

 MID-COLUMBIA  
MASTERSINGERS  
2024-2025 SEASON

*Teachings of the  
Water*

Celebrating Native American Heritage Month

**FRIDAY, NOV 8 AT 7PM  
SATURDAY, NOV 9 AT 3PM**

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Kennewick**

**[WWW.MCMASTERSINGERS.ORG](http://WWW.MCMASTERSINGERS.ORG)**



# MID-COLUMBIA MASTERSINGERS

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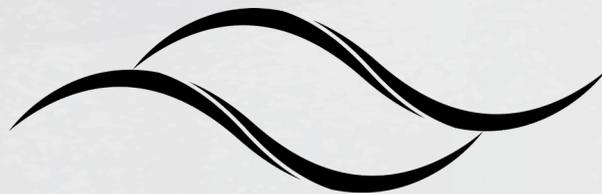
## MID-COLUMBIA MASTERSINGERS TREBLE CHOIR

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Jacqueline Itzel Medina Green  
Ruth Ann Hickey  
Katelyn Reinschmidt

**SOPRANO 2**  
Mistie Barfus  
Hannah Bonham  
Paula Kimmel  
Wendy Newbury  
Joanna Schunk

**ALTO 1**  
Laurel Adams  
Benita Brown  
Cathy Exarhos  
Sharon Isotalo  
Tanya Knickerbocker  
Brittney Sofie

**ALTO 2**  
Connie DeHaan  
Elizabeth Erickson  
Rebecca Francik  
Ellen Kathren  
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# PROGRAM

*Today's performance is being recorded. Please silence cell phones and watches.  
Today's program will be presented without intermission*

**Prayer of Black Elk**

**Karen P. Thomas (b. 1957)**

**This Is Me**

**Benj Pasek (b. 1985) & Justin Paul (b. 1985)**  
*Hannah Bonham, Paula Kimmel, Joanna Schunk, soloists*

**Snewíyalh tl'a Staḡw**

**T. Patrick Carrabré (b. 1958)**

1. Ḳeksín ti syatshn

*Benita Brown, soloist*

2. Kwis na xwey

3. Shúkw'em

4. Slúlum

*Jacqueline Itzel Medina Green, soloist*

5. Úxwumixw

**Rewrite the Stars**

**Pasek & Paul**

*Mistie Barfus, Brittney Sofie, soloists*

**Sleepy Song**

**Sherryl Sewepagaham**

**From Now On**

**Pasek & Paul**

*Rebecca Francik, soloist*

**Chaḡté Wašté Hokšíla**

**Linthicum Blackhorse (b. 1989)**

**Many thanks to the  
Fox Vance Family Foundation  
for its long-standing and  
generous support of the  
Mid-Columbia Mastersingers and  
the Tri-Cities arts community**



# PROGRAM NOTES

## Prayer of Black Elk

“Hear me, four quarters of the world. A relative I am!” This profound statement of the prayer of Lakota leader Black Elk dramatically begins this piece. Upbeat in tempo, with a spirited piano accompaniment and harmonic color, this text speaks of peace and humanity.

Karen P. Thomas is the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Seattle Pro Musica. Her compositions are performed and broadcast throughout the world, by groups such as The Hilliard Ensemble, NOTUS, and the Vocal Consort of Brussels. Her works are published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing and Karen P Thomas Music and have been featured at numerous festivals and conferences. A prize-winning composer, she has received grants from the NEA, The American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and Meet the Composer, among numerous others. Among her many commissions are works for the Harvard/Radcliffe Choirs, the Grand Jubilee in Rome, the Washington National Cathedral, the American Guild of Organists, the Pacific Chorale, Chorus Austin, and the Association of Anglican Musicians. She received a 2018 Seattle Mayor’s Arts Award and the 2012 Outstanding Choral Director Award for Washington State, and currently serves on the boards of Chorus America and the Northwest Division of the American Choral Directors Association.



## Snewiyalh tl’a Staḵw

Snewiyalh tl’a Staḵw (Teachings of the Water) is an 18-minute, five-movement a cappella work in the Squamish language that was commissioned, recorded and released by the award winning Elektra Women’s Choir in 2022 as a music video. The fruit of a 3-year collaborative project with First Nations, it was conceived by Co-Curator and ethnomusicologist, Dr. Jeanette Gallant (B.Mus. UBC, D.Phil. Oxford), the project is a musical exploration of water teachings in British Columbia First Nations cultures. T. Patrick Carrabré is a Métis composer in Vancouver BC for whom construction of identity and community engagement are long-term themes in his compositions, artistic programming, and administrative activities.

The work is set in the Sk̓wx̓ wú7mesh (Squamish) language, spoken by the Squamish Nation, a vibrant and dynamic Coast Salish Nation of 4,200 members with a strong culture and rich history. The largest proportion of Squamish Nation members reside on urban reserves in the Canadian cities of Vancouver, North Vancouver, and West Vancouver and the municipality of Squamish, BC. The Coast Salish peoples collectively reside in the Pacific Northwest region of North America, which includes British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon.

1. Keksín ti syatshn (The Natural World): The meaning of the title (all of us in the same basket) reveals our relationship to one another, while the text eslhelhá7kwhiws (how everything is connected) shows that we are also related to the natural world. Water nourishes the land, and the land gives us medicine. Rivers and creeks are like our veins – they carry water to the heart of the earth and nurture the plants and animals.
2. Kwis na xwey (Birth): The title, “when you were born”, conveys the belief that birth is sacred because we all come from the water found in our mother’s womb.
3. Shúkw’em (Ceremony): In Coast Salish communities, shúkw’em (spiritual cleansing) is often performed in different contexts by women who brush or cleanse with wet cedar boughs, otherwise known as xwip’i7án in the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh language.
4. Slúlum (Song): Traditionally, family members owned water songs and these songs were passed on to teach cultural values and beliefs. The words lúlum (to sing) and slúlumcht (our song) signify the purpose of song in building relationships and teaching water ethics. Personal power songs are often received when Coast Salish people are in or around water.
5. Úxwumixw (Identity): While water teaches us about identity in terms of the village and family from which someone comes, it also shows us our place in the world. The phrase i7xw wa méymeým (everything is a ripple) exemplifies that human beings are not dominant over the natural world – we are but a ‘ripple’.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Sleepy Song

As part of traditional Cree parenting practice, lullabies are sung by mothers, aunts, grandmothers and big sisters to the infants as they are swung in a wîwîp'son, a moss bag or held in the arms and rocked. The melodies were hummed or words of love, comfort and descriptions of the baby's preciousness were sung. This lullaby is inspired by one that my great-grandmother sang to my father when he was a child. While he no longer remembers the song, he speaks of the memory of being sung to as he was swung in a traditional baby swing called wîwîp'son. A wîwîp'son is a swing constructed of two parallel ropes or thick sinew mounted over the parents' bed and tied to two opposite tipi poles. Cloth or hides were wrapped around the rope/sinew to act as a cradle and rock the baby. Parents can pull the rope while still lying in bed and swing the baby when it becomes fussy. The wîwîp'son is still used today in modern bedrooms. When babies are in the womb surrounded by the mother's bodily fluids, the soothing sound of "swishing" is heard by the baby (the mother's blood in the veins, digestion and body movements). In The Sleepy Song, the swishing is represented by the rattles.

This lullaby was created in the spirit of my great-grandmother's lullaby to soothe the spirit and the child within us all.

Sherryl Sewepagaham, MEd, BEd, BMT, is Cree-Dene from the Little Red River Cree Nation in northern Alberta. She is a former elementary music teacher and director of two Indigenous children's choirs. Sherryl was also a 23-year member of the Indigenous women's trio, Asani and earned a 2006 Juno nomination and a Canadian Folk Music Award win in 2010. Sherryl is a singer-songwriter and composes songs in Cree for children and choral arrangements for children, youth and adult choirs. Sherryl is a strong advocate for language revitalization through the arts and the preservation and creation of Cree language songs with the traditional hand drum and rattle.



### Chanṭé Wašté Hokšîla

Here is a traditional Lakota lullaby that was often sung by mothers to their young boys. The Lakota language has become nearly extinct, but composer/arranger Linthicum-Blackhorse has made it his life's work to bring the language back to life. Reviving the meanings behind many of these songs has proven a rewarding and frustrating challenge since most of our living elders were persecuted for using the language or singing the songs.

Linthicum Blackhorse is a multi-ethnic music composer in North America that has been actively commissioned, writing music for ensembles and performers across the globe. He has taught as an Adjunct Professor of Western Music Theory and performed as a Guest Artist for numerous ensembles. His works include a wide array of themes stemming from his cultural, environmental, and spiritual influences; namely his Latino, Anglo, and Lakhóta heritages. He is currently a freelance composer living in the United States of America. Dr. Blackhorse (They/He) is an active member of the global LGBT+ community, giving voice to all of those who are marginalized for identifying outside of the hetero-normative Anglo-Christian/American colonial stereotypes—with the goal of one day being granted equal liberty in our collective humanity.



*This concert is  
sponsored in part  
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from Amentum*

## TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### Prayer of Black Elk

*English translation from Black Elk Speaks by Heháka  
Sápa Nicholas Black Elk (1863-1950)*

Hear me four quarters of the world.  
A relative I am!  
Give me the strength to walk the soft earth.  
Give me the eyes to see and the strength to understand.  
Look upon these faces of children without number,  
that they may face the winds  
and walk the good road till the day of quiet.  
This is my prayer; hear me.



### This Is Me from The Greatest Showman

*Benj Pasek (b. 1985) & Justin Paul (b. 1985)*

I am not a stranger to the dark  
“Hide away,” they say  
“Cause we don’t want your broken parts”  
I’ve learned to be ashamed of all my scars  
“Run away,” they say  
“No one’ll love you as you are”

But I won’t let them break me down to dust  
I know that there’s a place for us  
For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down  
I’m gonna send a flood, gonna drown ‘em out  
I am brave, I am bruised  
I am who I’m meant to be, this is me  
Look out, ‘cause here I come  
And I’m marchin’ on to the beat I drum  
I’m not scared to be seen  
I make no apologies, this is me

Another round of bullets hit my skin  
Well, fire away ‘cause today  
I won’t let the shame sink in  
We are burstin’ through the barricades  
And reachin’ for the sun (We are warriors)  
Yeah, that’s what we’ve become

### Snewiyalh tl’a Staḵw (Teachings of the Water)

*Texts curated by Squamish educator and musician Rebecca Duncan*

#### 1. Keksín ti syatshn (The Natural World)

eslhelhá7ḵwhiws how everything is connected

#### 2. Kwis na xwey (Birth)

kwis na xwey when you were born

#### 3. Shúkw’em (Ceremony)

shúkw’em spiritual cleansing

xwip’i7án brushing off or cleansing with wet cedar boughs

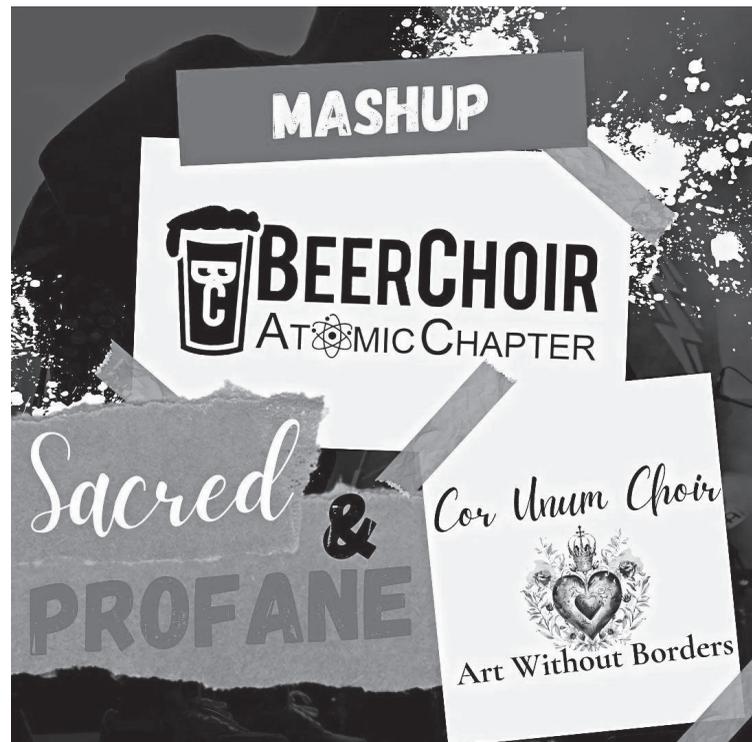
#### 4. Slúlum (Song)

lúlum to sing

slúlumcht our song

#### 5. Úxwumixw (Identity)

i7xw wa méymejem everything is a ripple



**November 13, 7pm, Princess Theatre in Prosser**

The Cor Unum Sacred Music Choir and the Atomic Chapter Beer Choir will combine their talents for “The Sacred and the Profane: An Evening of Choral Entertainment.” Doors open at 6:30pm with refreshments, local wines, beers, hard ciders, and a selection of non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase. Music begins at 7:00pm. Tickets are \$20 each. Students admitted free with school ID required for middle school and older.

**Tickets: <https://www.prosserprincess.com>**

## TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### Rewrite the Stars from The Greatest Showman

*Pasek & Paul*

You know I want you  
It's not a secret I try to hide  
I know you want me  
So don't keep sayin' our hands are tied  
You claim it's not in the cards  
And fate is pulling you miles away and out of reach from me  
But you're here in my heart  
So who can stop me if I decide that you're my destiny?

What if we rewrite the stars?  
Say you were made to be mine?  
Nothing could keep us apart  
You'd be the one I was meant to find  
It's up to you and it's up to me  
No one can say what we get to be  
So why don't we rewrite the stars?  
Maybe the world could be ours tonight?

You think it's easy?  
You think I don't want to run to you?  
But there are mountains  
And there are doors that we can't walk through  
I know you're wonderin' why  
Because we're able to be just you and me within these walls  
But when we go outside  
You're gonna wake up and see that it was hopeless after all

No one can rewrite the stars  
How can you say you'll be mine?  
Everything keeps us apart  
And I'm not the one you were meant to find  
It's not up to you, it's not up to me  
When everyone tells us what we can be  
How can we rewrite the stars?  
Say that the world can be ours tonight?

All I want is to fly with you  
All I want is to fall with you  
So just give me all of you  
It feels impossible  
It's not impossible  
Is it impossible?  
Say that it's possible

How do we rewrite the stars?  
Say you were made to be mine  
Nothing can keep us apart  
'Cause you are the one I was meant to find  
It's up to you and it's up to me  
No one can say what we get to be  
Why don't we rewrite the stars  
Changin' the world to be ours?

### Sleepy Song

*Woodland Cree poem by Sherryl Sewepagaham*

Nipa, kisâkihitin Go to sleep, I love you

### From Now On from The Greatest Showman

*Pasek & Paul*

From Now On from The Greatest Showman  
I drank champagne with kings and queens  
The politicians praised my name  
But those were someone else's dreams  
The pitfalls of the man I became  
For years and years, I chased their cheers  
A crazy speed of always needin' more  
But when I stop and see you here  
I remember who all this was for

From now on  
These eyes will not be blinded by the lights  
From now on  
What's waited 'til tomorrow starts tonight  
Let this promise in me start  
Like an anthem in my heart  
From now on  
From now on

And we will come back home  
And we will come back home  
Home again  
And we will come back home  
And we will come back home  
Home again

### Chaŋté Wašté Hokšila (My Kind-Hearted Boy)

*Traditional Lakota Lullaby*

Ahí yé, hé yo iyé. I have brought you here, so that I can speak to you in your language.  
We hé yo iyé. I am speaking to you in your language.  
Ahí yé, hé yo iyéya. I have brought you here, so that you will recognize me.  
We yeló iyé. I am speaking your language.

čaŋté wašté hokšila My kind-hearted boy  
lá khé ištiŋma. I beg you to fall asleep.  
Haŋhépi kiŋ wašté. The Night is good.  
We yeló iyé. I am speaking your language.

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**Friday, December 13, 6:30pm**

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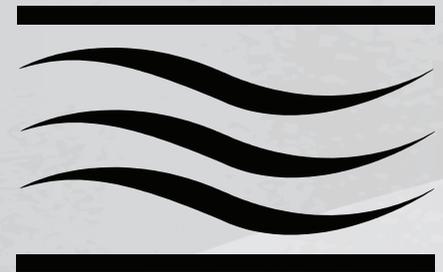
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*Transforming lives through the power of choral music*

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Learn more at: [artscentertaskforce.com](http://artscentertaskforce.com)



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 MID-COLUMBIA  
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2024-2025 SEASON

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