

CHOIR ROSTER

Soprano

Claire Delcourt
Lucy Mathias
Rebekah Rochte
Kelsey Rothera
Leah Towarnicky

Alto

Rebecca Phillips
Claire Seely
Kate Tidaback
Andrea Williams
Arianna Zell

Tenor

Dylan Echter
Christian Pelfrey
Alec Marshall Honey Saxe
Patrick Willis

Bass

Alexander Blaha
Tim Koch
Ethan Roday
S. Jacob Saracco

The College of William & Mary
Department of Music
Presents

My Soul in Rapture Soars: A Senior Lecture-Recital

Jake Nelson, conductor

Sunday, March 26, 2011

2:00 pm

Great Hall of the Sir Christopher Wren Building

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for a
Bachelor of Arts Degree with a major in Music.*

Jake Nelson is a music and French literature double major from Williamsburg, Virginia. He has studied jazz voice under Stephanie Nakasian and conducting under Angela Holt and Akiko Fujimoto. During the past four years, he has also been a member of the William & Mary Choir, the Botetourt Chamber Singers, Opera Workshop, Sinfonicron Light Opera Company, DoubleTake, and the Gentlemen of the College. He will be forever gracious and thankful for the warm welcome he received from the faculty and students of the Music Department during his four years at the College.

Special Thanks to: the students and faculty of the Music Department, especially Professors Jamie Bartlett, James Armstrong, and Anne Rasmussen for their unwavering support and guidance; Professor Magali Compan from the French Department for being the sort of adviser of which a student could only dream; Louise Kale and the staff of the Christopher Wren Building; Christian Amonson for recording of this concert; my former Catholic Sunday school teachers; all eighteen of the students listed above who, for no reason other than to help a friend create music, gave up so much of their free time to rehearse for this recital; all those performers who have worked so hard to sustain the tradition of the African-American spiritual, especially (in my own life) Kathleen Battle, Barbara Hendricks, and the Moses Hogan Chorale; and my mother Christine Nelson for her endless love, her inspiring faith, and her delicious baked goods.

Please join us downstairs in the Wren Kitchen for an informal reception.

My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord

Leah Towarnicky, *soprano*
Patrick Willis, *tenor*

Traditional Spiritual
arr. Moses Hogan
(1957 – 2003)

De Blin' Man Stood on de Road an' Cried

Traditional Spiritual
arr. Hogan

O Holy Lord

R. Nathaniel Dett
(1882 – 1943)

The Sixty-Seventh Psalm

Charles Ives
(1874 – 1954)

i thank You God for most this amazing day

Kelsey Rothera, *soprano*

Eric Whitacre
(1970 –)

PROGRAM NOTES

The title of this recital comes from a poem by Phillis Wheatley, an eighteenth-century slave who was the first African American woman ever to have her work published. The poem, "Thoughts on the Works of Providence," goes on at length about the glories of God. One passage in particular stuck out to me as inspiration for this program:

So rich, so various are thy beauteous dies,
That spread through all the circuit of the skies,
That, full of thee, my soul in rapture soars,
And thy great God, the cause of all adores. (43-46)

That feeling of complete lightness and freeness in one's soul is one that I sometimes feel when I am singing or listening to great music, when I just let myself be enveloped by beautiful sound. While I was raised in the first half of my life as a rather devout Catholic, I do not today consider myself a religious person. But the idea of a *spirit* that moves one to sing, as is often mentioned in the African-American spiritual tradition, is one to which I can and do wholeheartedly relate.

The goal of this lecture-recital is to look at histories of different American religious musics and to analyze times and places where they have come into contact and influenced each other. The idea of "contact zones," specific social settings where different cultures can meet and clash, is often used in analyzing literature and colonialism, but it seemed equally appropriate in looking at American Protestant music and the often overlapping dialogue between parallel black and white musical histories, a dialogue that began with the arrival of the first slaves to the United States and that doubtlessly continues today. This lecture-recital is, in its own way, both an examination of that historical dialogue and a continuation of its present-day permutation.

But beyond that, this lecture-recital is about music as a way to transcend the terrestrial, to glorify what is great around us, and to create sounds that can resonate into the depths of the unknown, no matter what we believe.

The Accidentals is an all-female a cappella group that has been active at the College for over 15 years. Recognized by their signature red scarves, the ladies frequently perform at events on and off campus throughout the year and enjoy traveling around the US during their annual fall tour.

SONG TEXTS

My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord *Traditional African-American spiritual*

My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

Before I'd stay in hell one day,
I'd sing and pray myself away.
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.
Goin' shout an' pray an' never stop
Until I reach the mountaintop
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

Do you love Him? Oh yes!
Hallelujah! God almighty.
Are you anchored? Yes I'm anchored.
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

Will you serve him? Oh yes!
Hallelujah! God almighty.
Are you anchored? Yes I'm anchored.
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

Will you praise him? Oh yes!
Hallelujah! God almighty.
Are you anchored? Lord, I'm anchored.
Lord, I love you. Lord, I'll serve you.
Lord, I'll praise you. Hallelujah!
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

De Blin' Man Stood on de Road an' Cried *Traditional African-American spiritual*

O de blin' man stood on de road an' cried.
Cryin' O my Lord save me.
De blin' man stood on de road an' cried.

Cryin' dat he might recieeb his sight.
Cryin' O my Lord save me.
De blin' man stood on de road an' cried.

Cryin' what kind o' shoes am dose you wear?
Cryin' O my Lord save me.
De blin' man stood on de road an' cried.

Cryin' dese shoes I wear am de Gospel shoes.
Cryin' O my Lord save me.
De blin' man stood on de road an' cried.

O Holy Lord

Text from "The Story of the Jubilee Singers"

O Holy Lord,
Done with sin and sorrow.

The Sixty-Seventh Psalm

Text from the King James Bible

1. God be merciful unto us, and bless us;
And cause his face to shine upon us;
2. That thy way may be known upon earth,
thy saving health among all nations.
3. Let the people praise thee, O God;
Let all the people praise thee.
4. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy:
for thou shalt judge the people righteously,
and govern the nations upon the earth.
5. Let the people praise thee, O God;
let all the people praise thee.
6. Then shall the earth yield her increase;
and God, even our own God, shall bless us.
7. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth
shall fear him.

i thank You God for this most amazing day

Text by E. E. Cummings

i thank You God for most this amazing
day:for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any--lifted from the no
of all nothing--human merely being
doubt unimaginaire You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)