



Stories From the Living Tree

Creative Director & Producer: Annika Bentley

Producer: Kathleen Fraser

Producer: Missy Pfohl Smith

Mount Hope World Singers

BIODANCE

Christine A. Banna

Greg Woodsbie

**Thursday May 18 7:00 pm
Sunday May 21 2:00 pm
Memorial Art Gallery M&T Ballroom
500 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14607**

Suggested donation \$15. No one turned away for lack of funds.

Poster by D. Norsen Design

**Livestream 5/18/23: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUtYnCvKxFY>
Livestream 5/21/23: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT-weWpmNys>**

**Tickets/make a donation:
https://www.paypal.com/donate?campaign_id=9BLEEGSRVMUUN&source=qr**

The Canandaigua Treaty is a treaty between the United States of America and the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy - Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk and Tuscarora. We are beneficiaries of this Treaty. May we acknowledge the harms done by colonization in the past and that continue in the present and work toward understanding, reconciliation, and sharing the land in a good way.

To support the Tulalip Tribe's efforts to revitalize Lushootseed, the native language and culture of Chief Seattle, please visit: <https://www.lushootseedresearch.org/support-us/>

To support Seneca art and culture, please visit:
<https://ganondagan.org/Support/Giving/Donate>

Stories From the Living Tree

Stories From the Living Tree is an immersive experience of song, dance, sound, and animation, centered around an ancient tree. This tree, a source of great wisdom, extends through its roots and canopy to all corners of the earth, and beyond the earth into the spiritual realm and across time. The performers will gather at the tree to share stories of universal experience and a reverent connection to nature. These stories will be told through the singing voice, in a multitude of languages and from a variety of cultural perspectives, through the solo and collective movement of the dancers' bodies, through ambient and transitional sound, through the abstracted visual projection of plants and other life forms, and also through the movement of our ASL interpreters' hands.

There is a narrative, figurative structure to our song selection, following the form and shape of a tree. We hope the audience will, on a subtle level, feel some movement upward from the earth, through the trunk and branches of the tree, and ultimately leave the event with a sense of expansive interconnectedness.

Mount Hope World Singers

MHWS seeks to build community and foster intercultural understanding through engaging, high quality, respectful performance of music in original languages from around the globe. We are an intergenerational community choir joyfully partnered with the Southeast Area Coalition (SEAC), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Visit us at www.mounthopeworldsingers.org

Artistic Director: Annika Bentley

Conductor: Brian White

Manager: Kathleen Fraser

Singers:

Ed Byrne
Peggy Dempsey
Rich Dempsey
Lizz deSimone
Kathleen Fraser
Jenny Gaul
Eric Grode
Elaine Hollis
Mark Hopkins
Fran Kreider
Carol Santos
Terry Schwartz
Holden Turner
Kayleigh White
Brian White
Jim Willer

Soloists:

Lizz deSimone, Jenny Gaul, Terry Schwartz, Holden Turner, Jim Willer, Kayleigh White, Brian White

Percussionist: Don Sherman

Accompanist: Greg Woodsbie

Special Thanks: N'Jelle Gage-Thorne, Mike Evans, Lori Wood, Darryl Norsen, Sanford Rockowitz, Mona Seghatoleslami, Alyssa Rodriguez, Harmeet Kaur, Jasmina Kamdar, Mary Lee Miller, The Hochstein School, Ken Workman, Seiko.

BIODANCE

BIODANCE is a contemporary dance and collaborative arts company based in Rochester, NY, that collaborates with multi-disciplinary artists and organizations. We interact with the community through performances, benefit concerts, limited mobility

dance classes for older adults, interactive lecture demonstrations and more. The company is dedicated to using dance as a way to connect people and build community, and to sharing the many facets of contemporary dance and collaborative arts with a wide audience through traditional, alternative, outdoor and free community venues.

Visit us at www.biodance.org.

Artistic Director: Missy Pfohl Smith

Dancers/Choreographers:

Yaa Adenike Cunningham, Choreographer for *Ose Ayo*

Sarah Johnson, Choreographic Advising for *Yemaya*

Nanako Horikawa Mandrino, Choreographic Collaborator for *Hiraita Hiraita*

Elio Mandrino

Euridece Seche, Choreographic Advising for *Yemaya*

Katherine Serna, Choreographer for *Tu Voz*

Missy Pfohl Smith, Choreographer/Director for *Frè O, Hiraita Hiraita, Hutia te Rito, Ilay Gandangan, Kylä Vuotti Uutta Kuuta, This We Know, Yemaya*, and Interludes

Donetta Tchoroleev

All choreography is created in collaboration with the dancers.

Costume design by Missy Pfohl Smith

Special thanks to Paul H. Taylor and the Rochester Area Community Foundation

BIODANCE is a 501(c)3 Non-profit organization. For more information, visit www.biodance.org

Christine A. Banna

Projection Designer/Animator: Christine A. Banna

Asst. Projection Designer/Intern: Piper Charron

Additional Animation: Vanessa Sweet

With the visuals for *Stories from the Living Tree*, our goal was to create an animated portrait of not just one tree, but a culmination of all trees. The visuals for the concert start underground with the roots of the tree and through the course of the concert, we travel up the tree and into the cosmos.

The projections include multidisciplinary techniques incorporating a mix of direct on 35mm animation, stop motion, digital animation, and live action.

Special Thanks: Amanda Hughes, Callie Garp, Vanessa Sweet, Matt Arnold, Bill Landers, MAGIC Spell Studios, RIT School of Film & Animation, Gianna Stewart, Jess Maffet, and JT Blake

Greg Woodsbie

Transition music composed by Greg Woodsbie.

Greg Woodsbie: Piano, percussion, voice

Matthew Nikoloff: trumpet, guitar, voice
Michaela Sandness: Violin

Postlude: "Stand Like an Oak," Rising Appalachia

ASL Interpreters

Camille Uadiale, student interpreter
Christopher Coles

A/V Tech: Michael Besaw/Highland Media

Photography: Sanford Rockowitz

Videography: Paul Tracy/Envision Productions

Livestream: Logan Barrett

1. "This We Know"

Duwamish sentiment & US musical setting; English, German, French, Spanish & Lushootseed
languages: speech by Chief Seattle, musical setting by Ron Jeffers

This edition of This We Know was prepared for the First World Symposium on Choral Music held in Vienna in August, 1987. Simultaneous multi-lingual performances are possible -- encouraged -- as a symbolic manifestation and celebration of the web that connects all things. **Chief Seattle (Seathl)** was a Suquamish and Duwamish chief who lived on the islands of the Puget Sound. There is a great deal of controversy surrounding this speech, dated to 1854, which is regularly attributed to Chief Seattle and has been adapted and rewritten many times--it is widely believed to have been actually written, not just translated, by white settler Henry A. Smith. This particular interpretation became popular with the environmental movement in the 1970s. We are grateful to Ken Workman, President of Duwamish Tribal Services and Council Member of the Duwamish Tribe, for providing this Lushootseed translation. Ken tells us that when Chief Seattle made his speech, he was actually making a case for unencumbered access of the tribe to their ancestral burial grounds.

Lyrics:

This we know.
tiʔəʔ čəl ʔesháydx

The earth does not belong to us,
šə ʔəspəd ʔəsxʷíʔ gʷəl čəl

we belong to the earth.
čəl gʷəl ʔəspəd

This we know.
tiʔəʔ čəl ʔesháydx

All things are connected
bək'w stab ʔəsq'wú?

like the blood which unites one family.
x'wul'ab ʔə tiʔə? q'wu? dəč'ú? dʔii'əd

All things are connected.
bək'w stab ʔəsq'wú?

Whatever befalls the earth
stabal picil al ti pəd

befalls the sons and daughters of the earth.
picil ti stútubš yəxw slələdəy? al ti pəd

We did not weave the web of life,
čəl ʔəsxw'í? yíq'id ti liča? al səli?

we are merely a strand of it.
ʔəsčəl dəč'ú? x'wíləb

Whatever we do to the web,
stabal ʔəsčəl ti liča?

we do to ourselves
ʔəsčəl al ti čəl

2. “Ose Ayo”

Nigeria, Yoruba language: traditional, arr. Brian Tate

Ose Ayo is a traditional Yoruba song from Nigeria. It is a sunrise song because this text expresses hope, thanks, and/or joy for the arrival of a new day. It should have a feeling of warmth and joy, and should be sung in a free and loose manner.

Lyrics:

Ose ayo
abeh
adeh
o
ayeh
o

Lyrics (English translation):

Thank you
Joy

We beg
We come
Oh
The World
Oh

3. “Frè O”

Haiti, Haitian Creole language: arr. Sten Källman

As a man lies dying from illness, his relatives appeal to the Voodoo spirits **Dambala**, the serpent, and **Ayidam**, the rainbow. These married spirits are very old images brought from West Africa to Haiti and symbolize our connection to the past, the present, and the future. Voodoo is practiced as a way of creating a collective community between the extended family and the nature spirits believed to respond to singing and dancing.

Lyrics:

Frè O di nou, di maladia pa gaya.
Na jwe na rele.
Ou malad mwen di yo.
Na jwe Papa Dambala Wedo gade nou.
Nou tout chante Ayida Wedo men pitit ou yo!

Lyrics (English translation):

O brother, you tell us your sickness will not be healed.
We are playing (the drums and singing) and weeping,
You are sick -- I will tell the others.
We are playing the drums and singing to Papa Dambala!
We are asking Papa Dambala to look after us.
We all sing to Ayida Wedo: "See your children!"

4. “Yemaya”

Cuba, Yoruba language: arr. Diana V. Sáez

A celebration of the moment when the river meets the ocean! **Yemayá** is a goddess from the Rule of the Osha, a Yoruba religion. This religion has its origins in West Africa, today's modern Nigeria. It was brought to the Americas by African slaves where it exchanged logics and symbols with Catholicism. In the Americas, **Yemayá** represents maternity and is considered the mother of all living things. **Asesu** and **Olodo** represent different paths or avatars of **Yemayá**. Paths or avatars are the different shapes and forms the Orishas take within the religious oral corpus of the Rule of Osha. **Yemayá** also reigns over the oceans and seas. This vocal arrangement is meant to be sung as a meditation. Let this chant be a tribute to the mother deity who looks out for our land, its natural resources and all its living creatures.

Lyrics:

Yemaya Asesu
Asesu Yemaya,
Yemaya Olodo
Olodo Yemaya

5. “Nda Wana”

South Africa, Venda language: traditional, arr. Michael Barrett

This song can be seen as a game. It starts off with a single voice part and as the game or song progresses, it becomes more complex. It is accompanied by traditional hand clapping and African drums. Venda, also known as Tshivenda, is a Bantu language and one of the eleven official languages spoken in South Africa. Roughly 2.2% of South Africans speak Venda along with others living in neighboring Zimbabwe.

Lyrics:

Nda wana
Nda wana vhana vha tshi khou tam ba
Vha tshi imbelela tshino ni
Vha tshi ri thungununu nemulanbo kumedza

Lyrics (English translation):

I found the children playing
while the birds were singing
by the river (mulambo) as they resisted sleep.

6. “Ilay Gandangan”

Philippines, Maguindanao language: Rodolfo Delarmente composer

Ilay Gandangan is a popular piece among Filipino choirs. Derived from a sun chant of the Maguindanao tribe, the people call on the sun god, **Ilay**, to end the rain that is covering the land. The piece constantly gains energy and power as the sun begins to shine. The Maguindanao people come from a Muslim-majority part of the Filipino island of Mindanao. This composition contains onomatopoeic features that imitate the sound of the tribal people chanting in a raw and shrill manner.

Lyrics:

Ilay gandingan
Ay gandingan ilay
Sedya de takan ilay dangan tulak ilay
Ilay, ilay, ilay, ilay
Kanñeda ilay, ilay, ilay
Ilay, gandang gandingan darang

gandang gandingan

Lyrics (English translation):

Beautiful Sun!
Oh, beautiful sun,
Shine to us now, show your light.
Sun, sun, sun, sun,
Shine sun, sun, sun.
Shine to us now sun,
Show your light!

7. “Hiraita, Hiraita”

Japan, Japanese language: folk song arr. Ken Hakoda

Hiraita, Hiraita is a Japanese children's song, its melody based on the pentatonic (five-note) scale. The text portrays the wondrous yet simple moments when a lotus flower blossoms and then closes. At a deeper level, the text speaks of the eternal cycle of nature. The music was set to show this eternal cycle by overlapping several layers of melodies to create a mysterious and dream-like atmosphere.

Lyrics:

Hiraita, Hiraita
Nanno Hanaga Hiraita
Rengeno Hanaga Hiraita
Hiraitato Omottara
Itsunomanika Tsubonda
Tsubonda Tsubonda

Lyrics (English translation):

Blossomed, blossomed.
Which flower blossomed?
A lotus flower blossomed.
When I thought it had blossomed
Without notice, it was closed,
closed, closed.

8. “Lao Duang Deuan”

Thailand, Thai language: traditional, arr. K. Tantrarungroj

The title of this piece, *Lao Duang Deuan*, refers both to Laos, the country that borders Thailand to the north, and the moon (**duang deuan**), used here as a poetic symbol for a woman. The melody, well known by Thai people everywhere, was written around 1924 by **Prince Benbadhanabongse**, inspired, as the story goes, by a trip to Northern Thailand. Traditionally, this music would be sung

while accompanied on traditional Thai instruments. The music is not for any particular holiday or festivity and is sung by people of all ages in various settings.

Lyrics:

o la no du-ang de-uan oie-y
pi ma wao rak chao sao kham du-ang
o wah duk lae-ew no, pi ko la lu-ang
ok pi pen hu-ang rak chao du-ang de-uan oie-y
ko la lae-ew chao kaew ko sum
pi ni rak chao no kuan ta ri-am
cha har nai ma ti-am
o chao du-ang de-uan oie-y
hom klin kei son
kay son dok mai
hom klin klai chao su kong ri-am oie-y
hom klin klun klan
hom num yang bo loie-y
nue-a hom sam choie-y
oie-y rao la no

Lyrics (English translation):

Oh my dear Duang Deuan,
I come to talk to you, my beauty of the night.
But it's getting late, and I have to leave
Though my heart still yearns for you, dear Duang Deuan.
I must leave, my dear.
I truly love you, my beauty.
Where can I find anyone like you,
Oh my dear Duang Deuan?
Oh sweet fragrance,
The fragrance of the flowers,
A fragrance so like yours.
Such sweetness,
A sweetness I never will forget;
The sweet fragrance of youth.
Oh, how I love you.

9. “Tu Voz”

Chilean poem, US musical setting, Spanish language: poem by Pablo Neruda, music by Shawn L. Kirchner

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973), whose real name is Neftalí Ricardo Reyes Basoalto, was born in the town of Parral in Chile. He adopted his pseudonym in memory of **Jan Neruda**, Czech poet (1834-1891). A prolific writer, the complete collection of his works contains over 3,000 pages. Considered one of the greatest and most influential poets of the 20th century, he was awarded the

Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. The collection of love sonnets from which the poem of this piece was chosen includes many poems dedicated to Pablo Neruda's wife **Matilde Urrutia**. The title *Tu Voz* was chosen by the composer.

Lyrics:

Cantas y sol y a cielo con tu canto
tu voz desgrana el cereal del día,
hablan los pinos con su lengua verde:
trinan todas las aves del invierno.
El mar llena sus sótanos de pasos,
de campanas, de cadenas y gemidos,
tintinean metales y utensilios,
suenan las ruedas de la caravana.
Pero sólo tu voz escucho y sube
tu voz con vuelo y precisión de flecha,
baja tu voz con gravedad de lluvia,
tu voz esparce altísimas espadas,
vuelve tu voz cargada de violetas
y luego me acompaña por el cielo.

Lyrics (English translation, Sonnet 52):

Singing unto the sun and sky with your song,
your voice threshes the grain of the day,
the pines speak with green tongues,
all the birds of winter trill.
The sea fills its cellars with footsteps,
with bells, chains, and groans --
metal and tools jangle,
wheels of the caravan creak.
But I hear only your voice --
your voice rising with the flight and precision of an arrow,
your voice falling with the gravity of rain,
your voice scattering the highest swords,
and returning, laden with violets --
accompanying me through the heavens.

10. “Kylä Vuotti Uutta Kuuta”

Finland, Finnish language: Janika Vandervelde composer

Kylä vuotti uutta kuuta is originally a Karelian wedding song. It was sung when the bride was coming into the house of the bridegroom. The song tells how the village (the whole family of the bridegroom) was waiting for the new moon (the bride) and all the people were waiting for the sunrise. The language of this song is archaic and highly metaphoric.

Lyrics:

Kylä vuotti uutta kuuta,
 Miero päivän nousendoa.
 Miepä vuotin minjoavani.
 Nouse sorsa soutamasta,
 Nouse ilman nostamatta,
 Ylene yletämättä.
 Pole jalka portahilla,
 Toini poikkipoliselta.
 Assu hanhen askelilla,
 Taputa tavin jaloilla.
 Notkuta nuoret nisatki,
 Niinkuin tuores tuomenlatva
 tahi kasvaja kataja.
 Ken tämän toven valehtii
 Veijon lyhjän tullehikse
 Eipä veijo lyhjin tullu
 Eikä ratsu jouten juossu.

Lyrics (English translation):

The village awaited the new moon,
 the young awaited the sunrise.
 I waited for my brother and his betrothed.
 Arise, fair one, from the sleigh,
 Arise proudly, without false humility.
 Enter our dwelling,
 be welcome and break bread with us.
 Hasten to us with a gosling's step,
 dance like a little teal.
 Arch gracefully your slender neck
 like the youngest branch of the cherry tree
 or the budding juniper.
 Who has brought the false report
 that the suitor returns alone?
 His wooing has not been in vain,
 nor has his steed run for nought.

11. “Hutia te Rito”

New Zealand, Maori culture and language: traditional, arr. Zachary J. Moore

This piece is based on a traditional Maori **waiata** (chant). The song presents a metaphor for life as it looks into the delicate and profound life of a flax bush. As described by Music Education New Zealand, "The flax is a symbol of family unity and the maintenance of close family connections, both between generations and among relations. The family of leaves remain within their cluster, just as people remain within their particular **hapu** [tribe] or **iwi** [clan]. The flax plant grows from the center. The first shoot divides into the father and the mother, and between them a child shoots up.

As this continues to happen, the original parents become grandparents and so on, and you can have many generations in the same plant. The new shoot always grows in the middle. When you cut a leaf from the flax, always cut it from the outside, because if you take the center it destroys the whole plant."

Lyrics:

Hutia te rito
Hutia te rito o te harakeke
Kei hea te kōmako e kō?
Kī mai ki ahau
He aha te mea nui?
He at ate mea nui o te ao?
Māku e kī atu
He tangata! He tangata! He tangata, hī!

Lyrics (English translation):

Pull out the shoot,
Pull out the shoot of the flax bush
Where will the bellbird sing?
Say to me
What is the greatest thing?
What is the greatest thing in this world?
I will say
The people! The people! The people!

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