

MYRIAD
Ensemble

PRESENTS

TUVAYHUN

BEATITUDES FOR A WOUNDED WORLD

Elise Naccarato, *Artistic Director*

Maryem Tollar, Voice of God
Emma Thamer Bergin, Voice of the Mother
Cecilia Boss, Voice of the Child
Myriad Ensemble Chamber Orchestra

Saturday, May 24, 2025 || 7:00PM

About Us

Myriad Ensemble is a vibrant upper-voice choir based in Burlington, Ontario, under the direction of Elise Naccarato. Renowned for their vocal excellence and innovative performances, the ensemble is dedicated to inspiring audiences through the art of choral music by highlighting works by female and emerging composers. Their repertoire spans works by Burlington native and Composer-in-Residence Katerina Gimon, medieval visionary Hildegard von Bingen, and female composers from throughout the centuries.

Founded in 2017 with a debut performance alongside the Burlington Symphony Orchestra, Myriad quickly established itself as a vital presence in the local and broader choral community. The ensemble's incorporation as a registered non-profit charitable organization in 2020 marked a significant step in their mission to enrich the cultural life of their community. Their dedication and artistry were recognized internationally in 2022 when they achieved top honours at the World Choir Festival, becoming the only North American choir to rank among the top ten overall. This momentum carried into 2024, when they were invited to perform at PODIUM, Canada's prestigious biennial choral conference, an opportunity to share their music with choral enthusiasts from across the nation. Committed to collaboration, Myriad regularly joins forces with other choirs and orchestras, using their music not only to entertain but to support meaningful community causes.

Beyond live performances, Myriad creates dynamic and impactful choral video content. A significant highlight is their innovative video series for *Unsung: If the Earth Could Sing* by Katerina Gimon, an SSAA choral song cycle exploring themes of environmental stewardship. Other notable projects include *Singkap Siaga* by Dr. Tracy Wong, which has garnered over 10,000 views on YouTube, and *Hands* by Jocelyn Hagen, a virtual collaboration involving six choirs from five Canadian provinces.

Today, Myriad Ensemble continues to share their passion for music through live and virtual performances, captivating audiences in the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.



FIND YOUR *voice* *Sing* WITH US

Auditions are open for our 2025–2026 season! Myriad is an inclusive and welcoming ensemble with singers from a diverse array of backgrounds, identities, and professions who sing within the soprano-alto range.

Are you looking to...

- Join a supportive community?
- Meet like-minded friends?
- Challenge your mind?
- Develop your singing voice and ability?



SCAN THE QR
CODE TO SIGN UP
FOR AUDITIONS

The Choir

Soprano I

Caitlyn Breukelman
Sally Busch
Sarah Chadwick
Amanda Chiu
Erica D'Amore*
Melody Gal
Victoria Hartman
Xiaoli Lin
Haley McIntosh
Danielle Murray
Elizabeth Pereira*
Emily Playfair-Ocvirk
Jennifer Wearden

Soprano II

Laura Almeida
Emily Crowe
Sally Dawoud
Jenn Evans-Laframboise*
Sarah Fearnley-Brown
Leslie Fisher*
Jihyen Ha
Sarah Hollick
Erin Inglis
Laura McNabb
Sara Morgan
Charlotte Myall
Nadine Nejati
Lindsay Rett
Alma Sarai
Jamee Smith

Alto I

Mayako Barringer
Sophia Briatico-Kirwin
Amanda Clydesdale
Emily Copps
Emily Downs
Leah Drury
Emma Dudley
Catherine Gendron
Marianna Goddard
Kezia Haklander
Misha Mistry
Natalie Plausini
Janna Polzin
Maggie Samson*
Caitlin Tanghe
Izzy Trask
Stella Tung*
Candace Walkes

Alto II

Adena Commisso
Amy Cuddy
Julie Datta*
Emma Duncan
Danica Evering
Megan Graziani
Emily Horton
Samantha Howse
CJ Jackson
Kristi Kemp
Emily Lightstone*
Erin Lyon
Emily Marques
Candice McMurdo
Kyla Paul
A. R.
Pooja Srikanth
Kylie Sylvester
Jennifer Wells
Meredith Woodiwiss

*Section Leaders



Tonight's featured singers:

Laura Almeida, Mayako Barringer, Sally Busch, Sarah Chadwick, Amy Cuddy, Erica D'Amore, Julie Datta, Sally Dawoud, Emma Dudley, Jenn Evans-Laframboise, Danica Evering, Sarah Hollick, Erin Inglis, Kristi Kemp, Emily Lightstone, Haley McIntosh, Laura McNabb, Nadine Nejati, Elizabeth Pereira, Natalie Plausini, A.R, Maggie Samson, Alma Sarai, Jamee Smith, Pooja Srikanth, Stella Tung, Candace Walkes, Jennifer Wells

Orchestra Personnel

MYRIAD ENSEMBLE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Sharon Lee, Concertmaster
Cecilia Chang
Gemma Donn
Gwyneth Thomson

VIOLIN II

Suhashini Arulanandam, Principal
Rezan Onen-Lapointe
Anna Hughes
Eiko Hosaka

VIOLA

Caitlyn Boyle, Principal
Elspeth Thomson
Sarah de Niverville

CELLO

Miriam Stewart-Kroeker, Principal
Kendra Grittani
Elizabeth Lee

BASS

Marilyn Fung, Principal

FLUTE

Ernie Tollar, Principal

HARP

Erica Goodman

PERCUSSION

Richard Moore, Principal
Beverly Johnson

SANTUR

Sadaf Amini

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we are on the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation as well as the Traditional Territories of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Anishinabek. In stewardship with Mother Earth and the enduring Indigenous presence connected to these lands, we acknowledge the Indigenous Nations of the past, present, and future.

In the spirit of ally-ship and mutual respect, we will take the path of truth and reconciliation to create change, awareness, and equity as we strive to elevate the collective consciousness of society.

Artistic Director Note

Music. Community. A Myriad of Journeys. These are not just principles. They are the soul of Myriad, etched into our story since day one.

Music calls us to artistic integrity, asking for technical precision, presence, vulnerability, and authenticity. From the first time we open a score to the final note, we are invited into a journey larger than ourselves. **Community** is the quiet engine behind everything we do. The bonds formed in this ensemble have extended beyond the music – they live in shared rides to rehearsal, in group chats, and in the weekly laughter. They are real, human, and lasting. A **myriad of journeys** reflects the many paths that bring each member to Myriad, adding irreplaceable lived experiences to our team. It is this intersection of integrity, creativity, difference, and belonging that gives Myriad its depth, warmth, and strength.

I never could have imagined what Myriad would become in just five years. The growth, resilience, and beauty is a testament to the people who have built it brick by brick. In thinking about how to close this season, one that has marked both reflection and transformation, I searched for a work that would honour our past, acknowledge the present, and whisper toward the future. Something that would be bold, meaningful, and deeply human. Tonight, we present the Canadian premiere of *Tuvayhun: Beatitudes for a Wounded World* by Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen.

Tuvayhun becomes a lens through which we can see ourselves and our world more clearly. It speaks directly to themes of struggle and healing, identity and empathy, otherness and inclusion, lifting voices that have been quieted. This work has challenged us, asking us to dig deep musically, emotionally, and spiritually. It has also been a gift, allowing us to reflect not only on who we are as an ensemble, but on the kind of world we individually hope to build through music. This performance is not only the culmination of a season, but it is the embodiment of a vision.

Myriad is committed to championing artists from within our community, especially women and non-binary creatives, whose voices have so often been overlooked in classical music spaces. I believe that representation shapes the music we make and the stories we tell. Tonight's ensemble reflects that belief by showcasing musicians who bring both exceptional talent and lived experience to the stage. It is an honour to present this music alongside a group of artists who share Myriad's values.

Finally, thank YOU for being here with us tonight to recognize this milestone – five years of dreaming, building, stumbling, learning, and growing. As we mark the end of this remarkable chapter, please know how grateful I am for your unwavering support, presence, and the part you have played in our journey. This celebration would not be complete without you.

We look forward to sharing more music and stories with you for many years to come.

With deepest appreciation,

Elise Naccarato

Artistic Director, Myriad Ensemble

Programme

Tonight's concert will run without intermission. Run time is approximately 90 minutes.

TUVAYHUN: Beatitudes for a Wounded World

Kim André Arnesen
Charles Anthony Silvestri

1. The Poor in Spirit
2. I Am Poor
3. The Merciful
4. Forty Days and Forty Nights
5. The Peacemakers
6. What is Peace?
7. The Meek
8. Rachel's Song
9. The Pure in Heart
10. The Face of God
11. I Hope
12. Those Who Mourn
13. Song for a Lily
14. Those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness
15. Song for Justice
16. Those Who Are Persecuted For Righteousness Sake
17. Hold My Hand
18. You are the Light



Elise Naccarato
Conductor



Maryem Tollar
Soloist



Emma Thamer Bergin
Soloist



Cecilia Boss
Soloist



ELISE NACCARATO, *Artistic Director*

Elise Naccarato is a dynamic and innovative conductor, whose journey in choral music began in the Hamilton Children's Choir, igniting a lifelong passion that has shaped her career. As the Founder and Artistic Director of Myriad Ensemble, Elise has nurtured the ensemble's extraordinary growth over the past five seasons, transforming it into a thriving collective of over 60 members.

Elise holds an Honours Bachelor of Music and a Diploma in Voice Performance from McMaster University, as well as a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Toronto. In 2024, she expanded her leadership skills by completing a Master of Business Administration with a focus on Innovation Leadership at the University of Fredericton.

Her early career included roles such as Apprentice Conductor of the Ontario Youth Choir (2016 and 2018) and Associate Conductor of both Chorus Niagara and Orpheus Choir of Toronto, where she worked under the mentorship of Robert Cooper. Elise also served as the Conductor of the Hamilton Estonian Choir, leading the ensemble to represent Canada at the Estonian Song Festival in 2019.

Elise is known for her creative and forward-thinking approach to programming, as well as her commitment to supporting women in the arts. Her contributions have earned her recognition, including the 2021 St. Catharines Emerging Artist Award and a nomination for the Halton Women of Distinction Award. In 2022, Myriad Ensemble's remarkable achievements at the World Choir Festival, where they were the only North American choir to place in the top ten, highlighted Elise's visionary leadership.

In addition to her work with Myriad Ensemble, Elise balances her roles as the Managing Director of Chorus Niagara, a guest clinician, and a board member of Choirs Ontario, continuing her mission to innovate, inspire, and elevate the choral music community.



ERNIE TOLLAR

Flute

Having performed across Canada, Egypt, India, Mexico, Argentina, and Europe, Ernie Tollar finds natural connections and commonalities from various world music cultures.

World music credits include: he co-leads the Near East Trio along with tabla virtuoso Ravi Nairmpally and Eastern Lute sensation Demetri Petsalakis and has performed on a recording with Canadian World Music Luminaries 'Turkwaz' - including Brenna MacCrimmon, Jayne Brown, Maryem Tollar and Sophia Grigoriadis. Other World Music experience includes performances with Trichy's Trio, Ravi Nairmpally's 'Tasa', Dhruva Ghosh, Bassam Bishara, George Sawa Nabeel Sheheda, Greek/Arabic ensembles Maza Meze and Doula, Brenna MacCrimmon and the Altin Yildiz Gypsy Orkestar, Rick Shadrach Lazar, Levon Ichkhanian and The Evergreen Gamelan.

Ernie has studied: South Indian classical music with mrdangam virtuoso Trichy Sankaran and N. Ramani Flute, Dhruva Ghosh, Arabic music with Bassam Bishara, Alfred Gamil, George Sawa, Simon Shaheen, Jihad Racy and Ibrahim Kawala. He has recorded on countless sessions for TV and film, cds and has composed extensively for dance, film, and theatre.



SADIFF AMINI

Santur

Sadaf Amini, an Iranian-Canadian musician, began studying the Santur at the age of 12 and entered Tehran Music School. In 2012, she received her Bachelor's degree in Iranian Music Performance from the University of Tehran. She earned her Master's degree in Music Technology and Digital Media from the University of Toronto in 2018.

She has performed at multiple music festivals and received several prizes, such as the 2019 YGK Emerging Musician Competition and the 2020 Kingston Film Festival Local Music Video Showcase Jury Prize. She has also collaborated with various ensembles, leading to several concerts and album recordings. Her most recent release was her original Santur solo album, *Flow*.



MARYEM TOLLAR

Voice of God

Maryem Tollar is a renowned Egyptian-Canadian vocalist, known for her world music performances. Her voice has been heard on the theme of CBC's Little Mosque on the Prairie and A.R. Rahman's Bollywood hit, *Mayya Mayya*. In 2022-23, Maryem toured with the musical *The Cave* and the stage adaptation of the book *Fall On Your Knees* by Ann-Marie MacDonald.

Maryem was the featured vocalist in Tafelmusik's multimedia performances of *Tales of Two Cities: The Leipzig-Damascus Coffee Houses* and the narrator and vocalist in *Safe Haven*. She performed Christos Hatzis' piece *Syn-Phonia - Migration Patterns* with The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and *Constantinople* with The Gryphon Trio and Patricia O'Callaghan.

She performs with several Toronto musical groups including: Al Qahwa, Turkwaz, LuA (co-lead by Shameema Soni and Maryem Tollar - original music with influences from folk, jazz, Arabic, African, and R&B) and Tabiba. Maryem works regularly with storyteller Dawne McFarlane, adding music and sounds to her stories. Maryem was awarded the inaugural 2019 Johanna Metcalf Prize for Performing Arts.



EMMA THAMER BERGIN

Voice of the Mother

Emma is thrilled to be joining Myriad - and reuniting with old friends - for Tuvayhun! Born and raised in Waterdown, she grew up singing in the Hamilton Children's Choir and owes her love of music to that special organization. She currently holds both a B.Mus in Voice Performance and a M.Mus in Opera Performance from the University of Toronto. Over the past two years, she has thoroughly enjoyed diving back into the world of theatre and performance and has become an active member of the arts community in both Hamilton and Toronto.

Notable credits include; *Jekyll & Hyde* (Lucy Harris), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Jesus Christ), *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Rona Lisa Peretti), *Of Thee I Sing* (Mary Turner), *Street Scene* (Emma Jones, Olga Olsen), *Parade* (Mrs. Phagan), *La Finta Giardiniera* (Ramiro), *Werther* (Charlotte). Special thanks to my friends for their limitless support and to my family for their unwavering love and countless car rides to and from rehearsals.



CECILIA BOSS

Voice of the Child

Cecilia Boss is a talented Grade 9 student at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, currently singing soprano in “Illumini,” the senior ensemble of the award-winning Hamilton Children’s Choir. Cecilia has showcased her remarkable talent in various community musical theatre productions, including starring roles in *Annie* (Annie), *The Sound of Music* (Gretl), and Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Cinderella* (Ensemble). She also lends her voice to her church Youth Choir and the St. Mary Chamber Choir.

Cecilia's dedication to music extends to volunteering with a Junior vocal ensemble, where she hopes to gain valuable experience for her future aspirations as a music educator. Beyond her musical achievements, Cecilia is an active member of the St. Mary wrestling and alpine ski teams and enjoys spending quality moments with her parents and three younger brothers.



DR. AMELIA YATES

Collaborative Pianist

Amelia Yates, D.M.A., is a pianist, adjudicator, and instructor from Hamilton, Ontario. A graduate of the Doctor of Musical Arts program at the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Yates’s research focuses on the solo piano music of Canadian composer Ann Southam. In addition to performing as a soloist, Dr. Yates has had the pleasure of adjudicating at music festivals across Ontario.

Dr. Yates teaches piano lessons from her home studio, AGYPiano. Her goal is to help students perform, understand, and enjoy music thoughtfully, healthily, and artfully. She is also passionate about applying teaching approaches that nurture students’ mental health and empower them to think critically and independently.

Dr. Yates holds positions on the board of the Hamilton/Halton Branch of the Ontario Registered Music Teachers’ Association and the Hamilton Music Festival. She is honoured to support the Association of Canadian Women Composers as an associate member. Dr. Yates is also a member of the Royal Conservatory of Music’s College of Examiners.

Programme Notes

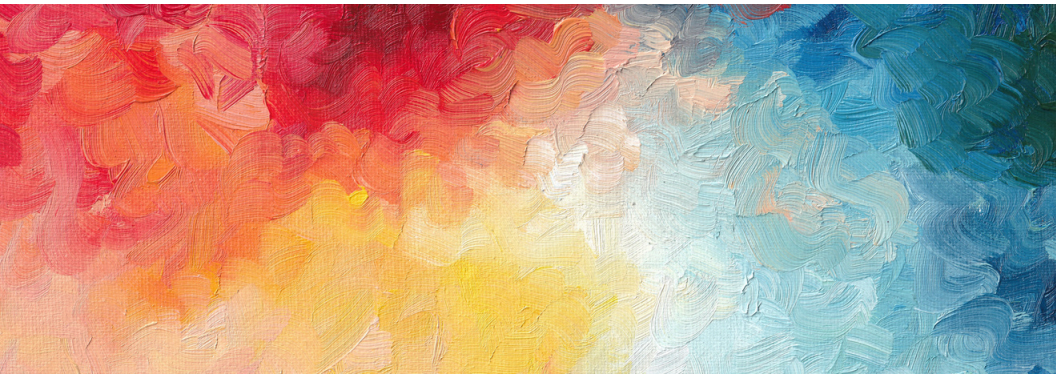
"Our world is wounded. All around us we see the cracks: the effects of environmental crisis, mass migrations, global pandemic, political polarization, growing income inequality, the rise of authoritarian regimes, unprecedented social change, and reticence or resignation on the part of many to do anything about any of it. And yet, our world is also a place of wondrous beauty, a beauty that surrounds us if we have eyes to see it. More than ever we need messages of hope and unity, messages that remind us of what we already know—that the world is beautiful, that people are beautiful, and if we come together, respect one another, bless one another, and open our hearts to be blessed in return—we might heal the despair, and repair the fractures that are threatening our fragile world.

In *TUVAYHUN*, we seek to address this fragility, and the part we are called to play in healing it. " – Kim André Arnesen and Charles Anthony Silvestri

TUVAYHUN: Beatitudes for a Wounded World is a poignant choral drama that gives voice to suffering, resilience, and hope. Commissioned in 2018 by the Manhattan Girls Choir, the work's overall message still reigns just as strong today.

Blurring the lines between concert and theatre, *TUVAYHUN* is a choral drama in which the choir becomes the narrator, emotional anchor, and communal voice. The soloists serve as protagonists. Maryem, the Voice of God, embodies the voice of a higher power, Emma, the Voice of the Mother, offers wisdom and empathy, and Cecilia, the Voice of the Child, gives voice to innocence. Each persona plays an integral role in bringing the Beatitude teachings to life in a modern and relevant setting.

The music takes us on a journey through deep emotions and deeply human situations. It weaves in and out, occupying the liminal space between ancient and modern, sacred and profane. We move from semi-liturgical chant to lively folk dance, from rich orchestral layers to stark solos, from the familiar to the exotic, and back again. The liturgical context of blessing is present in the solemnity of chimes and gongs, in the chanted Aramaic text, in patterns of repetition. The response movements transport us from the ancient to the contemporary world. The music illuminates the many different peoples and experiences the texts evoke, and serves in sonic form as a reminder of the universal and enduring message of the Beatitudes. You will hear influences from world music traditions, jazz, and the Western canon all fused together.



Programme Notes

You may be asking 'what is a Beatitude'? Here is Google's definition:

Beatitude (noun) has two primary meanings:

1. **Supreme blessedness or happiness** - a state of utmost bliss or spiritual joy.
2. **The Beatitudes** (capitalized) - refers to the declarations of blessedness made by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in the Bible (Matthew 5:3-12)

There are eight Beatitudes, offering a vision of human flourishing grounded not in power or perfection, but in humility, compassion, and justice. Though centuries old, these teachings remain startlingly relevant today. They challenge us to see value where the world often overlooks it and to live with integrity, empathy, and grace.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Those who live with humility and spiritual openness find themselves closest to what truly matters.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

In a world that avoids grief, those who feel deeply help us remember what it means to be human.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

True strength often speaks softly through gentleness, patience, and quiet resolve.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

The longing for justice, equality, and goodness still burns in hearts today. That hunger brings about change.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

In a culture quick to judge, mercy remains a radical act of love.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Clarity of heart and authenticity of spirit allow us to see beauty, truth, and the divine in everyday life.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Those who work to heal division and restore harmony carry forward the sacred work of reconciliation.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Standing firm in truth, even in the face of adversity, is a mark of deep moral courage.

Programme Notes

The Beatitudes are not just ideals to admire — they are invitations to live differently. Arnesen has taken this ancient wisdom and applied it to a modern world. Broken into 18 movements, he alternates between sacred and secular ideas, suggesting that regardless of personal religious or spiritual beliefs, both can live in harmony.

“TUVAYHUN” in Aramaic is the first word in each of the Beatitudes, translating to “Blessed...”. Movements 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, and 16 set each of the eight original texts paying homage to the origins of the teachings. Movements 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, and 15 offer a modern response using texts by renowned American writer and poet, Charles Anthony Silvestry. i

Movement 13, *Song for a Lily*, is a deeply moving tribute inspired by the real-life story of a young girl named Lily who tragically died in a car accident. This movement serves as a memorial, honouring Lily's life and spirit, and offering comfort through music to all touched by her passing. It is a reminder of the fragility of life and the enduring power of love and memory.

So what about movements 11, 17 and 18? Well, this is a choral drama after all. Movement 11, *I Hope*, gives the choir the opportunity to personally reflect by asking each chorister to speak and share with you their wish for this world. In *Myriad*, we are lucky to have many singers who come from diverse backgrounds and beliefs. You will hear them express their wishes for the world in a language close to their heart.

Movements 17 and 18 are a summation of the teachings ending on a note filled with life and unwavering belief that by embracing differences with authenticity, vulnerability and acceptance, we can make our world a better place to live. Now, I would like to leave you with parting words and summary as written by the composer:

“TUVAYHUN was born from a desire to shine new light on those whom Jesus blessed so long ago, for they are still with us. The alternating text and music styles evoke the timelessness of this message of hope and the need for blessing.

We visit with refugees. We hear a mother's lullaby. We hear the voice of a child who has died. We pass from a folk dance to an anthem of universal human needs and dignity interspersed with messages of hope and blessings. The work ends with an exhortation for all of us to let our light shine and be a blessing to others.

Our goal was to bring together images and music from different cultures, to encourage us to see ourselves in the other, to reach out our hands in blessing; for by blessing others, we ourselves are blessed. TUVAYHUN creates an opportunity for performers and listeners alike to inspire and be inspired, to be blessed, and be a blessing. It is my hope that upon listening, you too can be lifted up, blessed, and inspired to be a blessing to someone else in need.”

Programme notes by Elise Naccarato, Kim André Arnesen, and Charles Anthony Silvestri

Libretto

1. The Poor in Spirit

Too-vay-hoon le -mes-ki-ne b'rooch, de - d eel-
hoon-ee mal-koo-tho dash-ma-yo.

(Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.)

2. I Am Poor

I am poor, yes;

I am poor in spirit.

In despair I weep for the wounded world I see,

A world of poverty, of misery,

Of loneliness profound;

A world of hate, of sad division,

And of shocking cruelty,

Where trolls well-fed and liars bold

Erode our sense of shared humanity,

Setting sister against brother,

Neighbor against neighbor, Race

against race, Faith against faith,

Nation against nation.

How long must we wait, O Lord? How long?

When will Your promised Kingdom come?

How can one NOT be poor in spirit

When lies become truth,

And truth lies, rejected?

When saints are silenced

And villains grow mighty?

While mumbling leaders dither and look away?

Why must we wait for the coming of the Kingdom,

My sisters and my brothers?

Why must we wait, O Lord?

When one is poor in Spirit,

One is poor indeed.

3. The Merciful

Too-vay-hoon lam-rach-mo-ne, da-^slay-hoon neh-
woon rach-me.

(Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.)

4. Forty Days and Forty Nights

Forty days and forty nights

The bombs rained down.

School, road, marketplace,

The world we knew

Now only dust and blood.

Who will tend the orchard, with harvest coming on?

Who will greet the sunrise on the hill?

Will we ever taste again the spices of our home?

Who can know it if we ever will?

Forty days and forty nights

We fled, frightened;

Desert, mountain, stormy sea...

Silent strangers

Passing by your door.

Will we be forgotten as we journey far from home?

Will we find a safer place to stay?

Will new neighbors welcome us as brothers and as friends?

Or will they scoff and send us on our way?

Forty days and forty nights

We've settled now,

Broken, worn out, hopeful.

All was lost,

Except our hope.

Forty days and forty nights

The bombs rained down;

The world we left behind,

the world we knew

Now just a memory.

May we sit and share with you the story of our journey,

And of our hope, and hardships overcome?

May we help you tend your orchard, when harvest's coming on?

May we share with you the spices of our home?

5. The Peacemakers

Too-vay-hoon l'ov-day shlo-mo dav-naw da-lo-ho
neth-qe -roon.

(Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.)

6. What is Peace?

Peace is not a silent state

That comes upon us from within—

Serene, detached, oblivious.

Peace is not a force like rain

That comes, unbidden, from above—

Gentle, enfolding, natural.

Peace is fire! Yes, peace is fire!

And peace is passion!

Peace requires a strength of will,

A certain courage, a heart of iron,

A force abiding to fulfill.

Peace is not a foregone fate;

For peace, like war, must be waged—

Mindfully, deliberately,

With arms ever ready,

And eyes wide open.

Libretto

7. The Meek

Too-vay-hoon le mak-ki-khe de - he-noon nir-
thoon lar-oh.

(Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.)

8. Rachel's Song

Oh Mama, I don't want to go to sleep!
So many things I want to do,
So many things I want to see,
I couldn't ever go to sleep!

Dear Mama, will you sing to me?
Go to sleep, my precious child,
And lay aside your worries.
Tomorrow is another day
To grow and learn, and love and play.
Tomorrow, all the world shall be
Just as it was today, you'll see.

Oh Mama, I don't want to go to sleep!
I want to jump! I want to dance!
I want to sing the whole night through!
I couldn't think of sleep at all.
Dear Mama, May I sing with you?

Go to sleep, my restless one,
And still your stirring spirit
The silent stars shall dance tonight
And greet the sun in morning light.
Tomorrow all the world shall leap;
But only if you go to sleep!

(I pray to God who dwells above
To watch you closely as you sleep,
And grant you all the joys you seek.
The world is darker than you know)

Tomorrow morning, when you wake,
The world will be made new again;
But you will be a little taller,
And the big, wide world just a little smaller.
Tomorrow the world is yours to keep;
But tonight, my darling, precious child,
Tonight, my sweet one, go to sleep!

9. The Pure in Heart

Too-vay-hoon lay-len da d -khen b'leb-hoon de -
he-noon nech-zoon la'lo-ho.

(Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.)

10. The Face of God

But I wonder...
Will the God I see
Look at all like me?

For we have many names, many faces,
Different mothers, different races.
How can we, who are so many,
Have a God resembling any of us?
I wonder...

And when I smile at the face of God,
Will God be smiling back at me?
Am I worthy of that smile? Are we?
We need not wonder...

For God has many hands--our hands.
And God has many hearts--our hearts.
And when we look upon each other's faces
We see the face of God.

11. I Hope

12. Those Who Mourn

Too-vay-hoon la-vi-le, de -he-noon neth-bay-oon
(Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.)

13. Song for a Lily

Leaving you behind
Is the hardest thing I've ever done.
Leaving you behind,
You who were my everything.

Keep the memory of me,
And may my memory be a blessing—
The songs, smiles, and laughter—
Every little thing that made you love me.

Love is powerful
In life as well as death;
For even as I die,
Eternal is my love for you.

Leaving you behind
Only makes our bonding stronger,
Vaster, longer,
Every day, in every way.

Libretto

14. Those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

Too-vay-hoon lay-len de -khaf-ninwaş-henle -
khi-noo-tha, de he-non nes-be -oon.
(Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness, for they will be filled.)

15. Song for Justice

In all that we are,
It is better by far
To follow our star,
And sing out our truth.

When things can't get worse,
We hunger and thirst
For the last to be first;
And so we sing out our truth.

We sing for the poor.
We sing for the weak.
We sing for the helpless,
The hopeless, the meek.
We sing out the truth
Against hunger and hate.
We sing out for justice
Before it's too late!

And in all that we do
For these, and for you,
The whole dark night through
We're gonna sing out our truth!

16. Those Who Are Persecuted For Righteousness Sake

Too-vay-hoon lay-len deth-re - ð ef, met-tool ki-
noo-tho de - ð il-hoon-ee mal-khu-tho dash-ma-
yo.
(Blessed are those who are persecuted for
righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.)

17. Hold My Hand

Brothers and sisters, gather round,
And hear the words we say,
For the world can be a better place
If we hold hands today.

Hold my hand and stand with me,
And face the tide together;
And we will change the world today,
Tomorrow, and forever.

Hold my hand against injustice;
Hold my hand and stand with me.
Hold my hand against division;
Just take my hand and see.

Hold my hand to conquer hatred;
Hold my hand and stand with me.
The troubles of the world will melt,
And we will be blessed.

18. You are the Light

You are the Light of the world;
Let your light will shine before others.
While you have the Light,
believe in the Light,
So that you may become children
of Light.
You are the Light of the world;
Your light will shine before others.
I am the Light of the world;
My Light will shine before others.
We are the Light of the world;
Our Light will shine before others.
We are the Light of the world...

(Based on Matthew 5:14, John 12:36, Philippians
2:15)

ELISE'S TOP 5 FROM THE PAST 5 YEARS

Favourite Memory: Our first tour to Montreal for PODIUM 2024

Favourite Music Video: *Singap Siaga* (Dr. Tracy Wong)

Favourite Female Canadian Composer: Katerina Gimon

Highlight Project: The environmental choral cycle, *Unsung: If the Earth Could Sing* (Katerina Gimon). From the inception of the idea in December 2018 to the mass release of the scores in April 2025, it was such a rewarding journey undertaken with friends

Wild Card Memory: Being the only North American choir to place in the top ten overall in the World Choir Competition in 2022. It pushed us to keep striving to excel artistically and create projects and programmes that are unique, challenging and test the limits of what choral music can be.

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and Alyson Cuddy for running the libretto slideshow for tonight's performance.

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