



presents

THE TCU CONCERT CHORALE

COME, LOVELY
AND
SOOTHING
DEATH...



MIDWINTER CONCERT

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND
VAN CLIBURN CONCERT HALL AT TCU AT 7:00PM

PROGRAM

Warum ist das Licht gegeben Johannes Brahms
(*first movement*)

“Invocation” from *Invocation and Dance* David Conte
Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao & Amy Pummill-Stewart, *collaborative pianists*

“Månen” from *Säsongsrunda* Till MacIvor Meyn
(*premiere*)

Love Never Fails Reginal Wright

COME, LOVELY AND SOOTHING DEATH...

Not the most uplifting title for a choral concert program, but just hang on... This program was inspired by the text of a new work (“Månen”) that we will premiere this evening by TCU composition faculty, **Till MacIvor Meyn**, from his choral cycle *Säsongsrunda*. Dr. Meyn composed this cycle over his sabbatical in Fall 2024, and the TCU Concert Chorale premiered the other four works in the cycle one year ago. The opening line by poet Edith Södergran translates to, “How everything that is dead is wonderful and unspeakable...” and links the cycle of life to that which is natural and beautiful.

Our program opens with the opening movement of **Johannes Brahms’** motet *Warum ist das Licht gegeben*. This motet, when sung in its entirety, lasts a little over ten minutes, and resembles the motets of J. S. Bach in its complexity and structure. The section of the motet performed tonight contains a musical anchor one will hear throughout: the words “Warum” (Why) repeated twice signal transitions and ultimately the end of the work and leaving us without an answer. The text of the work is from Job 3:20-23 and asks, “Why is light given to him who is in misery, life to the bitter in soul, who long for death, but it doesn’t come; and dig for it more than for hidden treasures...” Brahms emphasizes this sense of longing by setting the opening in an intense and chromatic four-part fugue. Each line of the text receives new musical treatment and paints an ever-changing musical and emotional landscape.

Warum ist das Licht gegeben

*Warum? Warum ist das Licht gegeben dem Mühseligen,
und das Leben den betäubten Herzen? Warum?*
Why is light given to him who is in misery,
life to the bitter in soul? Why

*Die des Todes warten und kommt nicht,
und grüben ihn wohl aus dem Verborgenen;*
who long for death, but it doesn't come;
and dig for it more than for hidden treasures,

*die sich fast freuen und sind fröhlich,
daß sie das Grab bekommen. Warum?*
who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad,
when they can find the grave? Why?

*Und dem Manne, deß Weg verborgen ist,
und Gott vor ihm den selben bedeckt. Warum?*
Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden,
whom God has hedged in? Why?

- Job 3:20-23, alt.

The program continues with the first movement of a work by **David Conte**. *Invocation and Dance* was originally composed for the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in 1986 in the height of the AIDS epidemic. In this work, Conte's sets the text of Walt Whitman's *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd*.

Conte begins the work with a pulsing and ominous low D in the piano giving the sense of time marching on. The voices enter with the text, "Come, oh come, lovely and soothing death, undulate 'round the world..." opening on a unison pitch and dramatically expanding to depict the text. This is immediately followed by the text "serenely arriving" that is set in stark contrast to the opening with lush and inviting sonorities.

"Invocation" from Invocation and Dance

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world,
serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

- *Walt Whitman*

After an inspiring choir tour to Scandinavia, composer **Till MacIvor Meyn** wrote *Säsongsrunda* (Season's Cycle), drawing from Swedish music and poetry to complete the choral set. In the movement we will premiere tonight, "Månen" (Moon), one will hear a variety of moods and colors that follow the text. The piece opens with a wordless call from the sopranos, followed by the tenors and basses replying in a lilting and mysterious duet. The trebles reply and then the entire choir joins in what will become a refrain of sorts on the text, "And the moon spins its wonderful web, which flowers love, and the moon spins its fabulous web around all that lives."

"Månen" from Säsongsrunda

How everything that is dead is wonderful and unspeakable: a dead leaf and a dead man and the disk of the moon. And all the flowers know a secret and the forest it preserves,

And all the flowers know a secret and the forest it preserves, it is that the moon's orbit around our earth is the path of death

And the moon spins its wonderful web, which flowers love, and the moon spins its fabulous web around all that lives.

And the sickle of the moon cuts off flowers in late autumn nights, and all flowers wait for the moon's kiss in endless longing

- *Edith Södergran*

We complete this part of the program with a newer work written for the “high school choir students at Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School and their directors” by Reginal Wright. *Love Never Fails* sets the well-known text from 1 Corinthians and brings our set to a close.

All of the previous works welcome death as a natural and beautiful part of life. Wright’s setting of this text, emphasizes the qualities of love that transcend our earthly life. From the Song of Solomon: love is strong as death.

Love Never Fails

Love never fails.

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

Love never fails.

It does not dishonor others,
it keeps no record of wrongs,

Love never fails.

it is not easily angered,

it is not self-seeking,

Love never fails.

It does not delight in evil
but love rejoices in truth.

Protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres.

Love never fails.

-1 Corinthians 13:4-9, alt.

CONCERT CHORALE

Christopher Aspaas, *conductor*

Rashaad Calaham & Sarah Gould, *assistant conductors*

Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao, *collaborative pianist*

Mary Grace Abney

Giri Anup

Adam Arntson

Elliot Banks

Rashaad Calaham

Casey Caldwell

Kolby Carpenter

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Telvin Culberson

Kaylyn Davis

Kai Diamond

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Samantha Irvin

TJ Kuon

Kaylynn Langham

Sara Lwin

Cate McCorquodale

Golda Marcello

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contribute to our students' success.

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The TCU School of Music, Dr. Marc Reed, Director
The TCU School of Music Vocal Faculty,
Twyla Robinson, Division Chair

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TCU

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

I Am Loved

February 22, 2026

7:00pm

*The Van Cliburn Concert Hall at
Texas Christian University*

Rashaad Calaham, conductor

Dr. Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao, collaborative pianist

Featuring the TCU Concert Chorale

Concert Program

I Am Loved

Christopher Harris (living)

If Ye Love Me

Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)

Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 82

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

III. O die Frauen

IV. Wie des Abends schöne Röte

VIII. Wenn so lind dein Auge mir

Dr. Cecilia Kao and Dr. Amy Stewart, collaborative pianists

And So I Go On

Jake Runestad (living)

Sarah Squires, soloist

Lovely Day

arr. Robert Gibson (living)

Kolby Carpenter, soloist

Eugenio Fabela, electric bass

Carl Evans, drumset

A Note from the Conductor

Good evening, and welcome to the second portion of tonight's program. Have you ever stopped to think about "What is love?" How would you define it? Merriam-Webster's Dictionary contains eight different entries for the word love; the first listing is "strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties."

And yet, love feels far too expansive to be contained in a single definition. It is at once tender and powerful, quiet and transformative. It binds families, deepens friendships, sustains faith, and inspires art. Love is found in devotion and sacrifice, in longing and joy, in the simple act of being seen and understood. And I don't know about you, but I think we certainly could use more of it in the world...

Music, perhaps more than any other language, gives voice to these many shades of love. Tonight's selections explore love in its varied forms — sacred and human, intimate and communal, contemplative and exuberant. From expressions of spiritual devotion and trust, to dances of romance, to affirmations of self-worth and resilience, each piece offers a unique lens through which we experience connection with one another.

It is our hope that these pieces resonate with your own stories — that you hear echoes of the people, memories, and moments that have shaped your understanding of love. Thank you for sharing this space with us and for allowing us to make music for you.

We are grateful you are here.

Program Notes

Taken from Sara Teasdale's poem entitled "Joy," composer Christopher Harris expertly captures feelings of elation and transcendence through exclamatory declarations of love and vitality in *I Am Loved*. Warm harmonies, lyrical melodies, and gently unfolding textures rekindle the infatuation one has when they first fall in love.

Written during the Protestant Reformation by one of England's most distinguished Renaissance composers, Thomas Tallis's *If Ye Love Me* surrounds the listener with a warm, luminous soundscape shaped by gentle homophonic clarity and flowing points of imitation. Set to a text from the Gospel of John, the anthem presents Christ's promise to his disciples: that love is expressed through steadfast faith and that they will not be left alone, but sustained by divine companionship.

Written for vocal quartet and four-hand piano by Johannes Brahms, the *Liebeslieder Waltzes* capture the charm and intimacy of nineteenth-century Romanticism.. Each waltz distills a distinct emotional shade—playfulness, longing, flirtation, or wistful reflection. Brahms's rhythmic buoyancy, graceful triple meter, and richly colored harmonies create an atmosphere of gentle dance, while the interwoven vocal lines echo the give-and-take of conversation between lovers. The third movement, *O die Fraen* (O the Women), describes how men are easily infatuated by women; this is followed by *Wie des Abends schone Rote* (Like the beautiful red of the evening sky), claiming her love for only one for a lifetime of "endless bliss." Lastly, the choir concludes this work with *Wenn so lind dein Auge mir* ("When you gaze at me so tenderly"), an intimate waltz in which a lover's gentle gaze becomes a healing presence, dissolving their admirer's inner darkness. Gratitude soon gives way to vulnerability as the speaker pleads for love's "sweet ardour" not to fade, ultimately affirming a promise of steadfast devotion.

Program Notes

The composer of *And So I Go On* writes: "When Germán Aguilar passed away unexpectedly in the summer of 2014, it was a huge loss to our world. Germán had a warm, kind personality and a love for life, teaching, and the people around him - especially his fiancé Jon Talberg. After Germán's death, Jon was cleaning out Germán's wallet and found the only card inside was mine. I had given it to Germán when we met in January of 2014. Jon soon contacted me and asked if I would write a piece of music in memory of Germán - I was honored to do so. I hope this music captures an element of Germán's life as an amazing man and lover of music. Also, I hope the music will serve as a form of healing to those who experience it and who continue to suffer from this immense loss. Todd Boss, the amazing poet who wrote an original text for this work, beautifully captured the message we want to leave with you: "And so I go on, always, wherever you are, my lovely one."

The iconic *Lovely Day*, written by Bill Withers, describes how the presence of a loved one completely changes your perspective, turning a potentially difficult day into something wonderful, highlighting the transformative power of relationships and human resilience. This contemporary arrangement by Robert Gibson transforms the familiar groove into a communal celebration, blending pop, soul, and choral textures.

Texts and Translations

I Am Loved

I am wild, I will sing to the trees,
I will sing to the stars in the sky,
I love, I am loved, he is mine,
Now at last I can die!

I am sandaled with wind and with flame,
I have heart-fire and singing to give,
I can tread on the grass or the stars,
Now at last I can live!

If Ye Love Me

If ye love me, keep my commandments.
And I will pray the Father,
and he shall give you another comforter,
that he may 'bide with you forever;
E'en the sp'rit of truth.

Texts and Translations

Liesbeslieder Waltzes

III. O die Fraen

*O die Frauen, o die Frauen,
Wie sie Wonne tauen!
Wäre lang ein Mönch geworden,
Wären nicht die Frauen!*

Oh, the women, oh, the women
How effortlessly they steal the heart
I'd have sworn off the world long ago
if it weren't for the women.

IV. Wie des Abends schöne Röte

*Wie des Abends schöne Röte
Möcht ich arme Dirne glühn,
Einem, Einem zu gefallen,
Sonder Ende Wonne sprühn*

Like the beautiful red of the evening sky,
I, a maiden, long to glow
To please one, just one
And radiate endless bliss.

VIII. Wenn so lind dein Auge mir

*Wenn so lind dein Auge mir
Und so lieblich schauet –
Jede letzte Trübe fliehet,
Welche mich umgrauet.*

When you gaze at me so tenderly
and so full of love –
all the gloom that assails me
fades away.

*Dieser Liebe schöne Glut,
Laß sie nicht verstieben!
Nimmer wird, wie ich, so treu
Dich ein anderer lieben.*

Oh, do not let this love's
sweet ardour vanish!
No one will love you
as truly as I.

Texts and Translations

My lovely one

though you are gone

taken from me

I cannot leave you

I am not free

I burn in snow

and thirst in rain

there is no sea

that can drown my pain

but you would want me to live

and love again

and so I go on

always

wherever you are

my lovely one

My lovely one

I am gone

taken from you

mine in your suffering

mine in your joy

my snow will kiss you

pouring down my love

there is no sea

that can drown your pain

I want you to live

and love again

and so I go on

always

wherever you are

my lovely one

Texts and Translations

Lovely Day

When I wake up in the morning, love
And the sunlight hurts my eyes
And something without warning, love
Bears heavy on my mind

Then I look at you
And the world's alright with me
Just one look at you
And I know it's gonna be
A lovely day

When the day that lies ahead of me
Seems impossible to face
When someone else instead of me
Always seems to know the way

Then I look at you
And the world's alright with me
Just one look at you
And I know it's gonna be
A lovely day,

When the day that lies ahead of me
Seems impossible to face
When someone else instead of me
Always seems to know the way

Then I look at you
And the world's alright with me
Just one look at you
And I know it's gonna be
A lovely day

It's gonna be a lovely day

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My fiance, Alex Carr

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