

# TAKE NOTE



GRAPHITE PUBLISHING.COM  
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## **THINK LIKE A COMPOSER:**

Dale Trumbore  
invites us into  
her process

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## **DIVERSIFYING THE CHORAL CATALOG:**

A conversation between Ahmed  
Anzaldúa and Tracy Wong

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**JUST RIGHT:** Repertoire for  
Middle School Choirs

**REPERTOIRE:** 90+ Programming Ideas

**ROUNDS TO SING RIGHT NOW**

Podcast & Choral Series coming soon!

# #ComposeLikeaGirl

from Jocelyn Hagen



in music



Mary Montgomery Koppel



Lucy Walker



Suzy Johnson



Liv Grace



Jennifer Lucy Cook



Grace Brigham



Grace Barker



Anna Vitpil



Sherry Blevins



B. E. Boykin



Amelia Ouverson



**Heather Nelson, Project Manager**  
Twin Cities native Heather has been extremely involved in the choral and church music communities both as a singer and a conductor. When she isn't performing, you will find her brunching, traveling, crocheting, playing tin whistle, and spending time with her husband and Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Palestrina.



**Jon Campbell, Contributing Writer**  
Jonathan is a choral conductor, composer, and a first tenor. He loves his two kids and his cat. He enjoys good food and a great glass of red wine.



**Shekela Wanyama, Contributing Writer**  
Shekela currently spends her days at the University of Minnesota, studying, teaching, and conducting choirs. She enjoys crossword puzzles and baking bread. She hasn't been the same since *Parks and Rec* went off the air seven years ago.



**Erika Malpass, Manager of Communications and Digital Media Content Creator**  
Erika is a composer, violinist, soprano, and aspiring percussionist. She loves photography, camping, and the mountains.



**Dale Trumbore, Contributing Writer and Associate Editor**  
Dale is a composer and writer based in Azusa, California. She enjoys good novels, bad reality TV, vegan baking, and spending time with her husband and two cats.

**Timothy C. Takach, Graphic Designer**  
Tim is a composer, singer, conductor, one half of the band Nation and exceptionally tall. Go after his heart with a board game, horror movie or an amazing iced tea.

**Jocelyn Hagen, Editor-in-Chief**  
Jocelyn is living the dream: composing, singing her heart out at the piano, and playing board games any chance she gets. She spends a lot of time driving her sons around to all their activities, makes a mean vegetarian chili, and is always on the lookout for the next great creative idea.



## From the Founders

Welcome to the first edition of *Take Note*, Graphite Publishing's official magazine. Most publishers send out catalogs for their customers to peruse and shop, but we don't do much that is "normal" for a publishing company.

Graphite has always been proud to boast the highest royalty payout in the music publishing world. When you purchase music from Graphite, you're supporting a team of artists and a growing roster of talented and diverse independent musicians. Not only do we want you to know and love our music, we want you to know us. What makes us tick? What are we passionate about? How does our work reflect our values and ideals? That's where our music comes from: it's an expression of who we are and what we feel.

Since 2006, we've been proud to serve conductors, vocalists, and composers by delivering high quality, accessible music to today's audiences. Read on for a glimpse of why our composers love writing music and why conductors love our composers. You'll find over fifty programming suggestions here, from large-scale works that can anchor a program to the perfect crowd-pleasing songs for middle-school choirs. So take note! Graphite publishes and distributes some of the finest vocal music being written today.

Jocelyn Hagen & Timothy C. Takach

## Our Difficulty Ratings

On our website and here on these pages, we use a rubric to approximately categorize music based on difficulty level.

**1: (Easy)** No divisi in voice parts, accompaniment doubles or supports vocal parts, diatonic, symmetrical phrases, textures mostly homophonic, simple rhythms, stepwise voice leading (conjunct), moderate ranges, no extended techniques, and limited sustained singing.

**2: (Medium Easy)** Limited divisi, voices somewhat independent from accompaniment, some chromatics, phrases may be longer or more fragmented, mostly homophonic, moderate rhythmic complexity, some difficult intervals (disjunct motion), moderate ranges, extended techniques are simple, limited sustained singing.

**3: (Medium)** Limited divisi, unaccompanied, or with independent accompaniment (voice parts not doubled), many chromatics, phrases of varying lengths, more contrapuntal textures, moderately complex rhythms, some difficult intervals (disjunct motion), moderately difficult/challenging ranges, extended techniques are potentially challenging, and some sustained singing.

**4: (Medium Difficult)** Abundant divisi, unaccompanied, or accompanying instruments are fully independent from voice parts, many chromatics and/or key changes, long and/or broken phrases, potentially little homophony, complex rhythms, many difficult intervals (disjunct motion), difficult/challenging ranges, potentially difficult extended techniques, and a demand for sustained singing.

**5: (Difficult)** Abundant divisi, unaccompanied, or accompanying instruments are fully independent from voice parts, many chromatics and/or key changes, long and/or broken phrases, potentially little homophony, complex rhythms, extreme ranges, use of challenging or unusual extended vocal techniques, abundant sustained singing.

# START WITH THE BEST

Tried and true. These bestsellers are a great place to start when you're looking for repertoire!

**"Gamaya" - Paul John Rudoj**  
Available for SATB or equal voices with percussion

**"I Started Out Singing" - Jocelyn Hagen**  
Available for 3-part treble or 3-part mixed voices and piano; also available for string orchestra

**"A Path to Each Other" - Jocelyn Hagen & Timothy C. Takach**  
A 3-part round a cappella

**"Will the Circle Be Unbroken" - arr. J. David Moore**  
Available for SATB, SSAA, or TTBB a cappella

**"Blessed Be the Lord, My Rock" - Abbie Betinis**  
SAB a cappella

**"In the Middle" - Dale Trumbore**  
Available for SATB or SSAA with piano

**"Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers" - Timothy C. Takach**  
Available for SSATBB a cappella or SATB with orchestra

**"After Music" - Eric William Barnum**  
SATB with piano

<p>Paul John Rudoj</p> <p><b>Gamaya</b></p> <p>Set to music by Paul John Rudoj in "Gamaya"</p>	<p>Jocelyn Hagen</p> <p><b>I Started Out Singing</b></p> <p>Set to music by Jocelyn Hagen in "I Started Out Singing"</p>	<p>Jocelyn Hagen &amp; Timothy C. Takach</p> <p><b>A Path to Each Other</b></p> <p>Set to music by Jocelyn Hagen and Timothy C. Takach in "A Path to Each Other"</p>	<p>J. David Moore</p> <p><b>WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN</b></p> <p>SATB • CAPPPELLA</p> <p>MUSIC TRAD. APPALACHIAN TEXT BY CLAYTON WHEATON, BETTY ROSE, &amp; MARCIA TAYLOR</p> <p>ARRANGED BY J. DAVID MOORE</p>
<p>Abbie Betinis</p> <p><b>Blessed Be the Lord, My Rock</b></p> <p>SAB • CAPPPELLA</p> <p>Set to music by Abbie Betinis in "Blessed Be the Lord, My Rock"</p>	<p>Dale Trumbore</p> <p><b>IN THE MIDDLE</b></p> <p>SATB Chorus &amp; Piano Text by Barbara Crooker</p> <p>Set to music by Dale Trumbore in "In the Middle"</p>	<p>Timothy C. Takach</p> <p><b>Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers</b></p> <p>SATB • CAPPPELLA</p> <p>Set to music by Timothy C. Takach in "Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers"</p>	<p>Eric William Barnum</p> <p><b>After Music</b></p> <p>SATB • CAPPPELLA</p> <p>Set to music by Eric William Barnum in "After Music"</p>

Will we look back at today and say that this was the moment when we took a stand?

- Barack Obama

Set to music by Dominick DiOrio in "Sittio"

Let each defeat be a source of a new endeavor, and each victory the strengthening of our spirit

- Ada Lovelace

Set to music by Grace Brigham in "Discoveries"

Oh the joy truth and respect acceptance and kindness bring.

- Julia Klatt Singer

Set to music by Timothy C. Takach in "A Mural of Change"

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

- Emma Lazarus

Set to music by Mary Montgomery Koppel in "Mother of Exiles"

And I remember yelling to him that we were okay and to keep singing.

And I told him I loved him.

- Renee Spilchal Larson

Set to music by Joshua Shank in "He Was Singing"

## LET YOUR FEED FEED YOU

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Come, you belong with me. We'll shelter and share bread together.

**We belong.**

- Marisha Chamberlain

Set to music by Jocelyn Hagen in "Belong"

We are the ones we have been waiting for.

- Edward Everett Hale

Set to music by Joan Szymko in "River"

Que del orbe dora las cumbres, zagalejo. Y pues vivea sus rayos, goce sus luces.

That golden orb lights up the heavens, young one. And then live in its rays, take joy in its light.

Set to music by Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco in "A este sol peregrino"

is the work of trust, work that is asked of us today. never call this "easy listening" - listen anyway.

- Elizabeth Alexander

This is your coffee calling. Come with me, and I'll see you Through another appalling day.

- Mark Dietrich

Fragile shoulders will burdens bear, small hands hold the world's despair,

tiny feet will print our journey's way, Alleluia for this day!

- Devondra F. Banks

# THE MOST GORGEOUS MUSIC YOU'VE NEVER HEARD

**W**ith lush melodies and rich harmonies, these pieces will add beauty and light to any program. Program one of these works and bring a little-known gem to a greater audience.

**“In Paradisum” - Christine Donkin**

Graphite Publishing

SSAATTBB a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

“In Paradisum,” an ancient text sometimes included in musical settings of the Requiem Mass, stands on its own in this dynamic eight-part setting. The opening is still and peaceful, as the text describes the soul’s arrival in paradise. Gradually the calm gives way to a sense of movement, created by a polyphonic passage which builds in intensity as the soul is brought to Jerusalem and greeted by a chorus of angels. Finally, the stillness returns and the music fades to nothing on the final word, “requiem.”

**“Tides” - Reginal Wright**

Graphite Publishing

SATB, violin, viola, and piano / 6' / Difficulty Level 5

“Tides” is like the opening chorus of a late Bach cantata or a Haydn mass. The instrumentation, voicing, and substantial musical development all contribute to a piece of ambitious proportions and weight.

**“Celestial Light” - Benjamin Cramer**

Graphite Publishing

SSATBB a cappella / 8' / Difficulty Level 4

This piece combines two different sacred cultural traditions—Tibetan overtone singing and a Taiwanese prayer-song—to create an ethereal and mysterious soundscape. The extended techniques utilized in this piece are meant to create a soundscape of cascading and clashing overtones. The time durations listed along the top of each system are approximate and may be adjusted at the conductor’s discretion to fit the performance space.

**“Everything is Made of Light” - Timothy C. Takach**

Timothy C. Takach Publications

SSAATBBB a cappella / 7' / Difficulty Level 5

Written for GRAMMY-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth and included as “Moon” from Takach’s solar system-spanning *Helios*, this piece is an exploration of sound, environment, and texture. Takach takes full advantage of the flexibility and range of choral singers: flickering, soft entrances and bright, blazing tutti moments. The striking timbral colors and massive contrasts spin a dazzling, haunting story in sound.

**“Suo Gân” - Luke Mayernik**

Graphite Publishing

SATB a cappella double choir, T solo

“Suo-Gân” sets the text of a traditional Welsh lullaby translated into English. This piece is scored for double SATB choir, which may be split antiphonally. The music was crafted so that the two choirs are offset by a beat, creating a marvelous echo effect. At the height of the work, warm and enveloping colors of the lullaby are echoed throughout the land.

**“Take this Thread / Le fil que je suis” - Katerina Gimon**

Katerina Gimon Music

SATB, piano and violin / 6' / Difficulty Level 3

Gimon has written a poignant work that explores the connections or “threads” that hold us together and enable us to support one another, even and especially in times of difficulty. The message of this bilingual choral work—that the strength to carry on lies in our ability to be present with and for each other—extends far beyond any one moment in history.

**“Ficus enim non floreat” - Sungji Hong**

Lorelei Ensemble

SSAA a cappella / 7.5' / Difficulty Level 5

This text from the Biblical book of Habakkuk is a prayer in a time of poverty. The writer rejoices despite suffering under the weight of a fallen world. Hong’s setting displays both purity and discord through stark unisons and open sonorities juxtaposed with thick parallel dissonance.

**“We Are the Song” - Joshua Shank**

B&F Music

SATB, piano / 7' / Difficulty Level 4

A lyrical piece about the connectivity between all things in nature and the strength to be brave in the face of adversity. “Though we may not have been called heroes,” goes the text by Robert Ressler, “that does not mean we are not brave.”

**Benediction - David von Kampen**

David von Kampen

SATB, piano, (opt. strings and percussion) / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

This setting of the Aaronic Benediction features a lush, dark, winding texture, offering a pensive interpretation of the words “The Lord bless you and keep you.” The chromatic, unaccompanied choral introduction gives way to a steady eighth-note-based piano accompaniment that continues underneath the longer melodic phrases.

**“O Magnum Mysterium” - B.E. Boykin**

Graphite Publishing

SSAA a cappella / 3' / Difficulty Level 3

This contemporary setting of the traditional Christmas text features haunting, floating harmonies that evoke a deeper sense of spirituality in singers and audiences alike.

L to R:  
Sungji Hong, David von Kampen,  
Joshua Shank, B.E. Boykin



# SELF-CARE FOR CONFERENCES

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT WITHOUT BURNING OUT



By Dale Trumbore for Graphite Publishing

In 2017, I wrote an essay with tips and tricks for making the most of a choral conference: what to do if you don't know anyone, how to make effective small talk, and best practices for sharing your work. Quite a few people mentioned that they found the article helpful, though I never would have guessed the most popular tip: bring protein bars.

Of all the strategies I'd mentioned, this was the one that people remembered? Protein bars? The more I thought about it, though, the more it made sense. If you keep a few protein bars in your conference bag, your blood sugar will stay level and you'll stay level-headed. You won't be stressed about when and where to eat at an event that can stretch for hours without a break.

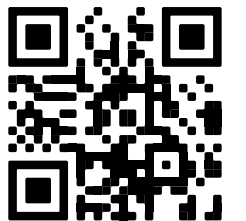
Heading into a new conference season, maybe we would all benefit from fewer networking tips and more suggestions for prioritizing our mental and physical well-being. After all, when I try to go to every convention event and say hello to every colleague in attendance, I'm usually drained by day two, huddling under the covers in my hotel room watching HGTV, and wondering if I'll offend anyone by skipping the rest of the concerts. When I get home, I often need a full day or two to recover. Half the time, I catch a cold.

What would it take to craft a healthier conference strategy? I turned to fellow composers and conductors to see how they stay calm and collected during a convention.

Composer Joshua Shank was quick to emphasize that, while it can be tempting to attend everything on the schedule, "it's important to get out of the professional space for a bit so you don't burn out." Shank always tries to find a local museum to visit. "In Dallas, I headed to the Kimbell Art Museum for an afternoon; in Kansas City it was the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library."

I love this advice. Especially when a conference is in a city you haven't visited before, why not take advantage of that city's cultural offerings instead of shuffling all day between the concert hall and conference center?

When I prioritize a quick walk—to a new museum or restaurant, or just around the block—or do even ten minutes of yoga in my hotel room, I can feel my introvert



Dale Trumbore's blog on making the most of a choral conference



**Composing is hard work, and sometimes we need some help.**

**Meet some of our composers' fuzzy assistant pals!**

Katerina Gimon + Pekoe & Gallie  
Elizabeth Alexander + Fiddle  
Erika Malpass + Percy

Reginal Wright + Cooper  
Jonathan Campbell + Pan

Dale Trumbore + Cotton  
Timothy C. Takach + Glissando  
Takach/Hagen + Shortcake

Isaac Lovdahl + Kezia  
Jocelyn Hagen + Skye



batteries recharge. Composer and conductor Reginal Wright, a fellow introvert, also prioritizes physical activity at conferences. He says, “I always access the gym of the hotel in which I am staying. I also watch plenty of Netflix. My primary goal is to get completely away from anything music or conference related for a few hours each day.”

Dominick DiOrio has not only attended conventions as a composer and educator, but also planned four conferences as a member of the NCCO Executive Board. He emphasizes the importance of taking time for yourself. “Sometimes this might be thirty minutes to escape to my hotel room and close my eyes for a bit, but it makes a big difference toward feeling like I am in control of my time and schedule, and not that it is in control of me.”

The hardest part of putting your well-being first can be carving out time for a quick workout, Netflix break, or power nap. With so many interest sessions and concerts on a conference schedule, it can be hard to decide in the moment what to prioritize. Composer Katerina Gimon has a solution.

“To prevent myself from falling into the FOMO trap,” Gimon says, “I like to make note of my absolute must-see sessions, concerts, events, etc. before the conference even begins. Having this planned out beforehand means I don’t have to spend brainpower on this while I’m in conference mode, and I know what I need to plan around. This also leaves me space for the time I’ll inevitably need to rest and re-charge, for

spontaneous meet-ups with new friends, wandering the exhibit hall, or maybe even attending some things I hadn’t planned.” Gimon points out, too, that if you don’t leave room to re-charge, by day two of the conference you might already be too burned out to take in and retain new information.

It’s easier to add more events to a spacious schedule than it is to cancel or alter existing plans. At home, I handle this by blocking out whole mental-health or catch-up days in my calendar at the start of each month—days when I’m not allowed to schedule any meetings or calls. At this year’s conferences, while I can’t and wouldn’t want to take full days off, I’ll block off at least one hour-long stretch each day to retreat completely from the conference.

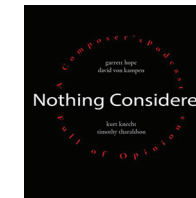
“I’ve found ten out of ten times I will get more out of conferences when I’m intentional about what I attend and make sure I’m taking care of myself,” Gimon says. DiOrio echoes her sentiment. “Remember: you don’t have to do everything,” he suggests. “It’s really okay. Find a balance that works for you.”

This year, I’ll prioritize a few exciting restaurants and cultural destinations in addition to the most exciting concerts on a conference schedule. I’m hopeful that this is the year I leave each conference feeling energized—not from protein bars, but from a schedule that puts my mental and physical well-being first. ▶



“I produce and host a podcast called *Have you Heard This?* which brings the choral works I love into dialogue with other music brought by my co-host, electronic music composer Jon Field. We offer humorous takes on some of the questions composers face on any side of the aesthetic spectrum.”  
Joshua Shank

In *Nothing Considered*, Composers Garrett Hope, Kurt Knecht, David von Kampen, and Tim Tharaldson discuss unpopular opinions in music and other worldly things.



Season 2 of Dessa’s *Deeply Human* Podcast is available now! Dessa speaks to psychologists, animal behaviorists, mathematicians, historians, and one legendary DJ to ask the evergreen question: why do you do what you do?

In *Composerly Thoughts* Elizabeth Alexander explores the unconventional imaginings that invite us to do, say and make stuff that never before existed. These thoughtful, playful and wide-ranging musings speak not only to the experience of composers and musicians, but also to the mental trajectories of journaling writers, doodling artists, stream-of-conscious thinkers, and irrepressible creatives everywhere.



*The Singers’ Vault* celebrates live concert performances by The Singers from the choir’s founding in 2004 through today. Conductor **Matthew Culloton** interviews members of the choir, composers, and other special guests while also sharing selected live performances from years gone by.



Scan to listen on Spotify

Punch Brothers, Meredith d’Ambrosio, and EAGERLY awaiting upcoming records from Gabriel Kahane and Brad Mehldau. **David von Kampen**

The podcast *Midnight Miracle* was a pretty stellar piece of work — a new kind of balance between information and art. **Dessa**

Some of my go-to news/feature shows are *Revisionist History*, and *Freakonomics*, and I love podcasts that are a singular deep-dive: e.g. *Serial*, *Dr. Death*. But my absolute favourite so far is *S-Town*. I don’t want to spoil anything, just go listen! **Benjamin M. Cramer**

*UpBeat* is one of my favorite podcasts. **Carol Barnett**

Honestly, I prefer silence these days. When I’m not being a musician, I’m usually being a gardener. I spend a LOT of time gardening and am currently studying landscape design. The pictures of my garden say a lot— though I’m not in them. **Joan Szymko**



David von Kampen  
Joan Szymko’s garden



**SONGS FOR MIDDLE LEVEL CHOIRS**

# JUST RIGHT



Shekela Wanyama is a DMA student in conducting at the University of Minnesota. She is a music educator at heart, having taught middle and high school choir for over a decade. Passionate about bringing people together through engaging and powerful singing experiences, Wanyama has worked with church, collegiate, and children's honor choirs. She currently serves as Associate Conductor for VocalPoint, sings projects with Border CrosSing and the Minnesota Chorale, and is repertoire and resources chair for World Musics and Cultures for ACDA Minnesota.

By Shekela Wanyama for Graphite Publishing

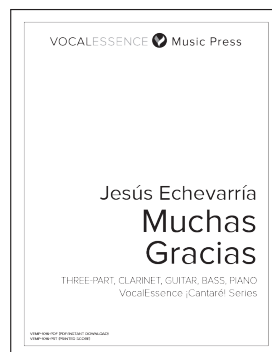
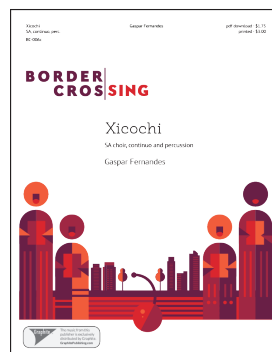
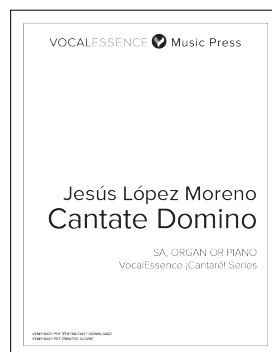
Working with middle level choirs is a bit like “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” only we’re looking for music that is not too challenging and not too simple. We used to have to wade through pages and pages of music to find something that was just right. Fortunately, this is changing. New compositions are released each year that meet the unique vocal needs of young singers without sacrificing artistic and pedagogical integrity.

For two-part treble choir, “Cantate Domino” by Jesús López Moreno is an energetic and delightful selection. The straightforward melodies and call-and-response writing would be a good fit for upper elementary treble singers. For the treble choir eager for something more challenging, “I Wandered, Lonely as a Cloud (Daffodils),” by Linda Tutas Haugen, is written for S(S) A choir. The piece includes

mixed meters, a piano part that is supportive but not always doubling, beautiful phrases for developing treble voices, and an opportunity for solo flute. The text, written by William Wordsworth, is rich with imagery, emotion, and learning opportunities that will delight English teachers as well as choir directors.

If you’re looking ahead to next year’s holiday season, consider “Xicochi,” a lullaby for Christmas. Written in the indigenous Mexican language of Nahuatl, this piece for SSA or SATB choirs will be particularly effective with the addition of a guitar or other string instrument, as well as piano. “Hush, little beloved child,” the text says, “Behold, there are angels here to rock you to sleep.”

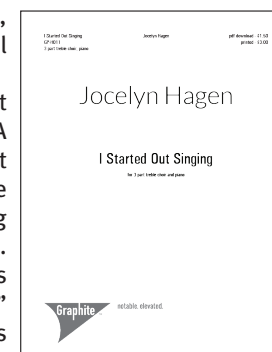
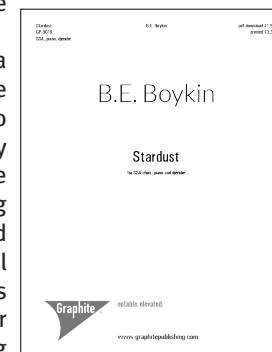
Mexican composer Jesús Echevarría delights with “Muchas Gracias,” a cheerful song reminding us to offer “Many thanks” and to say “you’re welcome.” Written in Spanish and



inspired by mariachi music, this song can be used in concert or as a greeting or transition song. Three clear melodies are sung first in unison, then combined into a three-part texture. Piano and clarinet accompaniment are included, but the piece can also be performed with just piano.

“Stardust” by B.E. Boykin is a wonderful piece for developing treble choir that features a compelling piano part. The text, written by Brittny Ray Crowell, is a prayer for those who have been lost too soon to violence, including George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor. Clear harmonies and vocal writing suited to middle-level treble voices (and easily adapted for emerging tenor bass voices), along with a refrain evoking the Gullah folklore of the Flying Africans, make this an ideal piece for middle level choirs seeking music of our time.

Jocelyn Hagen’s “I Started Out Singing” was originally written for SSA choir, but exists in an SAB arrangement as well. This piece is particularly suitable for the middle level choir with strong treble and emerging tenor/bass voices. The text celebrates singing and features a sparkling piano part that “sings” independently of and just as much as the choir. Naomi Shihab Nye’s text is full



**EASIER MIDDLE SCHOOL FAVORITES**

“Lovely Appear” - David von Kampen  
SA, piano

“A Red, Red (Noun)” - Timothy C. Takach  
TB, piano

“Bersatu Senada (Together with One Voice)” - Tracy Wong  
SATB, piano

“America, the Beautiful” - arr. J. David Moore  
Unison, piano

“Blessing” - Joan Szymko  
flexible voicing, piano

“Coventry Carol” - arr. Michael Weber  
SAB, piano

“La Barco de oro” - Abundio Martínez, arr. Ahmed Anzaldúa  
SATB, piano

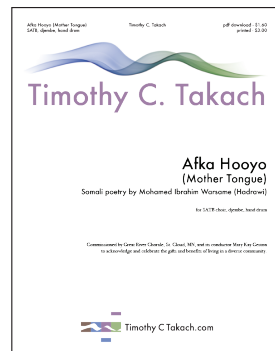
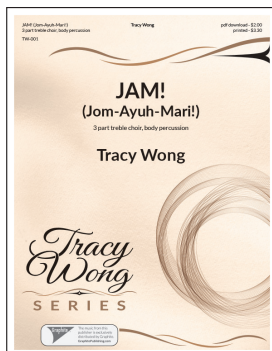
“One Step” - Jocelyn Hagen  
SATB or SSAA, piano, body percussion

“Adonai, Adonai” - Carol Barnett  
flexible voicing

“Bahihii Waaliidkay Dhaqay” - Timothy C. Takach  
SA, piano, drum, body percussion

of vibrant and youthful images that will appeal to singers' imaginations.

Conductor, educator, and composer Tracy Wong understands young voices, and this is evident in her energetic, fast-paced new piece, "Jam! (Jom-Ayuh-Mari!)" Like many of Wong's other compositions, this piece includes body percussion. Unison melodic lines gradually build to independent and busier textures. Choirs will enjoy this fun challenge as much as audiences will enjoy watching and hearing it!



"Afka Hooyo (Mother Tongue)" is the second of Timothy C. Takach's compositions in Somali, a language widely spoken in Minnesota. The score includes phonetic pronunciation guides written beneath the text. With engaging rhythm and harmonies, this piece is suitable for younger SATB ensembles comfortable singing unaccompanied. The text, written by revered Somali poet Mohamed Ibrahim Warsame (Hadrawi), celebrates the ability of language—a Mother Tongue—to unite people and preserve culture.

For the beginning (and not-so-beginning) SATB choir, Melanie DeMore's "Blessed Be!" is a joyful

and peaceful tune. It can be easily adapted for other voicings and would be a great audience sing-along. DeMore's music always "grooves," and happy is the choir that learns to find and feel it! This unaccompanied piece includes simple body percussion, and the four melodic phrases are easily taught by rote or as a sight-singing exercise. This heartwarming piece, along with those mentioned above, will stay with your singers for years to come. ▶

IN MEMORIAM

# Wayland Rogers

## 1941-2020

Wayland D. Rogers, 78, a singer, conductor, teacher and celebrated composer based in Chicago, passed away on September 9, 2020 after a long illness. Wayland studied music at the University of Kentucky, Wichita State University, Northwestern University and the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria.

He was artistic director/conductor of The Camerata Singers of Lake Forest for 15 years and music director at North Shore Unitarian Church in Deerfield for 25 years and held numerous faculty appointments.

Wayland's compositions garnered accolades from The Leeds University Liturgical Choir Competition, The Roger Wagner Center Choral Competition, Meistersingers Choral Competition, The Chautauqua Chamber Singers Award, The Vincent B. Silliman Anthem Award and the Thornesian Prize from Chichester, England.

In 1986 he received a Grammy nomination for best chamber music award in a recording of Mozart with the Chicago Symphony Winds. Wayland was inducted into the Wayne County (Kentucky) High School Hall of Fame in 2004.

Our favorite work by Wayland was his song "This World is Not My Home," based on an Appalachian folk poem. When he passed away in 2020, we hired Boston-based mezzo Megan Roth to create a recording for a scrolling score video in his honor. ▶

Listen to "This World is Not My Home."

CHORAL MUSIC FOR WORSHIP AND COMMUNITY

# SACRED SONGS FOR BLESSED HEARTS

By Jonathan D. Campbell for Graphite Publishing

Choral repertoire is traditionally understood to exist in two broad genres: sacred and secular. Secular music is devoted to the human experience of life in the world: love, loss, grief, joy, and much more. Sacred music must be subdivided into two separate categories: liturgical and non-liturgical.

Even experienced composers and choral conductors sometimes struggle with this subtle yet important distinction: all liturgical music is sacred, but not all sacred music is liturgical. Liturgical choral music is written for use within the context of a Judeo-Christian worship service, but sacred music can be either for public performance or worship.

Many people don't know that Handel's Messiah is sacred, not liturgical. Its intended use was to delight the public during Lent, when performing opera wasn't allowed. Perhaps that is why it is so enjoyed even to this day—Messiah was conceived as an audience pleaser. On the flip side, most of Bach's sacred music was written for liturgical use but is now often featured in concerts.

The influence of liturgical music on the field of choral composition has continued up to our current times, and much of the sacred music in Graphite's catalog would be useful in a concert or liturgical context. The diverse composers of the Graphite catalog represent a wide variety of styles and difficulty levels. Graphite publishes sacred works in styles such as gospel music, popular music, "art music," Latin American music, and any number of fusions, and these disparate styles are united by their high quality. The following compositions represent a list of selected pieces from this catalog, arranged by the liturgical calendar.

ADVENT

"Comfort My People" - Timothy Hoekman  
 Timothy Hoekman Music  
 SATB, piano / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

A chorus extracted from Hoekman's oratorio "Prophet Songs," this movement is written in a neo-Baroque style, evocative of a twenty-first-century Handel. Imitative melismas and a supportive accompaniment make the piece challenging and fun, yet also accessible to community singers.

"Benedictus" - Jocelyn Hagen  
 JH Music

SATB a cappella (div), soli. / 4' / Difficulty Level 4  
 For a larger, more developed choir, this mass movement from Hagen's *amass* is a work for the concert hall or a worship service. Much like the movements from Frank Martin's *Mass for Double Choir*, Hagen's unaccompanied "Benedictus" is an independent piece and would be a stunning enrichment for a concert of sacred music or for liturgical use.

"Ave Maria" - B.E. Boykin  
 Graphite Publishing

SSAA a cappella / 3' / Difficulty Level 3  
 Boykin's "Ave Maria" is accessible and emotionally expressive. A primarily homophonic texture and diatonic harmonies are gently accented with a few chromatic notes. The piece builds to a climax of gentle and lyric intensity before ending confidently with a three-fold "amen."

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" - Kurt Erickson  
 VocalEssence Music Press

SATB a cappella, 4 Sop soli / 3' / Difficulty Level 3  
 This piece accomplishes something rare: it isn't as hard as it sounds (or even looks). The SATB passages offer straightforward diatonic homophony. The four soprano soloists could easily be promoted from the choir and sing over a sustained pedal point. "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" would be a great piece to show off some star sopranos while also working on intonation and blend.

ADVENT OR CHRISTMAS

"The Gate is Open" - Elizabeth Alexander  
 Seafarer Press

SATB a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 3  
 Alexander's expressive and moving anthem explores themes of hope amidst despair, finding sunshine in even the darkest of places. "The Gate is Open" is accessible to smaller choirs due to the lack of divisi, but its expertly crafted part writing draws out a richness from the four vocal parts. The generalized nature of the text makes this piece appropriate for either Advent or Christmas.

## CHRISTMAS

**“Alleluia, for this Day”** - Christopher Harris  
Graphite Publishing  
SATB divisi, piano / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

Christopher Harris has contributed a bold, rich, and dramatic anthem to the repertoire of SATB choral Christmas music. The arpeggiated piano figures lend both momentum and harmonic support to sustained and colorful choral parts. The piece slowly builds to a passionate climax, then builds once again to serenely beautiful “alleluias.” Choirs with the depth to sing divided parts as well as long, sustained phrases would benefit from adding this to their Christmas programs.

**“Carol of the Angels”** - Eric William Barnum  
Eric William Barnum  
SATB a cappella (div) / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

Barnum's anthem could be performed in a variety of contexts: stage, worship, Christmas, Easter, or a general celebration of joy. Few other pieces so effectively express the ecstasy of paradise. Ending with a literal portrayal of heaven, this slice of joy would pair magnificently with William Harris's (1883-1973) “Faire is the Heaven.”

**“Two Carols”** - Matthew Culloton  
Graphite Publishing

SATB a cappella / 3-5' / Difficulty Level 2

Writing simple yet effective and emotive music is one of the hardest things for a composer to do. Here, Culloton succeeds with two strophic settings of “Away in a Manger” and “Wondrous Birth” that are short and easy, but imbued with the beautiful choral writing Culloton is known for. Either of these two carols would be a great stepping stone for a church choir learning to sing unaccompanied.



## EPIPHANY

**“O Virtus Sapientiae”** - Katerina Gimon  
Katerina Gimon

SATB or SSAA a cappella, 2 soli. / 3' / Difficulty Level 3

Gimon's arrangement of a chant by Hildegard von Bingen is otherworldly and intensely beautiful. Overtone singing, delicate contrapuntal structures, and the unmistakable and haunting Phrygian mode combine to create an enchanting tapestry of sound.

**“Bright Morning Star”** - arr. Michael Weber  
NDSU Challey School of Music Choral Series  
TTBB a cappella, T solo / 4' / Difficulty Level 3

This slice of Americana brings vibrant energy to a concert or service. Weber's arrangement is easy to learn and eminently singable, with an uplifting tenor solo. The portrayal of faithful “fathers” and “mothers” praying in heaven is touching and kindhearted.

## LENT

**“Rules to Live By”** - Joshua Shank  
B&F Music

SATB a cappella, Bar. solo / 10' / Difficulty Level 5

Based on the traditional “Credo” mass movement, this piece offers a modern take on living a good, ethical life. The text combines confessions of faith from various traditions with basic humanistic ideals, resulting in the perfect piece for church choirs seeking to move beyond traditional dogma or find new language for expanding the tent of grace. Shank's universal piece can also be programmed for any musical event with the theme of working together to build a better world.

**“Keep Watch, Dear Lord”** - Timothy C. Takach  
Timothy C. Takach Publications

SATB a cappella (div) / 4' / Difficulty Level 3

Here is simply gorgeous, sacred choral music appropriate for concert or liturgical use. Much like a motet by Bach or Rheinberger, Takach's piece stands as a work of art wherever it is heard. The reassuring text is augmented by a comforting music, resulting a work greater than the sum of its parts.

**“Before the Bread”** - Elizabeth Alexander  
Seafarer Press

flexible (SA, SSAA, or SATB) / 3' / Difficulty Level 2

Shape note hymns from the nineteenth century inspire Alexander's “Before the Bread.” Meant to be sung in a canon with flexible voicings, “Before the Bread” is useful in a multitude of contexts; it could be sung in a concert, worship, a meeting, or even in a classroom.



Christopher Harris

## EASTER

**“He's Able!”** - Christopher Harris  
Graphite Publishing

SATB a cappella (div), solo / 4' / Difficulty Level 3

A “show stopper” written in a gospel style, this anthem allows every section to shine. The piano accompaniment provides enough support to make “He's Able!” a quick learn, but maintains enough independence to be exciting. The message of God's ability to help us through any trial is welcome and worthy news.

**“Sing to the Lord”** - Dale Trumbore  
Dale Trumbore Publications

SATB a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 3

“Sing to the Lord,” a setting of Psalm 96, is a layered and dynamic piece. It opens with monophonic plainchant, then transitions to a reflective chorale. The third section explodes into joyful, dancing song. A brief recapitulation of the opening chorale finally gives way to an exuberant climax.

**“Go Out in Joy”** - Joan Szymko  
Joan Szymko Music

SSAA, piano / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

This joy-filled setting of Isaiah 55 is perfectly written for treble voices and piano. Lofty vocals soar through the sky above mountains. The piano accompaniment helps to create Debussy-like imagery, with colossal chords for mountains and energizing asymmetrical figurations evocative of a whirling dance.

**“Aleluya!”** - Jorge Córdoba  
VocalEssence Music Press

TTBB a cappella / 5' / Difficulty Level 4

More in the concert vein, “Aleluya!” is rhythmically complex and joyful. Here, as in other choral “alleluia” settings, Córdoba treats the word as a point of departure from which to explore rhythms, vowel sounds, and emotions. In a collegiate or advanced community choir, “Aleluya!” would pair wonderfully with Randall Thompson's setting.

## PENTECOST / GENERAL

**“Benediction”** - David von Kampen  
David von Kampen

SATB, piano (optional strings) / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

This lush, gorgeous mass movement is suitable for worship or concert. Kampen—fluent in the jazz idiom—writes choral music filled with interesting harmonies, colors, and modulations. Choral tones are sustained over a rippling piano accompaniment.

**Songs of Hope and Promise** - Linda Tutas Haugen  
Ephraim Bay Press

SATB, organ / 10'+ / Difficulty Level 4

This set of three anthems could be sung as a single work or performed separately. The texts, taken from the Bible, are useful for a variety of worship services and contexts. Moments of reflection, hope, and joy abound in these anthems, which are versatile but accessible. Haugen sticks to four-part writing throughout, making these songs useful for smaller choirs. The skillful organ writing adds another layer of musical interest.

## ALL SAINTS

**“In the Midst of Life”** - Benjamin M. Cramer  
Graphite Publishing

SATB a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 3

Cramer's contrapuntal anthem sets a beautiful text from the Book of Common Prayer and would be perfect for an advanced choir. Good sopranos and basses are needed for some high tessituras, but strong singers will welcome and enjoy the challenge. “In the Midst of Life” is a sincere expression of peace and hope in the transition from life to death.

**“In Paradisum”** - Christine Donkin  
Graphite Publishing

SSAATTBB a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 4

Donkin's anthem is best suited for performance in concert but offers a reminder that other Requiem settings—Mozart, Fauré, and Duruflé—were originally intended for liturgical use. Although this piece may be beyond the reach of most church choirs, advanced groups will find much to love in this peaceful composition. ▼



As always, continuously re-watching *Frasier*.  
David Von Kampen

Just finished watching 5 seasons of *Jane the Virgin*  
(ostensibly to work on my Spanish).  
Such joy in this series! Joan Szymko

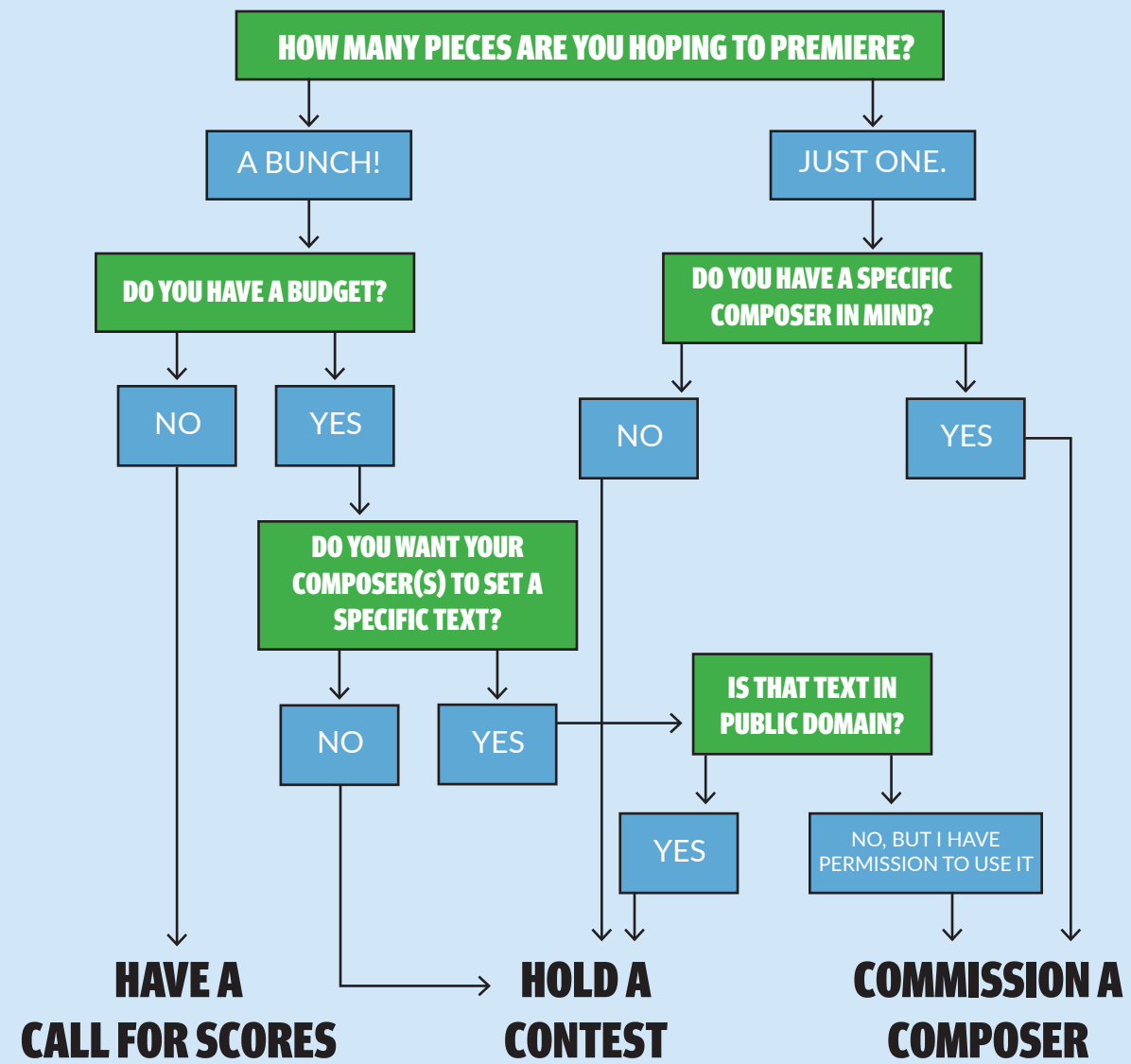
*The Expanse*  
Jocelyn Hagen, Timothy C. Takach,  
Jenni Brandon, Dominick DiOrio



*Ozark*  
Dessa, Dominick DiOrio, Paul John Rudoj, Timothy C. Takach

*Schitt's Creek*, *The Good Place*, *Ozark*, *Peaky Blinders*,  
*Attack on Titan*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Will and Grace*  
(Karen is literally the best), *Big Mouth* (a hilarious,  
guilty pleasure), *The Circle*. I just started *Downton*  
*Abbey* at the suggestion of one of my students, and I  
just finished *Breaking Bad* and *The Witcher*. Also *The*  
*Terrell Show* on YouTube.  
Christopher Harris

## HOW TO PREMIERE NEW WORK (AT ANY BUDGET!)



**Help us  
welcome new  
talent to our  
Graphite family.**

On the following pages, learn more about these voices bringing beautiful music into the world...

# B.E. Boykin

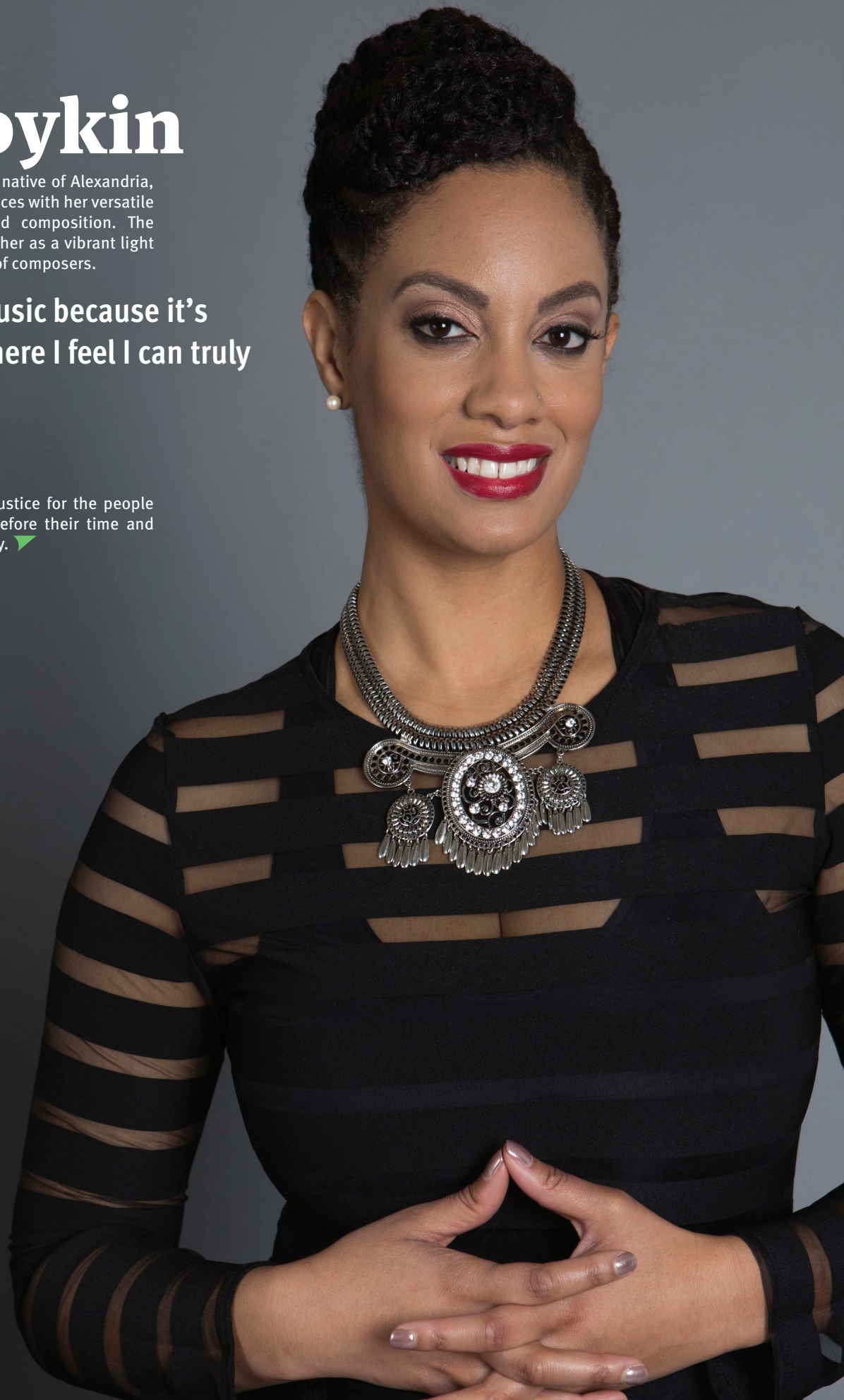
B.E. Boykin (Brittney Boykin) is a native of Alexandria, Virginia. Boykin captivates audiences with her versatile skills in piano, conducting, and composition. The vitality of her writing establishes her as a vibrant light and voice in this next generation of composers.

**“I love writing music because it’s the only place where I feel I can truly be myself.”**

**Check out “Stardust”**

SSA, piano, djembe

A beautiful and stirring call for justice for the people of color taken from this world before their time and without concern for their humanity. ▼



# Isaac Lovdahl



Isaac Lovdahl’s distinct harmonic language, detailed attention to natural speech rhythms, and highly expressive text setting have begun to solidify a niche for him in the world of vocal music.

**“Writing helps me process my emotions in a meaningful and healthy way, especially when I feel troubled. I write with the hope of comforting others—choral music can shine a much-needed light on any dark day.”**

**Check out “Everyone Sang”**

3-part mixed choir, piano

A hopeful and beautiful piece about the importance and joy of singing. ▼



# Katerina Gimon

Katerina Gimon's uniquely dynamic, poignant, and eclectic compositional style marks her as one of the most distinctive emerging voices in contemporary Canadian composition and beyond.

**“I started writing music to help me find my voice. Now, I write to help others find theirs.”**

### Check out “Boundless”

SSAA a cappella, with solo

A fun and lively work. The spirit of “Boundless” is that of empowerment, exploration, and creativity. ▼



# Joe Twist

Australian composer/arranger Joe Twist straddles film music and concert music. With a wealth of experience in choral music as both a singer and composer, Twist has received numerous commissions and performances of his music from choirs in Australia and around the world.

**“I think of my music as an adventure. Setting out on an exploration of gestures and colours, an adventure unfolds as we arrive at contrasting musical places, some familiar, some abstract, ultimately telling some kind of story.”**

### Check out “Hymn of Ancient Lands”

SATB div, S solo, a cappella

Intense, prayerful reflection gives way to bursts of energy, rhythmic intensity, and dance-like passages. ▼



## Reginal Wright

Reginal Wright is a clinician, composer, conductor, and educator from Arlington, Texas. He currently teaches at Mansfield High School in Mansfield Texas.

**“Music to me is the bridge from an ever-changing reality to a world of infinite possibilities. I write music to transport both listener and performer across that bridge.”**

### Check out “Forged”

TTBB, piano, brake drum, and bass drum

Percussion, piano, and low voices create a powerful, driving work of prophetic power. The text exhorts the listener to be a participant in forging rhetorical weapons for change and justice. ▼



## Ellen Gilson Voth

Dr. Ellen Gilson Voth is active as a conductor and composer. She credits her years of teaching experience and her performing experience as a keyboard artist as important influences on her composing career, along with her passion for writing for the human voice.

**Check out “Across the empty square”**  
SATB, piano

A monument to current times, this piece explores how we can make progress against hate, fear, and isolation. ▼

**“Composing is the best possible mixture of inspiration, effort and joy I can imagine. But the work isn’t finished till it’s shared with others.”**

NOTHING, NOT EVEN WINTER,  
CAN TAME  
YOUR WILD BIRD OF A HEART.  
- Julia Klatt Singer ("How to Survive Winter")

# SECULAR MUSIC FOR A WINTER'S NIGHT

**"A Winter Ride"** - Joan Szymko  
Joan Szymko Music  
SSAA with piano / ca. 3 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
Exciting and exuberant, "A Winter Ride" captures the thrill and exhilaration of galloping on horseback through an open field of snow.

**"Woods in Winter"** - Dominick DiOrio  
DD3  
SATB (divisi) a cappella / ca. 5 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
A winter madrigal that sets the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, with an opportunity to teach syncopated rhythm and mixed meter.

**"I Should Be Glad"** - Carol Barnett  
Beady Eyes Publishing  
SSAA with vibraphone / ca. 3 min. / Difficulty Level 2  
This piece has a fluttering quality to it, as if illustrating the dance of falling snow.

**"In the Sky of Winter"** - J. David Moore  
Fresh Ayre Music  
SSA a cappella / ca. 3 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
Tom Hennen's poem "In the Sky of Winter" describes the winter disappearance of flying insects. The sky, "lonesome without its tiny aviators, has filled the air with snowflakes" in this hushed, cool, and intimate work.

**"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"** - Joshua Shank  
B&F Music  
SATB with piano / ca. 6 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
This sensitive and extremely melodic setting by Joshua Shank reminds us of the beauty of the natural world.

**How to Survive Winter (cycle)**- Jocelyn Hagen  
JH Music  
SSAA choir with string quartet / ca. 14 min. / Difficulty Level 4  
This four-movement work has been called "a welcome departure from the typical winter/holiday music." Setting winter-themed poetry by Julia Klatt Singer, *How to Survive Winter* moves from themes of sadness and grief to an uplifting final movement.

CHILL AIRS AND  
WINTRY WINDS! MY  
EAR / HAS GROWN  
FAMILIAR WITH YOUR  
SONG; / I HEAR IT IN  
THE OPENING YEAR, / I  
LISTEN, AND IT CHEERS  
ME LONG.  
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
("Woods in Winter")



**"Snow Toward Evening"** - Michael Fairbairn  
NDSU Challey School of Music Choral Series  
SATB a cappella / ca. 4 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
"Snow Toward Evening" slowly layers chords to create a colorful tonality, portraying the serene beauty of a winter's night in this hauntingly beautiful meditation.

**"Lady Icicle"** (from *Songs of Tekahionwake*) - Martha Hill  
Duncan  
Graphite Publishing  
SSSSAA a cappella / ca. 3 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
Scoops, slides, tremolos, and rapid changes of mood and tempo characterize this colorful story of "Lady Icicle."

**The Longest Nights (cycle)** - Timothy C. Takach  
Timothy C. Takach Publications  
SATB, piano (or string quartet) / ca. 20-25 min. / Difficulty Level 3  
This choral cycle takes us from the approach of winter to the emergence of spring with seven movements that can be excerpted or sung together. Includes one TB and one SA movement, making it perfect for a concert that includes the whole choral program. Need something shorter? "Winter Walk" is a beautiful excerpt from this larger piece.



THE WOODS ARE LOVELY, DARK AND DEEP, / BUT I HAVE PROMISES TO KEEP, / AND MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP.  
- Robert Frost ("Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening")



# Composers— They're just like us!

Starting upper right, counter-clockwise:  
Carol Barnett making lefse, Eric Barnum hiking Baxter Peak, Ellen Gilson Voth enjoying a cruise, Joan Szymko visiting Mt. Hood, Jocelyn Hagen and Timothy C. Takach at "Prom."



OSTOJA, J. TRUMBORE  
SOPRANO & PIANO

**SARA TEASDALE  
SONGS**

Soprano & Piano  
Text by Sara Teasdale

**daletrumbore**  
composer

The Clan of the Lichens Cycle  
OP. 8899  
high voice, piano

**Abbie Betinis**

**The Clan of the Lichens**

for high voice and piano

I. All Things Live  
II. Night and the Little Fairies  
III. The Prayer Wind  
IV. A Tale for Children and Taller Ones  
V. The Clan of the Lichens

**Graphite Publishing**  
www.graphitepublishing.com

Singing in the Northland, Vol. 1  
OP. 1817  
voice, piano

**Martha Hill Duncan**

**Singing in the Northland, Volume 1**

A celebration of Canadian poetry in song for voice and piano

**Graphite Publishing**  
www.graphitepublishing.com

## Don't forget, we publish art songs, too!

How to Triumph Like a Girl  
OP. 1017  
low voice, piano

**Timothy C. Takach**

**How to Triumph Like a Girl**

for low voice and piano

I. Mantra  
II. Begin Again  
III. How to Triumph Like a Girl

**Graphite** notable, elevated.  
www.graphitepublishing.com

OP. 127-023 - Digital Edition

**Grace**

high voice and piano

**Elizabeth Alexander**

*Seafarer* Prose

Thank you for honoring the copyright of this music. *Elizabeth Alexander*

love, songs  
for soprano and piano

I. burn  
II. your little voice  
III. so quite new  
IV. i love you much (most beautiful darling)  
V. i carry your heart

**Jocelyn Hagen**

**Graphite Publishing**  
www.graphitepublishing.com

Three Cummings Settings (collected)  
OP. 3021  
high voice and piano

**Christine Donkin**

**Three Cummings Settings**

for high voice and piano

love is a spring at which  
who are you, little i  
up into the silence the green

**Graphite Publishing**  
www.graphitepublishing.com

Services of Snow  
OP. 2802  
soprano, piano

**Joshua Shank**

**Services of Snow**

for soprano and piano

I. There is another sky  
II. Denial  
III. Good me  
IV. I cannot

**Graphite** notable, elevated.  
www.graphitepublishing.com

Dog Tales  
OP. 6902  
soprano, flute, clarinet, piano

**Jenni Brandon**

**Dog Tales**

for soprano, flute, clarinet and piano  
(instrumental parts available from publisher upon request)

1. We Live to Run  
2. Thirteen Ways of Looking at Mona, Part I  
3. Dig (Choir)  
4. Thirteen Ways of Looking at Mona, Part II  
5. This is a Good Place  
6. Ode to a Golden Retriever

**Graphite Publishing**  
www.graphitepublishing.com

Seven Housman Songs  
for high voice and piano

Music by Timothy Hoekman  
Poems by A. E. Housman

1. Loveliest of Trees
2. When I Was One-and-Twenty
3. There Pass the Careless People
4. Oh, When I Was in Love with You
5. The Lent Lily
6. Look Not in My Eyes
7. From Far, from Eve and Morning

**Timothy Hoekman Music**

The voice may be found at GraphitePublishing.com



# OPENERS & CLOSERS

**“Come Dance and Sing”** - Joan Szymko  
Joan Szymko Music  
SA or TB with piano / 2' / Difficulty Level 2  
“Sing with life, live with life, live with life and power.”  
An energetic Shaker dance song with a lively piano accompaniment.

**“Everyone Sang”** - Isaac Lovdahl  
Graphite Publishing  
3-part mixed with piano / 3' / Difficulty Level 3  
“Everyone suddenly burst out singing!” A joyful and uplifting setting with a dynamic and exciting piano accompaniment.

**“There’s a Meeting Here Tonight”** - Bob Gibson, arr. Cantus  
Cantus (Timothy C. Takach Publications)  
TTBB a cappella / 3' / Difficulty Level 3  
“I can tell by your friendly face there’s a meeting here tonight.” A signature song from Cantus—a true crowd pleaser.

**“When We Sing”** - Rosephanye Powell  
Cantus (Timothy C. Takach Publications)  
TTBB with percussion / 3' / Difficulty Level 3  
“When we sing, we are one...That’s why we sing.”  
A delightful, upbeat piece with optional hand percussion.

**“Come, Let Us Meet Here Together”** - J. David Moore  
Fresh Ayre Music  
SATB div. / 4' / Difficulty Level 4  
“One household, high and low, And all the earth shall sing.” A psalm of praise inspired by folk music, calling for the unity of humankind.

**“The Gift to Sing”** - Reginal Wright  
Graphite Publishing  
SATB div with piano / 5' / Difficulty Level 4  
“I pierce the darkness with a note, and sing, and sing.” A reminder that singing can help us find joy and sunlight again.

Sometimes the mist overhangs my path,  
And blackening clouds about me cling;  
But, oh, I have a magic way  
To turn the gloom to cheerful day—  
I softly sing.

And if the way grows darker still,  
Shadowed by Sorrow’s somber wing,  
With glad defiance in my throat,  
I pierce the darkness with a note,  
And sing, and sing.

I brood not over the broken past,  
Nor dread whatever time may bring;  
No nights are dark, no days are long,  
While in my heart there swells a song,  
And I can sing.

— James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

**“¡Cantaré!”** - Jesús Echevarría  
VocalEssence Music Press  
Unison with optional duet guitar / 2' / Difficulty Level 1  
“Voice of wood / Voice of metal / Voice of the seas / Voice of the choirs.”  
A brave and happy dance inspired by traditional Mariachi music.

**“Goodbye, Then”** - Timothy C. Takach  
Timothy C. Takach Publications  
SATB, SAB, SSA, or TBB with clarinet and piano / 4' / Difficulty Level 3  
“How could I not hold you? / How could we separate our hearts / when we felt them beating together?” A poignant way to say goodbye in any context: a friend moving away, losing a loved one, the loss of a pet, graduation, or leaving home.

**“This Beautiful Speed”** - Paul John Rudoi  
PJR Music  
SATB with piano and soloists / 5' / Difficulty Level 3  
“This beautiful speed will be the end of us. Those are stars in our teeth.” An ecstatic work with an exhilarating piano part.

**“Bersatu Senada”** - Tracy Wong  
Tracy Wong Series  
SATB with piano and body percussion / 4 minutes / Difficulty Level 3  
“Different faces, different cultures...singing the same song”

“The music shows the coming-together of different languages and musical elements that continue to influence my composition writing. Here, the English and Malay text is co-written by Mohd Fairuz bin Mohd Tauhid and me, and represents the two languages that we were formally taught in Malaysian schools. It also signifies my continued search to define my Malaysian-Canadian identity. This can also be heard in the weaving of Malay folk elements into the contemporary Western choral setting. Snippets and small musical references of Rasa Sayang, an iconic Malay folk song, can be heard throughout the piece.”  
— Tracy Wong

**“Jayjaykar!”** - Shruthi Rajasekar  
VocalEssence Music Press  
SATB with percussion / 4' / Difficulty Level 4  
“Victory to the Lord, Praise the Lord.” An upbeat piece in praise of the Divine, “Jayjaykar!” merges the choral tradition of India and the musical forms of Hindu bhajan groups with Sufi Islam Qawwali worship.

**“Always Singing”** - Dale Warland  
Graphite Publishing  
SATB div. a cappella / 4' / Difficulty Level 4  
“There was such a lot of singing and this was my pleasure, too.” A gorgeous and poignant work full of hope and gladness.

**“Gloria”** - Jocelyn Hagen  
JH Music  
SATB double choir a cappella / 6' / Difficulty Level 5  
“Gloria!” A jubilant and rousing composition with a spectacular ending.

## GET TO KNOW GRAPHITE WHAT ARE YOU READING?



*JFK: Coming of Age in the American Century, 1917-1956*  
by Pulitzer-winning historian Fredrik Logevall.  
Joshua Shank

*11/22/63* by Stephen King. A wild historical fiction/time travel thing.  
David Von Kampen

*The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway  
Matthew Culloton

I recently finished *Recursion* by Blake Crouch.  
Fabulous sci-fi.  
Jocelyn Hagen

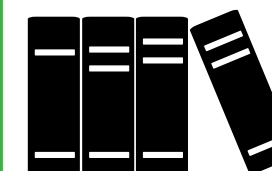
I frequently gorge myself on poetry from any source.  
*Gems and Debris* by Devondra Banks—a GOOD one!!!  
Christopher Harris

Just finished *Fates and Furies* by Lauren Groff. Don’t read too many novels—I usually lean non-fiction—but was thoroughly impressed.  
Dessa

Slowly working through *7½* by renowned Australian author Christos Tsiolkas. His work is an important part of Australian literature, elucidating the unique experience of a queer Greek Australian.  
Joe Twist

I’m about to dive in and start *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. It was a gift from a faculty colleague here at IU and I’ve heard it’s revelatory in so many ways about how our country operates.  
Dominick DiOrio

LOVED *Binti* by Nnedi Okorafor, looking forward to finishing the *Arc of a Scythe* series by Neal Shusterman.  
Timothy C. Takach



# THINK LIKE A COMPOSER

Written by Dale Trumbore for Graphite Publishing

A few years ago, in an interview, I was asked to describe a new piece I'd written. I started to respond, but the interviewer stopped me right away.

"Don't just talk about the text," she said. "Composers always want to talk about the text! Tell me about the music."

But in a composition with words, the text is the music. I ask myself a series of questions about each text I'm setting, and from these answers, I derive everything about the music, from minor details like shaping dynamics to the large-scale arc and form of the composition. If a finished piece represents a string of decisions, then these questions are the key to untangling that string.

Here, I'm unraveling the seams of three of my pieces—"Breathe in Hope," "In the Middle," and "Sometimes Peace Comes"—in the hope that my own questions will become a set of tools you can use to gain insight into any choral composition, new or old. As I'm

composing, I unfold these answers like petals, note by note, over a period of months or even years. But you can ask the same questions of any composition's lyrics, make your own guesses about how the composer has answered them, and look ahead to the finished score to watch your answers bloom in fast-motion.

I start by asking one big question for every text I'm considering setting to music:

**What does this text capture about humanity? What makes this poem worthy to be shared with a larger audience?**

We're digging in deep, right from the start, but this question isn't quite as lofty as it appears. There are so many ways that a poem, found text, or bit of prose can capture a deeply human experience.

The text could reflect an emotion that I've experienced but never seen captured in art. It could make me feel that the author and I have something in common; we share a similar worldview. Or the poem might distill and capture what it means to be alive—the messiest, grittiest, funniest, most profound or unpleasant parts of our human experience.

When I first read Laura Foley's poem "Sometimes Peace Comes," I felt something restless within me begin to quiet and settle. Reading what would become the text for "Breathe in Hope," which I originally encountered as two of Maya Jackson's Facebook posts, I recognized an experience—wanting to stay in an uncomfortable emotion until it changed me—that I'd never before seen expressed with such poignant, succinct accuracy. And I first read "In the Middle" at the beach with my family in Wareham, Massachusetts.

Barbara Crooker's poem "In the Middle" describes running down a beach and lying in a hammock. Just before I read the poem, I'd run down a literal beach. I'd taken a nap in a literal hammock. My family has returned to the same beach and house nearly every year since before I was born. If there's anywhere that I feel the weight and significance of time passing, it's here.

Reading Barbara's poem and seeing my own experience rendered in metaphor, I was most struck by the line that begins "Sometimes we take off our watches." I read it as setting aside not only our watches, but our phones, our email, and anything else that could

IN THE MIDDLE of a life that's as complicated as everyone else's, struggling for balance, juggling time.

The mantle clock that was my grandfather's has stopped at 9:20; we haven't had time to get it repaired. The brass pendulum is still, the chimes don't ring. One day I look out the window, green summer, the next, the leaves have already fallen, and a grey sky lowers the horizon. Our children almost grown, our parents gone, it happened so fast. Each day, we must learn again how to love, between morning's quick coffee and evening's slow return. Steam from a pot of soup rises, mixing with the yeasty smell of baking bread. Our bodies twine, and the big black dog pushes his great head between; his tail, a metronome, 3/4 time. We'll never get there, Time is always ahead of us, running down the beach, urging us on faster, faster, but sometimes we take off our watches, sometimes we lie in the hammock, caught between the mesh of rope and the net of stars, suspended, tangled up in love, running out of time.

— Barbara Crooker, from "Radiance"

steal our attention. The poem reminds us to look up: at our family, at what and whom we love, at the stars.

The first time I read each of the three texts mentioned above, I felt more human, more awake, and more alive. When I find that emotional resonance in a text, I want to share it with everyone I know. Luckily, choral music is designed to do just that: to disseminate information through sung words to listeners eager to find emotional resonance. This is why I write so much choral music; I believe our audiences arrive hungry for not only entertainment, but connection.

Once I have answers to my big-picture questions, I read the text aloud, so I can observe the natural cadence of each punctuation mark and the organic prosody of these words. I speak the text until I know where my voice naturally rises and falls, where I want to talk quickly, and where my speech slows down. Then I ask:

**What are the most dramatic or quietest moments of the text? Where does the epiphany or turn, the biggest moment of revelation, occur? Where do I find moments of tenderness, softness, or nostalgia?**

In a piece of music, we can easily identify the highest note of a piece, or the loudest. In a poem, though, I'm not looking for a climax so much as the moment when the speaker of the poem has a realization or shift in their perspective. A moment when the poem turns toward its ending, or where something new is revealed. A solution. A suggestion. An image





Certain themes recur in my music, to the point that I worry whether I'm repeating myself. I write music about change and anxiety. I write about empowering others to take action, staying awake to the present moment, and moving through the winding, unpredictable fog of grief. I write about fearing death; I write about learning how to live with what we fear when we have no other choice.

I return to these themes because my music naturally mirrors my real-life concerns. My writing—words and music—lets me safely explore what scares me most. In this way, my creative process is like descending into a dark cave with a flashlight: I get to choose where I shine that light and how deep I descend.

The themes that recur in my work aren't "repeating myself"; they're what I hope to spend my whole artistic life exploring. I want the texts I choose and the music I write to facilitate that journey for others, which brings me to my final set of questions:

**How is this text asking anyone who reads it to change? What is it asking me, the performers, and the audience to reconsider within our own lives?**

A really good poem or piece of music will alert you to the immediacy of your life: you're here, it's happening. Wake up! It will show you a fresh way to view what you thought you knew: a wide, high plain; a moment passing; returning to a familiar beach. Good art holds you accountable, or asks you to hold yourself accountable. This doesn't always have to be heavy, or deep; good art might simply hold you accountable for finding more joy or laughter in your life.

I can ask and guess at the answer to each of my questions before I begin writing a new piece, but it's only in the act of composing that I find my answers. Even working with similar themes, I reach a new epiphany each time. After all, we don't lose one person we love, become an expert in navigating loss, and never suffer through grief again. We don't put down our phones once, then never need another reminder to look up. Progress isn't a single action but a series of hard conversations and steps forward.

If you consider my sequence of questions—if you think like a composer—before learning a new piece, you'll unlock not only an explanation for why the music exists the way it does, but a reason to sing it. You sing to illuminate a deeper meaning that the poet and composer have jointly instilled in the work. You sing for the feeling of becoming, briefly, something greater than your singular self. You sing so that the music, your understanding of it, and the audience's perspective will shift and deepen—so that, to quote Laura Foley again, "you find out what it is, / what it is, / and your part in it." ▼

**W**hen you're programming a concert, you could pick your compositions first, then struggle to find a unifying theme that encompasses your chosen works. Or you could simplify the process: start with one of these well-crafted compositions, then let its underlying themes suggest an entire program.

Takach's *At Home* could be programmed alongside other works that explore what it means to find home or feel like you're where you belong. Trumbore's *How to Go On* could be paired with a traditional requiem, such as those by Fauré or Howells, or other works that explore grief and loss. The jointly-composed *Quilt Songs* could be performed with songs that explore craft and artistry, or other pieces written by a collective of composers.

These pieces aren't only compelling compositions; they're larger works that can serve as anchors, grounding a program in meaning and beauty.

***At Home* - Timothy C. Takach**  
Timothy C. Takach Publications  
SATB, flute, clarinet / 16' / Difficulty Level 4

*At Home* is a stunning piece about where we belong. Using four poems from Wendell Berry and one from Julia Klatt Singer, it beautifully sets the story of a couple and their definitions of home: being together, being alone, and their physical dwelling.

***Color Madrigals* - Joshua Shank**  
Graphite Publishing  
SATB div a cappella / 19' / Difficulty Level 5  
*Color Madrigals* is a six-movement choral song cycle that sets poetry by John Keats. Each movement corresponds to primary and secondary colors, ranging from a quiet hymn to a barnstorming closer.

***The Dawning Light* - Carson Cooman**  
Lorelei Ensemble  
SSSSAAA a cappella / 21' / Difficulty Level 4  
Carson Cooman's *The Dawning Light* is a seven-movement exploration of songs and poems of the Inuit-Yupik (Eskimo) in anonymous English translations. The texts are direct and vivid in their straightforward expression. While not quoting or employing any indigenous musical idiom, the music seeks a similar clarity, allowing the text's images to generate music in an organic manner.

***How to Go On* - Dale Trumbore**  
Dale Trumbore  
SSAATTBB a cappella, soli / 30' / Difficulty Level 5  
This secular requiem for virtuosic a cappella chorus moves through loss with presence and grace. The movements are designed to be programmed in a flexible order; this piece can also be performed in single- or multi-movement excerpts.

***In Glory Everlasting* - David von Kampen**  
David von Kampen  
SATB and piano (opt. strings) / 14' / Difficulty Level 3  
A rich, lyrical English setting of the historic Christian hymn "Te Deum Laudamus." The choral parts

are sturdy and melodic, with smooth voice-leading throughout, making this work approachable for many church and school choirs.

***The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* - Jocelyn Hagen**  
JH Music  
SATB (divisi) and full orchestra (chamber orchestra and chamber ensemble also available), with video projections / 35' / Difficulty Level 4  
Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks are brought to life through his words and drawings in an unforgettable multimedia concert experience. Composer Jocelyn Hagen served as the creative force behind both the music and visual component, designing an opportunity in which the music serves as the foundation for the film.

***Quilt Songs* - Alice Parker, Libby Larsen, Gabriela Lena Frank, Ysaÿe Barnwell, & Carol Barnett**  
VocalEssence Music Press  
SATB to SSAATTBB a cappella / 18' / Difficulty Level 4  
*Quilt Songs: Women Weaving the Fabric of Life* was commissioned in 2015 for VocalEssence by Mike McCarthy to honor his wife Kay. Each composer personally selected a quilt and a poem inspired by the quilt. The five quilts chosen for *Quilt Songs* all include bold color and design. The techniques range from intricate piecing to graceful, curved appliqué.

***Songs of Hope and Promise* - Linda Tutas Haugen**  
Ephraim Bay Publishing  
SATB, organ / Difficulty Level 4  
*Songs of Hope and Promise* for choir and organ is constructed in three parts and can be performed as one uninterrupted composite or as individual movements interspersed throughout a worship service. The text, arranged by the composer, encourages and inspires singers and listeners in their walk with God.

***Song of Sky and Sea: A Song of Realization* - Paul John Rudoi**  
PJR Music  
TTBB a cappella / 20' / Difficulty Level 5  
*Song of Sky and Sea: A Song of Realization* for men's choir is a dynamic narrative based on translations of Hafiz, Kabir, and Rumi. This cycle offers a journey unlike any other, beginning at the moment of death, moving toward and slowly becoming of like mind and form with the Divine, and ultimately becoming one with Love.

***This is How You Love* - Jocelyn Hagen & Timothy C. Takach**  
Graphite Publishing  
SATB a cappella / 33' / Difficulty Level 4  
This multi-movement work explores the depths of relationships: infatuation, need, companionship, conflict, compromise, and love. Co-composed by Jocelyn Hagen and Timothy C. Takach, the libretto is a mixture of different poetry threaded together with transcripts from couples' therapy sessions. ▼

# TO ANCHOR YOUR PROGRAM





**A conversation between Tracy Wong and Ahmed Anzaldúa**

# DIVERSIFYING THE CHORAL CATALOG

In February, Tracy Wong and Ahmed Anzaldúa sat down for a conversation about bringing the music of Malaysia and Latin America to a broader choral community.

**Tracy Wong** hails from Malaysia and is a choral conductor, music educator, vocalist, pianist, and composer. She is currently based in Toronto, Canada, where she is the Assistant Professor of Choral Studies at Western University. **Ahmed Anzaldúa** is a Mexican choral conductor, classical pianist, and music educator of Egyptian descent. He currently lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he is Director of Music Ministries at Unity Church Unitarian, co-editor of the Justice Choir Songbook, and Founding Director of Border CrosSing.

This interview has been edited and condensed for length and clarity.

**Ahmed Anzaldúa:** Tracy, I would love to hear more about what prompted you to begin writing arrangements and music based on Malaysian music. Where did this come from? When did it begin?

**Tracy Wong:** When I was working in Malaysia, I was teaching both public and private school choirs as a contractor, because the schools would never have enough money to have a full-time music teacher. We started doing more out-of-country festivals and invitations for performances, and they were saying things like, “We don’t want to hear you sing Western art music, we want to hear you sing you.” And we thought, okay, this is great. No one is going to compare us with another choir if we have our own music.

At that time, unfortunately, the body of choral music based on folkloric elements or folk songs was very little or none in Malaysia, or at least none that

were accessible. I thought, “Let’s try and figure out something that’s friendly for children’s choir.” Long story short, we wrote out of necessity because there was no music and we needed music to perform.

**AA:** How has your relationship to Malaysian culture or music changed or evolved now that you’re in Canada?

**TW:** The further I am from home, the closer I am to my culture. There is a wording for that in Malay: “far from vision, but close at heart.” If back home I say, “Sing this joyfully,” everyone gets it. We know the tone. But over here I have to use the vocal terms like “soft palate,” “in front of the face” and “a bright sound, not dark.” So it’s very different.

Initially I was asking my mentor, “Where is the Southeast Asian choral music in Canada?” And she said, “The music is not here if the conductors are not here.”

**AA:** I had a similar conversation with a Venezuelan singer in my choir. We both grew up sort of singing “Te

Quiero,” which is a really popular song. Every time we did it in choir, back home, it’s like, “Ugh, here we go again.” But whenever we do it in the United States, we’re tearing up and getting all emotional because it’s a very different relationship. Is there something about Malaysian culture or Malaysian music that you wish the rest of the world knew about?

**TW:** That one Malaysian piece does not represent every Malaysian piece. I think that’s the biggest thing, that not every song needs to have movements, or not every song would sound the same way or a single language.

Ahmed, what prompted you to do this series, Border CrosSing? And how does this align with your big-picture advocacy and artistic vision?

**AA:** It’s not just about performance, but especially when we’re talking about performing music of underrepresented groups or minoritized groups, there is an element of advocacy. I find that mainstream culture in the United States has certain ideas and stereotypes



about music, and those very easily translate into ideas and stereotypes about people.

For example, I am Mexican Egyptian, so I've experienced the stereotypes that Americans have about Arabs and Middle Eastern people and about Latin Americans and Mexican people. They're very different sorts of stereotypes. Stereotypes about Arabs are that they are alien and shifty, or exotic, and somehow they want to take over. And the stereotypes about Mexicans/Latin Americans are that they don't take things seriously; they party all the time. And it translates into the music. We think of Mexican music and Latin American music as dance music, as bright and colorful, lots of guitars and drums, and party music. So there's that very easy connection that some people make: "well, maybe Mexican people are like that." Same with Arab music—there's this idea that it uses these weird scales and rhythmic patterns that people just can't grasp.

I really do believe that representation on stage and in the songbooks and in the curriculums translates into a better understanding of people, of how we relate to each other. And a lot of that was my thought process. I was thinking, "Well, which pieces do we include on this series initially?" You'll notice, for example, none of the pieces in this first run of scores are bright and dance-like and full of guitars or anything related to the "Latin lover" and that sort of thing. It's all sort of dry—early music and very emotional songs about death. It does

influence this idea of: How do people think of us, and how do we want them to think of us?

**TW:** I totally understand. Although we are very different in our lived experiences, from my perspective, being in North America as an "outsider," it does feel as if anything that comes out of the community is a representation of the community, whether we like it or not. And there's all this imposed narrative about who we are.

For me, being an Asian in Canada, I just know that it's the stereotype of, "Oh, you're here to take my job." That's it. The immigrant mindset also translates to the generation before me. My dad told me to study hard. Keep your head low. Don't rock the boat. Don't get into trouble. Just do well and do your work and don't make anyone upset. That's what my parents grew up with; that's what they know. And if anyone in Canada is asking me, what does it feel like to be a minority in a society? I would say I wouldn't know otherwise. I've been a minority back in Malaysia, too.

What are some of the challenges that you have encountered so far when introducing these pieces?

**AA:** There are lots of challenges, but I think that the biggest challenge, initially, was getting rid of my own preconceptions and my own ingrained bigotry that I wasn't aware of. It's so ingrained in me because back

home in Mexico and going through like the conservatory system as a pianist, you have all these ideas hammered into you about certain music being superior to other music. A lot of them are just not true, even historically. But I find myself constantly catching myself using certain words or taking certain actions that point towards some piece of harmful information that was fed to me by teachers or mentors or the environment we grow up in: about how we perform, about vocal tone, or referring to ways of singing as beautiful or correct versus other ways of singing.

I remember when I was working with my first big university choir, I had the huge one that had like 150 students in there, non-auditioned, where it's just virtually impossible to know who's doing what. I remember a rehearsal where I started having students record themselves on their phones while they were singing. We would take a phrase and I'd say, "Take your phone out. Record yourself singing this passage. Email it to me." I sat down and listened to those individually.

And I remember realizing how much of the way I rehearsed was influenced by me assuming that the American students were going to be better than the international students, even though I was an international student for six, seven years. I was assuming that the Asian students, especially the Chinese students, were going to struggle with the language, or that the American students were going to sing with a better vocal tone, which was not true at all. And I realized that I really wasn't listening. I was judging people on how they looked and assumptions I was making about what their background was.

That made me realize—if I was doing that where I was an international student, where I went through this sort of treatment from other teachers, then I need to learn to be really sensitive and respectful to just how difficult it might be for people that are trying to enter into this, and a lot more forgiving and open minded.

If I had to think of that one biggest hurdle—both in introducing this music and working through it and in acting as some sort of cultural ambassador, even though that wasn't ever what I thought I was going to be—it's been getting rid of my own ingrained biases and preconceptions.

**TW:** It makes me think about my experiences teaching choirs as well, and how it is a way of connecting. I forget that they want to do their best; they don't want to fail

the teacher. They want to do good by the community and the music that they sing. They just need to know how.

If you could reassure conductors about music that you have in your series, what would you want them to know?

**AA:** You know, almost half of our series is early music written in the 1500s and the 1600s or 1700s. And if you don't know what it's really about, if you blurred out the text, you might think it's Vivaldi or Pergolesi.

When I started doing Border CrosSing, it was really important to me that other choral conductors but also people like me realize that we have incredible choral music going back hundreds of years written in these styles, apart from the folk music. This is not something that was introduced by an alien party. These are pieces that were written by indigenous Mexicans and Peruvians. This sort of cultural exchange was happening all the time; we're just not taught about it. The Chaconne was invented in Peru. The Sarabande was invented in Mexico. These three two rhythms were going back and forth for centuries. But in Europe, it wasn't taught because they regarded us as inferior. And in Mexico, it wasn't taught because Mexicans didn't want to visit that part of their history that was about colonization. So all of a sudden, we're left with this weird void.

**I realized that I really wasn't listening. I was judging people on how they looked and assumptions I was making about what their background was.**

**- Ahmed Anzaldúa**

Music back then wasn't centered around three geniuses in Germany and France and Italy. It was this global thing that we are just beginning to understand now. I think that so many of these really problematic issues—white supremacy—that are in our world, if we're talking specifically about classical music and choral music, are rooted in this idea of European superiority and colonization. I think it's really important for

us to start really analyzing it and breaking it down.

The way we are taught music in school is shameful. I mean, I didn't learn in school, in university, about music from the Middle East until the very last semester of the very last year of my doctorate. Even though, you know, the Pythagorean scale was developed in in the Middle East. Even though instruments like violins and oboes originated in Asia, we don't learn about these connections. And I remember just being so struck that people with terminal degrees who've been in choral music for 40+ years and know so much—they had no idea that some of this music even existed.

**TW:** I was thinking about the kind of things that I could

advocate for right now. First is to assure composers and arrangers that it's okay to write in parallel fourths and fifths, if that is representative of the musical culture you are celebrating. I once submitted a choral arrangement to a publisher who returned it to me and said, "You need to study the conventions of part-writing again, because this won't sell."

I understand that there is a big barrier to a lot of publishers out there and a lot of music distributors as well. What is sellable is not necessarily what is helpful, in so many levels, to various communities who want to do the work or who want to learn more, because then you're getting a watered-down version of folk music. I thought to myself, "I don't need a four-part harmony of something that I learned in unison or in fourths." So I asked them, "With all due respect, could you help me understand better why this arrangement is not singable?" They said, "Oh, it'll be a tuning issue to the singers." I am thinking, "But isn't interval tuning the work of the conductor? If the ears are not used to tuning parallels, then that is something that would be great to learn in a rehearsal setting and to work at musicianship and skills."

I really hope that composers or arrangers who want to write do not fall accidentally into the conventions of, "I have to make sure I'm doubling my root and doubling my fifth, but not the third, you know, seven must go to eight and four must go to three." Things that we grew up with. I get it. I understand how beautiful it is because we've sung Bach, we've sung Brahms, and it's beautiful. But does it correlate to music that I'm familiar with outside of that realm? No.

Something else I think about is ethical consumption of goods. When someone puts their money down, where does the money go? How much of it goes back to the community? How much goes back to the composer or arranger, or, if there are learning tracks for it, who benefits from the monetary gain of those learning tracks? That's my work right now. If I was telling my

friend, if folks can be so passionate about coffee beans and tea leaves, they can be equally passionate about being ethical consumers for music that I know about.

**AA:** I agree so much. So how has your relationship with the Faurés and the Rutters and all that stuff changed? Or has it changed at all?

**TW:** Not really. It actually becomes a palate cleanser. Perhaps having my music from my home not only makes there be more practice of the music of my culture, which is beautiful and brilliant and a totally different tonal color altogether, but it makes the Faurés and Rutters look good too.

It's like the ears can take a deep breath and relax, either in my music or in someone else's music. If it wasn't for singing John Rutter growing up, I wouldn't have known how to write in a choral style. I also learned about building voice from traditional Western art music. So for me, in my situation, I have to decide: When does my Western music training become a barrier, and when does it actually become a trampoline for something that I have to do? It's so hard to just say we have to decolonize music for my situation, because without certain influences, we wouldn't have the music that we have. It really depends, from one community to the next, what sort of work needs to be done at that moment. It is such a delicate conversation.

**AA:** And it expands your vocabulary, too. You mentioned this idea of immigrants having to contend with this perception that we're here to take people's jobs. I've found that when you start becoming associated with a certain specific niche of music, when you become the "Latin American music guy," all of a sudden there's this impression that you're trying to take away their Rutter. We're not trying to take away this rep, we're trying to expand that to build, to complement, to give people a wider palette. A wider menu.

**TW:** Yeah, there is space for everyone. Honestly, that

**When someone puts their money down, where does the money go? How much of it goes back to the community? How much goes back to the composer or arranger, or, if there are learning tracks for it, who benefits from the monetary gain of those learning tracks?**  
- Tracy Wong

**BORDER  
CROSSING**

*Tracy Wong*  
SERIES

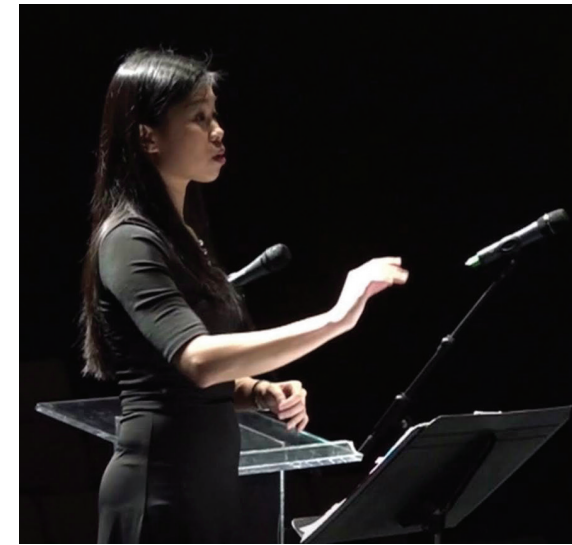
is a great way of looking at it. I had a really honest conversation about accessibility with a professor during my doctoral studies. I asked, "Is it just me, or do I feel like everyone's trying to be so culturally appropriate or politically correct to the point of paranoia?" I get emails coming in saying, "I'd love to perform your music. Would it be offensive if...?" and then fill in the blanks. Sometimes I wonder, why are all these questions coming in? Should we do research on this? How can I do more to assure people? Why is it that the first question that comes out is, "Would it be offensive if...?"

What sort of first questions come at you when people are performing your music?

**AA:** It's the same one. It's a question that's rooted in fear: people are afraid to get canceled, afraid to get called out, afraid that that they've been doing the wrong thing. And all of a sudden, they're going to have to have consequences for it.

For me, the hardest part was dealing with that in my own person and upbringing, because I found myself approaching repertoire with kid gloves. "Am I offending? Is this offensive? Is this bad?" It's so much easier to do the Fauré *Requiem* because I'm not thinking, "Who am I going to offend—French people?"

That is the number one question, and I find it a lot here in Minnesota because as soon as you get out of the



Tracy Wong



Twin Cities, schools are overwhelmingly white. I'll get messages: "I don't have a single black or brown kid in my choir. Is it offensive if we sing, 'Yo ya me voy a morir a los desiertos?'" Usually my reply is, "I mean, it's even more important that you do it, because these kids are growing in a community where this might be their only exposure to this culture. It's important that you do your best to do it right, but I really do believe that the value of taking that step far outweighs the fear of not doing it because you might get it wrong."

Part of the big problem for me, at least with Latin American music, is that it just isn't done at all. It's not that it's not done well, but it's just not done. So seeing people that are taking that step to do it is really satisfying, and I want to help as much as I can.

**TW:** Yeah. I'm learning just from chatting with you. I'm so glad that we've had this opportunity to exchange information. ▽



An interview with Canadian Composers  
Martha Hill Duncan and Katerina Gimon

# MUSIC OF EVOLVING PLACE

**M**artha Hill Duncan and Katerina Gimon both take inspiration from the landscapes of Canada and the nuances of a new text. Here, these composers offer a deep dive into their recent projects, favorite collaborations, and artistic sensibilities.

**How does “place” influence your music?**

**KG:** The awe-inspiring landscapes of both my childhood home of Burlington, Ontario (on the edge of Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment) and my current home Vancouver, British Columbia (nested between the Pacific Ocean and Rocky Mountains) have a lot to do with my interest in the environmental and its preservation, which has inspired much of my music. As well, my Ukrainian heritage is something that’s becoming increasingly important to me in the music I write—drawing on influences of its folk music and singing styles, harmonic language, stories, and more.

**MHD:** I sense a touch of homesickness and angst in a lot of my earlier writing, as I dealt with the emotions of leaving my family and friends in Texas and traveling north to Canada with my husband in my twenties. I eventually resolved to immerse myself in “Canadian-ness,” embracing the landscape, climate, music, and poetry. Feeling somewhat isolated and disconnected also forced me to be resourceful, independent, expressive, and more free-spirited. I still unapologetically use “y’all,” though.

**What has been your favorite collaboration, and why?**

**MHD:** I was thrilled to be approached by living poet Janet Windeler Ryan, who was offering expressive and contemporary texts. This collaboration culminated in several art song collections, *Searching the Painted Sky*, *How Will the Rain Fall?* and *Porch Songs*, along with several choral works and a youth opera. Through this highly enjoyable and entertaining process, I learned that

a living poet (especially one who doubles as a pianist) can stroke your ego (“I love this!”), have strong opinions (“You’re not going to keep that note, are you?”), and keep you going (“When are you going to start the next song?”).

**KG:** Hard to choose one favorite, but a recent collaboration I’m super proud of is the creation of my set *A Path to Hope*, created as part of an initiative I co-founded called *Sonic Timelapse Project*—a cross-Canadian collaborative commission project in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ten new works were commissioned, including my own, all inspired by reflections from members of the choral community on how they were faring during pandemic lockdowns—a look at their fears, ways of coping, hopes for the future, and more.

**What is your favorite piece in your catalog, and why?**

**KG:** This tends to change for me day by day, but today I’d say “beneath/sound,” a setting of an evocative spatial poem about the natural elements found beneath everything and that connect us all. Bringing a spatial poem to life was a huge challenge for me, but something that proved to be immensely fruitful compositionally, as I had to get quite creative to find ways to bring out the poem’s spatial characteristics musically. To do this, I relied heavily on textural transformation, density, and color, and in doing so created one of my favorite pieces I’ve written to date.

**MHD:** If I had to choose a favorite vocal work from my Graphite catalogue, it would be “Rainfall” from *Singing in the Northland*. It’s a little more challenging rhythmically, but I just love the tension between the voice and piano as well as the expectant rain/storm quality in the writing.

**What upcoming project are you most excited about?**

**MHD:** I am really looking forward to a live performance of my song cycle *Season of Sensations* (with poetry

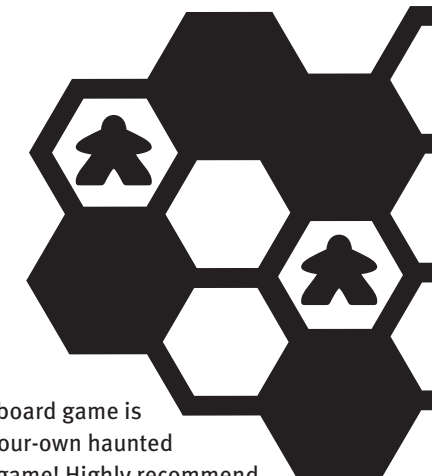


by Meg Freer), commissioned and published through the Graphite Art Song Consortium. I really loved the poetry and felt that the three songs would be expressive, personal, and engaging for the performers and audience alike. Unfortunately, it was written right before lockdowns, social distancing, and global health concerts. Fortunately, with so much time on my own, I’ve been able to complete several vocal projects that had gotten caught up in the conveyor belt of composing.

**KG:** I’m currently working on a cycle of five SSAA works for Myriad Ensemble which honor diverse Canadian landscapes threatened by the climate crisis. The poetry, written by my dear friend and frequent collaborator Lauren Peat, gives voice to the landscapes themselves (sung from their perspective), and the music is shaping up to be quite moving. Today I’m working on the final movement about glaciers—about their strength and vulnerability at a time when these crystalline ‘time capsules’ are melting faster than ever before. I can hardly wait to share this powerful and timely set of works later this year! ▶



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WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING?



Although it always changes, my current go-to board game is *Betrayal at House on the Hill*. Basically a build-your-own haunted house and live-your-own-spooky-movie kind of game! Highly recommend.  
Katerina Gimon

*Uncharted 4* on the PS4. Reginal Wright

*Calico* is absolutely my new favorite board game! Jocelyn Hagen

Trying to finish the *Pandemic Legacy: Season 0* board game with **Jocelyn Hagen**, **Paul Rudoj** and his wife. I’m ready to dive into *Horizon Forbidden West* on the PS5. And I’m apparently waiting to get together with **Katerina Gimon** for a game of *Betrayal at House on the Hill!* Timothy C. Takach

*Carcassonne & Machi Koro*. Jenni Brandon

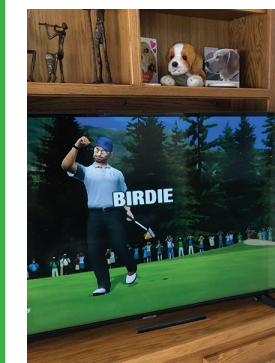
I’ve always been a JRPG fan, so I have just about finished the most recent *Tales of Arise* game for the PS systems. I’m anxiously awaiting *Zelda: Breath of the Wild 2* as well as the *Final Fantasy 7* remake next chapter! Dominick DiOrio

*Carcassonne & Mice and Mystics*. Eric William Barnum

We have been on a bit of a board game kick lately, but most recently it’s been *Pandemic* (I know...but it’s awesome!), and *Seven Wonders: Duel*. We have also been playing a Greek card game called Μπιρίμπα (either Biriba, or Birimba) which is pretty similar to Rummy or Canasta. Benjamin M. Cramer

*Tiger Woods PGA Tour* on Nintendo Wii...old school! Matthew Culloton

*Baba is You*, *Ender Lilies*, and *Zelda: Breath of the Wild*. Paul John Rudoj



### What are you currently eating and drinking?

Tea! I always have a pot on the go. My current favorite is a “Cherry Rose Sencha” green tea from Granville Island Tea Company here in Vancouver, Canada. I may or may not be drinking it (in my favorite cat-themed mug) as I write this...

Katerina Gimon



Australia is the land of brunch, so I’m constantly exploring the incredible range of cafés here in Brisbane. Any given morning outside my apartment, there are at least 20 cafes serving very good espresso coffee and yummy brunch treats.

Joe Twist

I’ve been making gourmet croutons lately! But not as a main course!

Joan Szymko

With my now regular weekly trips to Philadelphia to conduct the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, I am in awe of the incredible royal Thai cuisine cooked up by chef Nok Suntaranon at Kalaya—consistently some of the best food I’ve ever had in my life!

Dominick DiOrio

Homemade Ramen. :-)

Paul John Rudoi



### In the News

Graphite composer **Isaac Lovdahl** wins the 2021 Yale Glee Club Emerging Composers Competition, for his composition “Though the great Waters sleep.”

Congratulations to **Dale Trumbore**, named in The Washington Post’s “22 for ‘22: Composers and performers to watch this year.”

Ellen Gilson Voth won the 2022 ACDA Pearl Prize with her new composition “Standing Tall.” The composition prize calls for works that “speak with deep musical eloquence yet remain accessible to volunteer choirs.” For the full press release visit [EllenGilsonVoth.net](http://EllenGilsonVoth.net).



Navona Records releases **Dominick DiOrio’s** “Fetter and Air,” an emotional and collaborative tour de force, presented by the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia. Artistic director and conductor Dominick DiOrio originally conceived this as a 25-minute looping sound installation for The Rail Park in Philadelphia.



**Timothy C. Takach** received two back-to-back grants in 2021 and 2022 from the Minnesota State Arts Board to offer online presentations to MN schools free of charge. His lecture introduces students to the workflow of a composer and the career path of a freelance artist.

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## Behind the Mountain

Three-part round for equal voices

Isaac Lovdahl

**A** ♩ = c. 60

1 *mp* 2 3

The sun\_hides be-hind\_\_ the moun - tain, and casts\_\_ a shad - ow

4 far beyond our view. Shroud-ed by the dark - ness,\_\_ we hum - bly wait for

7 morn - ing when\_\_ we can\_\_ start a - new.

## A Path to Each Other

3 part round



Julia Klatt Singer

Jocelyn Hagen and Timothy C. Takach

♩ = 74

1 2 3

Each word a stone We can build a wall We can\_\_ build a wall

4 *legato* We can build a wall Or a path to each oth - er, to each oth-er, a path to each

8 oth - er, each oth - er, a path to each oth - er.

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