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# Program

## Your Stars to Hold

Stuart Beatch (b. 1991) \*

Soloists: Vita Lorence,  
David Dykstra,  
Alex Thompson

## Constellation (excerpts)

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

- i. From the Sea  
Soloist: Katrina Smith
- ii. The Falling Star

## Let It Be Forgotten

Stephen Chatman (b. 1950) \*

## There Will Come Soft Rains

Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

## Only in Sleep

Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

Tegan Hyrciw, Soprano solo

## Spring Rain †

Katerina Gimon (b. 1993) \*

Aaron Addorisio, percussion

## Sorrow Into Song †

Christine Donkin (b. 1976) \*

## intermission

## In a Railroad Station

David von Kampen (b. 1986)

## Snow Song

from Three Winter Songs

Trent Worthington (b. 1963) \*

## Alchemy

Karen P. Thomas (b. 1957)

## The Music of Stillness

Elaine Hagenberg (b. 1979)

## Stars

Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

† Premiere

\* Canadian Composer



# Welcome!

This evening's program has had a tumultuous journey from concept to realization! Conceived ahead of our 2019-2020 season, the planned performance in April 2020 was one of the first casualties of the pandemic for Chronos. A reboot planned last year also was ultimately not to be. Finally making this concert production a reality has involved retooling of the concept, length, instrumentation, and more. But the core is as always envisioned: the timeless and wonderful words of American lyric poet Sara Teasdale, as set by many contemporary composers, including several favourite—and, for followers of our video releases over the pandemic, familiar—works by prolific Latvian composer Ēriks Ešenvalds.

This program features premieres of two new works by Canadians. First, *Spring Rain* by Katerina Gimon, commissioned by Chronos in 2020, delivered more than a year ago, and finally being presented to an audience. We've been excited to work with Katerina, including a virtual workshop with her last weekend, and look forward to having her here in person in the future. The second premiere is *Sorrow Into Song* by Christine Donkin, whose *In Paradisum* you may recall us performing most recently in the fall. This new work is the result of a consortium commission project organized by Graphite Publishing; partaking in this type of project allows us support a publisher working with Canadian composers and to connect with ambitious choral ensembles internationally. A repeat performance of Stuart Beatch's *Your Stars to Hold* opens the program; written in 2019 and the winner of our composition competition in that year, we premiered it in November 2021.

We're excited to again collaborate with Kim Cousineau at the piano. Our relationship with Kim goes as far back as the choir's inaugural rehearsal in 2013, and ever since then he has been a go-to collaborator, primarily as a rehearsal pianist. We don't often perform with piano in concert, and it's a pleasure to include him in this production. Selections featuring Kim include the jazz-inspired *In a Railroad Station* by David von Kampen, the serene and affirming *The Music of Stillness* by Elaine Hagenberg, *Snow Song* by Trent Worthington (which was included on our 2016 album of Trent's music – and he's here to hear it!), and the ebullient *Alchemy* by

Karen Thomas. The latter work was written as part of a fundraising project in support of Chorus America during the pandemic, and we're pleased to be a part of that in our small way.

All the bumps along the road to fruition are made worthwhile when we get to share an hour with you, our audience, and make music happen. We look forward to more and more of that in the coming months.

## Program Note

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American lyric poet Sara Teasdale (1884-1933) was "first, last, and always a singer."<sup>1</sup>

She would overtly characterize her poems as songs, humming melodies as she wrote. Though flowing from an outwardly guarded and private person, her writing possessed deeply personal and evocative emotion. Given her "gentle yet persistent rhythm... and simple, direct diction, her poems have become natural vehicles for choral expression."

Relatively traditional in style and form, her distinctiveness was in great precision in choosing words; as critic and biographer William Drake would write, "for Teasdale the point of a lyric was not merely to state an emotion ... but to clarify and analyze, to coax it from the dim regions of disquiet into consciousness." Nature and its elements feature strongly in her work, both literally and as metaphor. Composer Frank Ticheli notes that "feelings of longing and melancholy – never far from the surface – are poignantly balanced by feelings of hope and an underlying sense of awe and wonder."

Born in St. Louis into a wealthy family, she was physically unwell throughout her life. Victorian sensibilities resulted in her spending considerable time in isolation. After entering private school at age 10, Teasdale continued to spend most time within the family home; this would continue well into adulthood. After three years involved with the publishing of a literary magazine, her first poetry collections were published in 1907 and 1911 and begin to attract critical acclaim, further achieved by the best-selling *Rivers to the Sea* in 1915, and ultimately by the Pulitzer Prize winning *Love Songs* in 1917.

The development of her poetic persona parallels certain events of her life, not least in the area of romantic love. A relationship with poet Vachel Lindsay ended with a rejected proposal of marriage (Lindsay's limited financial means being a factor), and would be followed by a marriage to admirer and businessman Ernst Filsinger in 1914 and a move in 1916 to New York City. She eventually became lonely due to his regular traveling, and filed for divorce in 1929. She later renewed a friendship with Lindsay, who was now himself married with children, but continued to live alone.

Beset by physical ailments and chronic depression which were exacerbated by financial difficulties and loss of community, she ended her life in 1933 with an overdose of sleeping pills. In her last poems written, published posthumously in the collection *Strange Victory*, Teasdale "shows her characteristic emphasis upon the... aloofness of the human soul amid perishable things and fugitive emotions." From that collection comes *There Will Be Rest*, including the hopeful text "I shall find the crystal of peace." May we be so fortunate as to find in her words the peace that she could not find in this life.

Thanks for joining us.

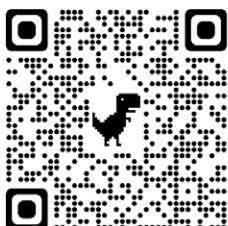


**Jordan Van Bier**  
Founder & Conductor, Chronos Vocal Ensemble

<sup>1</sup> Except where noted, quotations are from a November 2009 Choral Journal article entitled "Teasdale at 125" by Natasia Sexton Cain.

## Get extended program notes for this performance

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Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera  
for a link to extended program notes to music on  
today's program

or visit

[https://chronosvocalensemble.com/  
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# CHRONOS

## vocal ensemble

### SOPRANO

Natassja By  
Virginia Clevette  
Jessica Heine  
Tegan Hryciw  
Rebecca Patterson  
Katrina Smith  
Amanda Wong

### ALTO

Erin Crocker  
Deanna Davis  
Vita Lorence  
Roxanne Runyon  
Anne-Marie Switzer  
Alex Thompson

### TENOR

Thomas Bergen  
David Dykstra  
Isabela Ramos  
Jason Ragan  
Tim To  
Andrew Whiteside

### BASS

Cole Dorchester  
Kurt Illerbrun  
Chad Ohman  
Justin Strand  
Noah Wright  
Anthony Wynne

A “rapidly rising star in the Canadian choral scene” (Anacrusis), Chronos Vocal Ensemble was founded in 2013 by Jordan Van Biert, and since its inception has built a reputation for innovation and excellence. Through a process of collaborative learning and careful preparation, the choir delivers an exceptional choral music experience that elevates the spirit and connects a community of music lovers in Edmonton and beyond.

The ensemble has delighted audiences through its subscription seasons of concerts in Edmonton, on tours of four Canadian provinces, and at conferences of Choir Alberta, Choral Canada and the American Choral Directors’ Association. Tracks from the choir’s three recorded albums are regularly featured on CBC’s Choral Concert. Collaborators have included the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Alberta Baroque Ensemble, Vocal Alchemy, Spiritus Chamber Choir (Calgary), Da Camera Singers and Edmonton Youth Choir.

In 2015 Chronos was awarded the Healey Willan Grand Prize in the National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs, and in 2016 given a performance award in the City of Edmonton’s Salute to Excellence for bringing recognition to the City. In March 2020, the choir undertook its first international tour, performing in Idaho and Washington states. To contribute to the ongoing development of the Canadian choral scene, with the support of generous donors Chronos has engaged in commissioning projects and an annual composition competition.





## **Jordan Van Biert** conductor

Over the past decade, Jordan has emerged as a respected choral leader and organization builder, uniting singers in the common goal of creating rich musical experiences – for themselves, for each other, and for audiences. Jordan is an experienced conductor, a passionate teacher, and an accomplished singer

Jordan founded Chronos Vocal Ensemble in 2013 to pursue excellence in choral performance with a non-professional ensemble. His work with the choir has gained wide recognition: he has been recognized with a nomination as Emerging Artist in Edmonton's Mayor's Celebration of the Arts, and in 2016 received the Con Spirito award from Choir Alberta, for "spirit, dedication, and commitment to choral music in the Province of Alberta." The same year, he was part of a group of international conductors selected to conduct the Stuttgart Chamber Choir in performance as part of a masterclass with Frieder Bernius.

Jordan also conducts the community chorus Vocal Alchemy, and the daytime choir called Ante Meridiem. He serves as workshop leader, adjudicator, and organizational consultant. During the pandemic he has enjoyed learning more about audio and video editing, and continued to explore interests in permaculture gardening, sustainable building practices, and the frustrating game of golf.

More at [jordanvanbiert.com](http://jordanvanbiert.com)



## **Kim Cousineau** piano

Kim received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Victoria, and studied privately with Anna Cal, student of Russian pianist Pavel Egorov. He is an alumnus of Opera Nuova's collaborative pianist program and has studied at the Franz Schubert Institute in Baden, Austria. Kim has worked as a répétiteur and music director for numerous organizations including Pacific Opera Victoria, Opera Nuova, Mercury Opera, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, MacEwan Theatre, and Concordia University of Edmonton. He is in high demand as a choral accompanist, collaborating with many groups including Da Camera Singers, Chronos Vocal Ensemble, Vocal Alchemy, Joyful Noise, Ante Meridiem, and student ensembles at both Concordia and King's Universities. In 2012, Kim was the recipient of the BC Choral Federation's Joyce O. Maguire Award for outstanding long-term service as a choral accompanist. In addition to his work with choirs, Kim freelances as a vocal coach and studio pianist in the Edmonton area.,



## **Katerina Gimon** composer

Composer, improviser, and vocalist Katerina Gimon's uniquely dynamic, poignant, and eclectic compositional style is rapidly gaining her a reputation as a distinctive voice in contemporary Canadian composition and beyond. Her music has been described as "sheer radiance" (Campbell River Mirror), "imbued...with human emotion" (San Diego Story), and capable of taking listeners on a "fascinating journey of textural discovery" (Ludwig Van), earning her several honours including two SOCAN Awards (2015, 2021), nomination for Western Canadian Composer of the Year (2021), and inclusion on the CBC's list of Canada's "hot 30 classical musicians under 30" (2017). Her music draws inspiration from a myriad of places — from Eastern European folk music to indie rock, as well as from her roots as a songwriter. Katerina's works are performed widely across Canada, the United States, and internationally.

[www.katerinagimon.com](http://www.katerinagimon.com)

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# Texts

from the poetry  
of Sara Teasdale 1884-1933

## Your Stars to Hold

"Peace" from *Rivers to the Sea* (1911)

Peace flows into me  
as the tide to the pool by the shore;  
it is mine forevermore,  
it ebbs not back like the sea.

I am the pool of blue  
that worships the vivid sky;  
my hopes were heaven-high.  
They are all fulfilled in you.  
I am the pool of gold  
when sunset burns and dies —  
you are my deepening skies;  
give me your stars to hold

## From the Sea

From *Rivers to the Sea* (1915)

For us no starlight stilled the April fields,  
No birds awoke in darkling trees for us,  
Yet where we walked the city's street  
that night  
Felt in our feet the singing fire of spring,  
And in our path we left a trail of light  
Soft as the phosphorescence of the sea  
When night submerges  
in the vessel's wake  
A heaven of unborn evanescent stars.

## The Falling Star

From *Collected Poems* (1930)

I saw a star slide down the sky,  
Blinding the north as it went by,  
Too burning and too quick to hold,  
Too lovely to be bought or sold,  
Good only to make wishes on  
And then forever to be gone.

## Let It Be Forgotten

From *Flame and Shadow* (1920)

Let it be forgotten,  
as a flower is forgotten,  
Forgotten as a fire  
that once was singing gold,  
Let it be forgotten for ever and ever,  
Time is a kind friend, he will make us old.

If anyone asks, say it was forgotten  
Long and long ago,  
As a flower, as a fire, as a hushed footfall  
In a long forgotten snow.



# Vocal Alchemy

Jordan Van Bierl conductor



## Add your voice to our community of singers

We are an adult community choir that knows the transformative power of music.

We are non-auditioned, with members from all walks of life, and all levels of skill.

We come together because we love to sing, we value community, and we are committed to working together and growing as singers.

We have exciting plans for spring 2022,  
including a collaboration with Chronos Vocal Ensemble!

**Join us for open rehearsals in February & March**

**[VocalAlchemy.com](http://VocalAlchemy.com)**

## There Will Come Soft Rains

From *Flame and Shadow* (1920)

There will come soft rains  
and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their  
shimmering sound;  
And frogs in the pools singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,

Robins will wear their feathery fire  
Whistling their whims  
on a low fence-wire;  
And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind,  
neither bird nor tree  
If mankind perished utterly;  
And Spring herself,  
when she woke at dawn,  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

## Only in Sleep

From *Flame and Shadow* (1920)

Only in sleep I see their faces,  
Children I played with  
when I was a child,  
Louise comes back  
with her brown hair braided,  
Annie with ringlets warm and wild.

Only in sleep Time is forgotten —  
What may have come to them,  
who can know?  
Yet we played last night as long ago,  
And the doll-house stood  
at the turn of the stair.

The years had not sharpened their  
smooth round faces,  
I met their eyes and found them mild —  
Do they, too, dream of me, I wonder,  
And for them am I too a child?



*Sonder*?

WHAT EVEN IS THAT?

FIND OUT MORE...SNDR.CA/WOW

## Spring Rain

From *Love Songs* (1911)

I thought I had forgotten,  
But it all came back again  
To-night with the first spring thunder  
In a rush of rain.

I remembered a darkened doorway  
Where we stood  
while the storm swept by,  
Thunder gripping the earth  
And lightning scrawled on the sky.

The passing motor busses swayed,  
For the street was a river of rain,  
Lashed into little golden waves  
In the lamp light's stain.

With the wild spring rain and thunder  
My heart was wild and gay;  
Your eyes said more to me than night  
Than your lips would ever say. . . .

I thought I had forgotten,  
But it all came back again  
To-night with the first spring thunder  
In a rush of rain.

## Sorrow Into Song

"Like Barley Bending" from  
*Flame and Shadow* (1920)

Like barley bending  
In low fields by the sea,  
Singing in hard wind  
Ceaselessly;

Like barley bending  
And rising again,  
So would I, unbroken,  
Rise from pain;

So would I softly,  
Day long, night long,  
Change my sorrow  
Into song.

## In a Railroad Station

From *Rivers to the Sea* (1915)

We stood in the shrill electric light,  
Dumb and sick in the whirling din  
We who had all of love to say  
And a single second to say it in.  
"Good-by!" "Good-by!" — you turned  
to go,  
I felt the train's slow heavy start,  
You thought to see me cry, but oh  
My tears were hidden in my heart.



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## Snow Song

From *Helen of Troy and Other Poems* (1911)

Fairy snow, fairy snow,  
Blowing, blowing everywhere,  
Would that I  
Too, could fly  
Lightly, lightly through the air.  
Like a wee, crystal star  
I should drift, I should blow  
Near, more near,  
To my dear  
Where he comes through the snow.  
I should fly to my love  
Like a flake in the storm,  
I should die,  
I should die,  
On his lips that are warm.

## Alchemy

From *Rivers to the Sea* (1915)

I lift my heart as spring lifts up  
A yellow daisy to the rain;  
My heart will be a lovely cup  
Altho' it holds but pain.

For I shall learn from flower and leaf  
That color every drop they hold,  
To change the lifeless wine of grief  
To living gold.

## The Music of Stillness

From "There Will Be Rest", adapted

There will be rest, and sure stars shining  
Over the roof-tops crowned with snow,  
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,  
The music of stillness holy and low.

I will make this world of my devising  
Out of a dream in my lonely mind.  
I shall find the crystal of peace,  
– above me  
The music of stillness holy and low.

## Stars

From *Flame and Shadow* (1920), adapted

Alone in the night  
On a dark hill  
With pines around me  
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars  
Over my head,  
White and topaz  
And misty red;

Myriads with beating  
Hearts of fire  
That aeons  
Cannot vex or tire;

The dome of heaven  
Like a great hill and  
Myriads with beating  
Hearts of fire,

Heaven full of stars.

I know that I  
Am honored to be  
Witness  
Of so much majesty.



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*Our heartfelt thanks—  
we would not be here without you.*

## **OUR DONORS**

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These are our donors since January 2020, when we performed our last pre-COVID concert in Edmonton. We are grateful for everyone who: supported our Pacific Northwest Tour; donated ticket refunds for our cancelled performance in 2020; contributed to our Breathe project campaign; and supported us through the pandemic.

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Our aim is to support the production of choral performances of a high calibre in Edmonton, Alberta, and beyond.

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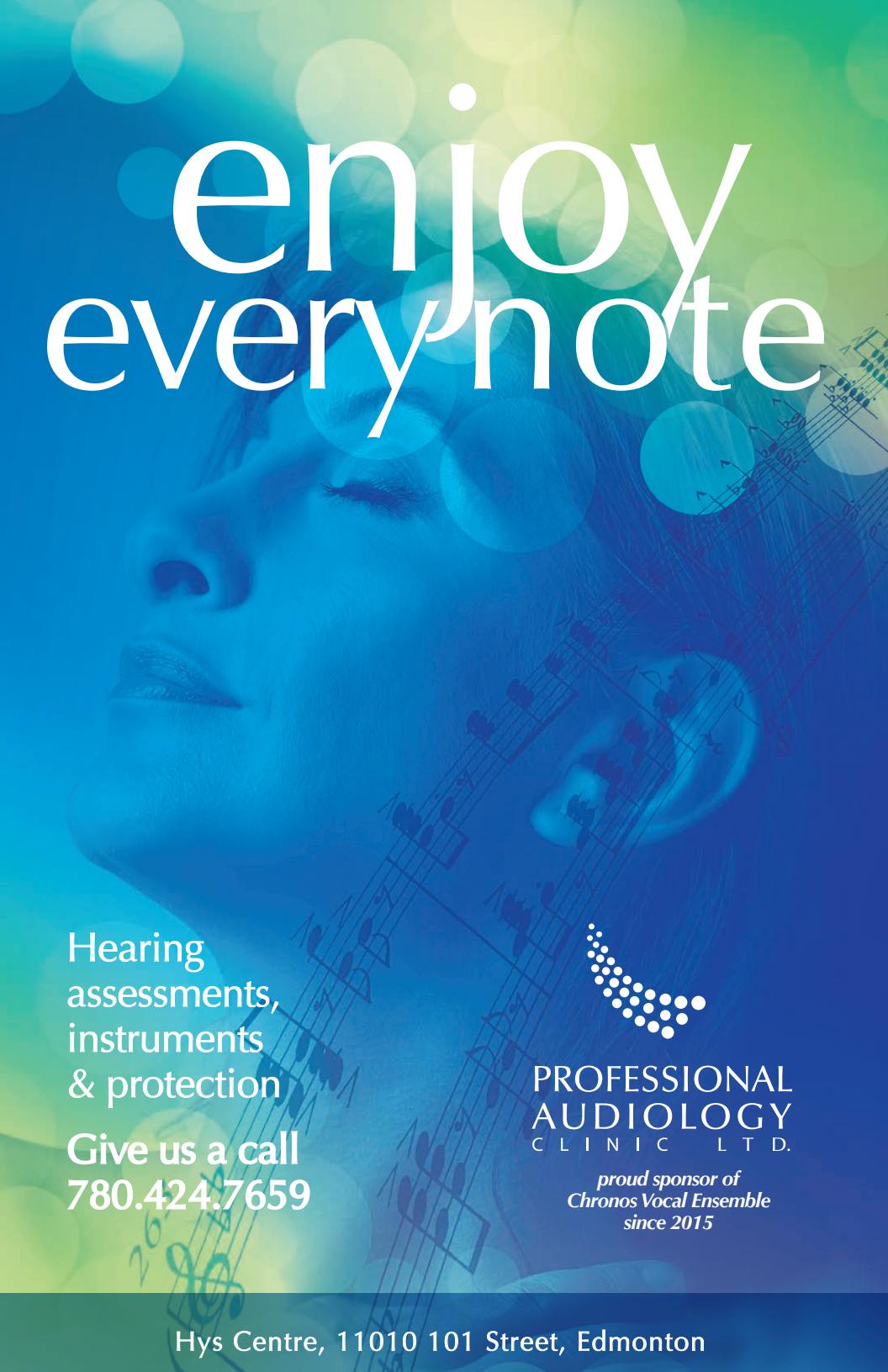
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