

RUTGERS

Mason Gross School
of the Arts

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Rutgers Voorhees Choir

of life and of living

Stephanie Tubiolo, conductor

Justine Langman, piano

Saturday, December 2, 2023 | 2:00 p.m.

Nicholas Music Center
Mason Gross Performing Arts Center
Douglass Campus

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

PROGRAM

A Song of Life

Marques L.A. Garrett

Elyse Guadagno, *soloist*

Alfonsina y el mar

Ariel Ramírez

arr. Vivian Tabbush

Surabhi Ashok, Aliyah Follaco,
Christina Keller, and Jasmine Naylor, *soloists*

She Lingers On

Zanaida Robles

Maid on the Shore

Traditional folksong

arr. Kathleen Allan

Madeleine Marsola, *soloist*
Carlos Vazquez and Sarah Nichols, *percussion*
Brandon Williams, *conductor*

Lorelei

Clara Schumann

arr. Brandon Williams

Kuumba

Zanaida Robles

Alana Dugger Fernandes and Madeleine Marsola, *soloists*

Coventry Carol

Anon. (15th century)

arr. B.E. Boykin

Jordan Miller and Sarah Nichols, *soloists*

Ábreme la puerta

Traditional Puerto Rican *aguinaldo*

arr. Cristian Grases

Carlos Vazquez, *percussion*

with thanks to Katie Castles, Aliyah Follaco, and Remeé Roy for their expert language coaching

PROGRAM NOTES AND TRANSLATIONS

A Song of Life

Marques L. A. Garrett

Marques Garrett's setting of Ella Wheeler Wilcox's exuberant text encapsulates a fiery resolve to find joy in quotidian beauty amidst the strife that surrounds us. The determination of this text is embodied by the driving piano accompaniment, which ushers the singers ever forward. The third stanza is set as if from another world, with the choir improvising ethereally underneath the soaring soprano soloist. With the return of the piano at the fourth stanza, the choir is grounded in its optimism as it beseeches the listeners to transcend their sorrow.

In the rapture of life and of living,
 I lift up my heart and rejoice,
And I thank the great Giver for giving
 The soul of my gladness a voice.
In the glow of the glorious weather,
 In the sweet-scented sensuous air,
My burdens seem light as a feather—
 They are nothing to bear.

In the strength and the glory of power,
 In the pride and the pleasure of wealth,
I can laugh at the world and its sages—
 I am greater than seers who are sad,
For they are most wise in all ages
 Who know how to be glad.

I lift up my eyes to the beautiful days,
And my spirit soars off like a swallow
 And is lost in the light of its rays.
Are you troubled and sad? I beseech you
 Come out of the shadows of strife—
Come out in the sun while I teach you
 The secret of life.

Come out of the world—come above it—
 Up over its crosses and graves.
Come up where the dust never rises—
 But only the perfume of flowers—
And your life shall be glad with surprises
 Of beautiful hours.
And your life shall be happy as mine is
 And as full of delight.

from "A Song of Life" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919)

Alfonsina y el mar

Ariel Ramírez

arr. Vivian Tabbush

with thanks to Hannah Carr and the Cantigas Women's Choir of Hoboken, NJ for providing scores and resources

Alfonsina y el mar, a poem by Felix Luna (1925-2009) was set to music by renowned Argentine composer Ariel Ramírez (1921-2010). Luna's poem recounts the popular legend of the death of Argentine writer and poet Alfonsina Storni (1892-1938), who in deep despair walked into the sea.

In Luna's poem, five little mermaids ("cinco sirenitas") escort Alfonsina. We envision ourselves as those mermaids in our program, embracing Alfonsina and helping her reclaim her power over the sea in the songs that follow (*She Lingers On, Maid on the Shore*, and *Lorelei*)

Por la blanda arena que lame el mar
Su pequeña huella no vuelve más,
Un sendero solo de pena y silencio llegó
Hasta el agua profunda,
Un sendero solo de penas mudas llegó
Hasta la espuma.

Sabe dios que angustia te acompañó
Que dolores viejos calló tu voz
Para recostarte arrullada en el canto
De las caracolas marinas
La canción que canta en el fondo oscuro
del mar
La caracola.

Te vas Alfonsina con tu soledad
Qué poemas nuevos fuiste a buscar?
Una voz antigua de viento y de sal
Te requiebra el alma y la esta llevando
Y te vas hacia allá como en sueños,
Dormida, Alfonsina, vestida de mar ...

Cinco sirenitas te llevarán
Por caminos de algas y de coral
Y fosforescentes caballos marinos harán
Una ronda a tu lado
Y los habitantes del agua van a jugar
Pronto a tu lado.

Bájame la lámpara un poco más
Déjame que duerma nodriza en paz
Y si llama él no le digas que estoy
Dile que Alfonsina no vuelve ...

Across the soft sand that the waves lick
Her small footprints are not coming back anymore
Only one path made of sorrow and silence
Reached the deep water
Only one path made of untold sorrows
Reached the foam

Only God knows about the anguish that accompanied
you
And about the old pains your voice never told
That caused you to go to sleep, lulled by the song
Of the seashells
The song sung in the depths of the dark sea by
The seashell

You're going away, Alfonsina, along with your
loneliness
What kind of new poems did you go looking for?
An ancient voice made of wind and salt
Is shattering your soul and taking you away
And you go there, like in a dream
Asleep, Alfonsina, dressed with the sea

Five little mermaids will escort you
Through paths made of seaweed and corals
And phosphorescent sea horses will sing
A round, by your side
And the aquatic dwellers
Will soon play by your side

Dim the light of the lamp a bit for me
Let me sleep in peace, nurse
And if he calls don't tell him I'm here

Y si llama él no le digas nunca que estoy,
Di que me he ido ...

Te vas Alfonsina con tu soledad
Qué poemas nuevos fuiste a buscar?
Una voz antigua de viento y de sal
Te requiebra el alma y la está llevando
Y te vas hacia allá como en sueños,
Dormida, Alfonsina, vestida de mar...

Félix Luna (1925-2009)

Tell him that Alfonsina is not coming back
And if he calls never tell him I'm here
Tell him that I have left

You're going away, Alfonsina, along with your
loneliness
What kind of new poems did you go looking for?
An ancient voice made of wind and salt
Is shattering your soul and taking you away
And you go there, like in a dream
Asleep, Alfonsina, dressed with the sea

She Lingers On

Zanaida Robles

Dr. Zanaida Stewart Robles is an award-winning Black American female composer, vocalist, and teacher. She is a fierce advocate for diversity and inclusion in music education and performance. Authentic interpersonal connection and relationship-building are core principles of her teaching and performance methods.

This piece is a setting of her own text and embodies the sensation of wading through something heavy. You will hear the voices cascading over each other and chasing each other as they sing the same text slightly displaced. In the second half of the piece, the piano is more active and the singers are more declamatory, creating a soundscape of resolve, resilience, and hope.

She walks in pools of sadness.
Her face is cool in moonlight.
No one can cover it.
She walks in pools and moonlight.
She lingers on.

Zanaida Robles

Maid on the Shore

Traditional folksong arr. Kathleen Allan

“[The Maid on the Shore], with its supernatural undertones, is often compared to the popular English ballad ‘The Mermaid.’ Not unlike the Odysseus tale of the siren, a sea captain and crew of a ship are entranced by the singing of a young woman on the coastline they are passing. The captain orders a boat to be sent to bring her on board the ship; when she

arrives he tells her that he intends to spend the night with her, and then pass her over to his men. Apparently agreeing, she then sings the whole crew to sleep, loots the ship and rows back home... Versions of [the song] were found in Counties Antrim and Cork in the 1950s and P.W. Joyce gives an unaccredited tune and a verse in 'Old Irish Folk Music and Songs' (1909). It was also popular with American and Canadian rural singers."

- Jim Carroll

Composer Kathleen Allan writes that her arrangement of *Maid on the Shore* "celebrates the triumph of a woman on the shores of Newfoundland," where she is originally from. You will hear the singers embody both the maiden and the voice of the ship captain, and our soloist will sing the maiden's soaring lullaby.

T'was of a young maiden who lived all alone.
She lived all alone on the shore-o,
There was nothing she could find for to comfort her mind
But to roam all alone on the shore.

T'was of the young captain who sailed the sea,
Let the winds blow high or blow low.
"I will die, I will die," this young captain did cry,
"if I can't have that maid from the shore."
"I have lots of silver I have lots of gold.
I have lots of costly fine fare-o,
I'll divide, I'll divide with my jolly ship's crew,
if they'll row me that maid from the shore."

By subtle persuasion, he got her on board.
Let the winds blow high or blow low.
And he placed her away in his cabin below,
"Here's adieu to all sorrows and care."
She sat herself down in his cabin below.
Let the winds blow high or blow low.
Where she sang so sweet, so soft and complete,
she sang captain and sailors asleep.
She robbed him of silver, she robbed him of gold,
She robbed him of costly fine fare-o,
and she stole his broadsword instead of an oar,
and paddled her way to the shore.

My men must be crazy, ("Your men was not crazy,")
my men must be mad, ("your men was not mad.")
My men must be deep in despair-o, ("Your men was not deep in despair-o")
for to let you away with your beauty so gay, and to paddle your way to the shore.

I deluded your sailors as well as yourself,
I'm a maiden again on the shore.

Lorelei

Clara Schumann

arr. Brandon Williams

Clara Schumann (1819-1896) was a child prodigy, composer, and pre-eminent pianist of the nineteenth century. The majority of her songs were written for her husband, Robert Schumann, as either birthday or Christmas gifts. Clara's dramatic setting of Heine's poem "Lorelei" was a birthday gift to Robert in 1843. In Heine's text, the maiden, the *lorelei*, lures the sailor with her siren song, and he is so enraptured by her song that he crashes his boat against her cliffs. Clara Schumann's mastery of the keyboard is evident in this exciting and virtuosic accompaniment that features driving eighth-note figures reminiscent of Schubert's "Erlkönig."

– Brandon Williams

Ich weiß nicht, was soll es bedeuten,
Daß ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.

Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
Und ruhig fließt der Rhein;
Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt
Im Abendsonnenschein.

Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet
Dort oben wunderbar,
Ihr goldnes Geschmeide blitzet,
Sie kämmt ihr goldenes Haar.

Sie kämmt es mit goldenem Kamme
Und singt ein Lied dabei,
Das hat eine wundersame,
Gewalt'ge Melodei.

Den Schiffer im kleinen Schiffe
Ergreift es mit wildem Weh;
Er schaut nicht die Felsenriffe,
Er schaut nur hinauf in die Höh'.

Ich glaube, die Wellen verschlingen
Am Ende Schiffer und Kahn;
Und das hat mit ihrem Singen
Die Lorelei getan.

I do not know what may be the meaning
Of this sadness I feel;
A fairytale from time long past,
I cannot get it out of my mind.

Cool is the air, darkness is descending,
And the Rhine flows quietly;
The top of the mountain is aglow
In the evening sunset.

A maiden most beautiful sits
Wonderfully there above,
Her golden trinkets sparkle,
She combs her golden hair.

She combs it with a comb of gold
Singing a song awhile;
It has a wondrous,
Most powerful melody.

The boatman in his little boat
Is seized by fierce sorrow;
He does not see the rocky cliffs,
He only gazes up to the heights.

I think the waves in the end
Will devour both boatman and boat;
And this by her singing
The Lorelei has done.

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

Kuumba

Zanaida Robles

“Kuumba” is the 6th principle of Kwanzaa meaning *creativity*: “to do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.” Zanaida Robles’ setting is designed to incorporate improvisation and to include any combination of voices and/or instruments. We invite the audience to join us singing the melody, which, Robles writes, keeps the beat and sustains the tonal center of the song, like a mantra:



On top of this three-measure mantra, members of Voorhees Choir will sing a counter-melody and improvise their own lines as well. In the inscription in her score, Robles emphasizes that Kwanzaa principles are valuable to remember year-round.

Coventry Carol

from *the Pageant of the Shearmen and the Tailors* (15th cent.)

arr. B.E. Boykin

“A 16th-century carol originating from Coventry, England, [“Coventry Carol”] was traditionally performed during Coventry Mystery Plays, which were Medieval plays telling New Testament stories, including that of the Nativity. Of the few surviving plays, *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors* depicts the Nativity from Chapter 2 in the Gospel of Matthew— from the ‘Annunciation’ to the ‘Massacre of the Innocents’...The lyrics of “Coventry Carol” are heart-breaking; farewelling the children that Herod has ordered to be killed.”

– Rosie Pentreath

Despite the sorrowful lyrics, this lullaby has persevered as one of the most popular and beloved carols of the Christmas season. B.E. Boykin’s hauntingly beautiful arrangement ends with a shimmering major chord, imbued with hope and peace.

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child,
By by, lully, lullay.
Lullay, thou little tiny child,
By by, lully, lullay.
O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we sing?

By by, lully, lullay.
Herod the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight
All children young to slay.
Then woe is me, poor child, for thee!
And ever mourn and say,
For thy parting nor say nor sing.
By by, lully, lullay.

Ábreme la Puerta

Traditional from Puerto Rico
arr. Cristian Grases

“In Puerto Rico, as in many other Latin American countries, there are numerous types of Christmas songs. The majority of them are called *aguinaldos* and tend to be very rhythmic and festive. These are usually refrain songs with multiple verses and are performed accompanied with the Puerto Rican *cuatro* and percussion (bongo, maracas, *panderos*, and *güiros*). Traditionally, the group of singers performs *aguinaldos* very late at night throughout the month of December with the sole intention of waking up the owners of a house to receive food and drinks from them. The owners are supposed to invite them into their home, eat and drink with them, and hopefully join the group as they head to the next home; all this in the spirit of celebrating Christmas. *Ábreme la Puerta* is one of the most traditional *aguinaldos* in Puerto Rico.”

– Cristian Grases

Ábreme la puerta que estoy en la calle
y dirá la gente que esto es un desaire,
A la zarandela, chiquita, de mi corazón.
Allá adentro veo un bulto tapao,
no sé si será un lechon asao

Open the door, I am on the street
and people will say this is a slight (a snub),
(dancing) to the rhythm (shaking), sweetie, of
my heart.
Inside I see a covered shape.
I don't know if it could be a roasted piglet.

Translation by Cristian Grases

RUTGERS VORHEES CHOIR

Jenn Amory, *President*

Sara Abdelkoudous, *Vice President*

Sofia Wernyj, *Treasurer*

Christina Keller, *Social Media/ Website Coordinator*

Molly Bryceland, *Activities/Alumnae Chair*

Soprano I

Ella Cifaldi
Aliyah Follaco
Elyse Guadagno
Rida Kadri
Olivia Kycia
Madeleine A. Marsola
Paige Palent
Saanvi Verma
—
Aislinn V. Brooks
Katie Castles
Toyesha Ganesh
Amina Goldenberg
Paige Liloia
Lila Mahaffy
Sarah Nichols
Emilee Yedigarian

Soprano II

Surabhi Ashok
Gennelle Kyla Cruz
Arianna Entero
Joanna Hur
Katyayani Iyer
Jasmine Naylor
Bea Patrie
Julia Ravenna
Ariana Roberts
—
Molly Bryceland
Clara Boyd
Katherine Cargille
Anne Gambourg
Jordan Miller
Clara Melvin
Emma Rentzel
Anna Lyn Rehberg
Remee Roy
Kristen Uchida
Sarah Werkmeister

Alto

Sara Abdelkoudous
Jenn Amory
Reva Bahuguna
Sydney Brissette-Rodriguez
Ekaterina Min
Nino Pasikashvili
Rachel Rostan
Caroline Shikata
Feyisayo Somoye
Sanjana Sriram
—
Alana Dugger
Fernandes
MacKenna Durbin
Maya Govindu
Christina Keller
Shreya Konkall
Emily Steele
Virginia Uyehara
Thi Vu
Sofia Wernyj
Felicity Winter

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Justine Langman is a sought-after collaborative pianist, chamber musician, and teacher in the central New Jersey area. After graduating with high honors from Rutgers University in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics, she was hired as a staff accompanist at the Mason Gross School of the Arts. She is proud to be the pianist of choice in the studios of esteemed musicians from the New York Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Justine is currently the music director at United Reformed Church in Somerville, New Jersey.

Conductor and educator **Stephanie Tubiolo** recently completed her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Rutgers University, where she won the *Irene Alm Memorial Prize for Excellence in Performance and Scholarly Research*. She directs the Rutgers University Choir, the Rutgers Voorhees Choir, and teaches courses to undergraduates studying music education and performance. From 2011-2023, she worked with the Yale School of Music's Music in Schools Initiative, where she was the founding director of Morse Chorale, a free choir for New Haven Public School students in grades 2-12. In recognition of her work with the Music in Schools Initiative, she received the *Yale Distinguished Teaching Artist Award* in 2023. Dr. Tubiolo holds a B.A. degree in Music from Yale College and an M.M. degree in Choral Conducting from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music. She is especially passionate about building non-selective choral communities at all levels and currently serves as the Inclusivity Chair on the board of NJ-ACDA.

Brandon Williams is an Associate Professor and Interim Director of Choral Activities at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, where he was the recipient of the 2020-21 *Rutgers Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching Innovations* and the 2021-22 *Rutgers Presidential Fellowship for Teaching Excellence Award*. He conducts the Rutgers Kirkpatrick Choir, the Rutgers Glee Club, and the Rutgers Voorhees Choir (Carnegie Hall 2019, Eastern ACDA 2020, 2024). Dr. Williams also appears internationally as a guest conductor, clinician, and presenter. He has published articles in the *Choral Journal*, the *Music Educators Journal*, and the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, and he is editor of the book *Choral Reflections: Insights from American Choral Conductor-Teachers*. Dr. Williams holds degrees from Western Illinois University, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Michigan State University, and an Artist Teacher Diploma from the Choral Music Experience-Institute for Choral Teacher Education.

ABOUT THE RUTGERS VORHEES CHOIR

The Rutgers Voorhees Choir has maintained a long tradition of representing Rutgers University—from its beginnings as the New Jersey College for Women (NJC) choir to its years as the official Douglass College choir to its current role as a Mason Gross School of the Arts ensemble and a Douglass Residential College (DRC) institution of pride.

The early days of the choir date back to 1924, when conductor John Earle Newton became a full-time professor of music at NJC. In 1926 the Elizabeth Rodman Voorhees Chapel was completed, and in 1927 Newton founded Voorhees Chapel Choir, which grew out of the NJC choir's roots. Voorhees Chapel Choir was funded then, as now, by the Elizabeth Rodman Voorhees Chapel Fund. The endowment has allowed the Rutgers Voorhees Choir to flourish as a leading ensemble.

Voorhees Choir performs regularly in concert and at traditional Douglass events in Voorhees Chapel. The chapel has undergone extensive preservation and restoration with funding provided by a bequest from the late Rena Hamelfarb, NJC'38, and generous support from Antonio Calcado, Rutgers' vice president for facilities and capital planning. Additional funding—provided by Betty Glaser Vaughan, DC'63—is used to purchase music and hire instrumentalists.

Voorhees Choir is extremely appreciative of the support from Douglass Residential College.

RUTGERS
Mason Gross School
of the Arts
MUSIC DEPARTMENT

MAKE A GIFT

