



**VOCAL CHAMBER MUSIC RECITAL**

*“The Music of Women and Composers of Color”*

Andre Thomas, guest conductor

Assisted by

Malcolm Swan, piano  
Scott Worthington, bass  
Jon Schlitt, drum set

Friday, July 30, 2021 - 7 p.m.  
MEMORIAL CHAPEL

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Praise the Lord    | Florence Price<br>(1887-1953)           |
| Morir non puo      | Maddlena Consulana<br>(c. 1544-c. 1590) |
| Invitation to Love | Jennifer Higdon<br>(b. 1962)            |
| Fengyang Song      | Chen Yi<br>(b. 1953)                    |
| Summer is Gone     | Samuel Coleridee-Taylor<br>(1875-1912)  |
| To Sit and Dream   | Rosephanye Powell<br>(b. 1962)          |

If I Can Help Somebody

Alma Bazel Androzzo  
(1912-2001)  
Arr. André Thomas

Sign Me Up

Brandon Boyd  
(b. 1986)

**TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS, AND NOTES**

Praise the Lord

Florence Price

Praise the Lord, all ye nations, praise the Lord, all ye people.  
Praise the Lord for his merciful kindness is great toward us.  
And the truth of the Lord endureth forever.  
Praise the Lord.  
(Psalm 117)

With countless others in the Great Migration, Florence Price moved in 1927 from her native Arkansas to Chicago. She had already graduated from the New England Conservatory and taught music in Atlanta and Arkansas, and in Chicago she joined a cultural milieu that included Richard Wright, Gwendolyn Brooks, Louis Armstrong, Mahalia Jackson, and the Chicago Defender. After Price won first prize in a composition contest with her *Symphony in E Minor*, the Chicago Symphony performed the work, the first time a major American orchestra programmed a piece by an African American woman. Along with orchestral and instrumental music, Price continued to write sacred songs and arrangements of spirituals, including *Praise the Lord* in 1951. Despite Price’s popularity during her lifetime, most of her compositions remain unpublished.

Morir non puo

Maddlena Consulana

My heart cannot die, I would like to kill it,  
Since that would please you,  
But it cannot be pulled out of your breast,  
Where it has been dwelling for a long time,  
And if I killed it, as I wish,  
I know that you would die, and I would die too!

Little is known about the life of Maddalena Casulana, an Italian composer, lutenist, singer, and teacher in the second half of the sixteenth century. She appears to have been the first woman to publish a book of madrigals, the preface of which asserts “the foolish error of men who believe themselves the masters of high intellectual gifts that cannot . . . be equally held among women.” Casulana’s patrons included Isabella de’ Medici Orsini, the duke of Munich, and other European nobles, and she features prominently in dedications by other composers. She performed at the Accademica Olimpica in Vicenza, which was likely the center of her professional life.

Invitation to Love

Jennifer Higdon

Come when the nights are bright with stars  
Or come when the moon is mellow;  
Come when the sun his golden bars  
Drops on the hay-field yellow.  
Come in the twilight soft and gray,  
Come in the night or come in the day,  
Come, O love, whene’er you may,  
And you are welcome, welcome.  
You are sweet, O Love, dear Love,  
You are soft as the nesting dove.  
Come to my heart and bring it to rest  
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.  
Come when my heart is full of grief  
Or when my heart is merry;  
Come with the falling of the leaf

Or with the redd’ning cherry.

Come when the year’s first blossom blows,  
Come when the summer gleams and glows,  
Come with the winter’s drifting snows,  
And you are welcome, welcome.  
[Hear this . . . Invitation to Love]  
(Paul Laurence Dunbar)

A setting of Paul Laurence Dunbar’s poem of the same name, *Invitation to Love* unfolds as a blanket of sound around the listener. Beginning with simple triadic harmony, the voice parts gradually split, but the harmonies remain extremely close, painting a vivid picture of sounds intertwining and welcoming one another into their realms harmonically. As the piece unfolds, Higdon evokes the idea of a bird, perhaps a dove, landing in its nest after flight. Beginning in C major, the piece gradually adds flats until the entire choir is singing in G-flat, nesting into sonorities a full tritone lower than the original key. The warmth of the final moments of the piece invites us home, to a place where acceptance is vital and love is unconditional.

If I Can Help Somebody Alma Bazel Androzzo, Arr. André Thomas

If I can help somebody as I pass along  
If I can cheer somebody with a word or song;  
If I can show somebody he is trav’ling wrong;  
Then my living shall not be in vain;  
If I can do my duty as a Christian ought;  
If I can bring back beauty to a world up-wrought;  
If I can spread Love’s message that the master taught;  
Then my living shall not be in vain.

Alma Bazel Androzzo was an African American songwriter, lyricist, and pianist born in Tennessee and raised in Philadelphia. Like Florence Price, she found musical inspiration in the cultural milieu of Chicago, where she produced a number of sacred songs. Although she had no formal music education, Androzzo found success with her first published song, *If I Can Help Somebody*, in 1945. The work has been recorded by artists as diverse as Liberace, Mahalia

Jackson, Bryn Terfel, and the King's Singers. Martin Luther King Jr. was reported to have favored *If I Can Help Somebody*, and he quoted its lyrics to conclude a sermon just two months before he was assassinated.

## **ENSEMBLE MEMBERS**

### **Soprano**

Lauren Breden  
Susanna de la Pena  
Adrienne Pedrotti  
Journey Schaubhut

### **Alto**

Anna Caplan  
Brandon Harris  
Elizabeth Snelling

### **Tenor**

Elias Berezin  
Lorenzo Murillo  
Andrew Swartchick

### **Bass**

Audrey Louise Gilgen  
Zachary Krug  
Connor Licharz

## **ABOUT THE GUEST CONDUCTOR**

André J. Thomas is the recently retired Owen F. Sellers Professor of Music, Director of Choral Activities, and Professor of Choral Music Education at Florida State University. He was appointed Professor of Choral Conducting and Interim conductor of the Yale Camerata 2020-2021. A previous faculty member at the University of Texas, Austin, Dr. Thomas received his degrees from Friends University (B.A.), Northwestern University (M. M.), and the University of Illinois (D.M.A). He is in demand as a choral adjudicator, clinician, and director of Honor/All-State Choirs throughout North America, Europe, Asia, New Zealand, Australia, and Africa.

Dr. Thomas has conducted choirs at the state, division, and national conventions of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). His international conducting credits are extensive. They include conductor/clinician for the International Federation of Choral Musicians' summer residency of the World Youth Choir in China and the Philippines. He was also the conductor of the winter residency of the World Youth Choir in Europe, and a premier performance by an American Choir (Florida State University Singers) in Vietnam.

He has been the guest conductor of such distinguished ensembles as the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in England, the Berlin Radio Choir and the North German Radio Choir in Germany, the Netherlands Radio Choir, The Bulgarian Radio Choir and Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, Tallahassee Symphony, China's People's Liberation Orchestra and the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. Since 1988, he has also served as Artistic Director of the Tallahassee Community Chorus.

Thomas has also distinguished himself as a composer/arranger. Hinshaw Music Company, Mark Foster Music Company, Fitzsimons Music Company, Lawson Gould, Earthsongs, Choristers Guild, and Heritage Music Company publish his compositions and arrangements.

Dr. Thomas has produced two instructional videos “What They See Is What You Get” on choral conducting, with Rodney Eichenberger, and “Body, Mind, Spirit, Voice” on adolescent voices, with Anton Armstrong. His recent book “Way Over in Beulah Lan’. Understanding and Performing the Negro Spiritual” has quickly become a major source in this area of study.

Thomas has been recognized by various musical organizations. The African Diaspora Sacred Music honored Dr. Thomas as a Living Legend. In 2011 Thomas’ dedication to and accomplishments in the choral arts were recognized by his peers in Chorus America when that organization presented Dr. Thomas with its Distinguished Service Award. In March of 2017 ACDA presented Thomas with its highest honor, The Robert Shaw Award, and in November of 2017 NCCO (National Collegiate Choral Organization) presented Thomas with its Lifetime Achievement Award. In January 2019 he was inducted into the Florida Music Educator’s Hall of Fame.

He is a past president of the Florida ACDA and the past president of the Southern Division of ACDA, and the current President of National ACDA.

## **UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS SCHOOL OF MUSIC LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We are gathered on the land of the Serrano and Cahuilla peoples, and we acknowledge the important contributions of this community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. The University of Redlands School of Music is committed to continuing to learn about the land we inhabit, the people who have been displaced from this land, and building community with its original caretakers.