



## *Global Echoes*

Cynthia Powell, Artistic Director and Conductor  
Jenny Clarke, Founder and Executive Director

**Janet Sora Chung, piano & organ**  
**Frances Duffy, harp; Kasey Blezinger, percussion**  
**Laura Albers and Yezu Woo, violins; Cameren Anai Williams, viola;**  
**Clara Kennedy, cello; and Eleonore Oppenheim, bass.**

No flash photography. Please set cell phones to silent. This performance is being video recorded.

<b>Dago Inang Sarge (Indonesian Folk Song)</b>	arr. Mark O'Leary
<b>Ancient City</b>	Andrew De Teliga, arr Paul Jarman
<b>Sakura (Traditional Japanese)</b>	arr. Michael Neaum
<b>Umyrzaya (Snowdrop) (Tatar Folk Song)*</b> Soloists: Hilary Baboukis and Zarina Vildanova	arr. Milyausha Khayrullinaa
<b>Akcharlaklar (Seagulls)*</b>	Elmir Nizamov
<b>Molitva (Prayer)*</b> Soloist: Nikhita Karra	Elmir Nizamov
<b>Du bist die Ruh**</b>	Franz Schubert arr. Peter A. Eklund
<b>The Blue Bird</b> Soloist: Erin Siu	Charles Villiers Stanford arr. Faye Timmer
<b>Over hill, over dale</b>	Andrea Ramsey
<b>Hark, hark the lark</b>	Alan Bullard
<b>Dirait-on</b>	Morten Lauridsen
<b>Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis</b> Soloists: Ruston Ropac and Hilary Baboukis	Jessica French

**Canticle to the Spirit**

Eleanor Daley

**The Skye Boat song**

William Ross, arr. Michael McGlynn

**An Oíche (The Night)**

Michael McGlynn

**The Parting Glass**

Traditional, arr. Michael McGlynn

Soloists: Hilary Baboukis, Rebecca Hart and Tina Rosenberg

**Flight**

Craig Carnelia arr. Ryan Murphy

\*Thanks to Zarina Vildanova for researching and providing transliterations of the Tatar and Russian texts.

\*\* Instrumental arrangements by Allison Sniffin

### **Melodia Singers**

#### **Soprano**

Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya  
Deliana Daskalova  
Daniela Finlay  
Janet Gillespie  
Alexis Hedvat  
Kristina Jacobs  
Lucy Janovitz  
Nikhita Karra  
Birgit Matzareth

Ashley Paskalis  
Chiara Pierangelo  
Mia Breckenridge Scott  
Erin Siu  
Tulasi Sundaresh  
Angela Zhang

#### **Alto**

Hilary Baboukis  
Cara Brownell  
Jenny Clarke

Rebecca Hart  
Erika Hauschild  
Ruston Ropac  
Tina Rosenberg  
Jeanne Ruskin  
Ezinne Umannabuike  
Zarina Vildanova  
Patricia Whyte  
Claire Wiener

### **Melodia Women's Choir History**

Founded in 2003, Melodia explores and performs rarely heard music for women's voices in many different styles, and nurtures emerging women composers through commissions and performances. Under the leadership of Jenny Clarke, Executive Director, and Cynthia Powell, Artistic Director, Melodia has performed at Symphony Space, Merkin Concert Hall, DiMenna Center for Classical Music, the Church of Saint Ignatius Loyola in collaboration with Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, and others. Melodia has been heard on WQXR and WNYC radio, including as part of "Her Music: 24 Hours of Emerging Women Composers," in 2014 and again in 2015 and 2016, and seen on NBC television.

Melodia released their first commercial recording in 2014, Lullaby, a collection of soothing pieces selected from among the many rare and special works Melodia has performed over the first twelve years of music-making.

Melodia was selected to participate in the WNYC/WQXR Radio's Salute the ARTS Initiative (STAR) 2013 – our second STAR award. Melodia was honored to receive a special proclamation from the New York City Council in April 2018 for “delighting listeners with high quality musical performances and for fostering greater harmony throughout our community and beyond.” Melodia was honored by New City Council Member Erik Bottcher in 2023 in celebration of Melodia's 20th Anniversary and for “raising women's voices and fostering greater harmony in New York City.”

## Notes on the Program

Melodia's *Global Echoes* reverberates with poetry in a half-dozen languages and music from around the world, traditional folk and classical repertoire that transcend our singular lives and take us across time and space to a universe beyond ourselves. We open our concert with folklore. The Indonesian *Dago Inang Sarge* tells of the longing of youth to test new waters, while *Ancient City*, a folk-flavored composition by Australian Andrew de Teliga yearns for the return of a lost, enchanted land, and the traditional Japanese *Sakura* celebrates the marvel of spring dressed in its cherry Blossoms.

Songs from the Tatarstan Republic of Russia contemplate the wonders of outer and inner worlds. *Umyrzaya*, a Tatar folk song, offers a gentle reflection of the beauty and fragility of life with the snowdrop flower as its symbol. The Tartar *Akcharlaklar* from the opera *Kara Pulat* by Elmir Nizamov whirls with seagulls as messengers of both joy and sorrow, and *Molitva* by Nizamov draws from the prayerful meditations of six Russian women poets.

With German and English writers, we explore heightened language. *Du bist die Ruh*, one of the most popular German Lieder (art songs) composed by Franz Schubert, is from poetry by Friedrich Rückert describing love as the resonance between two souls. *The Blue Bird*, composed by Charles Villiers Stanford in 1910, is based on a poem by the English novelist Mary Coleridge. Originally written in the tradition of part-songs, Melodia performs a special arrangement for treble voices by Melodian Faye Timmer.

The text for *Over hill, over dale* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare, portrays a Fairy rushing about to please the Queen. Hark, hark, the lark from the Bard's *Cymbeline* offers a brief awakening to "everything that pretty is." *Dirait-on*, created from the writings of German master-poet Rainer Marie Rilke, is the fifth in a cycle on the theme of roses.

Our next section features sacred works by women composers. *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* with music by Seattle-based Jessica French are each prayers sung in evening services. In *Canticle to the Spirit*, contemporary Canadian composer Eleanor Daley sets music to text by the visionary medieval abbess and mystic Hildegard von Bingen, giving the classic sacred words a new interpretation.

The three songs that follow emanate from the British Isles. *The Skye Boat Song*, a 19th century Jacobite lament tells of 'Bonnie' Prince Charlie's escape to the Isle of Skye. This version was later tweaked to "lass" by American composer Bear McCreary, as befitting 'Outlander' ... and, of course, Melodia. *An Oíche* (The Night) in traditional Irish language uses text from the 17th century to share the memory of a night's romantic tryst. *The Parting Glass* is a time-honored song for the last glass of the evening, a toast to friendship and honor.

We end with *Flight* by American musical theater composer Craig Carnelia, which uses lush string accompaniment to evoke running in open fields and the soul lifted in flight in an exuberant expression of freedom that surely echoes across the globe.

## Text

### *Three World Folk Songs*

#### **Dago Inang Sarge (Indonesia)**

Folk Song from Sumatra in Indonesia

Refrain: Dago inang sarge dago inang sarge  
Dago inang sarge da songoni do do hape.

Bidang bulung ni rimbang  
Umbidangan bulung ni dulang  
Pondok kon ni dainang  
Daingkon marboru ni tulang

Mandurung ho di pahu  
Dua dua insor tu batu  
Pondok kon ni bagian  
Dua dua ilu madabu

#### **Ancient City**

From Turn on the Open Sea

City in my dreams  
Ancient city mystic land  
Lost and left behind by time  
Dreams that speak to me  
Songs for eternity  
Take me to the golden ancient city

Now as the moon appears  
Trees wander in the breeze  
Blackened clouds adorn the sky  
Moon shining on the sea  
Path of light to carry me  
Take me to the golden ancient city

Where fires once burned  
The shadows of the night  
Are dancing in the silver light  
A once masterful race  
Now gone without a trace  
Lost and left behind by time

Refrain: Oh dear mother, Oh dear mother  
Oh dear mother, you are so unfair.

Wide leaf of Rimbang,  
But wider leaf of Dulung.  
It is the wish of dear mother  
That I must marry my Uncle's daughter

I'm fishing in the swamp,  
I get stuck between two rocks.  
That is my destiny.  
I am going to be in tears.

Lonely stars up in the sky  
Listen to my song tonight  
And take me to the golden ancient city

Dust scattered memories  
Darkness for a thousand years  
Only dreams are left behind  
Dreams etched into the stars  
Memories from a distant past  
Take me to the golden ancient city

## **Sakura (Japan)**

Japanese traditional piece

Sakura sakura  
Yayoi no sora wa  
Mi-watasu kagiri  
Kasumi ka kumo ka  
Nioi zo izuru  
Iza ya iza ya  
Mi ni yukān

Saita sakura  
Hana mite modoro  
Tatsuta wa momiji  
Karasaki nomatsu  
Tokiwa tokiwa  
Iza yukn

### ***Three Spring Songs***

#### **Umirzaya (Snowdrop)**

Traditional Tatar folk song, lyrics. A. Fayzi (1903-1958),

Boz katlavy eregäch, jir östenä  
Umyrzaya chyga, karagyz:  
Umyrzaya chyga,  
Umyrzaya kalka,  
Umyrzaya suza sabagyn.

Umyrzaya bik tiz üsep chyga,  
Bik az gyna yashi turaep,  
Umyrzaya bik tiz  
Bashyn aska iya,  
Umyrzaya sula moñaep.

Yuk, min yashär idem ozak, ozak,  
Minem kilmi alay bulasym:  
Umyrzaya kebek,  
Umyrzaya kebek,  
Umyrzaya kebek sulasym...

Yuk, min yashär idem jäy yashäüche  
Zur chäcäklär belän jiyelip,  
Yuk, min ülmäs idem  
Umyrzaya kebek,  
Umyrzaya kebek boegyp.

Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms  
In the sky of early spring  
As far as the eye can see  
Is it mist or is it clouds?  
A fragrance rises and spreads  
Come now, come now  
Let's go to see them

The cherry blossoms are in bloom—  
let's go see them and come back.  
At Tatsuta, the maples glow;  
at Karasaki, the grand pine stands evergreen.  
Come now, Come now  
let's go!

When the ice layer melts and on top of the earth  
The snowdrop appears, look:  
The snowdrop appears,  
The snowdrop rises,  
The snowdrop stretches its stem.

The snowdrop grows very quickly,  
It lives only a little while, standing upright;  
The snowdrop grows very quickly,  
Bowing its head down,  
The snowdrop wilts, drooping...

No, I would live for a long, long time,  
I do not want it to be like this:  
Like the snowdrop,  
Like the snowdrop,  
Like the snowdrop, I don't want to wither

No, I would live, creating summer,  
Gathered with big flowers;  
No, I would not die  
Like the snowdrop,  
Like the snowdrop, bowing...

## **Akcharlaklar (Seagulls)**

Libretto: Renat Kharis

Ak bolytlar...  
Zäñgär dulkyn...  
Akcharlaklar, akcharlaklar  
Tyn Ideldän  
Zäñgär kükkä  
ap-ak häbär iltä alar.

Karshy toryp davyllarga, alar kanat nygytalar.  
Chaikalshyp dulkynnarda küät ala akcharlaklar.

Ak bolytka, chal dulkynğa tiep ala ak kanatlar.  
Kiñ Idelneñ irkenlegen yaklyi alar, saklyi alar.

Kara bolyt...  
Yarsu dulkyn...  
Akcharlaklar, akcharlaklar  
Chal Idelgä yashennärdän utly häbär iltä alar

Davyl bulyp öerelep bolytlarny kua alar.  
Ap-ayaz kük... Typ-tyn Idel...  
Akcharlaklar, akcharlaklar

## **Molitva (Prayer)**

Based on poems by Russian women poets — Bella Akhmadulina,  
Agniya Barto, Zinaida Gippius, Marina Tsvetaeva, Yulia  
Zhadovskaya, and Anna Akhmatova

Molu Tebya, Sozdatel` moi:  
Smiri vo mne strastey volnen`e,  
Izbav` menya ot iskushen`ya  
Ispolni krotosti svyatoi!

Ot greshnyh chuvsv,  
ot gordih dum, Obo roni menya,  
Spasi tel`I o za ri  
Is kupi tel`, Nebesnim svetom bednyi um

## **Du Bist die Ruh**

Text by Friedrich Rückert

Du bist die Ruh, der Friede mild,

White clouds...  
Blue waves...  
Seagulls, seagulls.  
From the quiet Volga  
to the blue sky  
they carry a pure white message.

Facing the storms, they strengthen their wings.  
Swaying on the waves, the seagulls gain power.

Touching the white cloud, touching the gray wave,  
their white wings brush against them.  
They protect the vast freedom of the great Volga.

Dark cloud...  
Fierce wave...  
Seagulls, seagulls.  
To the gray Volga they bring a fiery message  
from the lightning.

Becoming like a storm, whirling in a vortex,  
they chase away the clouds.  
Clear, bright sky... Silent, still Volga...  
Seagulls... seagulls...

I pray to You, my Creator:  
Calm the passions in my heart,  
Save me from temptation,  
And teach me holy gentleness.

Guard me from sinful feelings  
And from proud thoughts, O Savior;  
Enlighten my humble mind,  
Redeemer, with Your heavenly light.

You are repose, and gentle peace.

die Sehnsucht du, und was sie stillt.  
Ich weihe dir voll Lust und Schmerz,  
zur Wohnung hier mein Aug' und Herz.

Kehr' ein bei mir, Und schliesse du  
Still hinter dir Die Pforten zu.  
Treib andern Schmerz Aus dieser Brust.  
Voll sei dies Herz Von deiner Lust.

Dies Augenzelt  
Von deinem Glanz  
Allein erhellt,  
O füll' es ganz.

### **The Blue Bird**

Text by Mary E. Coleridge

The lake lay blue below the hill  
O'er it, as I looked, there flew  
Across the waters, cold and still  
A bird whose wings were palest blue  
The sky above was blue at last  
The sky beneath me blue in blue  
A moment, ere the bird had passed  
It caught his image as he flew

### **Over Hill, Over Dale**

Text by William Shakespeare from A Midsummer Night's Dream

Over hill, over dale, Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Over park, over pale, Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere

Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the Fairy Queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green;  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;

In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favours;  
In those freckles live their savours;

### **Hark, Hark the Lark**

Text by William Shakespear from Cymbeline

Hark, hark, the lark at heav'n gate sings,  
and Phoebus 'gins arise,

You are longing and what stills it.  
Full of joy and grief, I consecrate to you  
my eyes and my heart as a dwelling place.

Come in to me and softly close  
the gate behind you.  
Drive all other grief from my breast.  
Let my heart be full of your joy.

The temple of my eyes  
is lit  
by your radiance alone:  
O, fill it wholly!

I must go seek some dewdrops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone;  
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

And winking marybuds begin  
to ope' their golden eyes;

His steeds to water at those springs  
on chaliced flowers that lies.

### **Dirait-on**

Text by Rainer Maria Rilke

Abandon entouré d'abandon  
Tendresse touchant aux tendresses...  
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse  
Se caresse, dirait-on ;

Se caresse en soi-même  
Par son propre reflet éclairé.  
Ainsi tu inventes le thème  
Du Narcisse exhaucé.

### **Magnificat**

Jessica French

My soul doth magnify the Lord  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maiden.  
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him  
throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the  
humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy hath held his servant Israel  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed, forever.

### **Nunc Dimittis**

Jessica French

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace  
according to thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:  
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without  
end. Amen.

With ev'rything that pretty is,  
my lady sweet arise!

Abandon surrounding abandon,  
tenderness touching tenderness...  
Your oneness endlessly  
caresses itself, so they say;

self-caressing  
through its own clear reflection.  
Thus you invent the theme  
of Narcissus fulfilled.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be  
: world without end. Amen.

## **Canticle to the Spirit**

Inspired by a text by Hildegard of Bingen

Holy Spirit,  
giving life to all life,  
root of all things, washing them clean,  
wiping out their mistakes, healing all their wounds,  
you are our true life,  
luminous, wonderful,  
awakening the heart from its ancient sleep.

## ***Three Songs of the British Isles***

### **Skye Boat song**

Text by Robert Louis Stevenson

Sing me a song of a lass that is gone,  
Say, could that lass be I?  
Merry of soul she sailed on a day  
Over the sea to Skye.

Sing me a song of a lass that is gone,  
Say, could that lass be I?  
Merry of soul she sailed on a day  
Over the sea to Skye.

Mull was astern, Rum on the port,  
Eigg on the starboard bow;  
Glory of youth glowed in her soul;  
Where is that glory now?

Give me again all that was there,  
Give me the sun that shone!  
Give me the eyes, give me the soul,  
Give me the lass that's gone!

Billow and breeze, islands and seas,  
Mountains of rain and sun,  
All that was good, all that was fair,  
All that was me is gone.

### **An Oíche (The Night)**

Text Traditional Irish

An cuimhin leat an oíche úd a bhí tú ag an bhfuinneog,  
Gan hata gan láimhne dod dhíon gan chasóg?  
Do shín mé mo lámh chughat.  
's do rug tú uirthi barróg,  
Gan hata gan láimhne dod dhíon gan chasóg?  
Gus labhair an fhuisseog.  
A chumainn mo chroí tar oíche ghar éigin.  
An cuimhin leat an oíche úd 'san oíche ag cur cuisne.

Do you remember that night when you were at the  
window  
Without a hat or glove or overcoat on you?  
I gave my hand to you  
and you clasped it to you  
Without a hat or glove or overcoat on you?  
And the lark spoke.  
My love, come to me some night.  
Do you remember that night, and the night was so  
cold.

## **The Parting Glass**

Traditional

Of all the money that e'er I had  
I spent it in good company  
And of all the harm e'er I've done  
Alas it was to none but me  
And all I've done for want of wit,  
To memory now I can't recall  
So fill to me the parting glass,  
Good night and joy be with you all.

If I had money enough to spend,  
And leisure time to sit awhile,  
There is a fair maid in this town,  
That sorely had my heart beguiled.  
Her rosy cheeks and ruby lips,  
I own she has my heart enthrall,  
So fill to me the parting glass  
Good night and joy be with you all.

## **Flight**

Craig Carnelia Words and Music

Let me run thru a field in the night,  
let me lift from the ground 'til my soul is in flight.  
Let me sway like the shade of a tree,  
let me swirl like a cloud in a storm on the sea.

Wish me on my way thru the dawning day.  
I wanna flow, wanna rise, wanna spill,  
wanna grow in a grove on the side of a hill.

I don't care if the train runs late,  
if the checks don't clear, if the house blows down.  
I'll be off where the weeds run wild,  
where the seeds fall far from this earthbound town.

And I'll start to soar.  
Watch me rain 'til I pour.  
I'll catch a ship that'll sail me astray,  
get caught in a wind, I'll just have to obey  
'til I'm flyin' away...

Let me leave behind all the clouds in my mind.  
I wanna wake without wondering why,  
finding myself in a burst for the sky. High!  
I'll just roll. Let me lose all control.  
I wanna float like a wish in a well,

Of all the comrades that e'er I had  
They're sorry for my going away  
And all the sweethearts that e'er I've had  
They'd wish me one more day to stay  
But call I should rise to my lot  
That I should rise and you should not  
I gently rise and softly call  
Good night and joy be to you all.

free as the sound of the sea in a shell.

I don't know, but maybe I'm just a fool.  
I should keep to the ground.  
I should stay where I'm at.  
Maybe everyone has hunger like this,  
and the hunger will pass. But I can't think like that.

All I know is somewhere, thru a clearing,  
there's a flickering of sunlight on a river long and wide, and I have  
such a river inside.  
Let me run through a field in the night,  
let me lift from the ground 'til my soul is in flight.  
Let me sway like the shade of a tree,  
let me swirl like a cloud in a storm on the sea.

Wish me on my way thru the dawning day.  
I wanna flow, wanna rise, wanna spill, wanna grow on the side of a  
hill, wanna shift like a wave rollin' on,  
wanna drift from the path I've been traveling upon, before I am  
gone.

### Meet the Directors



**Jenny Clarke**, Founder and Executive Director of Melodia, combined her lifelong love of choral music and her career as an arts administrator to form Melodia in 2003. She has a B.A. in music and English from Leeds University, England, and an M.A. in arts management from New York University. In addition to singing with Melodia – her true passion – Jenny has sung with the Royal Choral Society in England, and Riverside Choral Society in New York, performing at venues including Avery Fisher Hall (Mostly Mozart Festival), Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space, and Merkin Concert Hall. Jenny has worked extensively in arts administration in music, theater, and dance in London including the South Bank Concert Halls, the Royal Court Theatre and London Sinfonietta, and – for the past 34 years – in New York, including Symphony Space, the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable, and Chamber Music America. Jenny is the Executive Director of the National Flute Association.



**Cynthia Powell**, Conductor and Artistic Director, celebrates her 23rd season with Melodia. A graduate of Westminster Choir College, she has worked with many musical groups in the NY metropolitan area and has conducted major works for chorus and orchestra. She has served on the guest faculty at Sarah Lawrence College, led the St. George's Choral Society in NYC, and was a guest conductor at the International Choral

Festival in Havana, Cuba. She is also the Artistic Director of the Stonewall Chorale, and Organist/Choirmaster of Temple Sinai in Tenafly, NJ. Her passion for music and commitment to the choral art is coupled with a desire to generate awareness and funds for timely causes, and she has produced recitals, oratorios and concerts to benefit Bailey House, a homeless residence for people with AIDS, for Doctors Without Borders, the Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan, and Water is Life, Kenya. At home as both a conductor and an organist, she freelances in a number of area churches, including Holy Apostles, Riverside, St. Luke in the Fields, and Church of the Ascension.



**Janet Sora Chung** is a New York City-based organist, pianist, violinist, and conductor. In 2022, she co-founded the Christopher Street Collegium, an ensemble dedicated to bringing the sacred works of Schütz, Bach, Buxtehude, and Couperin to life in intimate settings. A dedicated proponent of the keyboard works of J.S. Bach, the French symphonic tradition, and the music of Olivier Messiaen, Chung frequently arranges pieces for solo organ and organ-saxophone duo.

Alongside saxophonist Jay Rattman, she has commissioned and premiered new literature from composers including Rachel Laurin and James Chirillo, in addition to performing arrangements of Duke Ellington and debuting her own transcriptions of works by Debussy and Bach. Most recently, she premiered her organ arrangement of the Goldberg Variations in celebration of the 200th anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Church. Chung holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with McNeil Robinson and received the Bronson Ragan Award for outstanding ability in organ performance. She is the Director of the Contemporary Ensemble at Holy Trinity Church.

### Meet the Melodia Singers



**Hilary Baboukis** is thrilled to be singing again with Melodia! Ms. Baboukis is the Associate Director of Music at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in NYC, the Administrator of Great Music under a Byzantine Dome, Programs & Communications Associate at Teatro Grattacielo, and an Adjunct Professor of Voice at Wagner College, Staten Island. As a professional mezzo-soprano, she performs with ensembles and organizations across New York and New Jersey. She lives in Jersey City, where she also teaches voice and piano privately.



**Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya** is thrilled to be singing with Melodia. A member since 2014, she started her vocal training in the Hindustani tradition of India, and later participated in select choirs throughout middle and high school. After a stint in college a cappella at Johns Hopkins University, she worked for UBS in London and joined the bank's Choral Society. Now working in startup marketing in NYC, she is

grateful for the support of her family and friends who always encouraged her to continue making music!



**Cara Brownell** joined Melodia in 2013. Choral singing and harmony have been her intercessors from an early age, in church & community choirs, high school (and a folk rock band, of course), SUNY Binghamton University Chorus and Women's Madrigal Ensemble. Cara's guitar-playing soprano sister nourished the pathway! Transplanted from Saratoga Springs in the 1970's, early years in NYC found her accompanying dance classes at NYU, Marymount Manhattan College, active in the downtown Soho/Lower East Side performance scene (Simone

Forti, Douglas Dunn, Collaborative Projects, Inc.) and teaching vocal and movement improvisation in her loft. Cara is a founding member of the Lafayette Inspirational Ensemble, a gospel choir based at historic Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Ft. Greene, Brooklyn and also sings in the classical Lafayette Choir.



**Deliana Daskalova** has been singing in choirs since the age of eight, starting with the youth choir "Danube Waves" in her hometown of Ruse, Bulgaria. After moving to the US she continued singing mainly in the Washington, DC area with The Washington International Chorus and Rockville Chorus. With a background in Theatre (BA/University of Maryland), Visual Anthropology (MA/Goldsmiths, London), and Film/TV in New York, she's been very lucky to work with amazing filmmakers, create her own projects, and continuously

reinvent herself as the times change, with choir singing being the unchanging constant. Deliana joined Melodia in January 2020 and is excited for this spring's "Global Echoes" concert.



**Janet Gillespie** grew up in Phoenix singing and playing the flute and piano. After studying literature at Yale and music at Bennington (voice & composition), she earned her M.M. in voice performance & pedagogy *with distinction* at Westminster Choir College (1993). As a member of the Westminster Symphonic Choir (Joseph Flummerfelt, director), she performed major works with the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Vienna Philharmonic, with conductors including Muti, Maazel, and Masur. With the Westminster Choir, she performed at the

private memorial concert for Leonard Bernstein at Carnegie Hall. Janet spent many summers singing opera and concert repertoire with the Festival Chorus (Donald Nally, director) of the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy. She also sang in the chorus at Opera Company of Philadelphia as well as semi-pro and community choruses. For almost two decades, she taught chorus and voice at Irvington HS (NY), where her choirs earned excellent NYSSMA ratings and her student soloists were consistently selected for county and state honor choirs. Since retiring, Janet has been traveling, writing poetry, and returning to singing. She is delighted to be performing her first concert with Melodia.



**Daniela Finlay** is excited to join Melodia for her first season. She grew up in New York City singing in a variety of choirs including the National Children's Chorus and her high school's select choir. She is an urban planner and in her free time enjoys going on long walks, reading, watching movies, and cooking!



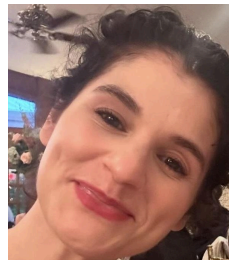
**Rebecca Hart** - is an actor, singer/songwriter, lyricist/librettist. Recent work includes her original solo show *How To Read Tarot Cards* at The Cell in NY and the Firehouse Theatre in Newport RI; writing residencies at the Woodstock/Byrdcliff Residency and the Catwalk Art Institute, and three nights opening for singer/songwriter Ryan Montbleau at Club Passim in Boston. Her album 'The Magician's Daughter' is available on [bandcamp.com](https://www.bandcamp.com). Favorite things include: being an aunt, doing yoga, baking, fronting her alt folk band The Wrong Band, and of course, Melodia.



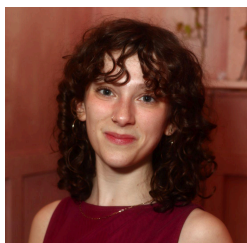
**Erika Hauschild** is excited to join Melodia for her second season. She has been a musician most of her life, playing piano from the age of 6 and singing in choir starting in elementary school. She took a break from choir in late high school and most of college, but joined acapella and choir as a senior in college and has continued to sing after graduation. She graduated with a degree in Information Systems from Cornell University in 2022 and is now a UX Designer. Outside of singing, she loves yoga, dance, drawing, video games, listening to audiobooks and podcasts, and going for walks in nature.



**Alexis Hedvat** is so excited to join Melodia for her second season. She has been involved with music her entire life, both as a pianist and choir singer. She studied with the Mannes School of Music Preparatory Program from ages 6 to 18 and continued her choir journey while pursuing a degree in computer science at Tufts University. A proud lifelong New Yorker, Alexis works as a software engineer and has a deep love for Broadway, show tunes, and all things musicals.



**Kristina Jacobs** sang for over ten years in her Episcopal church choir, as well as in her high school select ensembles and with the Juilliard Choral Union. She's thrilled to join Melodia for her first season after several years away from singing.



**Lucy Janovitz** Lucy Janovitz is thrilled to be joining Melodia Women's Choir for her second season! A lifelong choral singer, Lucy grew up in Massachusetts singing in school choirs, including a high school ensemble that traveled to China. She went on to sing with the chamber and community choirs at Skidmore College in upstate New York. Lucy now lives in Brooklyn and works as a grantwriter at a nonprofit organization.



**Nikhitai Karra** is thrilled to be singing with Melodia for her second season this spring. She has been singing since she was a child, beginning with formal training in the Indian classical traditions of Carnatic and Hindustani music. She transitioned to voice lessons and choral music in middle school, and has sought out choirs ever since. She first joined a treble choir in high school, and is so glad to be singing music for treble voices again with Melodia. Outside of Melodia, she loves to read and is always looking for new book recommendations!



**Birgit Matzerath** is thrilled to have found Melodia and get a chance to return to singing in choir. She was born and raised in Cologne, Germany, where she acquired a degree in piano, and a degree as a high school teacher for music and English from Hochschule für Musik / Universität Köln. For 20 years she taught piano at community music schools in the Cologne area and performed as a collaborative pianist. In 1997 she began to take lessons with Seymour Bernstein in New York, which led to her relocation to the US in 2002. From 2002-2009 she was a full-time faculty member of the Concord Community Music School in Concord, NH. In 2009 she moved to New Jersey; she maintains a private studio in South Orange. She has held lectures and recitals, frequently about the music of J.S. Bach, for various institutions and organizations in the New York City area and beyond. She writes a blog, “Music, Life and other Challenges” and has published a memoir: “More than the World in Black and White - How music came alive and life became music” about her unusual journey as a musician.



**Ashley Paskalis** had been singing with Melodia since fall 2010. Singing since grade school, Ashley studied vocal performance and sang in the Treble Choir at Wagner College, where she graduated in 2006 with a degree in Arts Administration. Currently working in healthcare PR/media relations, she spends her free time playing softball and of course, singing with Melodia. She'd like to thank her NYC family for continuing to support our concerts.



**Chiara Pierangelo** is excited to be singing with Melodia again this season! Originally from Padova, Italy, she has sung with vocal groups since childhood. Chiara has a deep love for Baroque, Renaissance, and Medieval music; with *Cantus Anthimi*, she recorded three albums of Medieval and Renaissance music, and is a founding member of *SolEnsemble*, a female a cappella group focused on medieval and contemporary repertoire. She holds a Master's in Ancient Greek Literature and studies classical voice with several esteemed teachers (Elisabetta Tiso, Francesco Signor, Rosetta Pizzo, and Sandro Naglia).



**Ruston Ropac** is a dynamic explorer of eclectic vocal soundscapes. She is the vocalist for the BlackBox Ensemble, a NYC-based chamber music collective, and Four and Twenty Strings, Long Island's premier early music ensemble. She holds a Master of Music degree in Contemporary Vocal Performance from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Redlands. She currently lives in

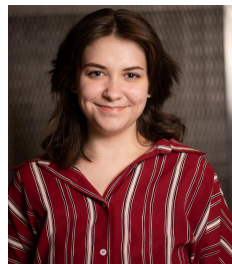
Manhattan and enjoys writing poetry and playing tabletop games in her spare time.



**Tina Rosenberg** is enjoying her second season as a member of Melodia. She has sung with Voce In Tempore in Mexico City and the Yiddish Philharmonic Chorus in New York City. Singing is a family activity; she and her oldest daughter sing together in the Glass Menagerie Chorus. Her day job is in journalism. She is co-founder of the Solutions Journalism Network.



**Jeanne Ruskin** has appeared on Broadway, and in many roles for the Roundabout Theatre, regional theaters, summer stock, and television. She has taught acting, voice and speech in colleges and universities and as a private coach. She is founder/artistic director of RFTC, Inc/Red Flute Theatre, and has presented four productions to date, including “Awakenings”, her dramatization of Kate Chopin’s 1899 novel *The Awakening*: <https://bit.ly/3Hj435T>. As a teenager she toured South America with the Michigan Youth Chorale. She toured with the USO during the Vietnam years. She performed as Ma Joad in “The Grapes of Wrath” in Moscow. Her travels changed her life. She is very happy to be singing again with Melodia (of which she has been a member since 2010). Music is truly the international language and we need the arts now more than ever.



**Mia Breckenridge Scott** is thrilled to join Melodia! Originally from Eagan, Minnesota, Mia moved to Manhattan in October of last year after graduating from the University of Wisconsin. When she’s not in her choir dress, she’s likely at the movie theater. Mia is also the lead singer and co-songwriter of her indie band, *Will They, Won’t They*. You can check out their debut EP “After School Special” on all streaming platforms. Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!



**Erin Siu** joined Melodia Women's Choir as a Soprano 1 in 2020. Prior to Melodia, she sang with NYU Steinhardt’s Women's Choir, and spent seven years with the San Francisco Girls’ Chorus. Outside of singing, Erin spends her time attending NYU as an MBA student, playing piano, doing yoga, reading, and making ramen.



**Tulasi Sundaresh** is excited to join Melodia for her third season as a Soprano 1. Tulasi is a lifelong musician, studying music theory, vocal performance, viola, violin, and piano throughout her life. She has grown up singing in choir all throughout her schooling in Connecticut. Tulasi attended Boston University and graduated in 2020, moving to NYC in 2021. She is currently a graphic designer and can be found baking, thrift shopping, or searching for the best new pasta spot in the city.



**Ezinne Umannabuike** is excited to join Melodia for her first season and looks forward to singing with the group every week. She sang in choirs throughout grade school in Columbus, Ohio and moved to NYC in 2013 to study writing at The New School. She works as a paralegal and enjoys reading and writing science fiction in her free time.



**Zarina Vildanova** is a professional singer and songwriter, performing in Tatar and dedicated to promoting her cultural heritage. In 2025, she was nominated for the Berlin Music Video Awards and won the London Music Video Awards. She is an artist of the independent Tatar label YummyMusic and has released several singles and albums. A graduate of GITIS in Moscow and the College of Music in Kazan, Zarina balances her artistic career with motherhood. Since 2024, she has been a member of the Melodia Women’s Choir, performing as an Alto 1.



**Patricia Whyte** is excited to join Melodia for her first season. Singing and performing were a large part of her growing up, and she has enjoyed rediscovering a childhood joy with this group. A graduate of Fordham University, Patricia currently works in publicity where she spends her days sending many, many emails.



**Claire Wiener** is excited to be joining Melodia this season! Originally from Arizona, Claire toured with the Phoenix Children’s Chorus to Australia and performed at the Sydney Opera House. She went on to sing with choirs at Seattle University and headed the first Senior Recital at the school. Melodia is her first professional choir and she is honored to be learning from and alongside such wonderful, talented people.



**Angela Zhang** is excited to join Melodia for her first season. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, she has been a musician for most of her life, playing the piano, violin, flute, singing, and studying music theory since childhood. Angela graduated from Cornell University in 2020 and moved to NYC in 2023. She is currently a product manager and loves running, hiking, reading, and watching movies.

## More About Melodia

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 Sally Collins  
 Cynthia L. Cooper  
 Kerry Fristoe

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Maggie Ress  
Advisor to the Board of Directors: Cynthia Powell

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Thanks to all our donors, including the most recent online contributors who may not be listed here.

### **Institutional Supporters:**

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



**Donate to Melodia and help us find and sing music for women's voices now and in the future.**

Your fully tax-deductible donation helps us to perform gorgeous, rarely-heard music for women's voices and commission women composers to write new works. Please help by mailing a check to the address below. Make checks payable to Melodia Women's Choir. You can also donate with a credit card at our website: [www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org](http://www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org) or via Venmo: Melodia Women's Choir NYC @MelodiaWomensChoir. Your support truly makes a difference!

**Special Thanks**

Special thanks to all those who have helped make this concert possible, including the staff at John's Lutheran Church and Church of the Holy Apostles and the Melodia Board of Directors.

Postcard design: Jill Vedric. "Woman Wading" Image by Lorraine Mackie - a member of Shout Sister women's choir, Ontario, Canada. Thanks to Zarina Vildanova for researching and providing transliterations of the Tatar and Russian texts and to Allison Sniffin for instrumental arrangements. Thanks to Melodia singers for all the extras, including: Section leaders: Ashley Paskalis, Chiara Pierangelo, Jeanne Ruskin, Jenny Clarke; program notes, Cynthia Powell; Social media and marketing, Kayla Oderah; program notes: Alexis Hedvat, Cara Brownell, Birgit Matzareth, Hilary Baboukis, Nikhita Karra, Rebecca Hart, Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya, Zarina Vildanova, Cynthia Powell and Cindy Cooper.

**Audition for Melodia**

Do you love to sing? We are a women-powered organization exclusively dedicated to exploring, creating, and performing exemplary music for women's voices. Come and explore this wonderful repertoire with us! We're auditioning experienced choral singers in June-August. Contact JenniferClarke446@gmail.com to schedule an audition.

Melodia Women's Choir of NYC  
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212-252-4134  
[www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org](http://www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org)  
Jenniferclarke446@gmail.com

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**Melodia Women's Choir History**

**2003-04**

**Salut Printemps** ~ Our first season, and a celebration of spring.

Monteverdi to Meredith Monk

Participation in Festival of Women and Girls' Choirs, NYC

## **2004-05**

**November Song** ~ Rachmaninov, Holst, Elgar and more

Sirens ~ Songs of the Sea, haunting tales of the deep, with piano, harp, flute and bassoon

## **2005-06**

**Twilight in the Garden of Dreams** ~ celebrating Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, with piano and strings

Participation in Wall to Wall Igor Stravinsky at Symphony Space

**A Thousand Sweet Refrains** ~ with four French horns, Brahms to Stravinsky

Participation in Carmina Burana at Merkin Concert Hall

## **2006-07**

**Óyeme con los ojos** (Hear Me with Your Eyes) ~ world premiere commission by Allison Sniffin, Merkin Concert Hall, Queens Library

**Shout, Sister, Shout!** ~ Girl Groups from 12<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries,

Hildegard von Bingen to the Dixie Chicks

## **2007-08**

**Sweet Interlude** ~ featuring all-female performance of Vivaldi Gloria, and world premiere commission by Becca Schack

**Force of Nature**, celebrating the living world, 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> century works

Participation in Wall to Wall Bach at Symphony Space

Guest artists at Women's History Month Celebration of NYC

Participation in Holst The Planets at Symphony Space

## **2008-09**

**Wrapped in Song** ~ Britten's Ceremony of Carols and works by Thompson, Tormis, Holst and Kodály

Guest artists at Women's History Month Celebration of NYC

**Visions of Eternity** ~ with orchestra, featuring Messiaen Trois Petites Liturgies, Church of St. Ignatius Loyola/Sacred Music in a Sacred Space

## **2009-10**

**Notes Upon the Breeze** ~ world premiere commission by

Chris Lastovicka, plus works by Pergolesi, Holst and Raminsh

**Songs from the Heart** ~ Merkin Concert Hall, works by Schumann, Brahms,

Fanny Hensel Mendelssohn, and US premiere of songs by Tofiq Guliyev

## **2010-2011**

**Timeless** ~ Britten Missa Brevis, works by Poulenc, Szymko, Casals, Fauré, plus world premiere commission by Becca Stevens

**Mornings with You** ~ world premiere commission by Christina Whitten Thomas, works by Meredith Monk, Ned Rorem, Charles M. Loeffler

## **2011-2012**

**Journey** ~ Amy Beach, The Chambered Nautilus, world premiere by Cathy Aks,

**Colors of the Sun** ~ NY premiere by Cecilia McDowall, plus works by Whitacre, Fauré, Holst, Verdi

## **2012-2013 – 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

**Questions About Angels** ~ world premiere commission by Sally Lamb McCune, plus early American sacred songs and medieval selections

**A Breath of Spring** ~ world premiere commission by Nina Siniakova, plus works by Stravinsky, Duruflé, Debussy, Rutter, and Daley.

## **2013-2014**

**Visions of Peace** ~ celebrating Britten 100, plus works by Holst and Csonka, and jazz samba selections.

**The Poet's Song** ~ World premiere commission by Errollyn Wallen, plus American Songbook favorites

## **2014-2015**

**Windsong** ~ works by Franz Biebl, Gwyneth Walker, Peter Warlock, Ola Gjeilo and more.

Released our first commercial CD – Lullaby

## **2015-2016**

### **¡Alegría!**

Works by Susa, Núñez, Chilcott, Carrillo, and more.

With Vox Nova Girls' Choir

**Cassandra.** World premiere commission by Hilary Purrington, plus works by Meredith Monk and Emma Lou Diemer.

## **2016-2017**

### **Autumn Rhapsody**

Featuring Vivaldi's Magnificat, works by Ola Gjeilo, Rudi Tas, Tõnu Kõrvits, Eleanor Daley, & arrangement of "Largo" for NY Philharmonic 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### **Awakening The Spirit**

Visions for upper voice choir, harp and strings ~ John Rutter, (US premiere)

The Dancers ~ Grace Williams

Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda ~ Gustav Holst

## **2017-2018**

### **15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

#### **Autumn Fire**

Works by Fanny & Felix Mendelssohn, Aiblinger, and Rheinberger

#### **The Harmony of Morning**

Works by Melodia commissioned composers Christina Whitten Thomas and Sally Lamb McCune; early work by Elliott Carter; U.S. premiere by Paul Halley

## **2018-2019**

**Where Shadow Chases Light** – world premiere commission by Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian, NY premiere by Deanna Witkowski, works by György Orbán, Eric Whitacre, Gustav Holst, and Elena Kats-Chernin

**Gloria - Lifting the Veil on Vivaldi's Masterpiece**

## **2019-2020**

**Incantations** – world premiere commission by Allison Sniffin. U.S. Works by C.V. Stanford, Robin Milford and Mediaeval Baebes.

From **fall 2019-2021**, Melodia's concert programs were on hiatus due to the pandemic. The choir produced a selection of virtual choir video recordings during this time.

## **2021-2022**

### **Sun, Moon, and Stars**

**Light of a Brand New Day** - Reimagining American roots music for women's voices with the Melodia Bluegrass Band!

## **2022-2023 - 20th Anniversary Season**

**A Winter's Welcome** - Featuring spoken word performed by a cast of NYC actors including poems by Maggie Dietz, William Shakespeare, and Robert Frost. Musical selections include Mel Bonis, Katerina Gimon, John Rutter, and Barry Manilow.

**Always Something Sings** - 20th Anniversary concert - stories of courageous women and their achievements. Music by Hildegard von Bingen, Florence B. Price, Margaret Bonds, Abbie Betinis, Ola Gjeilo, and Emma Lou Diemer, excerpts from Melodia-commissioned works by Allison Sniffin and Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian. Spoken word by members of Melodia.

#### **2023-2024**

**The Circle Never Ends** – world premiere commission by Zanaida Stewart Robles, music by Amy Beach, Ron Perera, Dan Forrest and more.

**A Tapestry of Song** – world premier commission by Emily Mason, works by Josef Rheinberger, Gustav Holst celebrating 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, Sally Lamb McCune and more.

#### **2024-2025**

**She Sang the Stars** - New York premiere by Sarah Quartel plus works by Kim André Arnesen, Hildegard von Bingen and Ethel Smyth.

**A Brighter Garden** - a potpourri of music from Melodia's garden of favorite repertoire. Music by Fauré, Paul Halley, and folk-oriented favorites.

#### **2025-2026**

**Radiant Voices** - sacred music across time. Interpretations of such classics as Schubert's *Psalm 23*, Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus*, and Franck's *Panis Angelicus* are intertwined with contemporary reflections by Kim André Anresen, Ola Gjeilo and others.

**Global Echoes** - blending works with global folk traditions and sacred repertoire with multiple languages and roots.