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COLLEGE

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Nordic

CHOIR

2022 MIDWESTERN ACDA CONFERENCE

Program

THE INNOCENCE

(from *Considering Matthew Shepard*)

Craig Hella Johnson (b. 1962)

Text by Michael Dennis Browne and Craig Hella Johnson

Hal Leonard 00243350

When I think of all the times the world was ours for dreaming,
When I think of all the times the earth seemed like our home,
Ev'ry heart alive with its own longing,
Ev'ry future we could ever hope to hold?

All the time our laughter rang into summer,
All the times the rivers sang our tune,
Was there already sadness in the sunlight?
Some stormy story waiting to be told?

Where, O where has the innocence gone?
Where, O where has it gone?
Rains, rolling down, wash away my memory.
Where, O where has it gone?

When I think of all the joys the wonders we remember,
All the treasures we believed we'd never ever lose?
Too many days gone by without their meaning,
Too many darkened hours without their peace.

Where, O where has the innocence gone?
Where, O where has it gone?
Vows we once swore; now it's just this letting go.
Where, O where has it gone?

WHY RAGE FIERCELY THE HEATHEN

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847)

Psalm 2

Augsburg 11-0647

Why rage fiercely the heathen and the people meditate a vain thing?

The kings of the earth, they set themselves up, and the rulers counsel take together against the Lord, and against his anointed.

Now let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

He that sitteth in the heav'ns shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall deride them.

In wrath he shall speak and shall vex them in his sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my King on Zion's holy hill.

I will declare the law whereof the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, thee this day have I begotten.

Ask thou of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, earth's utmost parts for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them in pieces with sceptres of iron; like a potter's vessel thou shalt dash them.

O therefore be ye wise, O kings: ye judges of the earth be instructed.

Serve ye the Lord with fear, rejoice to him with trembling.

Kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the right way, for his wrath shall soon rekindle; all who trust in his Name they are blessed.

I WON'T FORGET

Zachary J. Moore (b. 1992)

Text by Larry Studt

Commissioned by the Studt Family

zacharyjmoore.com

The courtship our wedding day,
Our children and families
Our time spent together,
All difficult to forget.

Our jobs and vacations,
Bike rides, walks and board games.
Our life, our plans derailed.
But I won't forget.

I won't forget.

The fall at the ball game
A light bulb then denial
The beginning of an illness
Unrecognized.

The scans tests and studies
Sugar coating and reality
Our bucket list and future
Why did we wait?

The Bruises, denial,
The distance, the chasm
And Seeing you fight
Until the end.

The falls and the fractures
Amidst the pandemic
The loneliness and mem'ry loss
But I won't forget

I won't forget

Abundant blessings we have had!
A journey I'm not worthy of.
Thank you. I will never forget.

My love for you.
I will never forget.

SO BREAKS THE SUN

Shavon Lloyd (b. 1997)

Text by Shavon Lloyd and Ben Jonson

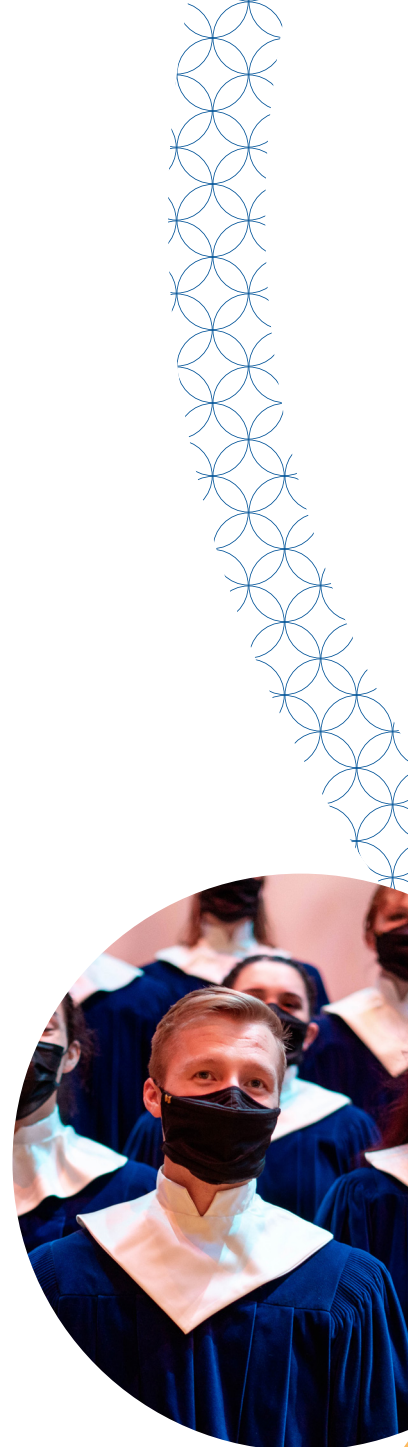
shavonlloyd.com

The night is dark and cold,
The earth is fettered with snow,
And the chill of the air confines me to sorrow.

So breaks the sun
Earth's rugged chains where-in rude winter bounds her veins
So breaks the sun
So grows both stream and source of price that lately fettered were
with ice.

So naked trees get crisped heads,
And colored coats the roughest meads,
And all get vigor, youth, and sprite,
That are looked on by his light.

So breaks the sun.



NEXT YEAR

Music and text by Mark Sonnenblick, Shaina Taub,
and Benj Pasek
arr. James Deignan
Driftless Press DP023

When the walls have grown narrow
When the world has turned grey
And the headlines are harrowing day after day
As you wonder and wonder how long you'll stay lost
Remember the deserts and oceans we've already crossed.

'Cause next year the doors will break open we'll breathe in the sky.
Though tomorrow's uncertain we're gonna get by 'til it's here.
So here's to next year.

When the people are pleading
'Cause the days seem so stark
And where there's nobody leading you out of the dark.
Can't let the misery harden your heart.
The worst will pass over and one day the waters will part.



Program Notes

As I sit in my office at the start of 2022, the notes I hoped to write when I proposed this program last spring seem foolish. This morning the news shared there were over 1 million new cases of COVID in the past 24 hours. Our program today was centered around “our COVID journey,” an experience that is familiar to each of us. Naively, I crafted the program thinking we could remember, mourn, and awaken as a choral community. Unfortunately, we may not be ready to turn the page on this unique moment in music-making. I do, however, believe there is still value in reflecting on this journey together.

Today, we begin with Craig Hella Johnson’s “The Innocence” from his powerful *Considering Matthew Shepard*. The Nordic Choir was set to perform this work

in the spring of 2020 and the beginning of our particular COVID experience. We were fortunate to work with Craig as we traveled to Austin, Texas, on tour of that year. His insight, personal connection, and humanity transformed the music for us. A few weeks later, we welcomed Matthew’s mother Judy to campus to speak with us about her son. She was honest and vulnerable. We enjoyed her stories of Matt and cried with her as she spoke honestly about those dark days. Rarely had I ever sensed such a collective investment in a piece of music. I selected this particular movement to honor that performance that never occurred but also because the line “where O where has the innocence gone” has echoed in my head many times since then.



Originally, I had programmed the next selection as part of our spring tour repertoire. As Nordic Choir celebrates its 75th anniversary, I thought it fitting to utilize a few of Weston Noble's favorite anthems in the program. As we rehearsed Felix Mendelssohn's "Why Rage Fiercely the Heathen" this fall, it elicited emotions that I clearly remember experiencing in the spring of 2020. Performances canceled, students sent home, courses taught online, isolation, and confusion. Personally, I found myself fluctuating between frustration, anger, and surrender. I still struggle with the text "All who trust in His name are blessed."

We continue with the premiere of "I Won't Forget," a piece commissioned by the Studt Family and written by the talented composer Zachary Moore. Although not specifically written for this convention performance, the completed piece was a reminder that everyday life continued for us as we made our way through this pandemic. Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and yes, losing loved ones were not put on pause. We learned how to "do life" as we were all isolated from friends and family. Larry Studt wrote this poetry to honor his late wife, Rachel. She was diagnosed with a debilitating disease that progressed during the peak of the pandemic. Although COVID was not the cause of her death, it certainly complicated the family's journey. In Larry's words, she "ultimately wanted to be admitted to memory care during the pandemic when she knew we could not see her." This performance is dedicated to Larry, Claire, Laurel (who sings in the choir), and Nathan.

Shavon Lloyd's "So Breaks the Sun" is a nod to the optimism that we've felt periodically. Personally, this fall

when Nordic Choir reached a 100 percent vaccination status, it felt like a return to making music in a "normal" way was not only possible but plausible. The opening text "the night is dark and cold" is followed by the frequent repetition of "so breaks the sun," which for me was the eternal optimism that I needed and will continue to need. For me, that ever-present optimism is found in my students. Throughout, their mantra was "we'll do whatever it takes to sing," despite me feeling like I never had the answers for which we all hoped.

We close today with a piece I first heard on the radio on a long drive home from seeing family in the spring of 2021. It was the first time my partner and I traveled together after being vaccinated. Although we felt safe and comfortable to travel, there was still the element of awkwardness as we reacclimated ourselves to interacting with people again. Originally recorded for Saturday Night Seder, an event to mark the Passover Seder and combat the spread of COVID-19, I cried in the car as I heard the actors, Broadway stars, health care workers, and families share all they looked forward to when we exit this pandemic. Ironically, I worried when I sought permission to arrange this tune for the convention that it might feel passé. With every email we received from ACDA regarding the safety precautions leading up to this event, it now feels imperative that we look forward . . . together. I asked for it to be arranged for a section where we sing together. We hope you'll sing and reflect with us today.

—Dr. Andrew Last



Nordic Choir Roster

Rather than follow the standard format of including hometowns and academic majors on our ensemble roster, instead we honor those music educators who inspired us to continue making music during the pandemic.

SOPRANO I

EMMA FAUCHIER, Trent Buglewicz, Linn-Mar High School
HALLIE T. JOHNSON, Sheryl Scheffert, New Minowa Players
GLORIA NELSON, Bill & Amy Nelson, Honor Choirs of Southeast Minnesota
LILY SMITH, Jason Rausch, Decorah High School
NORA WEIGLE, Brandon Berger, St. Michael-Albertville High School
MADLINE WILKINS, Connie Lyda, Lyons Township High School

SOPRANO II

KAITLYN ANDREWS, Kelly Mielcarz, Naperville Central High School
LIZ BURTON, Ben Luginbuhl, Normal Community High School
MAGGIE CALLANAN, David Haas, Iowa City West High School
MOLLY HOLCOMB, Leann Roder-Manson, Conant High School
KITRI LINDBERG, Michelle Hayes, Anoka High School
STEFANIE MAAS, Dan Henjum, Private Voice
MADI MILLER, Pam Edwards, Geneseo High School
ABIGAIL REIS, Greg & Kari Douma, Eastview High School
KATELYN SIEBERT, Aaron Olson, Waconia High School
ZOE WOOD, Jeff Knutson, Waukeez High School

ALTO I

CAMILLE BLANFORD, Jan Cashen, First Christian Church of Jacksonville
ASHLEY HARMS, Jesse Bunge, Hampton-Dumont High School
SIENNA HAUBEIN, Sara McGinthy, Columbia High School
ALI PINTO, Jessica Palmisano, Plainfield East High School
LAUREL STUDDT, Steve Wells, DeLong Middle School
CATHERINE VITT, Karen Lutgen, Minnehaha Academy
LAURA WYRE, David Baxter, Pleasant Valley High School
MADLINE YOUNG, Richard Carrillo, Providence Academy

ALTO II

KYLA BILLINGTON, Sarah Bieber, Waukon High School
JESSI LABENSKI, Kyle Eastman, Northfield High School
OLIVIA LUSTER, Libby Fischer, Craig High School
MAYA MUKAMURI, Robin Hughes, Mankato East High School
CAMRYN NELSON, Beth Hellstedt, Maple Grove Senior High School
AMBER OLSON, Stephanie Schumacher, Kenyon-Wanamingo High School
BRENNA REILAND, Wendy Suoja, White Bear Lake Area High School
MIA SUZUKI, Rick Kvam, Honor Choirs of Southeast Minnesota

TENOR I

PATRICK CAREW, Jason Heitland, Clear Lake High School
BJORN CHRIST, Mark Johnson, The Minnesota Boychoir
FRANCIS CICHOCK, Dan Walls, Boylan Catholic High School
ELMS ELMQUIST, Aimee Pashby, Rice Lake High School

JOSH KAINZ, Brandon Berger, St. Michael-Albertville High School
BEN MEYER, Jeff Knutson, Waukeez High School
JAMES NYSSE, Barb Cox Peterson, Hillside Elementary
RILEY VANDER HART, Ted Brimeyer, Urbandale High School

TENOR II

KALE ALTMAN, Joel Foreman, Solon High School
ANI CHAUHAN, Donald Annis, Private Voice
NICHOLAS DRILLING, Kelly Newell, Mound Westonka High School
GABE GEODDEKE, Mary Werner, St. Thomas the Apostle Church
THOMAS HARDING, Kelly Meilcarz, Naperville Central High School
DREW JAEGER, Jennifer Schwingle, Waukesha North High School
CIRDAN KILNDWORTH, Kellen McMillen, Roseville Area High School
NATHAN KNAUTZ, Chris Owen, Batavia High School
NATE SIKKINK, Nick Johnson, Stewartville High School
SAM SUNDERLAND, Jeff Knutson, Waukeez High School

BASS I

WILLIAM BENJAMIN, Martha Graber, St. Paul Central High School
TYLER BUHR, Audric Buhr, Menomonie High School
BAILEY CONNORS, Meg Byrne, Pleasant Valley High School
NATHAN ELSBERND, Joel Everest, Mason City High School
NOAH HOWE, Aaron Kohrs, Minnetonka High School
SAM LUBS, Elliott Kranz, Cedar Falls High School
HUNTER MEYER, Bri Bergstrom, Belle Plaine High School
RHYLAN PETERSON, Craig Anderson, Triton High School
ETHAN WILLIAMS, Gillian Teoh-Berbee, Lake Middle School

BASS II

SPENCER GILLIAN, Garrett Lathe, Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School
BRADY HELGET, Katie Krueger, Byron High School
JACK JORGENSEN, Adam Miller, Craig High School
ALEX KARAU, Doreen Athnos, Logan High School
SAMUEL LLAMZON, Kristin Symes, Singapore American School
LOGAN OLSON, Alyssa Ellson, Forest Lake High School
SETH OLSON, Angela Mitchell, Stillwater Area High School
NOAH ROUW, Michelle Droe, Lincoln Elementary
ERIC SHAFFER, David Haas, Iowa City West High School
ALEX THOMPSON, Ted Brimeyer, Urbandale High School

CONDUCTOR

ANDREW LAST, Weston Noble, Luther College

TOUR MANAGER

SUSAN POTVIN, Fred Nyline, Luther College

Nordic Choir

NORDIC CHOIR IS LUTHER'S PRINCIPAL TOURING CHOIR—AND THIS YEAR, THIS HIGHLY ACCLAIMED ENSEMBLE CELEBRATES ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY.

Nordic Choir honors the Lutheran choral tradition while exploring new and innovative choral works that span styles and genres. Nordic Choir has earned a reputation as one of the premier collegiate choral ensembles in the United States on the strength of performances described as “thrilling,” “breathtaking,” and “rock-solid in intonation and rhythmic clarity.” Founded by Sigvart Steen and memorably conducted for 57 years by Weston Noble '43, previous conductors also include Craig Arnold and Allen Hightower.

The choir has toured extensively throughout the United States, performing at venues including Lincoln Center, New York; Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.; Orchestra Hall, Chicago; Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Crystal Cathedral, Los Angeles; and the Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City. Nordic Choir also tours internationally every three years and has performed in Scandinavia, Italy, Ireland, England, the Caribbean, Mexico, Russia, and Eastern Europe.

Conductor Dr. Andrew Last '97 believes choral music is far more than a vessel for music education and performance. He views his role as facilitating the journey from technical artistry to an emotional awakening, saying, “Great choral music stirs within us a spirit and passion, connecting us in a community of belonging and acceptance.”





ANDREW LAST, CONDUCTOR

Dr. Andrew Last '97 is the Weston Noble Endowed Professor and director of choral activities at Luther College, where he conducts the Nordic Choir, teaches conducting, and serves as the artistic director for *Christmas at Luther*. Additionally, Last serves as the camp director for the Dorian Summer Music Camps that welcome over 700 student musicians to the Luther College campus each summer.

In addition to performing at the 2022 Midwest ACDA Conference, ensembles under Last's direction have been featured at the 2016 regional and 2017 national ACDA conventions. A frequent clinician and guest conductor around the United States and abroad, Last has conducted All-State ensembles in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Texas, and South Dakota. Last made his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in 2019.

Last holds a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, where he was named a Hixon-Lied Fellow. He received his master of music degree from Northern Arizona University and his bachelor of arts degree in music education and voice from Luther.



CHRISTMAS AT LUTHER

Our annual *Christmas at Luther* event is a series of collaborative concerts featuring Luther's choirs, Symphony Orchestra, Luther Ringers, and pipe organ. *Christmas at Luther* is a truly special opportunity that showcases the lasting impact of Luther College's commitment to the power of musical performance.

Music AT Luther

LUTHER COLLEGE IS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR ITS EXCEPTIONAL MUSIC PROGRAM.

Each year, one-third of the student body hones its musical talents through our three upper-class mixed-voice touring choirs, two first-year choirs, two bands, three orchestras, and two jazz bands—in addition to opera, composition, handbell choir, faculty-directed chamber groups, applied lessons, and master classes. These exceptional artists then share their talents through a series of performances here on campus, across the country, and around the world.

Throughout its history, Luther College has lived out the belief that music is a vital, life-shaping gift for all students—a reality you can see for yourself within the many exceptional music facilities on Luther's campus. Luther musicians find their unique places to thrive inside all of them, including the Jenson-Noble Hall of Music, with a 325-seat recital hall; the Center for Faith and Life, with a 1,600-seat main hall and a 200-seat recital hall; and the Center for the Arts, with a 225-seat black-box theatre.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ANY MAJOR

Luther offers a variety of scholarships and awards based on musical talent, and the majority are offered regardless of chosen major. Most are renewable for up to four years. These Weston Noble Music Scholarships are awarded by audition and can be added to any academic scholarship. Students who have applied to Luther College may schedule an audition during an individual weekday visit to campus or during a selected group visit event—including a Dorian Festival or the *Christmas at Luther* event.

For additional details and more information about specific music scholarships and audition requirements, visit audition.luther.edu or contact Jana Vorvick, assistant director of admissions music recruitment, at (563) 293-1420 or jana@luther.edu.

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TRANSFORMATIONAL MUSIC EXPERIENCES

The Luther College music program offers every student a personalized, high-quality education built on transformational experiences. This includes Symphony Orchestra's immersive month-long Vienna residency, which brings student musicians to famed concert halls, such as the Musikverein, home of the Vienna Philharmonic (pictured left).



Dorian



FESTIVALS AND SUMMER CAMPS

Each year, Luther College invites hundreds of middle and high school student musicians to join the Luther community at the Dorian Festivals and Summer Camps. Participants shape their artistic futures through private instruction, ensemble coaching, and performance opportunities in Luther's own Noble Recital Hall and Center for Faith and Life. These students develop musical skills, build confidence, and prepare to take the next step as singers and performers who will shape our world with their creative gifts.

Dorian Middle School Summer Camp
June 12–18, 2022

Dorian High School Summer Camp
June 19–25, 2022

FOR ADULTS:
Dorian Choral Retreat
July 8–10, 2022

Dorian Keyboard Festival
Nov. 11, 2022

Dorian Vocal Festival
Jan. 8–9, 2023

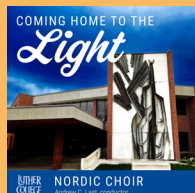
Dorian Orchestra Festival
Feb. 5–6, 2023

Dorian Band Festival
Feb. 26–27, 2023

For information, contact
Susan Potvin
Director of Music Marketing
(563) 387-1267
susan.potvin@luther.edu
dorian.luther.edu

Purchase & Streaming

Enjoy the music of Luther's music ensembles from anywhere in the world! Many performances are available for purchase or streaming via Spotify, Amazon Music, and Apple Music. Our most recent releases include ***Christmas at Luther 2021: Awake! And Greet the New Morn***, featuring the music department's five choirs, Symphony Orchestra, and Luther Ringers performing individually and in collaboration.



You can also find the latest release from the Luther College Nordic Choir: *Coming Home to the Light*. This album includes selections from each Nordic Choir since Andrew Last took the podium in 2017 and is the first digital-only release by Luther College Recordings.

Luther music recordings are available for purchase at lutherbookshop.com or by calling the Luther Book Shop at (563) 387-1036.



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SUSAN POTVIN '02. MME, University of St. Thomas. Director of music marketing.

About Luther



At Luther College, our 1,800 undergraduate students gain more than a college education. They each receive a personal, tailored journey that brings their brightest futures to life. From music to accounting, from theatre to physics, every student—in every one of our 60+ academic programs—is empowered to shape their experience and be shaped by it. Our emphasis on experiential learning and intentional collaboration inspires growth that makes an impact. Our graduates go on to achieve remarkable success in their careers—but more importantly, they go on to live with purpose and lead with courage as they make a difference for others.

Luther College is a Phi Beta Kappa campus in the Lutheran tradition (ELCA) nestled in the beautiful bluff country of Decorah, Iowa. We are nationally recognized for our unique, engaging Paideia program and ongoing commitment to sustainability—as well as our impressive roster of Rhodes and Fulbright scholars. So it's no wonder Luther is consistently ranked among the nation's top 100 liberal arts colleges.

Interested in learning more? Come see for yourself how Luther College will shape you for a lifetime of achievement and purpose at luther.edu.

98%

of Luther students receive
financial aid

52

music faculty

55%

of Luther's electricity comes from
renewable sources (wind and solar)

**LUTHER
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