



Program Notes

Art Thou Troubled is a *da capo* aria from G. F. Handel's opera *Rodelinda*, written for the Royal Academy of Music in 1725 when Handel was living in London. "Art thou troubled? Music will calm thee."

In 1945, Charlie Parker, the famous bebop alto saxophonist, wrote the original twelve-bar melody for **Now's the Time**. Parker was nicknamed "Bird" due to his love of chicken and also for the way his fingers flew lightly over the keys of his instrument. Written in a 'scat' style of singing, there are four main melodies which intertwine in the three-part arrangement.

Gloria in Excelsis Deo is from the well-known Gloria (RV 589) by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). Vivaldi taught at the Ospedale della Pieta, a girl's orphanage in Venice in which musical training was a central part of the curriculum. The first movement of Vivaldi's best-known sacred work opens with octave leaps and repeated patterns of notes that set a mood of pomp and grandeur.

Glory to God in the highest.

Aaron Copland (1900-1990) has long been credited with capturing the "American" sound in many of his works. In ballets like *Rodeo* and *Billie the Kid*, Copland composes musical landscapes capturing, in sound, the look of the frontier and early American settlements. In *Appalachian Spring* he helps create the sound of Americana by including the Shaker tune *Simple Gifts*. In Copland's two sets of *Old American Songs*, he sets many American folks songs for solo voice and piano. Published in 1954, **At the River** was part of the second set of these songs and was later arranged in 1964 by R. Wilding-White for chorus. This arrangement along with *Simple Gifts*, *Ching-a-Ring Chaw* and *I Bought Me a Cat* are just a few examples of the famous choral arrangements to come from these song sets.

Cloudburst is a contemporary jazz piece written in 1960 for Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, a trio formed by jazz vocalists Dave Lambert, Jon Hendricks and Annie Ross. They specialized in *vocalese*, a style of singing wherein lyrics are written for melodies that were originally part of an all-instrumental composition or improvisation.

Laudamus Te is also from the *Gloria* by Vivaldi. In this joyful G-major duet, a recurring instrumental refrain separates the vocal sections. At first the voices imitate each other and then they join to sing together in thirds.

We praise Thee, We bless Thee, We adore Thee, We glorify Thee.



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When I Fall in Love has become a standard, recorded by over 100 artists including Nat King Cole, Johnny Mathis, Etta Jones, and The Lettermen, though the original hit version was by Doris Day in 1952. Our arrangement by Kirby Shaw is in an a cappella style known as close harmony.

It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing is an iconic jazz standard by Duke Ellington. The music was written and arranged in August 1931 during intermissions at Chicago's Lincoln Tavern and was first recorded by Ellington and his orchestra on February 2, 1932. The song became famous, Ellington wrote, "as the expression of a sentiment which prevailed among jazz musicians at the time." Probably the first song to use the phrase "swing" in the title, it introduced the term into everyday language and presaged the swing era by three years.

Embodying the perfect Baroque balance of melody and continuo bass line, **Bist Du Bei Mir** by J.S. Bach (1685 – 1750) is a meditation on contentment, joy and peacefulness. Some scholars suggest that Bach wrote this for his second wife, Anna Magdalena to perform in 1725.

If thou art near, I will be joyful

To greet my rest with peacefulness.

Ah, sweetest joy, here at my ending

With loving hands now close mine eyes

We mark the 150th Anniversary of the start of the Civil War with **The Battle Hymn of the Republic**, a hymn by American writer Julia Ward Howe using the music from the song *John Brown's Body*. Howe's more famous lyrics were written in November 1861 and first published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in February 1862. The tune was written around 1856 by William Steffe. The first known lyrics were called *Canaan's Happy Shore* or *Brothers, Will You Meet Me?* and the song was sung as a campfire spiritual. Julia Ward Howe heard this song during a public review of the troops outside Washington on Upton's Hill, Virginia. Howe's companion at the review, the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, suggested to Howe that she write new words for the fighting men's song. *The Battle Hymn* will be conducted tonight by William Hickson, parent of chorister Alice and winner of the auction in February. We thank him very sincerely for his support!



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The poetry of Robert Louis Stevenson inspired Mary Lynn Lightfoot to set selected verses from his "Romance" to music. **And This Shall Be For Music** was commissioned by the Missouri Northeast District Sixth Grade Honor Choir. It is an expression of music as the greatest gift anyone can give. With this song, chosen by Lucille Parkinson on her retirement, we thank her and honor her for the gifts she has shared with thousands of children of the FCCC and beyond. Brava, Lucille!

Blue Skies was written by Irving Berlin in 1926 as a last minute addition to the Rodgers and Hart musical, *Betsy*. Although the show only ran for 39 performances, *Blue Skies* was an instant success, with audiences on opening night demanding 24 encores of the piece from star, Belle Baker. During the final repetition, Ms. Baker forgot her lyrics, prompting Berlin to sing them from his seat in the front row. In 1927 it became one of the first songs to be featured in a *talkie* when Al Jolson performed it in *The Jazz Singer*. The year 1946 was also notable for the song, with a Bing Crosby/Fred Astaire film taking its title, and two recorded versions by Count Basie and Benny Goodman.

You Are My Sunshine, one of the most popular lullabies of the past 50 years, was first recorded in 1939. There are numerous attributions, with Paul Rice considered the original composer. When our Chamber Singers attended a concert in New Orleans in 2009, we heard a swinging version that we will share with you today. We also include this as our salute to Mother's Day!!



Fairfield County Children's Choir

P.O. Box 110588 Trumbull, CT 06611 • (203) 414-4292 • www.singfccc.org

Fairfield County Children's Choir

Jon Noyes, Music Director & Founder presents
16th Annual Spring Concert



Saturday, May 7, 2011 at 7:00pm
Norwalk Concert Hall • Norwalk, CT



For audition and ticket information,
please contact us at:



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Special Guests

William Hickson - Guest Conductor
Rodger Bryan - Bass
Chuck Saber – Percussion

FCCC Music Staff

Jon Noyes – Music Director & Founder, Chamber Singers Conductor
Lisa Bettke – Chorale Conductor & Accompanist
Kevin Cotellese – Concert Choir Conductor
Lucille Parkinson – Chorus Conductor
Todd Simmons - Accompanist

FCCC Administrative Staff

Jon Noyes – Music Director & Founder
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Alicen Masi – Assistant Choir Manager



Fairfield County Youth Choir

Where the Music Comes FromLee Hoiby
HomelandGustav Holst, arr. Stroope
In the MoodJoe Garland, arr. Sterling

Chorus

Oh Be Joyful *from "Gaudeamus Hodie"*Natalie Sleeth
On the Sunny Side of the StreetFields/McHugh, arr. Zegree
Swinging, Jazzy SaintsTraditional, arr. Rentz

Chorale

Sing Me A SongLeonard Enns
Art Thou TroubledG.F. Handel
Now's the TimeCharlie Parker, arr. Luckey

Concert Choir

Gloria In Excelsis DeoAntonio Vivaldi
At the RiverAaron Copland, arr. Wilding-White
CloudburstHarris/Hendricks, arr. Shaw

Chamber Singers

Laudamus TeAntonio Vivaldi
When I Fall in LoveHeyman/Young, arr. Shaw
It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing ..Duke Ellington, arr. Huff

Combined Choirs

Bist Du Bei MirJ.S. Bach
Battle Hymn of the RepublicSteffe/Howe, arr. Wilhousky
And This Shall Be For MusicRobert Louis Stevenson
Lightfoot
Blue SkiesIrving Berlin, arr. Lojeski
You Are My SunshinePaul Rice



Program Notes

Welcome to the Fairfield County Children's Choir's Sixteenth Annual Spring Concert! This evening's concert features numerous jazz selections as well as numerous pieces from the Baroque period, including selections from Bach, Handel and Vivaldi. Our intention is to draw a connection between Baroque music and jazz. What could the exalted music from 1600 – 1750 possibly have in common with the vernacular music of the 20th century? There are two primary commonalities: a texture that is based on two key elements, namely a melody line accompanied by an equally important bass line; and improvisation. It was common practice in the Baroque era for the performers to embellish an existing part or create an entirely new part or parts. This connection is also quite evident in the manner in which each style is often notated. In the Baroque the melody line was written along with a 'basso continuo' part, which was a single bass line to be interpreted by the harpsichordist and cellist. In jazz a 'lead sheet' usually consists of the melody line and chord symbols, which is then interpreted by the band which may include piano, bass, guitar, drums, etc.

Jazz is considered by many historians to be one of the most important forms of American music of the 20th century. We have programmed music by the jazz masters Duke Ellington and Charlie Parker, among others, and we will continue the jazz practice of turning just about any standard melody into a vehicle for swinging jazz performance. A key component of jazz music is improvisation, which requires a complex combination of cognitive tasks and a synthesis of many musical elements, skills and concepts. Understanding and mastery of advanced dimensions of rhythm, melody, harmony, form, style, creative expression and originality come into play when one improvises. Most importantly, vocal jazz improvisation is exciting, rewarding and fun! Stephen Nachmanovitch, in his book *Free Play-The Power of Improvisation in Life and the Arts*, states "We have a right to create, a right to self-realization and fulfillment... this whole adventure of creativity is about joy and love." Tonight's concert will include authentic vocal jazz improvisation.

Thank you for attending our program and please join us again!!



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Where the Music Comes From is a song about inspiration and creativity, about a place and/or a state of mind, about growing and becoming, and about living "in the moment." It connects art, nature and interpersonal relationships.

The composer, Lee Hoiby (b. 1926), originally from Wisconsin, passed away on March 28 of this year. He wrote the following to the FCCC in 2003, "Where the Music Comes From was written for a consciousness-raising group to which I belonged in the 1970's. The group was called The Pathwork and our goals were to learn how to grow, how to feel and how to love. It was meant to be sung only among ourselves, but eventually I was prevailed upon to put it in a collection of my songs, and the next thing I knew it was on recital programs of Leontyne Price. I wrote the words of the first two verses in a couple of hours; the third verse took me a whole year. I guess it really takes time to learn how to love."

Homeland is based on melody by Holst, which he used as *Jupiter's Theme* in The Planets. A patriotic text was written by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice which is well known in many English speaking countries. The arranger Randall Stroope adds a new second verse to this timeless piece.

In the Mood was popularized by the American bandleader Glenn Miller in 1939 and is one of the best-known arrangements of the big band era. Miller's rendition topped the charts in 1940 and one year later was featured in the movie *Sun Valley Serenade*.

Oh Be Joyful (from "Gaudeamus Hodie") is an arrangement by Natalie Sleeth. The lyrics speak of the joys of raising our voices in song. The song features a well-known melody with harmonies created by two countermelodies.

Swinging, Jazzy Saints is a happy combination of two popular African-American Folk Songs, *When the Saints Go Marching In* and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* arranged by Earlene Rentz.

On the Sunny Side of the Street is a fun arrangement of an old favorite that is a good introduction to singing in swing style. Arranged for treble voices by Steve Zegree, the lyrics are by Dorothy Fields and the music is by Jimmy McHugh.

Leonard Enns (b. 1948), a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, currently teaches at the University of Waterloo in southern Ontario. He has written works for many choirs in Canada, including *Sing Me A Song*, an upbeat jazz piece composed for the Niagara Children's Chorus.