



Choral Chameleon Ensemble

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2025

7:30 PM

MAHANEY ARTS CENTER, ROBISON HALL



Choral Chameleon Ensemble

Vince Peterson, Artistic Director

Ronnie Romano '20, Piano

Mama Who Bore Me

Duncan Sheik
arr. Steven Sater

Zadala Mamka from *Four Slovak Folk Songs*, Sz. 70 (1917)

Béla Bartók

Where Is Love?

Lionel Bart
arr. Mac Huff

Siúil a Riún

Kimberli Alphonso, soloist

Traditional
arr. Michael McGlynn

The Coolin (The Fair Haired One) from *Reincarnations*

Samuel Barber

Control

Janet Jackson et al.
arr. Matthew Robbins



The Times They Are A-Changin'

Bob Dylan
arr. The Podd Brothers

The Moment I Said It

Imogen Heap
arr. Jennifer McMillan

Against Despair

Edward Thompson

What Is Our Life?

Orlando Gibbons

Blackbird

John Lennon & Paul McCartney
arr. Daryl Runswick

Forever Young

Kimberli Alphonso and Ari Messenger, soloists

John Corigliano

Better People

India.Arie

A stream of this evening's concert will be available at go.middlebury.edu/chameleon-stream
through Monday, January 20 at 7:30 PM.

Please join us again for a free Choral Chameleon Sound Installation event on Wednesday, January 22 starting at 7:30 PM in the MAC lobby. Learn more at go.middlebury.edu/chameleon-installation



*This performance is made possible with generous support
from the Paul Nelson Performance Endowment and the Rothrock Family Residency Fund.*

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Photography and the use of audio or video equipment are prohibited.*



Program Note by Vince Peterson, Artistic Director

CONTROL: A Musical Journey within the Generation Gap

Few things are as timeless and complex as the relationship between parents and children. Across generations, this bond has been marked by love, conflict, understanding, and miscommunication. The “generation gap” may feel wider today than ever before, but is it truly new? Or are we simply replaying an age-old struggle, dressed in modern clothes?

Not so long ago, rock and roll sparked outrage among parents. Then came hip-hop and rap, igniting similar debates. In families, expectations and traditions are passed down, often with the hope of providing a better future. But when children forge their own paths—paths that diverge from parental dreams—tensions can rise, leaving both sides feeling misunderstood.

At what age do we take true ownership of our lives?
What happens when we choose not to marry?
What if our parents’ dreams are not our dreams?
“Why won’t they just let me be?”

Yet even as parents struggle with their children’s independence, they may recall their own youthful rebellion against authority. Time and change provoke fear, and this fear often manifests as protective, well-intentioned, yet restrictive behaviors. And so, the cycle continues—an eternal push and pull between generations, bound by love yet separated by perspective.

Choral Chameleon invites you to step into the heart of this universal story with a program that delves into the tender, tumultuous, and ultimately hopeful dynamics between parents and children. Through original choral works and masterful arrangements of music by Bartók, Michael McGlynn (Anúna), John Corigliano, Duncan Sheik, Janet Jackson, and more, this concert explores the human journey of navigating CONTROL.

From moments of conflict to reconciliation, from misunderstanding to acceptance, this program reflects the deeply human desire to connect across generations—to listen, to grow, and to love. Join us for an evening of music that transcends time and culture, celebrating the enduring link between those who raise us and those we raise.

MAMA WHO BORE ME

Duncan Sheik

Mama who bore me
Mama who gave me
No way to handle things
Who made me so sad
Mama, the weeping
Mama, the angels
No sleep in Heaven or Bethlehem

Some pray that, one day, Christ will come a-callin'
They light a candle, and hope that it glows
And some just lie there, crying for Him to come and find them
But when He comes, they don't know how to go

Mama who bore me...

ZADALA MAMKA

Béla Bartók

Poetic Translation by Vince Peterson

The Mother gave her Daughter away,
Sending her far from herself.
She forbade her daughter:
“Don't come back to me.”

I will turn myself into a partridge and
I will fly to my mother.
I will perch myself there in the garden
On the white lily.

Mother will come into the garden and say
“What kind of bird is this that sings so sadly?”
She will shoo the bird away:
“Don't break the lily!”

“But you gave me to an evil husband
In a foreign land.
Truly, it is bad for me, Dear Mother,
To be with an evil man.”

WHERE IS LOVE?

Lionel Bart

Where is love?
Does it fall from skies above?
Is it underneath the willow tree
That I've been dreaming of?
Where is she?
Who I close my eyes to see?
Will I ever know the sweet "hello"
That's meant for only me?
Who can say where she may hide lit?
Must I travel far and wide?
'Til I am beside the someone who
I can mean something to ...
Where...?
Where is love?

Who can say where...she may hide?
Must I travel...far and wide?
'Til I am beside...the someone who
I can mean...something to...
Where?
Where is love?

SIÚIL A RIÚN

Traditional Irish Text

I wish I were on yonder hill
'Tis there I'd sit and cry my fill
Until every tear would turn a mill

Siúil, siúil, siúil a rúin
Siúil go socar agus siúil go ciúin
Siúil go doras agus éalaigh liom
(Is go dté tu, mo mhuirín slán)

His hair was black, his eye was blue
His arm was strong, his word was true
I wish in my heart I was with you.

I'll dye my petticoats, I'll dye them red
And 'round the world I'll beg my bread
Till I find my love alive or dead

Walk, walk, walk, my secret one
Walk calmly and quietly
Walk to the door and escape with me
(Until you go safely, my dear)

THE COOLIN

Samuel Barber

Text by James Stephens

Come with me, under my coat,
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat,
Or wine, if it be thy will;
And we will talk until
Talk is a trouble, too,
Out in the side of the hill,
And nothing is left to do,
But an eye to look into an eye
And a hand in a hand to slip,
And a sigh to answer a sigh,
And a lip to find out a lip:
What if the night be black
And the air on the mountain chill,
Where the goat lies down in her track
And all but the fern is still!
Stay with me under my coat,
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat
Out on the side of the hill.

CONTROL

Janet Jackson et al.

When I was seventeen, I did what people told me.
I did what my father said, and let my mother mold me
But that was long ago, I'm in

Control
Never gonna stop
Control
To get what I want
Control
I like to have a lot
Control
Now I'm all grown up

First time I fell in love, I didn't know what hit me.
So young and so naive, I thought it would be easy.
But now I know I've got to take

Control
Now I've got a lot
Control
To get what I want
Control
Never gonna stop
Control
Now I'm all grown up

Got my own mind
I wanna make my own decisions
When it has to do with my life, my life
I wanna be the one in control

So let me take you by the hand and lead you on this dance.
Control is what I've got because I took a chance.
I don't wanna rule the world, just wanna run my life.
So make your life a little easier
When you get the chance, just take

Control
Now I've got a lot
Control
To get what I want
Control
I'm never gonna stop
Control
Now I'm all grown up

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

Bob Dylan

Come gather 'round people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin'
And you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come mothers, and fathers throughout the land
And don't criticize what you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly aging

Please get out of the new one if you can't lend a hand
For the Times they are a-changin'

The line it is drawn the curse it is cast
The slow one now will later be fast
As the present now will later be past,
The order is rapidly fading
And the first one now will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'!

THE MOMENT I SAID IT

Imogen Heap

The moment I said it
The moment I opened my mouth
Lead in your eyelids
Bulldozed the life out of me
I know what you're thinking
But, darling, you're not thinking straight
Sadly things just happen, we can't explain

It's not even light out
But you've somewhere to be
No hesitation
No, I've never seen you like this
And I don't like it, I don't like it
I don't like it at all

Just put back the car keys
Or somebody's going to get hurt
Who are you calling at this hour?
Sit down, come round, I need you now
We'll work it all out together
But we're getting nowhere tonight
Now sleep, I promise it'll all seem better somehow, in time

It's not even light out
Suddenly, suddenly
Ooh, you've somewhere to be
No hesitation
Mmm, I've never seen you like this
You're scaring me, you're scaring me
You're scaring me to death

Don't, oh... smash please
Don't, oh... and a-please-nother one
Don't, oh... smash please
Don't, oh... and a-please-nother one

I'm losing you
I'm losing you

Trust me on this one
I've got a bad feeling
Trust me on this one
You're going to throw it all away
With no hesitation... smash

AGAINST DESPAIR

Edward Thompson

Text by Christopher Smart

A raven once an acorn took
From Bashan's stoutest tree.
He hid it by a limpid brook
And lived another oak to see.

Thus melancholy buries hope
Which Providence keeps still alive
And bids us with afflictions to cope
And all anxiety survive.

WHAT IS OUR LIFE

Orlando Gibbons

Text attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh

What is our life? A play of passion.
Our mirth the music of division.
Our mother's wombs the 'tiring houses be,
where we are dress'd for this short comedy.
Heav'n the judicious sharp spectator is,
that sits and marks still who doth act amiss.
Our graves, that hide us from the searching sun
are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
Thus march we, playing to our latest rest;
Only we die in earnest, that's no jest.

BLACKBIRD

John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these broken wings and learn to fly
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise

Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these sunken eyes and learn to see
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to be free

Blackbird fly, blackbird fly
Into the light of the dark black night

FOREVER YOUNG

Bob Dylan

May God bless and keep you always
May your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
And let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young

May you grow up to be righteous
May you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you
May you always be courageous
Stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young

May you stay forever young
May your hands always be busy
May your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of change shift
May your heart always be joyful

May your song always be sung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young

BETTER PEOPLE

India.Arie

I wish there was a video game
To teach you your ancestors' names
I wish there was a phone number
Like 1-800-Save-Your-Brother
I'm thankful for the radio station
Not afraid to put the truth in rotation
There are certain information
That you can only get in conversation with...

Young people, who talk to
Old people, it would make us
Better people, all around

And if old people would talk to
Young people, it would make us all
Better people, all around

We went from radio to TV
Now we're going from LP to CD
Don't be afraid to try something new
I can help you with the brand-new technology
Help me with the age-old philosophy
Together there's so much we can do, with

Young people, who talk to...

They say that every
Generation gets worse
They call it a generational curse
These problems don't just drop out (of) the sky
Listen to Mahatma Gandhi's words
"Be the change you want to see in the world"
Start with yourself and healing will multiply

Young people, who talk to...

If Black people
Would talk to white people
It would make us
Better people
All around
If republican people would
Talk to democratic people
It would make us diplomatic people
All around



About the Choral Chameleon Ensemble



Vince Peterson, Director
Kimberli Alphonso, Soprano
Annie Beliveau '18, Soprano
Clover St. Hubert, Soprano
Greta Moorhead, Alto
Christina Swanson, Alto
Matthew Finkel, Tenor
Alexander Goity, Tenor
Drew Young, Tenor
Richard Berg, Bass
John Maderazo, Bass
Ari Messenger, Baritone



Since 2008, the Choral Chameleon Ensemble has been redefining what a choral music concert can be and where listeners find choral music. Fearless champions of new work and reimagers of timeless repertoire across centuries, they have paved the way for change throughout the American choral music landscape. Recipients of the Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, they have been profiled and reviewed in major publications including *Time Out New York*, *The New York Times*, *The Examiner*, and *I Care If You Listen*.

The Ensemble performs seasonally in New York City and tours the northeast, with periodic appearances in other parts of the U.S. Their first album **CHANGING** was released in November 2024 on the Navona Record Label and features 11 tracks, including 9 world-premiere recordings and a never-before-recorded work by Orlando di Lasso.

Vince Peterson, the Founding Artistic Director, was the 2018 recipient of the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal for his work founding Choral Chameleon—an honor shared with fewer than 25 choral conductors.

The Choral Chameleon Ensemble roster is comprised of many more singers than those who appear in each specific project. They are carefully selected through a rigorous single-blind audition process by a committee of current members and our artistic director.

Choral Chameleon Ensemble members hail from a widely varied set of musical and cultural backgrounds. In addition to singing with Choral Chameleon, they work in many other areas both inside and outside the music industry. Their staggering musicianship and level of experience have placed them among the strongest and most resilient singers in North America. They include both local singers from New York City and those who travel from across the United States to sing with Choral Chameleon for many projects each season. They are the lifeblood of Choral Chameleon.

Learn more at <http://choralchameleon.com>



About Vince Peterson

Vince Peterson is a respected, award-winning choral conductor, composer/arranger, and teacher of music in the United States. He has established himself most prominently in the world of choral music, notably having founded the “shape-shifting” vocal ensemble Choral Chameleon in 2008. Through his work with this ensemble and others, he has influenced widespread change in common practices of choral music concert programming and interdisciplinary work. An undisputed champion of new music and an empathetic composer himself, Dr. Peterson is responsible for presenting nearly 300 premieres of new choral and theater music in the last 15 years and has won critical acclaim in *Gramophone Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Time Out New York*, *The New York Concert Review*, *I Care If You Listen*, *The Examiner*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and other reputable publications. He is also a recipient of the prestigious ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming.

In addition to his work with Choral Chameleon, Dr. Peterson has been the proud Artistic Director of Empire City Men’s Chorus since 2014 and led the ensemble through its 25th Anniversary Season.

As composer and arranger, Peterson has received seven commissions from the multi-Grammy® Award-winning ensemble Chanticleer, whose YouTube videos of his work have garnered over a million views. Several of his choral arrangements and original compositions have become staples for choirs across the United States. Distinguished performance venues include Chicago Symphony Hall, San Francisco’s War Memorial Opera House, Bartók National Concert Hall in Budapest, New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, Carnegie Hall, and National Sawdust.

As a collaborative pianist and organist, he has toured with choirs in Italy, France, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, The Philippines, and throughout North America. At the age of 15, he played the organ for mass in St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, and sang at an audience for Pope John Paul II. To this day, he continues to work extensively in liturgical music ministry.

Dr. Peterson earned the BMus in Composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of the late celebrated composer Conrad Susa. He earned a Double MM in Composition and Choral Conducting from Mannes College of Music, where he studied under pioneer conductor Mark Shapiro as well as composer David Loeb, and was awarded the 2007 Music Teacher's League Award upon graduation. He earned his DMA from the Conservatory at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia, writing his dissertation on his former teacher Conrad Susa. He is a leading authority on Susa's work. He was the 2018 recipient of the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal by Chorus America, a lifetime distinction he shares with only 19 of the most influential choral musicians in the United States.

A recognized thought leader in the music world, *The New York Times* called Peterson "authoritative beyond his... years," and *The Brooklyn Eagle* praised his work as "a stunning symphony of the spiritual and secular," while hailing him as a solo performer "with depth and vigor" who "provided a universal context which resonated with his audience." Through his work as a teacher and pedagogue, he has mentored, inspired, and supported hundreds of musicians across musical disciplines and from six continents.

With special thanks to those friends who have played a major role
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Middlebury College sits on land which has served as a site of meeting and exchange among Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The Western Abenaki are the traditional caretakers of these Vermont lands and waters, which they call Ndakinna, or “homeland.”
We remember their connection to this region and the hardships they continue to endure.
We give thanks for the opportunity to share in the bounty of this place and to protect it.