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Concert: Ithaca College Women's Chorale: "Weaving Stories"

Janet Galván

Ithaca College Women's Chorale

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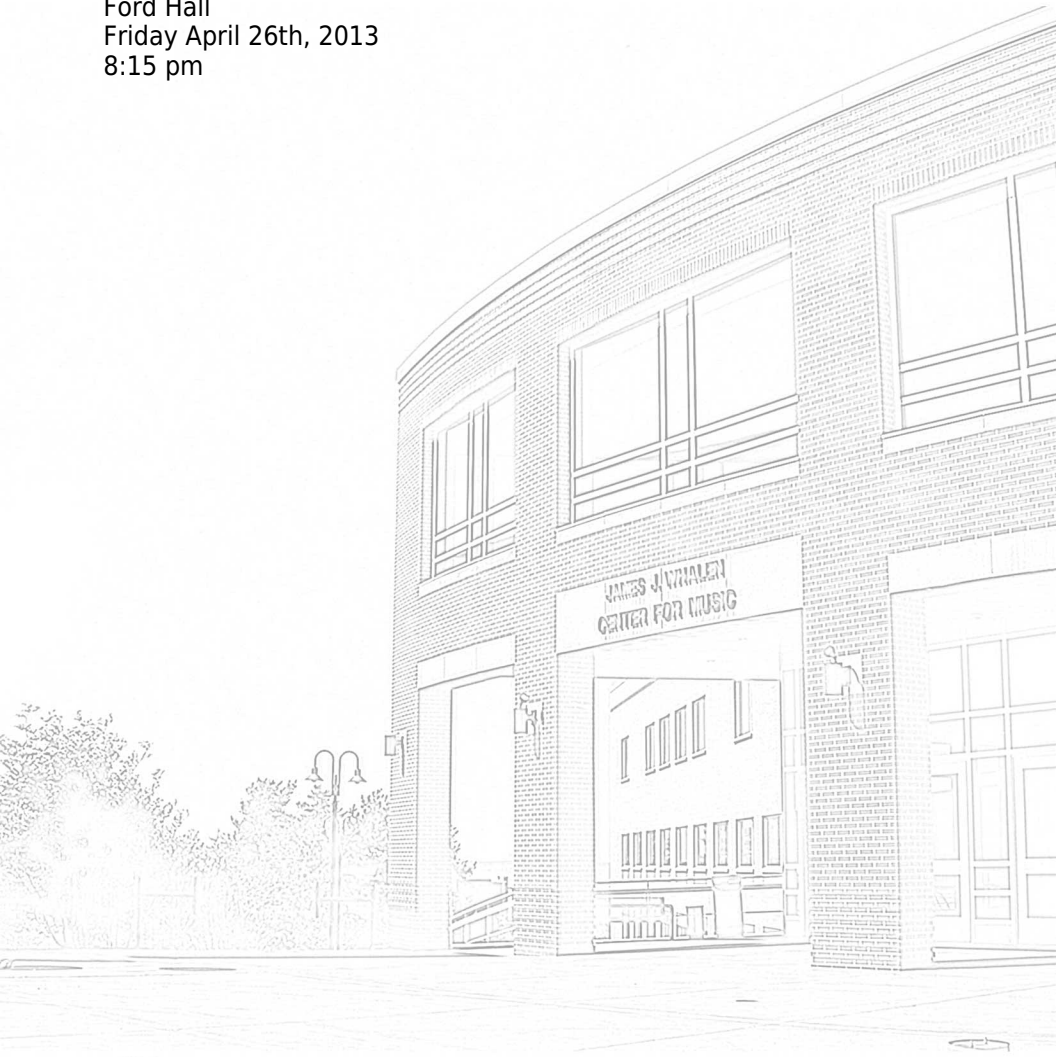
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Ithaca College Women's Chorale

"Weaving Stories"

Janet Galván, conductor

Ford Hall
Friday April 26th, 2013
8:15 pm



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Ithaca College Women's Chorale
"Weaving Stories"
Janet Galván, conductor
Sarah Fears and Gina Fortunato,
collaborative pianists

Alleluia Randall Tompson

Voices of the Hills: Four Appalachian Songs Sally Lamb McCune
for Women's Choir
I. Jubilee
II. Where Do the Roads Go
III. Go Dig My Grave
IV. Voices of Loved Ones

All the Pretty Little Horses arr. Douglas E. Wagner

The False Young Man arr. Donald Patriquin

Somos Tejedoras Words by Monica Lozano,
Music by Rhiannon

*As taught to the Women's Chorale by Rhiannon
and improvised by members of the Chorale*

Go 'way from my window John Jacob Niles
arr. Hugh Ross

Emily Behrmann-Fowler, Meghan Kelly, Lauren Smith, soloists

Hamisha Asar Flory Jagoda
arr. Nick Page

Tembangdumba Paquito D'Rivera

*Kimberly Hawley and Josi Petersen, soloists
Gillian Lacey, Paola Nieves-Rodriguez,
Zohaniris Torres, Penelope-Myles Voss, solo speakers
Sean Harvey, claves*

Blessing Katie Moran Bart

Program Notes

Tonight's program is called "Weaving Stories." The majority of the music is folk-based or based on poetry that tells a story. Hopefully, you enjoyed the past "weavings" and artistic endeavors from our relatives and friends - each of these objects has a story. The old quilt that was used to cover furniture when moving from one residence to another after it was worn, but provided warmth when it was new, tells a story. None of the fabric was purchased to make a quilt. It was made from leftover material from homemade clothes. The top was stitched by Dr. Galván's grandmother but finished around a quilting frame with relatives helping. Many stories were told in the making of that quilt. There are other quilts and other artwork. Enjoy all of our stories as we weave the music tonight.

We are also acknowledging that in many of the old stories in song, as in "Go Dig My Grave," young lovers took their own lives - "dying for love," because life's momentary pain seems endless. Sally Lamb McCune set this piece in a way that reminds us that this is incredibly sad. In the past, settings often romanticized the notion of dying for love. We hear the gravity of the situation in this current work. We want to dedicate our concert to memory of Audrie Pott, a 15-year old girl who hanged herself after feeling devastatingly humiliated by an image of her sexual assault being circulated online. We have handed out yellow ribbons tonight. Yellow Ribbon is dedicated to preventing youth suicide and attempts by making suicide prevention accessible to everyone and removing barriers to help by empowering communities and individuals through leadership, awareness and education and by collaborating and partnering with support networks to save lives. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at Ithaca College (607-274-3136) and Suicide Prevention and Crisis Service (800-273-TALK) in the city of Ithaca are the two local suicide prevention resources.

Alleluia

This "Alleluia" is from Thompson's treble set "Place of the Blest." Like his more well-known "Alleluia" for mixed voices, this composition is set with only one word - Alleluia. In weaving stories, the women have chosen their own reason for saying each and every "Alleluia."

Randall Thompson (April 21, 1899 - July 9, 1984) was an American composer, particularly noted for his choral works. Thompson composed three symphonies and numerous vocal works including *Americana*, *The Testament of Freedom*, *Frostiana*, and *The Peaceable Kingdom*, inspired by Edward Hicks's painting. His most popular and recognizable choral work is his anthem, *Alleluia*, commissioned by

Serge Koussevitzky for the opening of the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood. He also wrote the operas *Solomon and Balkis* and *The Nativity According to St. Luke*.

Voices of the Hills: Four Appalachian Songs

In writing these songs, I wanted to represent a select handful of the types of texts and tunes that are typical of the region. Two of the songs, "Jubilee" and "Go Dig My Grave" are elaborate arrangements of pre-existing tunes, although the texts come from a number of sources. "Jubilee" is representative of the light-hearted songs sung at social gatherings, while "Go Dig My Grave" is typical of the tragic love songs sung to warn young women of the pitfalls of courtship. "Where Do the Roads Go?" is an original setting of a poem by the West Virginian poet Louise McNeil. The song evokes a sense of longing and wonder that comes from the isolation of life in the hills. The last song, "Voices of Loved Ones" draws its inspiration from the many sentimental songs about returning to home and mother. The text is a composite of several songs; the tunes are original, although generic. A single quote from "The Cuckoo" is heard at the very end of the piece, encouraging the listener to reminisce of a time passed.

-Sally Lamb McCune

I. Jubilee (Anonymous)

Although the origin of this tune and text is unknown, there are several lines of the text that can be traced to the West Virginian song "Cindy" or "Miss Lucy." Also known by some as "Jubilee", it was often sung as part of a "folk game" or "singing game." These movement-based games served as a convenient substitute for dancing, which was prohibited in many Puritanical homes.

All out on the old railroad,
All out on the sea,
All out on the old railroad,
Far as I can see.
Swing and turn, Jubilee,
Live and learn,
Jubilee.

Hardest work I ever done,
Workin' on a farm,
Easiest work I ever done,
Swing my true love's arm.
(Swing and turn, etc.)

Coffee grows on a white oak tree,
Sugar runs in brandy,
Girls as sweet as a lump of gold,

Boys as sweet as candy.
(Swing and turn, etc.)

If I had a needle and thread
As fine as I could sew
I'd sew my true love to my side
And down this creek I'd go.

Saddle up my old gray horse,
Who will be my rider?
Ride him down to the old still house
And get a jug of cider.

II. Where Do the Roads Go? (text by Louise McNeill, 1911-1993)
Louise McNeil was born in 1911 in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, on a farm that her family had lived on for nine generations. She said of herself, "Until I was sixteen years old, until the roads came, the farm was about all I knew: our green meadows and hilly pastures, our storied old men, the great rolling seasons of moon and sunlight, our limestone cliffs and trickling springs." Louise McNeill was appointed Poet Laureate of West Virginia in 1979. She died in 1993.

Where do the roads go,
The ruined country roads flow,
Fern-clogged and weed-bogged, wandering the hills?
Nowhere that I know, by shad-blow and fence-row,
By woods where the lilacs grow,
By the rotted sills.

What can a road feel?
How can this sorrow heal?
Sole mark and wagon wheel passing through the day,
Grain load and apple load creaking down the hilly road,
All of the life that flowed,
Now gone away.

Where do the roads wind?
What do they go to find,
Crossing on the mountain tops and meeting by the shores,
Swamp-locked and briar-blocked, searching for the rib-rocked
Men of mountain stock,
By their empty doors,

Frost-pocked and bur-docked.
Winding through the passes
Where the dying chestnut trees reach their shriveled arms,
Thorn-crossed and time-lost, through the tangled grasses,
All the little country roads,
Searching for the farms...

"Where Do the Roads Go?" from *Paradox Hill: From Appalachia to Lunar Shore*. Reprinted with permission by West Virginia University Press, Copyright 2009. Edited and with an introduction by A. E. Stringer.

III. Go Dig My Grave (anonymous)

Like many tunes found in Appalachia, much of this song dates back to 18th-century Britain. Originally entitled "The Butcher's Boy," the ballad tells the tragic tale of a young girl who commits suicide after being jilted by her lover. Her father finds her dead body, along with a note expressing her final wishes. Once the song made its way to the mountains of Kentucky, the "butcher boy" became the "railroad boy" and is sometimes known by that name. There are also remnants of the Bahaman-Negro spiritual that contains a similar line, "Go and dig my grave both long and narrow." It was popularized by Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson in the folksong revival of the 1960's and covered later by Joan Baez and Bob Dylan in 1976 as "She Died of Love".

She went upstairs to make her bed
An' not a word to her mother said
Her mother she went upstairs too
Sayin', "Daughter, oh daughter what troubles you?"

"Oh mother, mother I cannot tell
That railroad boy that I loved so well
He's courted me my life away
An' now at home I long to stay."

"Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy, Lord.
Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy, me."

"There is a place in yonder town
Where my love goes an' sits him down
An' takes a strange girl on his knees
An' he tells to her what he won't tell me."

Her father he came home from work
Sayin', "Where's my daughter, she seems so hurt"
He went upstairs to give her hope
An' found her hangin' by a rope.

He took his knife an' cut her down
An' on her bosom these words he found.

"Go dig my grave both wide an' deep
Put a marble stone at my head an' feet
An' on my breast put a white snow dove
To tell the world that I died of love."

IV. Voices of Loved Ones

The texts for this song come from a variety of sources. The words from "Twilight A-Stealing" (Aldine Sillman Kieffer, 1840-1904, American shape-note proponent) are combined with fragments from "Take Me Back to Home and Mother" (Arthur W. French, 1875) as well as a line from a traditional Appalachian song, "The Cuckoo."

Voices of loved ones,
Songs of the past,
Still linger round me,
While life shall last.
Lonely I wander, sadly I roam,
Seeking my far-off home.

Twilight a gleamin',
Over the sea,
Shadows a-fallin',
Dark on the lea,
Born on the nightwind,
Voices of yore,
Come from a far-off shore.

Take me back to home and mother,
I am weary wanderin' here,
There can never be another
Place on earth so dear.

Come in the twilight, (Wish I had a needle and thread)
Come, come to me, (Fine as I could sew)
Bringing a message over the sea, (Dum, diggy,-dum, dum, dum)
Come, come to me.
Cheering my pathway,
While here I roam,
Seeking my far-off home.

Far away, beyond the starry skies,
Where the lovelight never, never dies,
Gleameth a mansion filled with delight,
Sweet happy home so bright.

The cuckoo, she's a pretty bird,
She sings as she flies,
She brings us glad tidings,
And she tells us no lies.

Composer **Sally Lamb McCune** has been described as "contemporary, edgy, descriptive, and extremely soulful." She has become an important voice in the rising generation of American composers. Her works, which range from solo and chamber pieces to

music for chorus, wind ensemble and orchestra, are convincing and evocative, often blending the traditional with the avant-garde. Lamb McCune lives and works in Ithaca, New York, where she teaches at Ithaca College.

All the Pretty Little Horses

Different people give different backgrounds of this piece. Most commonly, the song is thought to be of African American origin. While versions exist with lyrics that show the song's African American roots, the rest of the song still leaves questions as to its origin. The lyrics "you shall have cake" and "you shall have all the pretty little ponies" suggest that the song may have originally come from another source. Many people assume the song to be from Irish or English origins upon initially hearing the melody of the lullaby.

The best-known versions of the song are written from the perspective of the mother or caretaker singing a baby to sleep. The singer is promising the child that when he or she awakes the child "shall have all the pretty little horses."

This arrangement is by Douglas E. Wagner, a native of Chicago and award-winning composer. He taught high school for 30 years but currently devotes all of his time to composition.

The False Young Man

This arrangement is by Donald Patriquin and is from a set of six songs of early Canada. This particular one is from Ontario and tells the story of a woman who is quite upset with her young man for lying to her and courting other girls. There are three speakers in the song. The person hearing the conversation between the wronged young woman and her lover, the young woman, and the lover. There is a twist at the end. Does she really have a right to be angry? You decide.

Donald Patriquin (b. 1938, Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada) was eleven when he began to compose, and though his musical career was briefly "interrupted" by studies in biology he was always involved in music as composer, performer, teacher, accompanist, organist and conductor.

He graduated from McGill and Toronto Universities where he studied composition with István Anhalt - once a pupil of Bartok and Kodaly - and John Weinzweig respectively. As professor at McGill's Faculty of Music for many years, he taught theory, musicianship and arranging, and directed a variety of ensembles. He now free-lances from his native Eastern Townships in Quebec, Canada.

Somos Tejedoras

The Women's Chorale learned this piece by rote from Rhiannon when WeBe3 visited in February. We have added poetry by various members which you will hear woven into the song.

Go 'way from my window

Composer John Jacob Niles wrote about his composition:

"In 1908 my father had in his employ an African American ditch-digger known as Objerall Jacket. As he dug, he sang, "Go way from my window, go way from my door" -- just those words, over and over again, on two notes. Working beside Jacket all day (I was sixteen at the time), I decided that something had to be done. The results were a four-verse song dedicated to a blue-eyed, blond girl, who didn't think much of my efforts. The song lay fallow from 1908 to 1929, when I arranged it and transposed to a higher key. "Go 'way from my window" was first sung successfully in Berlin, Germany, in 1930. It has gone a long way since."

John Jacob Niles (April 28, 1892—March 1, 1980) was an American composer, singer, and collector of traditional ballads. Called the "Dean of American Balladeers", Niles had an important influence on the American folk music revival of the 1950s and 1960s, with Joan Baez, Burl Ives, and Peter, Paul and Mary, among others, recording his songs.

He became a serious student of Appalachian folk music by transcribing traditional songs from oral sources while an itinerant employee of the Burroughs Corporation in eastern Kentucky, from 1910 to 1917. After serving in the U.S. Army Air Service during World War I, in which he was injured, he studied music in France, first in Lyon, then in Paris at the Schola Cantorum, also meeting Gertrude Stein. Returning to the United States in 1920, he continued his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. In the 1920s, Niles began publishing music. Niles was also a noted songwriter. His songs, many of which are based on traditional sources, include "Venezuela," and the haunting Christmas song "I Wonder As I Wander." Later in life, Niles published compositions in a more classical style, including works for choir and art songs for voice and piano. The latter include his last work, a setting of poems by Thomas Merton.

Hamisha Asar

Flory Jagoda had a happy youth spent with her Nona (grandmother) in the Bosnian village Vlasenica and with her parents in Sarajevo. After the horrors of World War II, Flory married Sergeant Harry Jagoda from

Youngstown, Ohio, and moved to the United States. The songs that Flory Jagoda and her three children perform celebrate the life and traditions of the Bosnian Sephardim, a rich Jewish heritage that was kept alive by the Sephardic Jews forced out of Spain in 1492.

"Hamisha Asar" are the Ladino words (the Spanish Hebrew language spoken by the Sephardic Jews) for "Tu Be'Shevat," the Jewish holiday in the spring that celebrates the time when sap begins flowing in the trees. Flory Jagoda remembers that "we children would go house to house, carrying a colorful bag made by our mothers, to gather the customary fifteen kinds of fruit and join in the festivities."

Translation:

*Hamisha Asar, Hamisha Asar
Come to visit us, we will sing*

*The hostess awaits us
With 15 platters of fruit*

*Blessed by his name, Lord of the Universe
Fruits of Israel*

*Hamisha Asar, Hamisha Asar
Come to visit us, let us dance*

*The hostess awaits us
With baklava and coffee*

Tembandumba

Translation of the text by Luis Palés Matos, Pucho Escalante, and Paquito D'Rivera, translation by Eric Galimando:

*There she goes, Tembandumba of Quimbamba, Mulata of the rumba.
Get out of her way. Lead in with maracas and bongos.*

*Island of the Caribbean, from the lit streets of the Antillanna she
comes. Sounds of maracas and bongos, walking down the street,
Dance.*

*There she goes walking between two rows of dark faces. Before her a
congo, bongo band thumps. A bombastic conga - maracas. Even far
away you can hear the skin of bongos, the rhythm of the dance and
the congo.*

*Dancing as she sways her hips, she advances, She moves her lithe
body with slight sensual movements, like rivers of sugar cane and*

molasses.

The mill of sensual harvest. Her colossal hips, those massive mortars, make rhythms ooze, sweat bleed like blood, and all this sensual movement culmintates in dance. It's good sound? The flower of the Virgin Islands, The Rose of Uganda. Haiti offers its gourds; Jamaica pours its fiery rum. Cuba says, "Give us what you have, Mulata, sweet as sugar."

Get down my dark love-crazed rascals. To jangle the drums and shake the maracas.

They say there is a land where honey is sweeter.

They say there is a land where they punish people for working, where honey is sweeter and give to those with dark skin.

Let's go!

The composer, **Paquito D'Rivera** says that the title is inspired by "Tembandumba de la Quimbamba," the main character of the poem Majestad Negra (Black Majesty) by Puerto Rican poet Luis Palés Matos. Although he used some extra lyrics and onomatopoeic sounds for rhythmic effects, the beautiful poetry of the Puerto Rican maestro stays intact in all its grace and glory. This is D'Rivera's tribute to the master poet from Borinquen.

Paquito D'Rivera is an award-winning composer, conductor, performer, and author. Born in Havana, Cuba, D'Rivera performed at age 10 with the National Theater Orchestra, studied at the Havana Conservatory, and at 17, became a featured soloist with the Cuban National Symphony. An explorer in the global musical landscape, he has written and conducted works for full orchestra, big bands, small ensembles, and led his own trailblazing jazz groups for over 40 years. Awards include the national Medal of the Arts, Honorary Doctorates from the University of Pennsylvania and the Berklee College of Music, and a Guggenheim Fellowship in Music Composition. He has won 9 NARAS Grammy Awards.

Blessing

This setting of the Irish Blessing has been sung by the Women's Chorale members every year when people leave the ensemble, and at every spring concert. We invite former members of women's chorale to come and sing with us.

Personnel

Ithaca College Women's Chorale

Soprano I - Soprano II

Hannah Abrams
Leanne Averill
Emily Behrmann-Fowler
Jenna Bock
Anne Carlin
Elizabeth Cooney
Kendra Domotor
Emily DeMarzio
Gina Fortunato
Jennifer Giustino
Katherine Gould
Mollie Hamilton
Meghan Kelly
Laura McCauley
Kathryn O'Brien
Josi Petersen
Kelly Timko
Victoria Trifiletti
Penelope-Myles Voss

Soprano II

Brittney Aiken
Shelley Attadgie
Haelin Kim
Lauren Smith

Soprano II - Alto I

Janine Colletti
Alyce Daubenspeck
Taylor Eike
Mattina Keith
Hillary Robbins

Alto I

Kimberly Hawley
Alexandria Kemp
Gillian Lacey
Zohaniris Torres
Caitlin Walton
Ariana Warren

Alto I - Alto II

Megan Brust
Ashleigh Ciambriello
Helen Morley
Kirstine Purcell
Rebecca Saltzman

Alto II

Katie Bickford
Sarah Fears
Mika Genatossio
Molly Korroch
Molly McAnany
Paola Nieves-Rodriguez