

## **Common Thread: Celebrating our Human Connection**

Thank you for joining the KU Glee Club today as we celebrate human connection through song. Our journey begins this afternoon with a greeting song *In Meeting We Are Blessed* composed by Troy D. Robertson. This work was written for the initial meeting of the Nairobi Chamber Chorus and the Festival Singers of Florida and serves as a reminder that music is a common ground that transcends our differences.

We transition to *Convidando está la noche*, Eugene Rogers' arrangement of Juan García de Zéspedes' original work by the same name. Zéspedes was a notable Mexican composer from the Baroque era whose sacred and secular compositions were often inspired by Mexican folk music. This work in 6/8 explores Baroque contrast by alternating between legato a cappella passages and uptempo sections accompanied by percussion and guitar. Although this text is Christmas-centered, we uplift the messages of tenderness and celebration - emotions that are ever-important in our 21st-century culture.

Our second set moves from Mexico to The Mogami River in Japan. *Mogami gawa funa uta*, arranged by Osamu Shimizu, is a composite folk song that borrows elements from different folk-work songs and was originally composed in 1936. The piece was written for a local NHK radio station to tell the story of journeying down the Mogami River. The ostinato motives mimic the teamwork and precision required by the oarsmen to journey through the treacherous currents. We explore another perspective on *The River* with the poetry of Bill Cairns set by Susan Labarr. Cairns was a member of a river rescue squad, and Labarr beautifully sets the storytelling text overtop of lilting Bluegrass harmonies.

The final piece in this set is based on a victory chant from the Itneg tribe, an ethnic group that belongs to the Igorot race of the Central Cordillera region of Northern Luzon of the Philippines. This tribe was known for being warriors in the 15th century and *Iddemdem Malida* was sung to celebrate victory after battle. You can hear the main chant melody constantly being passed to each voice part while the other sections create interlocking rhythmic ideas to mimic gong and drum instruments indigenous to the Philippines.

The final set opens with Andrea Ramsey's *The Way of Trust* featuring poetry by Charles Anthony Silvestri. The dramatic ABA' form of this piece highlights a text that encourages us to be introspective and "rise above our nature, and embrace the middle way." As a KU Glee Club, we will continue to lean into the middle way as we endeavor to create a space for community and musical excellence to thrive under the tenets of unity, accountability, and friendship. *Sogno di Volare* arranged by Chinese-American composer Christopher Tin with text by Leonardo da Vinci is a closing celebration of our journey to this point and our love for each other, despite our many differences:

"Once you have taken flight,  
You'll decide  
Gaze toward the sky, you'll know that  
**That is where your heart will feel at home.**"

## **Texts & Translations:**

### **In Meeting We Are Blessed**

Text by R. Gatsnahos and John Donne

We are met together and in meeting, we are blessed.  
Peace in coming and in going, peace in labor and in rest.  
Hold on, dear brother! Hold on, dear sister! Hold on!  
Hold on to me, hold on to me, hold on to me.

We are met together, and in meeting, we are blessed.  
Peace in coming and in going, peace in labor and in rest.  
You're not alone, no, and you nevermore will be.  
I will be with you and I will carry you with me.

Friendship endures, and surely we will prove.  
It's not ourselves, but our bodies that move.

We are met together and in meeting, we are blessed.  
Peace in coming and in going, peace in labor and in rest.  
Hold on, dear brother! Hold on, dear sister! Hold on!  
Hold on to me, hold on to me, hold on to me.

### **Convidando está la noche**

*(Juguete)*

*Convidando está la noche Aquí de músicas varias  
Al recién nacido infante Canten tiernas alabanzas.*

*(Guaracha)*

*¡Ay, que me abraso! ¡Ay! Divino dueño ¡Ay!  
En la hermosura ¡Ay! De tus ojuelos ¡Ay!*

*¡Ay, cómo llueven ¡Ay! Siendo luceros ¡Ay!  
Rayos de gloria ¡Ay! Rayos de fuego ¡Ay!*

*(Juguete)*

The night is inviting us here with varied music.  
To the newborn child sing tender praises.

*(Guaracha)*

Oh, I'm ablaze, Divine Lord, oh  
in the loveliness, oh of your little eyes, oh!

Oh, how they rain, oh though they are stars,  
oh rays of glory, oh rays of fire, oh!

## **Mogami gawa funa uta**

Text source unknown

*Sakata sa eguhage mame dero cha  
Hayari kaze nado higaneyo-ni.  
Wakare tsurasayo.  
Yamaseno kazeda.*

*Oreo uramuna  
Kazeo urame.*

*Anokono tameda.  
Nanbo tottemo tanto tanto.*

I'm goin' to Sakata, be well  
Don't get the flu or anythin'.  
It's too hard to say goodbye.  
It's the terrible cold wind.

Don't blame it on me  
Blame it on the wind.

But it's for that girl.  
No matter how much I earn,  
it's not enough.

## **The River**

Text by Bill Cairns

I grew from boy to man along the river.  
My roots grew tangled with the willow tree.  
The rocks and sand and mud were my foundation.  
I thought the water flowed only for me.

The old man always warned, don't fight the river.  
If you just give her time, she'll bring you in.  
But times when you're adrift you get ready anxious.  
And there's a chance you won't get home again.

The river holds the secrets of a lifetime.  
Its depths and shallows swirl with mystery.  
Through flood or drought, the water follows one law.  
"Flow on" to the everlasting sea.

Part of that river still pumps deep inside of me.  
But I need more to make my spirit whole.  
Baptize me once again in river water.

Let river mud anoint my prodigal soles.

I grew from boy to man along the river.  
My roots grew tangled with the willow tree.  
The rocks and sand and mud were my foundation.  
I thought the water flowed only for me.

### **Iddemdem Malida**

A victory chant that is sung after a war in which the whole community participates. The main melodic line “Iddemdem Malida inabak mi daida” is traditionally sung repeatedly. The text “inabak mi daida” translates to “We defeated them.” All other text is onomatopoeic and mimics the sounds of traditional instruments of the Philippines that create the interlocking choral rhythmic parts.

### **The Way of Trust, Andrea Ramsey**

Text by Charles Anthony Silvestri

All around us in this broken fragile world  
Are broken fragile people, fumbling on their way.  
Falling, unthinking, into well-worn pathways  
That cleaves the world, dividing the familiar and the fey.  
But the sword that divides cuts self as well as others;

Sisters and brothers cling to yesterday,  
We must see the world with eyes unclouded,  
Look toward tomorrow, and seek the middle way.

Seek the way of trust, the way of hope unbounded,  
The way of true affection must be our path today;  
The way is hard, commands a higher calling,  
To rise above our nature, and embrace the middle way.

### **Sogno di Volare**

Text adapted from the writings of Leonardo da Vinci

*Una volta che avrai  
Spiccato il volo deciderai  
Sguardo verso il ciel, saprai  
Lì a casa il cuore sentirai*

*Una volta che avrai  
Spiccato il volo deciderai  
Sguardo verso il ciel, saprai  
Lì a casa il cuore sentirai*

*Prenderà il primo volo verso il soleil grande uncello  
Sorvolando il grande Monte Ceceri  
Riempendo l'universo Di stupore e gloria*

*Una volta che avrai  
Spiccato il volo deciderai  
Sguardo verso il ciel, saprai  
Lì a casa il cuore sentirai*

*Una volta che avrai Spiccato il volo,  
Alora deciderai  
Sguardo verson il ciel, saprai  
Lì a casa il cuore sentirai*

*L'uomo verrà portato dalla sua creazione  
Come gli ucceli, verso il cielo...  
Riempendo l'universon di stupore e gloria*

*Una volta che avrai  
Spiccato il volo deciderai  
Sguardo verso il ciel, saprai  
Lì a casa il cuore sentirai*

*Gloria!  
Gloria!*

Once you have taken flight,  
You'll decide  
Gaze toward the sky, you'll know that  
That is where your heart will feel at home

Once you have taken flight,  
You'll decide  
Gaze toward the sky, you'll know that  
That is where your heart will feel at home

The first great bird will take flight towards the sun,  
Sweeping over the great Mt. Ceceri,  
Filling the universe with wonder and glory.

Once you have taken flight  
Alora will decide  
Gaze toward the sky, you'll know that

That is where your heart will feel at home.

Man will be lifted by his own creation,  
Just like the birds, towards the sky,  
Filling the universe with wonder and glory.

Once you have taken flight,  
You'll decide  
Gaze toward the sky, you'll know that  
That is where your heart will feel at home

Gloria!

Gloria!