carlen Hobbs

Barbara Hobson
Shayna Kutt
Nancy Littlejohn
Melody Palm
Debra Thomas

ALTOS

Gail Barnes
Marles Bradley
Chris Cane
Natalie Chism

Melina Evard
Autumn Losey-Bailor
Julie Rice-Rollins
Pat Simons

TENORS

Anthony Bradley
Joshua Chism
Mark Mitchell
Elisha Moncrief
David Zittel

BASSES

Chuck Bacon
Whitney Boutin
Tom Burke
Eric Casperson

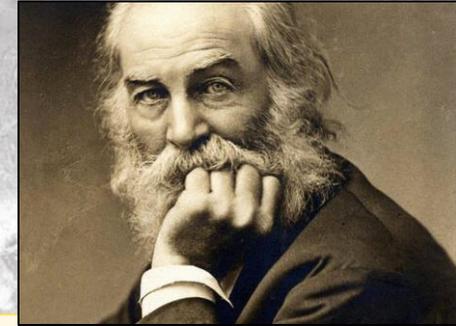
Chuck Palm
Blake Ratliff
David Warren

In Time of Silver Rain

Langston Hughes

In time of silver rain
The earth
Puts forth new life again,
Green grasses grow
And flowers lift their heads,
And over all the plain
The wonder spreads
Of life,
Of life,
Of life!

In time of silver rain
The butterflies
Lift silken wings
To catch a rainbow cry,
And trees put forth
New leaves to sing
In joy beneath the sky
As down the roadway
Passing boys and girls
Go singing, too,
In time of silver rain
When spring
And life
Are new.



Give Me the Splendid, Silent Sun

Walt Whitman

Give me the sunrise
when I can walk alone,
Give me the nights perfectly silent
on high plateaus,
And I, looking up at the stars,
Take me way, take me back home.
Give me a garden of flowers,
give me an arbor, the trellised grape,
Give me an orchard, the bough rich with fruit,
give me the field, the meadow,
Give me the sunrise, the sunset,
give me the harvest moon.
Give me to sing my songs,
give me to sing spontaneous songs,
Take me back home again.
Give me the splendid, silent sun.