WE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM
CANNOT REST
WE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM
CANNOT REST

I  On Feminine Identity
Shining a light on separate but distinct feminist issues

Trilo
Swedish traditional (arr. A. Möller)

To the Mothers in Brazil: Salve Regina
Lars Jansson (arr. Gunnar Eriksson)

Strange Things
Music by Suzanne Collins, Jeremy Fraites, & Wesley Schultz. Adapted by Karen Porter and the VT Solidarity Singers

La Lisière
Music by Emanuelle da Costa
Words by Marie Kock

A Path to Each Other
Music by Jocelyn Hagen & Timothy C. Takach
Words by Julia Klatt Singer

What Happens When A Woman?
Alexandra Olsavsky of Artemisia

II  Forced Migration & Refugee Crisis
Who are we as a nation?
What do we see as our responsibility?

Would You Harbor Me?
Ysaye M. Barnwell

On Dark Earth*
Music by Victoria Malawey
Words by Sappho (c.500 B.C.E.)
*2019 Call for Scores Winner

Dos Cuerpos
Music by Julio Morales
Words by Octavio Paz

She Took His Hands*
Nicholas Cline
*2018 Call for Scores Winner

Mi Única
Peace Poets

Everybody’s Got a Right to Live
Rev. Frederick Douglass Kirk Patrick & Jimmy Collier

Please hold applause until the end of the program.
WE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM
CANNOT REST

III Race & Violence
Racism, lynching, and mass incarceration

Ezekiel Saw de Wheel
Traditional Spiritual (arr. William L. Dawson)

I Am a Superpredator
Halim Flowers

Ella’s Song
Bernice Johnson Reagon

National Anthem
Halim Flowers

The Listening
Cheryl B. Engelhardt

I’m Gonna Walk It With You
Brian Claflin and Ellie Grace (arr. Cheryl B. Engelhardt)

Please hold applause until the end of the program.

VOICES 21C

André de Quadros, Artistic Director
Quincy Cason
Jesse Colford
Eugenia Conte
Josaphat Contreras
Chris Clark*
Olivia de Geofroy
Mary DiRoberts
Bradford Dumont
Cheryl B. Engelhardt
Elise Felker
Ashley Frezza

Michael Gondek
Jana Hieber
Mallory Leonard
Michael Leonard
Nicolette Mingels*
Krystal Morin*
Sydney Mukasa
Chad Putka*
Ofri Tanchelson
Judith Zuckerman

Leadership Team
Ruth Debrot, Olivia de Geofroy, André de Quadros, Bradford Dumont, Cheryl B. Engelhardt, Michael Genese, Nicolette Mingels, Krystal Morin, Judy Zuckerman

Artistic Leadership Committee
Bradford Dumont, André de Quadros, Krystal Morin

Special thanks to Sharon Rae Paquette for her assistance with choreography and dramaturgy in developing this program.
When VOICES 21C was formed in 2016 for a residency in the French Alps, we could not have imagined that it would become such a strong, committed, and vibrant ensemble with compassion and creativity at the core of its mission. When asked what the “21C” means, our singers joke around quite a lot, but its meaning lies in the mission to engage with the contemporary world—“21C” signifying the twenty-first century. Increasingly, over the last generation or so, choral music has become the locus for creativity, justice, resistance, empowerment, and equity. While VOICES 21C’s programming seeks to capture some or all of these elements, our vision is clear. Through musical engagement, we celebrate the pursuit of justice, admiring the many attendant achievements and struggles. We remain committed to presenting the voices of contemporary composers based in the US and abroad, and we pursue an affirmative action to include the creative works of people of color and diverse identities and orientations. We understand that our performance style is unconventional. We present our performances in a spirit of humility as we seek to stretch the boundaries of the art form and invite the open hearts and minds of our audiences.

When the group was invited by the ACDA to present a program on peace and justice at the ACDA Eastern Region Conference in 2020, we reflected on three of the most compelling and intersecting sets of issues of our world—feminine identity, migration, and race. These topic areas are close to our mission, as we have explored them in previous programs and projects. This group has been greatly influenced by Empowering Song, an approach that emphasizes image, body, creativity, compassion, and justice, together with the works of Susan B. Anthony, Augusto Boal, Frederick Douglass, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Bryan Stevenson and many others. Over the years, the ensemble has built a connection with people in prison, and formerly incarcerated people. In this performance, we welcome Halim Flowers, poet, apostle of justice, advocate of love, and a former prisoner, wrongfully incarcerated for over two decades. This collaboration represents the very soul of our work as we seek to honor many like him, who are victims of systemic injustice. The series of works in our performance are intended to speak for themselves, and we invite our audience to view our performances as lenses through which they can find joy, consolation, inspiration, and meaning in the complexity of today’s world.

—Dr. André de Quadros
Artistic Director, VOICES 21C
voices21c.org
Halim A. Flowers was arrested at the age of sixteen and sentenced as an adult to two life sentences in the District of Columbia. His experiences as a child in the adult prison system were filmed in the Emmy award-winning documentary “Thug Life In DC.” In 2005, he started his own publishing company, SATO Communications, through which he has published eleven books.

On March 21, 2019, Halim was released from prison after serving twenty-two years. Since then, he was filmed performing his spoken word in the upcoming documentary *Kim Kardashian: The Justice Project* (2020), which will air on the Oxygen network. He is also a surrogate for Represent Justice, where he travels the country to perform for the national campaign in support of the film *Just Mercy* (2019).

His fashion line “Ideallionaires” is a social justice brand that incorporates his poetry into apparel to amplify his social impact. He serves as a criminal justice consultant for Vera Institute, where he uses his experiences as a juvenile lifer to educate attorneys, judges, professors, and prosecutors on how to effectively implement love and restorative justice principles into our juvenile justice system. He intends to use his poetry, spoken word, fashion, film, and PhotoPoetry to advocate for revolutionary love.

www.halimaflowers.com
www.ideallionaires.com
@halimflowers (Instagram)
@ideallionaires (Instagram)
@therealhalim (Twitter)
WE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM CANNOT REST

Trilo

Trilo!
Här är han.
Nära land.

Trilo!
Here he is.
Near land.

To the Mothers in Brazil: Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae
Ad te clamamus
exules filii Hevae
Regina coeli laetare, alleluia.
O Clemens, O pia,
O dulcis virgo Maria
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui.

Hail holy Queen, Mother of Mercy
To thee do we cry,
poor banished children of Eve.
Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
O clement, O loving,
O sweet Virgin Mary
And Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb.

Strange Things

Our health, our lives, our bodies not for sale.
We struggle to change a system that has failed.
Strange things have happened here, no stranger would it be
If we built a system good for you and me.

La Lisière (The Edge)

Nous sommes les racines,
Nous sommes les branches,
Nous sommes la mousse
qui adoucit le vent,
Nous sommes le chemin
qui te mène à la clairière.
Avance, Viens!
Il est l’heure pour toi
de sortir de l’ombre,
Il est l’heure
tu nous entendes?
Nous sommes les branches,
Nous sommes les racines,
Nous sommes le vent
qui console la mousse,
Nous sommes la clairière qui t’attend.

We are the roots,
We are the branches,
We are the moss
that softens the wind,
We are the path
that leads you to the clearing.
Come forward, come!
It is time for you
to come out of the shadows
It is time
Can you hear us?
We are the branches
We are the roots
We are the wind
that consoles the moss,
We are the clearing that awaits you.

voices21c.org
What Happens When A Woman?

What happens when a woman takes power?  
What happens when she won’t back down?  
What happens when she wears the crown?  
What happens when she rules her own body?  
What happens when she sets the beat?  
What happens when she bows to nobody?  
What happens when she stands on her own two feet?

We rise above; we lead with love;  
we have won; we are one; we’ve just begun.

Would You Harbor Me?

Would you harbor a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew,  
a heretic, convict or spy?  
Would you harbor a runaway woman or child,  
a poet, a prophet, a king?  
Would you harbor an exile or a refugee,  
or person living with AIDS?  
Would you harbor a Tubman, a Garrett, a Truth,  
a fugitive or a slave?  
Would you harbor an Afghan, Latinx, or Kurd,  
a lesbian or a gay?

Would you harbor me? Would I harbor you?

On Dark Earth

Some say a cavalry corps,  
some infantry, some, again,  
will maintain that the  
swift oars of our sea fleet are  
the best sight on dark earth;  
but I say that whomever one loves, is.
Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces dos olas
y la noche es océano.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces dos piedras
y la noche desierto.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces raíces
en la noche enlazadas.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son a veces navajas
y la noche relámpago.

Dos cuerpos frente a frente
son dos astros que caen
en un cielo vacío.

She Took His Hands

“She took Saulito’s hands and said to him very calmly, “They can’t hurt us. God is protecting us. You just have to have faith and I will be fine and with you soon.”


on the arrest of Chicago activist Elvira Arellano

Mi Única (My Only)

Oye mi gente
traemos la fuerza
La libertad es mi única bandera

Listen my people
we bring strength
Freedom is my only flag

Rise up my people
my condors, my eagles
No human being will ever be illegal

voices21c.org
Everybody’s Got a Right to Live

Everybody’s got a right to live. Everybody’s got a right to live.
And before this campaign fails, we’ll all go down to jail.
Everybody’s got a right to live.

Ezekiel Saw de Wheel

Ezekul saw de wheel, ‘Way up in de mid’l of de air,
Ezekul saw de wheel, Way in de middle of de air.
De big wheel run by faith, an’ de lit’l’ wheel run by de grace of God,
A lit’l’ wheel in a wheel, Way in de middle of de air.

Better mind my brother how you walk on de cross,
Your foot might slip, an’ yer soul get lost,
Ole Satan wears a club foot shoe,
If you don’ mind he’ll slip it on you.

Some go to church for to sing an’ shout,
Hallelu-, Hallelu-, Hallelujah!
Befo’ six months dey’s all turn’d out.

Ella’s Song

Until the killing of black men, black mothers’ sons,
is as important as the killing of white men, white mothers’ sons,
We who believe in freedom cannot rest.
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.

To me young people come first, they have the courage where we fail
And if I can but shed some light as they carry us through the gale.
The older I get the better I know that the secret of my going on
Is when the reins are in the hands of the young,
who dare to run against the storm.

Struggling myself don’t mean a whole lot, I’ve come to realize
That teaching others to stand up and fight is the
only way our struggle survives,
I’m a woman who speaks in a voice and I must be heard.
At times I can be quite difficult, I’ll bow to no man’s word.

We who believe in freedom cannot rest.
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.
I am a Superpredator/ The child that we cast away/Flushed down the school-to-prison pipeline/ For decades in a cage to lay/My soul scrolls the Confederates river/ Where I cannot call Mass/ Mister/ Strange Fruit vulture picked from the lynching tree/ What ghosts will dare compose a song for me/ I am nothing but a menace to society/ With no big wheel for God's grace to carry me/ To where my foot won't slip beneath the sand/ To drown as a manchild in the promise land/ Who will fight for the child the village failed to raise/ With no audacity to hope for better days

I will cry for the little boy/ Shackled and away from home/ I will cry for the little boy/ Trapped in a cell all alone/ I will cry for the little boy/ Whose heart is too cold to weep/ I will cry for the little boy/ Pain never lets him sleep/ I will cry for the little boy/ He was buried alive in the burning sand/ I will cry for the little boy/ The boy sentenced to life like a man/ I will cry for the little boy/ Who knows that his soul is in chains/ I will cry for the little boy/ His spirit died again and again/ I will cry for the little boy/ A good boy he tried to be/ I will little boy/ That died

inside of me.........@Idollionaires (1-30-20)  طليم

I AM A SUPERPREDATOR
Halim Flowers (2020)
NATIONAL ANTHEM
Halim Flowers (2020)
The Listening

Violence! Silence! Silence! Violence! Time!
Time has come for us to move on. We must move on.
There is a new spirit rising.
I turn my back when I hold my tongue
I cannot be silent.
I cannot stand by and leave these words unsung.
I cannot be silent.
Trust and praise is reason to make better choices.
But it’s our duty to speak for the voiceless.
We must hear their broken cries.
It starts with listening.
This is the re-creation of the listening…
Interruption, oppression, suppression, exploitation,
vigour, control, hypocrisy…
Somehow, this madness must stop.
To be on the right side of the revolution
means it’s time we shift our view of peace
so we can alter our evolution.
War is not the way.
Can we be tranquil and somewhat tame,
rational while we stay sane?
Solve the problem with a solution thereof.
That being unconditional love?
Love.
Not as a weak condition.
But as the key for the ignition of peace.
The time is now.
There is a new spirit rising.
We must act in the face of risk.
We must choose to transform,
and we need to be brisk.
I cannot be silent. I will not be silent.
It is time to close the gap,
and stop the distancing, stop inhibiting,
stop what we are witnessing.
It’s time to break the silence with the listening.
I’m Gonna Walk It With You

Well it looks like it might be a long road but I’m gonna walk it with you.
And I know you might have a heavy load but I can carry some too.
   I will lift you up when they push you down,
   I will raise my voice and stand my ground,
Well it looks like it might be a long road but I’m gonna walk it with you.

Well it looks like it might be a long night but I ain’t goin’ nowhere.
And I know it’s gonna be a hard fight but I will stay right here.
   I will shine a light in the darkest hour,
   I will face the man in the tallest tower.
Well it looks like it might be a long night but I ain’t goin’ nowhere.

   I will work! I will fight! I will strive in the name of love!
   I will speak! I will shout! I will sing it to the skies above!

Well it looks like it might be a long road but I’m gonna walk it with you.
And I know you might have a heavy load but I can carry some too.
   I will lift you up when they push you down,
   I will raise my voice and stand my ground,
Well it looks like it might be a long road but I’m gonna walk it with you.
Dr. André de Quadros is a professor of music at Boston University, where he holds affiliations in African, Asian, and Muslim studies, and in prison education. He leads the following choirs: Common Ground Voices (Israeli-Palestinian-international), Common Ground Voices / La Frontera (US-Mexico), the Manado State University Choir (Indonesia), the Muslim Choral Ensemble (Sri Lanka), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Countries Youth Choir, VOICES 21C, and the World Muslim Choral Ensemble.

As a scholar, conductor, educator, and human rights activist, his professional work has taken him to the most diverse ensembles and settings in more than forty countries, spanning professional ensembles, and including projects with prisons, psychosocial rehabilitation, refugees and asylum-seekers, and victims of torture, sexual violence, and trauma. He is the artistic director of the London International Music Festival, and Conducting 21C: Musical Leadership for a New Century at the Eric Ericson International Choral Centre in Sweden. In 2019, he was a Distinguished Academic Visitor at Queens’ College, University of Cambridge.

He is the editor of the following series: Cantemus (earthsongs), Music of Asia and the Pacific (earthsongs), Salamu Aleikum – Choral Music of the Muslim World (earthsongs), and Songs of the World (Hinshaw). Among his many publications is his 2019 book, Focus: Choral Music in Global Perspective, published by Routledge.

www.andredequadros.com

voices21c.org
In the United States over fourteen million people sing in choirs, according to Chorus America. Until relatively recently, the choral art has been relatively isolated from the social justice movement, yet there have been several initiatives from the American Choral Directors Association and Chorus America, and from educational and religious institutions to make the choral art more relevant, diverse, and subversive.

One of many challenges for conductors and artistic leaders is the lack of repertoire and the deficit of programming models. VOICES 21C’s project seeks to address both these issues by building on existing works to create a long-form and cohesive narrative blending the choral art with imaginative and innovative practices, borrowing from kinesthetic art and theatre.

This group seeks to combine technical proficiency with creativity and compassion, creating meaning in performance by connecting musical messages to social justice issues in the US and abroad, representing the voices of the silenced, the forgotten, and the marginalized.

In 2016, VOICES 21C’s program in France focused on international immigration, and in 2017, it became one of the only American choirs to collaborate with both Israeli and Palestinian
artists in Israel and in the West Bank. Then in 2018, to draw attention to the tensions between Mexico and the US, VOICES 21C gave performances and collaborated in Mexico with community partners in both Cuernavaca and Mexico City. 2019 brought VOICES 21C to the world-renowned triennial Choralies Festival in Vaison-la-Romaine, France, to share “Half the Sky,” a program of music by women, and works that highlight women’s issues. This festival allowed VOICES 21C to connect with hundreds of international choral organizations.

Since its inaugural year, VOICES 21C has annually represented prison narratives and has worked with former prisoners in performance. The choir has also performed a complete Islamic program, annually presented by Boston’s Center for Jewish Culture, the only such American choir to undertake such a repertoire challenge in the days of Islamophobia. This year’s performance will take place on March 29, 2020 at The Vilna Shul in Beacon Hill, Boston.

As for the group’s leadership structure, VOICES 21C utilizes an egalitarian leadership model, meaning every member is on an even playing field with the artistic director, and can contribute to any degree during the rehearsal process. VOICES 21C also has a leadership team of around eight volunteer members for most financial, artistic, communication, and logistical decisions. 

voices21c.org
VOICES 21C COMPOSER

Cheryl B. Engelhardt

Cheryl B. Engelhardt is a singer-songwriter and composer. She collaborates with and writes for choirs, theater productions, and film producers. Her newest record, “Luminary” (piano and vocal ambient music for mindfulness and focus), recently landed #1 on the iTunes and Amazon New Age charts. She has been a member of VOICES 21C since their first season in 2016, and has frequently written and arranged pieces for the group over the last four seasons. She is often requested to write repertoire for VOICES 21C to fulfill specific goals or aspirations, and to provide links within performance sets that strengthen the group’s chosen performance themes. She particularly enjoys these collaborations because she gets to be a part of the thoughtful and caring conversations that shape the group’s programs, and can then provide a bespoke piece to help tell these important stories. www.cbemusic.com

2018 CALL FOR SCORES WINNER

Nicholas Cline

Deeply influenced by the natural world, Nicholas Cline’s music draws on a broad range of subjects and experiences with the belief that music reveals, challenges, and shapes the listener’s understanding of the world. He has collaborated with and been commissioned by VOICES 21C, Spektral Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, Ensemble VONK, Bienen Contemporary/Early Vocal Ensemble, Northwestern Contemporary Music Ensemble, Jeff Siegfried, Jena Gardner, Square Peg Round Hole, Stare at the Sun, Constellation Men’s Ensemble, and F-Plus. He lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina with his wife Mallory and son Gareth, and teaches composition and music theory at Appalachian State University. www.nicholas-cline.com

2019 CALL FOR SCORES WINNER

Victoria Malawey

Victoria Malawey is a composer, singer-songwriter, and scholar based in the Twin Cities and Associate Professor of Music at Macalester College. Her music has been performed at venues throughout the world. Malawey’s Chansons Innocentes was the 2017 winner of the International Alliance of Women in Music New Music Competition Patsy Lu Prize, and her Miniatures for solo piano was the second-place winner of the 2016 New Ariel Piano Composition Competition. Malawey studied composition with Sven-David Sandström at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and Robert Lombardo at Chicago Musical College at Roosevelt University. www.victoriamalawey.com

Keep an eye out for our third annual Call for Scores

Winners of our Call for Scores receive a live performance recording and a spot in the following year’s performance season! Past finalists of our call for scores are featured on this program: Victoria Malawey (’19) and Nicholas Cline (’18).