



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

Instrumentalists:

Allison Sniffin, piano, organ, and melodica
Keiko Tokunaga and Jessica Park, violins; Gizem Yücel, viola; Ani Kalayjian, cello.

No flash photography. Cell phones should be set to silent. This performance is being video recorded.

Be Like the Bird

Soloist: Chiara Pierangelo

Abbie Betinis

Text by Victor Hugo

Women Pursuing Intellectual, Spiritual, and Artistic Development

Introduction by Chiara Pierangelo

Karitas Habundat

Hildegard von Bingen

Introduction by Peggy Samuels

Meditabor*

Emily Mason

Introduction by Peggy Samuels

Cantilena from Óyeme con los ojos (Hear Me with Your Eyes)**

Allison Sniffin

Women in the Fight for Equal Rights and Labor Rights

Introduction by Christine Fiala

The Rose

Ola Gjeilo

Text by Christina Rossetti

* New York premiere

** Commissioned by Melodia

Northern Lights
Soloist: Sydney Weaver

Ola Gjeilo
Text from Song of Solomon

Bread and Roses
Soloist: Christine Fiala

Mimi Fariña+
As performed by Judy Collins

Women of Color in the Arts
Introduction by Kym Mendez

Negro Folksongs in Counterpoint

Florence B. Price

**Words of Welcome from Melodia Founder & Executive Director,
Jenny Clarke**

Sleep Song

Margaret Bonds
Words by Joyce Kilmer

Spirit from Red Bird**
Soloist: Kym Mendez

Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian
Words by Zitkala-Sa

Women's Actions for Peace
Introduction by Sarah Woodruff

Dirge for Two Veterans
Soloist: Sydney Weaver

Harl McDonald+
Text by Walt Whitman

Days of Beauty

Ola Gjeilo
Text by Emily Brontë

Peace

Emma Lou Diemer
Text by Sara Teasdale

Battle Hymn of the Republic

William Steffe, arr. Peter Wilhousky
Words by Julia Ward Howe

Always Something Sings

Dan Forrest
Words by Ralph Waldo Emerson

** Commissioned by Melodia
+Instrumental arrangement by Allison Sniffin

Melodia Singers

Soprano

Melissa Apperson
Shohini Bhattacharya
Lindsay Cornelio
Kyra DeTone
Kate Fiala
Sarah Hautzinger
Deb Howard
Juliet LaSala
Anna McPherran
Nicole Owen

Ashley Paskalis
Chiara Pierangelo
Erin Siu
Sydney Weaver
Sarah Woodruff

Alto
Hilary Baboukis
Cara Brownell
Veronica Cator

Jenny Clarke
Christine Fiala
Roxanne Joseph
Kym Mendez
Ruston Ropac
Tina Rosenberg
Jeanne Ruskin
Peggy Samuels
Emily Segal

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 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 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.

Notes on the Program

This season marks the beginning of Melodia's 20th Anniversary, a celebration of the many voices of Melodia over the past two decades.

This community of singers has brought hundreds of pieces – many of them rarely performed, others commissioned by Melodia – to more than 25,000 live audience members and 100,000 online viewers worldwide. We have engaged dozens of leading female instrumentalists, and our concerts have received generous support from hundreds of individuals, along with prominent government funders and foundations.

Shortly after our 15th anniversary, the world experienced a traumatic transformation as the coronavirus pandemic brought so much tragedy, fear, and change to our lives. What we thought would be a short pause in 2020 expanded to a gap of two years before live concerts could resume. With the help of online technology and the support of our community, Melodia survived this extended hiatus, so we are now able to celebrate in person, 20 years of music-making, and, we hope, many more.

In this concert we have created a musical journey of beauty and perseverance through twelve centuries of history. *Always Something Sings: Women's Voices Through the Ages* weaves together stories of courageous women and their achievements through music that amplifies their voices. *Resilience* is the theme that runs through these stories.

Each section is introduced by a singer from the choir, sharing her response and insight into the theme and the music. These personal testimonies remind us of all the Melodia singers whose voices have joined together over the years to make one unique sound, choir, and journey.

Our concert opens with Abbie Betinis' canon, *Be Like the Bird*. Victor Hugo's words underscore our concert's theme of resilience: "Be like the bird that, pausing in her flight a while on boughs too slight, feels them give way beneath her, and sings, knowing she hath wings." At the end of our musical journey, Dan Forrest's *Always Something Sings*, our title piece, brings us full circle with the final words of the evening, "from all that's fair, from all that's foul, always something sings."

Notes by Jenny Clarke and Cynthia Powell

Texts

Be Like the Bird

Victor Hugo

Be like the bird that,
pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight
feels them give way beneath her
-- and sings --
knowing she hath wings.

Karitas Habundat

Hildegard von Bingen

Karitas habundat in omnia,
De imis excellentissima
Super sidera
Atque amantissima
In omnia,
Quia summo regi osculum pacis dedit.

Love abounds in all,
From the depths exalted and excelling
Over the stars
Inexpressible love
Of all,
To the highest sovereign the kiss of peace she
gave.

Meditabor

Psalm 118

Meditabor in mandatis tuis,
Que dilexi valde:
Et levabo manus meas
Ad mandata tua, que dilexi valde.

I will meditate on thy commandments,
Which I have loved exceedingly:
And I will lift up my hands
To thy commandments, which I have loved.

Cantilena

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Esta tarde, mi bien, cuando te hablaba,
Como en tu rostro y tus acciones
Veia que con palabras no te persuadia,
Que el corazon me vieses deseaba
Y Amor, que mis intentos ayudaba,
Vencio lo que imposible
Parecia pues entre el llanto que el dolor
vertia,
El corazon deshecho destilaba.
Baste ya de rigores, mi bien, baste:
No te atormenten mas celos tiranos
Ni el vil recelo tu qui etud contras te con
sombbras necias, con indicios vanos:
Pues ya en liquido humor viste y tocaste
Mi corazon, deshecho entre tus manos.

This afternoon, my darling, when we spoke,
And in your face and feature I could see
That I was not persuading you with words,
I wished you might look straight into my heart.
And Love, who was assisting my designs,
Succeeded in what seemed impossible:
For in the stream of tears which anguish loosed,
My heart itself, dissolved, dropped slowly
down.
Enough unkindness now, my love, enough:
Don't let these tyrant jealousies torment you
Nor base suspicions shatter your repose with
foolish shadows, empty evidence:
In liquid humor you have seen and touched
My heart undone and passing through your
hands.

The Rose

Christina Rossetti

The lily has a smooth stalk,
Will never hurt your hand;
But the rose upon her brier
Is lady of the land.

When with moss and honey
She tips her bending brier,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
She sets the world on fire.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
And profit in the corn;
But lady of all beauty
Is a rose upon a thorn.

Northern Lights

Text from Song of Solomon

Pulchra es amica mea,

Thou art beautiful, O my love,

Suavis et decora filia Jerusalem,
Pulchra es amica mea,
Suavis et decora sicut Jerusalem,
Terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.
Averte oculos tuos a me
Quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Sweet and beautiful daughter of Jerusalem,
Thou art beautiful, O my love,
Sweet and comely as Jerusalem,
Terrible as an army set in array.
Turn away thy eyes from me,
For they have made me flee away.

Bread and Roses

James Oppenheim

As we go marching, marching
in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens,
A thousand mill lofts grey
Are touched with all the radiance
That a sudden sun discloses
For the people hear us singing
Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses

As we go marching, marching
We battle too for men,
For they are women's children
And we mother them again.
Our lives should not be sweated
From birth until life closes
Hearts starve as well as bodies
Give us Bread but give us Roses!

As we go marching, marching
Unnumbered women dead
Go crying thru our singing

Their ancient call for bread
Small art and love and beauty
Their drudging spirits knew
Yes, it is Bread we fight for
But we fight for Roses too.

As we go marching, marching,
We bring the greater days
The rising of the women
Means the rising of our race.
No more the drudge and neither
The toil where one reposes,
But the sharing of life's glories,
Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses.

Our lives should not be sweated
From birth until life closes,
Hearts starve as well as bodies,
Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses.

Sleep Song

Joyce Kilmer

The Lady World is sleeping
On her white and cloudy bed.
Like petals furl'd Her eyelids close.

Besides her dream-filled head
Her lover stands with silver cloak and shoon,
The faithful Moon.

So Love, my Love,
Sleep on, my Love,

My Life be not afraid.

The Moon above,
Shall guard the World,
And I my little maid.

Your life, your love,
Your dreams are mine to keep,
So sleep.

Spirit from Red Bird

Zitkala-Sa

My heart and I lie small upon the earth like a grain of throbbing sand.
I seem to see clearly again that all are akin[...] a living mosaic of human beings.
[...] a great galaxy of American women.
Look up and see a new day dawning.
I have a place in the Universe, and no one can cheat me, or crowd me by a single hair's breadth.

Dirge for Two Veterans

Walt Whitman

The last sunbeam falls from the finish'd
Sabbath,
Lightly on the pavement here and there beyond,
It is looking down a newmade double grave.

Lo the moon ascending up from the east,
The silv'ry moon beautiful over the housetops,
Ghostly phantom moon, immense and silent
moon.

I see a sad, a sad procession,
And I hear the sound of coming full-keyed
bugles,
And all the channels of the city streets they're
flooding
As with voices and with tears.

For the Son is brought with the father
In the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they
fell
Two veterans, son and father drop't together,
And the double grave awaits them.

In the eastern sky up buoying,
The sorrowful vast phantom moves, illumined,
'Tis some mother's large, transparent face
in heav'n brighter growing.

I hear the great drums pounding
And the little drums steady whirring,
And ev'ry blow of the great convulsive drums
Strikes me through and through.

Now nearer below the bugles,
I hear the great drums pounding,
And all the channels of the city streets they're
flooding,

O my soldiers twain what I have
I also give to you,
The moon gives you light, and the bugles,
and the drums, give you music,
And my heart gives you love,
The moon gives you light, o my soldiers,
And my heart gives you love.

Days of Beauty

Emily Brontë

When days of beauty deck the earth
Or stormy nights descend,
How well my spirit knows the path
On which it ought to wend.

It seeks the consecrated spot
Beloved in childhood's years;
The space between is all forgot
Its sufferings and its years

Peace

Sarah Teasdale

Peace flows into me
As the tide to the pool by the shore;
It is mine forever more,
It will not ebb like the sea.

I am the pool of blue
That worships the vivid sky:
My hopes were heaven high,
They are all fulfilled in you.

I am the pool of gold
When sunset burns and dies,
You are my deepening skies;
Give me your stars to hold.

Peace flows into me,
Peace flows.

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Julia Ward Howe

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of
the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes
of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His
terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on!

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on!

I have seen Him in the watchfires of a hundred
circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening
dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence in the dim and
flaring lamps,
His truth is marching on!

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across
the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you
and me:
As He died to make men holy let us die to make
men free,
While God is marching on!

Always Something Sings

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a skyborn music still:
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young,

From all that's fair, from all that's foul
Always something sings.

It is not only in the rose,

'Tis not in the high stars alone,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the cup of budding flow'rs,

It is not only in the rose,
Nor in the robin's mellow tone,

It is not only in the bird,
Nor in the bow that smiles in show'rs,

It is not only in the bird,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the song of woman heard,

But in the dark, but in the darkest, meanest
things
There always something sings.

Not only where the rainbow glows,

But in the dark,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There always, always, something sings.

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 at the South Bank Concert Halls, the Royal Court Theatre and London Sinfonietta, and – for the past 32 years – in New York, including at 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 20th 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.

Meet the Ensemble



Allison Sniffin is a frequent arranger for Melodia Women's Choir and was the inaugural composer for Melodia's Women's Composer Commission Series (*Oyeme con los ojos: Sor Juana*, 2006). In 2019 Melodia commissioned *Eko*, an atmospheric piece choreographed and danced by Stephanie Larriere. Allison tours and performs with Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble. She is the principal transcriber of Meredith Monk's music, preparing and arranging her scores for ensembles such as the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Kronos Quartet, Western Wind Ensemble, Bang on a Can and Alarm Will Sound.



Hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as “representing the young, up-and-coming generation,” and a “superb cellist with a large, expressive, singing tone, passionate musicianship, and magnificent playing” by the *Journal Tribune*, Armenian-American cellist **Ani Kalayjian** enjoys a prolific career as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician and educator that has taken her to Japan, Australia, Canada, the Middle East, and throughout Europe and the United States. Her chamber music series, Carriage House Concerts, features international chamber music artists and gives young performers educational opportunities to perform, connecting the community through the arts in New Jersey as the Artistic Director at the Woman's Club of Englewood. She also serves as the Co-Artistic Director of LYRICA Chamber Music Series.

Ani's recent engagements include recording Albanian composer Fatrin Krajka's new album, several tours to Jordan with Oberlin College & Lebanon, as well as solo concerts at Haigazian University where she performed a World Premiere ‘Yesterday is No More’ written for her and violinist Rebecca Jackson by award-winning composer Polina Nazakinskaya. She is a passionate chamber musician, attending various festivals including the La Jolla Chamber Music Festival and Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival. She holds an M.A. with Distinction from the Royal Northern College of Music in England and a B.A. from the Mannes College of Music. www.anikalayjian.com



Praised as an “exceptional talent” by the Frankfurter Neue Presse, violinist **Jessica Park** captivates audiences from New York to Seoul with a diverse and compelling array of solo and chamber music performances. Equally at home on both modern and baroque violins, Ms. Park has appeared internationally at such venues as the Cologne Philharmonie, Shanghai Grand Theatre, and the Vienna Konzerthaus; and stateside at Alice Tully Hall and Symphony Hall (Boston).

A versatile and imaginative artist, Jessica is in high demand as an interpreter of baroque and classical repertoire. She can be heard frequently with the country's premier period instrument ensembles, including the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and New York Baroque. In 2017, Jessica founded the Cramer Quartet, a period instrument string quartet performing Classical and early Romantic repertoire. She holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from Juilliard, as well as a Professional Studies Diploma from the Mannes School of Music. Jessica was also a Fellow at the Yale School of Music, where she was a member of the Yale Baroque Ensemble.



Winner of the 2019 GRAMMY Award for Best Chamber Music / Small Ensemble Performance, Japanese-born violinist **Keiko Tokunaga** spends most of her days touring and performing globally as a soloist and chamber musician. Keiko has been praised by *the Strings Magazine* for possessing a sound “with probing quality that is supple and airborne” and for her “pure, pellucid bow strokes”. She has soloed with various orchestras including the Spanish National Orchestra, Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya and Virginia Arts Festival Chamber Orchestra.

In 2021, Keiko founded [INTERWOVEN](#), an intercultural ensemble whose mission is to elevate the visibility of AAAPI (Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander) artists by integrating the musical traditions of the East and West. Keiko holds Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees, as well as Artist Diploma from The Juilliard School. She currently plays on a J. B. Vuillaume violin from 1845, generously loaned by an anonymous donor.



Gizem Yücel is a versatile concert violist equally at home in many genres from jazz, rock, experimental to classical. She holds a bachelors and master's degree in viola performance from Hacettepe University State Conservatory and Bilkent University in her hometown of Ankara, Turkey. Gizem later earned her artist diploma in viola performance from the State University of New York, Purchase College in New York and her doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a cognate in piano and conducting. Currently, Gizem is teaching strings and conducting the middle and high school orchestras at Ethical Culture Fieldston School as well as working as a recording artist, orchestral and chamber player and a singer songwriter with her husband jazz pianist Antonio Truyols.

Meet the Melodia Singers



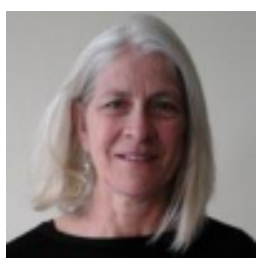
Melissa Apperson joined Melodia in January 2023; this is her first performance with the group. She holds a passion for singing in women's choirs, beginning at Wellesley College and continuing, for more than 20 years, with Concord Women's Chorus in Concord, Massachusetts. Melissa is also a poet. Concord Women's Chorus selected two of her poems as texts for commissions by Libby Larsen and Melissa Dunphy.



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, and an Adjunct Professor of Voice at Wagner College, Staten Island. As a professional mezzo-soprano, she performs frequently with ensembles and organizations across New York and New Jersey. Ms. Baboukis studied at Columbia (NYC), the American University in Cairo, and Oklahoma State University (Stillwater). She lives in Jersey City, where she also teaches voice and piano privately.



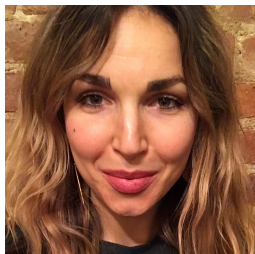
After a long hiatus, **Shohini Goldin Bhattacharya** is thrilled to rejoin Melodia this season. A Melodia member since 2014, she started her vocal training in the Hindustani tradition of India, and later participated in select choirs throughout middle and high school. After a stint in college a cappella 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.



Veronica Cator is delighted to be joining Melodia for the first time this spring. She currently works in music publishing while also composing her own works, and as choir music has always been a source of inspiration for her, she looks forward to every Melodia rehearsal. She studied music composition at Baldwin Wallace University where she also performed with a variety of choral ensembles. She also loves reading and trying new recipes.



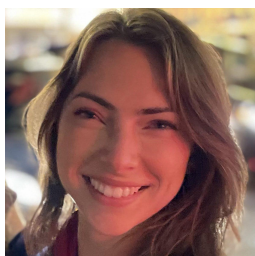
Lindsay Cornelio just recently joined Melodia in the fall of 2021 and is so happy to be singing again. Lindsay comes from a very musical family and was part of choirs and musical groups her whole life. Lindsay currently lives in Brooklyn and is the Operations & Human Resources Director at a non-profit law firm. Lindsay is passionate about social justice, and loves live music, going out to dance, meeting new people, traveling, culture, running, yoga, meditation, nature and being outside.



Kyra M. DeTone has been a member of Melodia since 2021 and is delighted to join the group for her second in-person season. Currently, she is attending law school where she attempts to recruit other law students with vocal talent to rekindle a non-legal hobby by joining Melodia. Before law school, Kyra spent five years developing and executing grant-seeking strategies for an education justice non-profit. She double majored in Art History and Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies at Union College and has been singing in musical groups since age seven. When she's not working on her amateur singing career or crying into a legal treatise, you can find Kyra obsessively photographing her dog, Harley, cooking (and eating), and drinking way too much coffee.



Christine Fiala is excited to be performing in her second concert with Melodia. She's an actor, writer, and comedian living in Brooklyn. When not auditioning and performing, she's showing tourists around NYC as a tour guide for TopDog Tours, and making fun TikTok videos and posts for the company's social media. It's been so fun getting back to her choral roots while singing with Melodia, especially since she gets to do it with her sister Kate. Enjoy the show!



Kate Fiala is thrilled to be singing with the Melodia Women's Choir in her third season. Kate has been singing since she can remember and happily shares the stage today with her sister Christine! The opportunity to join together in song with a group of inspiring women is among precisely the reasons Kate, a Midwest native, now calls New York home. Huge thank you to Jenny, Cynthia, Allison, and the Melodia family for creating a wonderful community of singing ladies!



Sarah Hautzinger joined Melodia in January and is excited to participate in her first concert with the group. She joined her first choir when she was in elementary school and continued singing in choirs throughout her time as an undergraduate at Saint Mary's College in Indiana. She also served as a pianist and cantor. Sarah is finishing up her last year at St. John's University School of Law before she begins her career as a full-time associate at a Manhattan law firm in the fall.



Deb Howard retired from a career in affordable housing and community development and sought to join another choir, which would be both challenging and rewarding. She has been singing in choirs since she was five years old and has sung at Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in both the Inspirational Ensemble and classic choirs for 40 years. After attending several concerts given by Melodia, she knew that this was the choir of which she wanted to be a part as the sound was so beautiful and the repertoire amazing! She is very glad to be in this wonderful choir!



Roxanne Joseph joined Melodia in 2022 and is excited to be singing in her second concert with them! She is from Massachusetts where she sang in her high school's honors choirs, central districts choir, and a women's barbershop choir that she helped keep running in her free time. She graduated from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts with a degree in film and television, and she currently works as a broadcast engineer.



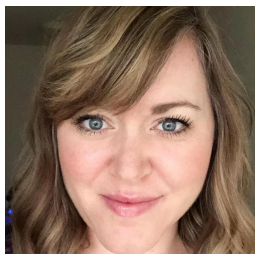
Juliet La Sala returned to Melodia this season after first joining for the Spring 2015 concert *Après Un Rêve, After A Dream*. In the past she has been with Dicapo Opera Theater's Children's Chorus and performed with St. Jean's Players Theater group. In May 2021 she graduated from Fordham University with a BA in Film and Television and a minor in Anthropology. She is happy to be back with Melodia this season singing beautiful music!



Anna McPherran is a new member of Melodia and has had a great time preparing for her first performance with them this spring. Growing up in Queens, she developed a love of singing from a young age. Her favorite vocalists are Aretha Franklin and Judy Garland, though she loves many genres of music. Anna's background is in conservation biology and she currently works as a Forester with NYC Parks.



Kym Mendez is excited to be singing with Melodia again for her fifth season. Equally from Jamaica, the U.K. and the U.S, Kym holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations and a Master's degree in International Education. Kym has been an avid chorister for most of her life; most recently she enjoyed singing in her undergraduate women's choir for all four years, even returning to the choir for a 5th year after graduating. Kym loves to travel (especially traveling to Asia) and works as an elementary school teacher in the city.



Nicole Owen is thrilled to be making music with Melodia! Nicole has a MMus. degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Florida. Currently working as a copywriter, she likes to bake and decorate cakes, play board games, travel, and spend quality time with family and friends. Nicole's favorite duet partner is her husband, Brian.



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 media relations, she spends her free time playing softball and of course, singing with Melodia. She'd like to thank Dave and her NYC family for continuing to support our concerts.



Chiara Pierangelo started singing at a very young age in various vocal groups in her hometown of Padova, Italy. Since 2009 she has been singing with "Cantus Anthimi", conducted by Livio Picotti, with which she made three recordings of Medieval music and Josquin Desprez's works. She is a founding member of "SolEnsemble", a female vocal group performing mostly a cappella medieval and contemporary music. Chiara earned a Master's in Ancient Greek Literature at the University of Padova and has been studying classical voice with 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, an 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 a brand-new 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.



Peggy Samuels feels privileged to sing with such a talented group of women and is excited to be part of bringing new compositions and arrangements to life. She spent several decades teaching poetry at Drew University and is enthralled to unleash the expressiveness of poems transformed into music. She and her husband, Lester, enjoy exploring the back roads of Vermont on their e-bikes.



Emily Segal has been a part of Melodia for a few years. She loves singing with this choir and to be a part of this very talented group of women! When not rehearsing, she pursues her longstanding interests in the arts and in live theatre. Spending time with her family is also something she loves to do.



Erin Siu is an editor and writer based in New York City. She joined Melodia Women's Choir as a Soprano 1 in 2020. Before Melodia, she sang with the NYU Steinhardt Women's Choir, and the San Francisco Girls' Chorus for seven years. When she's not singing, you can find her playing piano, learning chords on her guitar, doing yoga, or cooking a bowl of ramen.



Sydney Weaver is ecstatic to be performing her second concert with Melodia since joining the group in the fall of 2022. Sydney is currently a full-time graduate student at Columbia University. Prior to moving to New York, Sydney had the privilege of singing with the Young Women's Chorus of San Francisco where she was fortunate enough to collaborate with the San Francisco Symphony on multiple projects, premiere a new opera, and tour globally. Sydney looks forward to continuing to grow and share her love of women's choral music at Melodia for seasons to come.



Sarah Woodruff is happy to be singing with Melodia! She was a member of multiple choirs during her time at Penn State University, and has been singing most of her life. After ten years in book publishing, she joined a Brooklyn-based environmental nonprofit to work on outreach around NYC's Curbside Composting program (which will be citywide by October 2024!). She can frequently be found writing, hiking, and playing guitar.

More About Melodia

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Donate to Melodia's 20th Anniversary appeal 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 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 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 Allison Sniffin for instrumental arrangements; Pam McAllister for research and inspiration; Cindy Cooper; Cecelia Martin, stage management; the staff at Holy Apostles Church and St. John's Lutheran Church; and the Melodia Board of Directors.

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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 July/August. Contact melodiachoirNYC@gmail.com to schedule an audition.

Melodia Women's Choir of NYC
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212-252-4134
www.melodiawomenschoirnyc.org
melodiachoirNYC@gmail.com

Melodia Women's Choir

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
200th 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 12th to 21st 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, 20th & 21st 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 – 10th 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 175th 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

15th 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 Red Bird – 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

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.