



Presents

WITH BELLS ON

WITH THE VIRGINIA BRONZE HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

Thursday, December 15, 2022, 7:30pm



WELCOME

Thank you for coming to tonight's Strathmore Children's Chorus program. We welcome the Virginia Bronze community handbell ensemble and their director, Brian Seemann. We strive to share holiday music from myriad cultures and traditions represented in our ensembles and in our community, and we create new arrangements for choirs and handbells to collaborate.

CONCERT PROGRAM

COMBINED CONCERT AND TENOR BASS CHORUSES WITH VIRGINIA BRONZE

Ukrainian Carol of the Bells (2014, 2022), based on Shchedryk by Mykola Leontovich, 1877–1921, arranged by Nicholas A. Hanson, living. Nick directs handbell ensembles at the Potomac School in McLean, and he is a long-time member of Virginia Bronze. He created this mixed and asymmetric meter version of the famous Carol of the Bells in 2014, adding choral parts for tonight's concert earlier this summer.

PREPARATORY CHORUS

Personent Hodie (1924), Latin text and melody from Piae Cantiones (1582), arr. Gustav Holst, 1874–1934. English composer Gustav Holst is best known for his orchestral work *The Planets*. Originally for organ and unison voices, SCC and Virginia Bronze have adapted this work for handbells and chorus.

Translation of the Latin: Children's voices here today | Praising the one who was born to us | Given to the Most High God, | and born from a virgin's womb. | | He is born in the world, wrapped in cloths, | Born in a manger in a stable for cattle, | The ruler of the heavens, | the prince of the underworld has lost his spoils. | | The three Magi came, they asked the child's location, | And by following the star, they adored the child | Offering him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. | | All priests and children alike, | Sing like angels, your savior has come into the world | Praise him on earth | And glory to God in the highest.

How Many Nights? (1986), words and music by Linda Swears, living. Mrs. DuBose-Li sang this piece in her childhood children's chorus experience. Listen for some of the main themes to return towards the end of the piece as a partner song as the lyrics describe the joy and wonder of the Hanukkah holiday.

Shoulda Been a North Pole Elf (2014), Andy Beck, living. The lyrics read like a resume of special North Pole talents, including baking cookies, wrapping gifts, and even looking good in tights.

VIRGINIA BRONZE

Los Pieces en El Rio (2022), Traditional Spanish, arr. Brian Seemann, living

APPRENTICE CHORUS

Aeyaya Balano Sakkad, Manamadurai Balakrishnan Srinivasan, 1925–1988, arr. John Higgins, 1939-1984. M. B. Srinivasan wrote this song to celebrate Diwali, "The Festival of Lights." Srinivasan composed extensively films, particularly for the Tamil and Malaysian film industries, and he founded and directed the Madras Youth Choir. Srinivasan and Higgins intersected in their study of Carnatic music.

Translation of the Konkani, official language of the Indian State of Goa: Come, children, listen to the secrets of life. | Childhood is a gift to us, when we can learn all that is taught. – Smt. Chandra Bhat

Niño Lindo (1996), traditional Venezuelan Christmas Song, arr. Ruth Boshkoff, b. 1934. The gentle melody is very simple. Listen for the constant shifting between triplets on the first beat and duplets on the second beat of most measures.

Translation of the Spanish: Lovely baby, lying in a manger, tiny infant king: | Goodbye. I must leave you. Goodbye, sweet love.

Christmas Gift (1955) Jester Hairston, 1901-2000. An American composer, songwriter, arranger, choral conductor and actor, Hairston was regarded as a leading expert on black spirituals and choral music.

VIRGINIA BRONZE

Up on the Housetop (1864, 1998), Benjamin Russell Hanby, 1833–1867, arr. Arnold Sherman, living

TREBLE CHORUS

Shalom Chaverim (2000), Hebrew folk song, arr. Stan Pethel, b. 1950. The lyrics to this traditional Hebrew round can be translated to “Peace and blessings, my friends.” This minor melody starts in unison and eventually grows to a three-part round.

Translation of the Hebrew: Peace and blessings, my friends, until we meet again
smoothly go our gondolets | O'er the moonlight sea. | |

I Saw Three Ships (1989), traditional English carol, arr. Stephen McNeff, b. 1951. An Irish composer best known for his work in contemporary theater and opera, McNeff originally created this carol setting for children’s chorus and brass quintet. Listen for the sopranos and altos take turns singing the melody while Treble Chorus is accompanied by the Virginia Bronze.

Sing to the World! (1971, 2013), arr. Ken Berg, b. 1955. Sing to the World combines two popular songs from the 1970s: Sing of Sesame Street fame and Daybreak by Barry Manilow. Listen for how each melody is heard separately and then intertwined with the other in this jazz arrangement.

VIRGINIA BRONZE

Winter Dance (2010), Seiichi Kyoda, b. 1958, arr. Larry Sue, living

TENOR BASS CHORUS

Noel (2002, 2004), Todd Smith, b. 1968, arr. Brad Holmes, b. 1956. With text in the African Kituba dialect, this bright, rhythmic piece captures the feeling of a tribal celebration as it expresses the joy of the Christ Child’s birth.

Translation of the Kituba dialect: Noel! Noel! Jesus has come to live with us. If you want to know the Child, you have to come kneel.

Bilvavi (2022), Joshua Fishbein, b. 1984. Dr. Fishbein is an award-winning composer and SCC parent to Naomi Fishbein in Apprentice Chorus. SCC commissioned him to compose a new work for our 2023–2024 season.

Translation of the Hebrew: I will build a tabernacle in my heart to glorify God’s honor. And I will place an altar in the tabernacle dedicated to God’s divine rays

of splendor. And for the eternal, constant flame I will take upon myself the fire that fueled the Binding (of Isaac). And as a sacrifice I will offer God my soul, my unique soul.

Deck the Halls in 7/8 Time (1999), Welsh carol, arr. James McKelvy, 1917–2003. This lively, odd meter twist on a familiar Welsh carol gives tenors and basses equal opportunity to sing the melody while other voices add harmony and a little rhythmic drive.

VIRGINIA BRONZE

West Indies Carol (1991), West Indies Folk Tune, arr. Hart Morris, b. 1946

COMBINED CONCERT AND TENOR BASS CHORUSES

Ocho Kandelikas (1990), Flory Jagoda, 1923–2021, arr. Joshua Jacobson, living. In this work, Jagoda revives the exciting memories of Hanukah from her childhood.

CONCERT CHORUS

Süßer die Glocken nie klingen (2022), German folk tune from Thuringia c. 1840, arr. Michael Wu, b. 1967. It was a joy to find a German carol that had a bell theme from which to create a choir and handbell arrangement for this concert.

Translation of the German: The bells never ring sweeter | than at Christmastime, | It is as if angels are singing | of peace and joy again. | How they sing in the blessed night, | [refrain] Bells with holy sound, | ring out across the earth! | | Oh, when the bells resound, | the Christ Child quickly hears them, | then swings down from Heaven | in a rushing descent to Earth. | Bless the father, the mother, the child | refrain | | Resound with delightful echoes | over the seas and beyond | to rejoice with all | the blessed Christmastime. | All exult in glorious song! | refrain – Friedrich Wilhelm Kritzinger, 1816-1890

Funky Dreidl (2003, 2017), Robert Applebaum, b. 1941, based on 1937 melody by Samuel E. Goldfarb, 1891–1978. This jazzy setting of My Dreidl was written for Greg Skalinder and the Coriolis Ensemble of Evanston, Illinois, with whom Wu had the opportunity to work during his undergraduate years at Northwestern University.

This Little Babe from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28 (1942), Benjamin Britten, 1913-1976. This movement sets text from *Newe Heaven, Newe Warre* (1595) by Robert Southwell, c. 1561-1595. It depicts a battle between the baby and Satan (good and evil), which is conveyed in its swift tempo, polyrhythms, overlapping segments between the voices, and the fact that the song grows progressively louder over the duration of the movement.

COMBINED TREBLE, CONCERT AND TENOR BASS CHORUSES

Sleigh Ride (1950, 2022), music by Leroy Anderson, 1908–1975. Vocal arrangement adapted from Hawley Ades, 1908–2008; handbell arrangement by Martha Lynn Thompson, b. 1940. Anderson described this piece as “one of the first things I wrote when I got out of the Army and moved ... to Woodbury, Connecticut. [It] was just an idea because, it was just a pictorial thing, it wasn’t necessarily Christmas music, and it was written during the heat wave.”

STAFF AND STUDENTS

ARTISTIC STAFF

Michael Wu, DMA, *Artistic Director; Apprentice, Concert, and Tenor Bass Chorus*

Ann Bartlow, *Collaborative Pianist, Preparatory, Apprentice and Treble Chorus*

Alice E. Dillon, DMA, *Vocal Coach*

Ann DuBose-Li, *Interim Director, Preparatory Chorus*

Yee Von Ng, DMA, *Principal Collaborative Pianist, Concert and Tenor Bass Chorus*

Carla Wardell, *Interim Director, Treble Chorus*

Lauren Campbell, *Program Director*

Suzanne Bagheri, *Administration and Singer Services Manager*

View full list of SCC bios [here](#).

VIRGINIA BRONZE

Since its founding in 2006, Virginia Bronze (VAB) has gained local and national recognition. A premier handbell ensemble just outside Washington, DC, VAB has performed with the Washington Chorus, the Cathedral Choral Society, Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington, DC, Children’s Chorus of Washington, and the Alexandria Symphony. VAB has been a part of First Night Alexandria in the past and have served as artists-in-residence at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. They performed a lunchtime concert at the 2010 Pinnacle Conference (a Handbell Musicians of America festival) in Nashville, Tennessee. VAB also performed at the HMA National Seminar in July 2019. For more information, go to www.vabronze.org.

VAB director Brian Seemann is the Director of Handbell Ensembles at the Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland. In the past, he has served as Music Director of the Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble and the New England Ringers. Seemann has performed with Sonos Handbell Ensemble, Back Bay Ringers, and the Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble. He is a published composer, and he has served as faculty, clinician, and conductor around the US as well as at several International Handbell Symposia.

Karen Eggert
Genevieve Hanson
Nicholas Hanson
Steven Holton
Kylie Johnson
Amanda Kosloski
Sarah Manchester
Kathy Murphy
Laurel Ohlson

G. Ordun
Gillian Penn
Alice Real
Christopher Shaheen
Christopher Simon
Judy Sondheimer
Ashley Wilhelm
Laura Wrubel

PREPARATORY CHORUS

Ione Aborn
Luke Alves
Nurali Ayubkhon
Satya Basnayake
Sofia Basogul
Lauryn Brodie
Josephine Cho
Lila Coleman
Lela Corman
Cecily Davenport
Juliet Dominguez
William Eyler
Matthieu Faguer
Iona Fanning
Ellery Ferguson
Hunter Fotopoulos
Marveentee Hansupichon
Evan Jepsen
JoJo Joyce
Elena Kim
Evelyn Kingsland
Natalie Krein
Elliot Lange
Avery Lange
Ellie Lu
Abigail Lyons-Pfeiffer
Gemma Ma
Lara Mackey
Leah McAlvanah
Sophia Natelson
Elizabeth Nimmo
Masha Ozbolt
Ruhani Panse
Jacob Power
Maggie Rapp
Annabelle Prashani Scott
Jade Shi
Eleanora Snyder
Sunny Spak
Mila Velazquez Sarkisova
Alex Zhan
Ella Zhang
Alexander Zhao

APPRENTICE CHORUS

Kristian Carpenter
Andrés Chavarría Iglesias
Tianxi Chi
Danielle Cho
Naomi Fishbein
Eva Glomb
Philipp Golovnin
Elise Gomez
Grace Hager
Savi Kanal
Leni Kim
Maria Kleinow
Raena Morgan
Deven Nath
Anna Parker
Ella Peterson Delaney
Fiona Peterson Delaney
Alma Plaza
Eva Plaza
Leela Ramaswamy
Isabella Reyes
Harriet Ritchie
Palen Russell
Reena Veshi
Ethan Xia
Juliana Zarate
Aiden Zhao

TREBLE CHORUS

Rachael Ajibola
Makayla Collins
Gioia D'Arista
Malaurie Dieudonne
Elizabeth Eyler
Tian Feng
Grace Gebregziabher
Natalie Habib
Heran Hailu
Athena He
Serena Huang
Anna Ibrahim
Kate LeBlanc
Zafina Matin
Sophia Neufeld
Isabella Patterson
Keane Russell
Abigail Scouler
Katelin Paige Velasquez

William Wildermuth
Marilyn Zhan
Alice Zhao
Malinda Zhu

CONCERT CHORUS

Dara Blecher
Abby Bruskin
Michelle Cooke
Camilla Fan
Ada Fetalcorin
Lila Fishman
El Fitzpatrick
Melina Fotopoulos
Heidi Gohari
Clara Jane Gomez
Isabella Goodman
Shivani Hancock
Shalini Hancock
Mackenzie Hann
Madeline Heath
Lily Heiser
Violet Ikenberry
Lauren Jain
Olivia Kwon
Tiffany Lolley
Molly McAlvanah
Ruhi Nair
Reheth Narula
Mia Payson
Emery Que
Maalini Srinivasan
Anika Sharma
Arina Shkolnik
Hana Sor
Linnea Spear
Kathryn Sulla
Carys Tan
Sofia Turkman
Alana Udell
Ruthiga Veerasingham
Sofia Veshi
McKenzie Wactor
Addie Wildermuth
TongTong Ye
Eileen Zhang

TENOR BASS CHORUS

Adrian Ahmadi
Langston Cephas
Garrett Cypress
Timothy Heiser
Mitchell Kwoun
CJ Pingca
Isaac Teberen
Skyler Xue
Michael Yau
Daniel Yin
Brian Zheng

JOIN STRATHMORE CHILDREN'S CHORUS!

Audition slots are available December 19 and 20. Visit www.strathmore.org/scc to sign up.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Donate to the Strathmore Children's Chorus scholarship fund. Your gift removes the financial barrier to participation, providing young choristers the opportunity to sing!

