



LOWER BRANDYWINE CHORAL FESTIVAL 2025

FINAL CONCERT

July 20, 2025 at 4pm

Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church

Zoe Yost, director

Aurelien Eulert, collaborative pianist

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Program Order:

"Yom ha-Shishi" from Shirim L'Yom Tov	Shulamit Ran (b. 1949)
Dhīre-dhīre	Reena Esmail (b. 1983)
I had no time to Hate	Ellen Gilson Voth (b. 1972)
Kayra Sillo	Trad. West African arr. Fred Onovwerosuoke (b. 1960)
"The Owl" from Four Bird Songs	Alan Bullard (b. 1947)
Ad te levavi oculos meos	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525-1594)
Eletelephony	Ben Parry (b. 1965)
My Flame the Song	Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980)

Program Notes:

“Yom ha-Shishi” from Shirim L’Yom Tov - Shulamit Ran (b. 1949)

Text from Haftorah Bereshit - Genesis I, II

“Yom ha-Shishi” is the second of a four-piece set written by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Shulamit Ran, for the Bar Mitzvah celebrations of her two sons. The Hebrew text is excerpted from the Torah—specifically Genesis I and II—and tells of the sixth and seventh days of creation. Hebrew transliteration has been extracted directly from the musical score.

Vaihi erev, vaihi voker, vayar Elohim ki tov. Vayar Elohim, et kol asher asa, v’hinei tov m’od.
Erev boker

yom ha-shishi, vaihi erev yom ha-shishi, vayar Elohim ki tov. Vay’chal Elohim bayom hashvi’i,
m’lach’to

asher asa. Vayish’bot bayom hashvi’i mikol m’lach’to asher asa. Vaivarech Elohim, et yom
hashvi’i,

vaikadeish oto kivo shavat mikol m’lach’to.

And there was evening, and there was morning... And God saw that it was good... And God saw every thing that was made, And, behold, it was very good. And there was evening... the sixth day. And on the seventh day God completed the work which God had made, and rested on the seventh day from the work of creation. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because in it God rested from all the work...

Dhīre-dhīre - Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Indian-American composer Reena Esmail, a bridge builder between Western and Hindustani music, sets a poem by Indian mystic poet Kabir.

Dhīre-dhīre re manā

Dhīre sub kūch hōya

Mālī sīche sau ghaṛā

Ritū āye, phal hōya.

Little by little, dear mind

Gradually, everything comes to be

The gardener can water a hundred times

But the fruit only comes in spring.

I had no time to Hate - Ellen Gilson Voth (b. 1972)

Conductor, keyboardist, teacher and composer Ellen Gilson Voth offers the following program note to accompany her setting of Emily Dickinson's I had no time to Hate:

"When I was given a book of Emily Dickinson poetry, years ago, I had no idea how her succinct, deep reflections on life would inspire my work as a composer. I hope her words will be as inspiring and life-giving for everyone who comes in contact with this piece.

"Time is short. The time we find to Love is what gives our world hope. Keep making the most of the time you have, to be that beacon of hope."

I had no time to Hate

I had no time to Hate—

Because The Grave would hinder Me—

And life was not so

Ample I

Could finish—Enmity

Nor had I time to Love—

but since

Some Industry must be—

The little Toil of Love—

I thought

Be large enough for Me—

Kayra Sillo - Trad. West African arr. Fred Onovwerosuoke (b. 1960)

Award-winning composer Fred Onovwerosuoke, an avid researcher of African musical traditions, offers us an arrangement of Kayra Sillo, a Mandingo wedding processional from Senegal.

Aye yee wo, kayra sillo le yeng naati.

Nkaaliye'nsi nong dee ma, fona ko si

bang, bang, bang.

The way of peace,

the way of perfect peace is here.

Through love and mutual harmony

we shall make our song for peace.

“The Owl” from Four Bird Songs - Alan Bullard (b. 1947)

British composer Alan Bullard’s “The Owl” sets Alfred Lord Tennyson’s poem of the same name, taking an owl’s eye view of town.

When cats run home and light is come,

And dew is cold upon the ground,

And the far-off stream is dumb,

And the whirring sail goes round,

And the whirring sail goes round;

Alone and warming his five wits,

The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,

And rarely smells the new-mown hay,

And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch

Twice or thrice his roundelay,

Twice or thrice his roundelay;

Alone and warming his five wits,

The white owl in the belfry sits.

Ad te levavi oculos meos - Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525-1594)

Renowned for his intricate, fluent counterpoint, the Italian Renaissance icon Palestrina composed hundreds of masses, motets, and other sacred and secular vocal works. *Ad te levavi oculos meos* is his setting of Psalm 123:1-2.

Ad te levavi oculos meos qui habitas in caelis.

Ecce, sicut oculi servorum in manibus dominorum suorum,

Sicut oculi ancillae in manibus dominae suae,

Ita oculi nostri ad Dominum Deum nostrum donec misereatur nostri.

To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven.

Behold as the eyes of the servants are on the hands of their masters,

As the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress:

so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us.

Eletelephony - Ben Parry (b. 1965)

Ben Parry, director of London Voices, has contributed his own take on Laura Elizabeth Richards' whimsical Eletelephony. Often set to music, this clever poem holds charm both for children and adults, a testament to the skill and heart of its Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant—
No! No! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone—
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)
Howe'er it was, he got his trunk
Entangled in the telephunk;
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee—
(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong!)

My Flame the Song - Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980)

The collaboration between Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen and Welsh-Scottish librettist Euan Tait has produced a warm and stirring piece on the very topic at hand: music itself.

I give this flame, my flame the song,
I pass it from my life to yours,
it gathers strength, through names we've loved,
you catch the flame and your name shines.
The fragile flame held in the heart,
it joins us all, love to love.
The human voice, our flame the song,
so fierce its flame, it cries out love,
love gathering, love burning,
the life of music's heart.
We know the wounds, the tear of grief,
the flame extinguished, sudden dark,

the silent voice, the empty road,
the lives we love torn out by the roots.

The fragile flame held in the heart,
it joins us all, love to love.

The human voice, our flame the song,
so fierce its flame, it cries out love,
so far off, yet calling,
to lives on distant shores.

We gaze at love,
love gazes back;
see, love's tears

burn on the ground,
love catches fire from our pain.

The fragile flame held in the heart,
it joins us all, love to love.

The human voice, our flame the song,
so fierce its flame, it cries out love
approaching, and calling
to lives that cry for song.

We're drawn to light, drawn to the heart,
drawn to this music, fire of song;
our fears transform, through music's pain,
to fire of life, compassion, flame.

The fragile flame held in the heart,
it joins us all, love to love.

The human voice, our flame the song,
so fierce its flame, it cries out love
approaching and calling,
a healing song of life.

THE CHORUS

Soprano

Genevieve Hahn*

Renee Lamoreaux

Janice Harper

Karen Zecher

Deborah Harper

Laura Hull

Alto

Leslie Sherman

Katharine Gibson

Demelza Davies

Kim Cole

Jane Wilson

Therese Taha

Alexandra Bermel

Tenor

Noah Donahue*

Sarah Yost

Oliver Yost

Rob Hull

Jan King

Bass

Stephen Johnson

Doug Kurtze

Dennis Witmer

Bill Taylor

Rob Kennan

**Section Leader*

GUEST ARTISTS

Noah Donahue, tenor soloist and section leader

Noah Donahue, tenor, hails from Huntingtown Maryland and currently resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Recent performance highlights include the role of Count Almaviva in The Barber of Seville, Don Basilio in Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro, Rodolfo in Puccini's La Bohème, Alfredo Germont in La Traviata, and Jacob in the world premiere opera film The Golem of Prague with the University of Florida in collaboration with the UF School of Digital Worlds. Noah received a Bachelors in Vocal Performance from Indiana University and a Masters from the University of Florida. He can be heard singing at the Victor Café in south Philadelphia as well as with the New Jersey Masterchorale and Philadelphia Orchestra Symphonic Choir.

Aurelien Eulert, collaborative pianist

Hailing from Alsace, France, Aurelien Eulert has been on the music staff of Charlottesville Opera, Opera Memphis, OperaDelaware, Opera Roanoke, Palm Beach Opera, Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, USC Thornton Opera, UCLA Alpert School of Music, Pacific Opera Project and the Los Angeles Opera Education department.

Aurelien's recent seasons included a return to the theatre stage with OperaDelaware and Opera Baltimore, and his debut with Opera Philadelphia, Opera Southwest and Opera Montana. In Philadelphia, he has been the Music Director of East Passyunk Opera Project since 2019, and involved with Liberty City Arts since 2024.

Aside from opera, Aurelien regularly performs in art song recitals, choral concerts and musical theatre pits. This season, he is involved in productions all over Delaware schools such as Wilmington Friends School, Sanford School and Salesianum School.

His 2024/25 season also includes a return to Opera Montana in the Spring, and debuts at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Aurelien holds degrees from the Conservatoire National de Strasbourg, Syracuse University and the University of Southern California and attended the Tanglewood Music Center in the summer of 2010.

Genevieve Hahn, soprano soloist and section leader

Genevieve Hahn, a coloratura/lyric soprano and flutist, is excited to be the soprano section leader for LBPC's 2nd Annual Choral Festival. She earned two Master's degrees summa cum laude from the University of Delaware in Flute Performance and Vocal Performance. Genevieve has performed and studied across Europe on both instruments. Her notable vocal roles include Alcina in *La liberazione di Ruggiero*, Nausicaa in *Penelope* and the Geese, and four Gilbert and Sullivan leads. She's a frequent guest artist and ensemble member in the tri-state area and performs diverse vocal solo recitals featuring everything from opera to jazz standards.

Genevieve prioritizes benefit concerts, such as those combating human trafficking, and enjoys studying multiple foreign languages, including Italian, German, French, Russian, Spanish, and ASL.

Zoe Yost, Artistic Director

A gritty, imaginative wayfinder, Zoe Yost centers her artistic life at the crossroads. A composer, violist, conductor, singer, poet, novelist, and visual artist, she finds her voice where disciplines collide, connect, and conflict. She studies viola with Dimitri Murrath and composition with Dr. David Conte.

Yost was the winner of San Francisco Conservatory's Low Strings Concerto Competition in 2024, and will perform Bartók Viola Concerto with SFCM Orchestra this October. She composes for a variety of ensembles, and her compositions has been premiered by artists including David Friend, members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, Genevieve Hahn, Choral Chameleon Ensemble, San Francisco Choral Artists, and Eight Strings & A Whistle. She is also passionate about building community through music and, to that end, she founded the Lower Brandywine Choral Festival in 2024.

FESTIVAL PATRONS

Sandra Borrer and Dave Baldt

Kristi Bayerlein

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Janet and Paul Haldeman

The Major Family

Dorsey, Brud, and Brent Reese

Lew Sears

Sarah and Oliver Yost

Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

Lisa Adams

Sandra Borrer

Kim Cole

Tricia Dewey

Will and Dorie Hahn

Sean and Becky Kennedy

Betsy McCreary

Oliver and Sarah Yost

MISSION STATEMENT

Lower Brandywine Choral Festival was founded in 2024 to bring music lovers from many different generations, religious backgrounds, and political orientations together in joyful singing, while exploring the vibrant, centuries-long tradition of choral music and offering a budget-friendly option to those with limited musical opportunities. Learn more at www.zoeyostvcw.com/choral-festival.

Our gratitude to everyone who has made the Festival's second season a success.



*Please help us reach our \$1500 fundraising goal for
the Delaware Food Bank! DONATE NOW!*



Please join us downstairs after the concert for a potluck reception!