

Saturday, April 18, 2026

Boston Children's Chorus

The Road She Paved

Kenneth Griffith, Music Director & Conductor of Premier Choir

Destiny Cooper, Conductor of Recital Choir

with

Jacob Hiser, piano

Carlos Sulbarán, bass

Patrick Hanafin, percussion

Freedom is Coming

Trad. South African folk song, collected by
Anders Nyberg/arr. Henry Leck

If I Can Help Somebody (1945)

Alma Bazel Androzzo (1912–2001), arr. David Brunner

Yukayeke ("Community" in Taíno language) (2025)

Suzzette Ortiz

On the Common Ground (2020)

Alice Parker (1925–2023)

Dum Spiro Spero (2025)

Daniel Brinsmead

The Dream Keeper (2006)

Rollo Dilworth

Little Birds (2001)

Eric Whitacre

Take Care of This House (1976)

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990), arr. Arnold Freed

Be the Bridge (2024)

Kyle Pederson

Love Will Guide Us

Trad., arr. Betty A. Wylder

More Love (2017)

Mark Miller

We Can Be the Change (2023)

Dilworth

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The Road She Paved

“If we cannot do great things, we can do small things in a great way.”

—Melnea Cass

Our singers honor the remarkable legacy of Melnea Cass, the “First Lady of Roxbury.” A tireless advocate for justice, Cass championed women’s suffrage, Black employment, early childhood education, care for the elderly, and civil rights leadership as president of Boston’s NAACP. Her lifelong commitment to equity shaped generations in our town. Join us as we celebrate the enduring impact of this powerful yet often unsung Boston icon.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Boston Children’s Chorus (BCC) was founded in 2003 by Hubie Jones, a civic leader who has worked for six decades to address the social problems facing Boston’s underserved children and communities. Named Boston’s “Ambassadors of Harmony” by *The Boston Globe*, BCC harnesses the power of music to connect Boston’s diverse communities, cultivate empathy, and inspire social inquiry. BCC after-school choral programs include 10 choirs with singers from 110 different ZIP codes in and around Boston. BCC is also proud to partner with schools to provide in-school choral education in Mattapan, Roxbury, South Boston, East

Boston, Allston, and the city of Chelsea. BCC presents over 50 performances per season in a wide range of public and private events. They have performed in venues from Boston’s Symphony Hall and Royal Albert Hall in London, to Sydney Opera House and the White House.

BCC is supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and in part by a grant from the Boston Cultural Council, a local agency which is funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, administered by the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture.

Learn more at bostonchildrenschorus.org

PREMIER CHOIR & RECITAL CHOIR—LOWER VOICES*

Julie Al-Beirouty
Chora Bayer
Ailie Bell
Lydia Bens
Yasmina Bird
Perry Bitter
Adrian Chalasani
Mariana Chango Gasset
Myles Charlton
Camilla Costa
Will Dendy
Elle DiFazio
Greta Elliott
Joseph Farelli
Maeve Flaherty
Jade Flemming
Gregory Ghazaryan

Ella Gimenez
Mateo Gonzalez
Maia Grammatopoulos
Jonathan Harris
Sarah Hernandez-Rodriguez
John Lucas Hopkins
James Hu*
Laura Hu
Yifeng Hu
Stephen Karon
Bija Kovatch
Drew Lanfer
Zakhar Lazarevich
Jasper LoRusso
Hurielle Louis
Rajdeep Majumdar
Ameerah Manigat
Heaven Martin
Sam Martin
Margot Martin-Wilson
Tatiana Martínez
Cecilia Godswill Mikala
Liana Min
Owen Molway
Ava Morrison
Faye Nazarchuk
Leonard Page
Drew Papia
Naren Patel*
Jack Peterson
Alla Petrosyan
Zahara Pless
Grace Porter
Mira Rath
Karina Ryan
Neve Sahni
Tiana Sandefur
Matilda Sherman
Binyam Tsegai
Robert Tsibere
Yana Tsibere

Kenneth Griffith is the music director and principal conductor of the Premier Choir at Boston Children's Chorus. In addition to conducting the choir, Griffith leads the artistic programs and coaches the team of conducting and teaching staff. Bringing a decade of choral music education experience, Griffith's warm but demanding approach and distinctive ability to connect with young people have created demand from choruses across the region, from the elementary to the collegiate level.

During his time with BCC, Griffith has led the chorus in major performances at some of the city's most prestigious venues, including Boston's Symphony Hall; the debut of a new musical, *WILD*, with the American Repertory Theater featuring Idina Menzel; the WGBH Holiday Celebration with operatic tenor Lawrence Brownlee; civic performances such as a performance for the Earthshot Prize and the investiture of US Attorney Rachael Rollins; and events for the Red Sox and Boston Celtics.

Griffith has experience with singers ranging from public school elementary through collegiate and professional levels at institutions like Bard College and Wellesley College. Over the years, he has assisted in preparing ensembles heard at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, American Repertory Theater, and the Verbier Music Festival in Switzerland. A versatile musician, Griffith collaborated on projects with vocalists including Idina Menzel and Javier Muñoz, movement artists like Chanel DaSilva, and instrumental ensembles such as the Boston-based Eureka Ensemble and Castle of Our Skins.

Griffith is passionate about music's role in bringing together diverse communities, leading to social change. His dynamic programming and ability to unify singers across differences have resulted in an active career on stage, in schools, and communities around Greater Boston, sharing songs and stories of underrepresented peoples and providing music instruction in neighborhoods underserved in the arts. He is a frequent adjudicator and clinician for state music educators associations in Massachusetts, adding New Hampshire and Rhode Island in 2023.

On the professional stage, Griffith recently prepared the chorus and ensemble for Anthony Davis's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. The recording of this project was GRAMMY® Award-nominated in 2023. In addition to his work with BCC, Griffith is the music director of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lynn. Griffith holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from Capital University and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Bard College.

Destiny Cooper is an active musician and music educator who teaches from the joy of working with students as they work to embrace their best selves and whose goal is to find ways to strengthen voiceless communities through music, expression, and leadership. As a musical leader, Cooper collaborates with local musicians to cross-connect choral music with the diverse worlds of audience members through concerts, podcasts, and roundtable discussions. She is currently a middle school choral director in

the Greater Boston area and serves on the board of Massachusetts American Choral Directors Association.

Before relocating to Massachusetts, Cooper attended Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, where she earned a Bachelor of Music and a Master of Arts in Teaching in Music Education. During that time she worked with various music programs and organizations, including Boston University Tanglewood Institute, Princeton Girlchoir (Westrick Music Academy), and the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America (Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute). Cooper previously worked with ChildrenSong of New Jersey and Westminster Neighborhood Children's Choir.

Jacob Hiser is a versatile pianist and violinist who performs and studies a variety of musical traditions. Born and raised in southern Missouri, he grew up playing bluegrass, blues, and classical music, eventually discovering jazz as a teenager. He attended Missouri State University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Jazz Studies. In 2014, he moved to Boston to attend New England Conservatory's Contemporary Improvisation program, completing his master's degree in 2016. While there, he studied with Ran Blake, Bruce Brubaker, Joe Morris, and Frank Carlberg, and performed in ensembles and concerts coached/directed by John Zorn, Jason Moran, Tanya Kalmanovitch, Anthony Coleman, and Simon Carrington. With jazz groups, country bands, choirs, Korean folk music ensembles, and classical cellists, Hiser has performed all over the United States, as well as Canada, France, Germany, Hungary,

and Australia. In summer 2019, he was accepted into the International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music at Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada, where he spent three weeks creating music with 45 other improvising musicians from around the world and working closely with faculty Vijay Iyer, Steph Richards, Tyshawn Sorey, Okkyung Lee, and many others. Currently, Hiser is adjunct piano faculty at University of Massachusetts Lowell and staff pianist for Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, NH. During the summers, he is a faculty member of two fine arts programs: Missouri Fine Arts Academy, a two-week summer residential program for high school student artists in visual arts, theater, dance, creative writing, and music; and Next Generation Performing Arts Camp, a weeklong piano/strings camp in Lawton, OK, for middle school and high school students. He has released one album, *Seconds*, comprised mostly of original jazz compositions for quintet and trio.

As the director of operations at the Boston Children's Chorus, **Patrick Hanafin** plays a key role in shaping the organization's strategy, vision, and planning. He oversees finance, operations, communications, and marketing, while leading the production and execution of all BCC events. A Summa Cum Laude graduate of Berklee College of Music, Hanafin holds a bachelor's degree in Music Business Management and Marketing.

In addition to his work at BCC, Hanafin is an accomplished drummer and percussionist. He performs and records with various artists, groups, theater companies, and ensembles throughout Boston and beyond. His national tours have taken him to prestigious venues,

including the Boston Opera House and the Castro Theatre in San Francisco. Hanafin is deeply committed to his community and a passionate advocate for the arts.

Latin GRAMMY® Award-nominated bassist **Carlos Sulbarán**, a native of Venezuela, is recognized for his versatility, musical sensitivity, and ability to navigate a wide spectrum of musical traditions with authenticity and depth. Equally at home on upright and electric bass, Sulbarán has built an international reputation as a dynamic performer capable of moving seamlessly between classical, jazz, funk, flamenco, Middle Eastern, pop, R&B, and Latin American music.

Throughout his career, Sulbarán has shared the stage with some of the most celebrated musicians in the world, including Arturo Sandoval, Paquito D'Rivera, Richard Galliano, Yamandu Costa, and Hamilton de Holanda. His diverse performance career has also led him to collaborate with artists such as Edmar Castañeda, Jeff Lorber, Sergio George, Emily Estefan, Alain Pérez, Tony Succar, and Lin-Manuel Miranda. He has also performed with the legendary vocal group The Platters.

Sulbarán's orchestral experience includes performing with the renowned Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra under the baton of acclaimed conductor Gustavo Dudamel. In addition, he has had the privilege of performing with the distinguished Boston Pops Orchestra, further demonstrating his ability to move effortlessly between orchestral, contemporary, and popular music settings.

Beyond his performing career, Sulbarán is deeply committed to music education and community engagement. He proudly performs with the Boston Children's Chorus, contributing to performances that highlight artistic excellence, diversity, and the transformative power of music.

Currently based in Boston, Sulbarán continues to balance an active career as a performer, collaborator, and educator, bringing together global musical traditions through the universal voice of the bass.

TEXTS

Freedom is Coming Trad. text

Freedom is coming, oh yes I know
My spirit knows
My freedom is coming, oh yes I know

If I Can Help Somebody text by Alma Bazel Androzzo

If I Can Help Somebody as I pass along
If I can cheer somebody with a word or song
If I can show somebody he is traveling' wrong
Then my living will not be in vain

Then my living will not be in vain
Then my living will not be in vain
If I can help somebody as I pass along
Then my living will not be in vain



Yukayeke text by Suzzette Ortiz

Ven a Yukayeke comunidad de amor
Ven con nosotros a cantar
Ven canta en varios ritmos, armonías que al
compás se unen en un son!

Join our community of Love!
A song of many rhythms, melodies and
harmonies combined in one song!

Aquí eres bienvenido y tienes tu lugar:
No importa quien tu eres
Tu alma tiene voz!

A space where you are welcome
Where everyone belongs
Both young and old are welcomed
United in song!

Ven sal de tubohio y canta en el batey
Donde eres bienvenido no importa quién es
quién

Come out of your hut and sing in the village
square
Where you are welcomed
No matter who you are

Lugar de amor y aceptación
So lo ana raza
Un mismo sol
Un corazón!

A place of love where you belong
A place with one race
The human race
One song! One soul!

On The Common Ground text by Alice Parker

Help me lord, help me lord
Help me find the common ground
Between the high and the low
Between the poor and the rich
Between the old and the young
Between the black and the white

Help me find the common ground, yes the common ground
Between the shouting, the silence
Between the bound and the free
Between the grief and the joy
Between the heart and the mind

Help me lord, Open us lord
Guide us to that meeting place where we can
See each other, Hear each other, Care for each other
Where we can sing together, work together, play together
On the common ground
Help me lord, Open us lord
Come, let us meet together on the common ground

Dum Spiro Spero text by Daniel Brinsmead

Dum spiro spero,
Dum spiro spero.

Sic parvis magna.
Per angust ad augusta.
Virtus tentamine gaudet.
Greatness is born of small,
Strength rises from the fall.

While I breathe, I hope.
While I have breath, I hope,

Great things come from small beginnings.
Through difficulties to greatness.
Strength rejoices in the challenge.

The Dream Keeper text from "The Dream Keeper" by Langston Hughes

Bring me all of your dreams,
You dreamers.
Bring me all of your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud-cloth
Away from the too rough fingers
Of the world.

Little Birds text by Octavio Paz


La luz no parpadea,
El tiempo se vacía de minutos,
Se ha detenido un pájaro en el aire
Se despeña la luz,
Despiertan las columnas y
Sin moverse bailan
La hora es transparente: vemos
Si es invisible el pájaro
El color de su canto.

The light does not pulse (the light is still)
Time empties itself of minutes,
A bird has stopped in the air.
The light,
The columns wake and,
without moving they dance.
The hour is transparent: we see
Yes the bird is invisible,
The color of its song

Take Care of This House text by Alan Jay Lerner

Take care of this house
Keep it from harm
If bandits break in
Sound the alarm

Care for this house
Shine it by hand
And keep it so clean
The glow can be seen
All over the land



Be careful at night
Check all the doors
If someone makes off with a dream
The dream will be yours

Take care of this house
Be always on call
For this house
Is the hope of us all

Be The Bridge text by Kyle Pederson

When you see the waters
rising up on your daughters,
lay yourself down . . .
be the bridge.

When the rushing river runs
up and over your sons,
lay yourself down . . .
be the bridge

We need more people who will reach across,
span the divide before the world is lost;
count the cost of causing hate to spread
and go build that bridge instead.

When half of the world thinks one thing,
and the other thinks another—
and starts the yelling and expelling—
can you stretch yourself out
and be the bridge.

When you have the chance to stand for truth,
and a voice across the chasm starts to shame you and inflame you
Can you stretch yourself out
and be the bridge.

When goodness and kindness hide their face,
and empathy goes missing, and no one can find grace,
won't you stretch yourself out
and be the bridge?

What does your bridge lead to?
Where is your bridge leading you?

Is it leading to redemption and restoration?
Is it leading to reconciliation?

Be the bridge.

Love Will Guide Us text by Sally Rogers

Love will guide us, peace has tried us,
Hope inside us, will lead the way
On the road from greed to giving.
Love will guide us through the hard night

If you cannot speak like angels
If you cannot speak before thousands,
You can give from deep within you.
You can change the world with your love

Love will guide us, peace has tried us,
Hope inside us, will lead the way
On the road from greed to giving.
Love will guide us through the hard night

More Love text by Mark Miller

Four simple words we sing today
With these four words we ought to pray
And take to heart this sacred phrase
"More love, less hate"
It seems so easy on its face
Four words to heal the human race
And yet we struggle to create
More love, less hate
For love we stand! More love in this land!
Will you join? Come take my hand
More love, less hate!
When fear and violence touch our lives
Hate separates, seeks to divide
Our faith in love won't be denied
More love, less hate



Just as the night gives way to dawn
Justice shines forth before too long
Until that day we will sing on
More love, less hate!

We Can Be The Change text by Rollo Dilworth

We are seeking freedom
We are seeking justice
For injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere

We are soldiers marching higher seeking justice and equality
Wading through the water and pressing through the fire
Singing songs of freedom, hope and liberty
Making music is our desire, change agents we can all be

We can be the change for the world
We are speaking truth to power,
We are lifting our voices as one
We have courage, we won't cower
We'll keep fighting till the work is done
Each and every day and each and every hour
We will sing and shout until victory is won

We can be the change for the world
Joining hands with those who walk beside us,
We can share our hearts and melodies
Breaking down the walls that can divide us
We can sing as one in harmony

We can be the change for the world
Oh we can be the change today for the world
Deep in my heart, I do believe
We can be the change for the world

We'll walk hand in hand through the world
We'll walk hand in hand today for the world
Deep in my heart, I do believe
We can be the change for the world

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:

IMANI WINDS

Sunday, April 19

BUTTER QUARTET

Sunday, April 26

ISATA KANNEH-MASON, PIANO

Sunday, May 10

RENAISSANCE STRING QUARTET

Sunday, May 17

THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC:

NEW MASADA QUARTET

Thursday, May 28, at 7pm

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum resides on the homelands of the Massachusetts Tribe, who belong to this place and continue to regard these lands and waters as sacred.

Music at the Gardner is supported by Manitou Fund. The Museum thanks its generous concert donors: The Coogan Concert in memory of Peter Weston Coogan; Fitzpatrick Family Concert; James Lawrence Memorial Concert; Alford P. Rudnick Memorial Concert; David Scudder in memory of his wife, Marie Louise Scudder; Wendy Shattuck Young Artist Concert; and Willona Sinclair Memorial Concert. The piano is dedicated as the Alex d'Arbeloff Steinway. The harpsichord was generously donated by Dr. Robert Barstow in memory of Marion Huse, and its care is endowed in memory of Dr. Barstow by The Barstow Fund. Music at the Gardner is also supported in part by Barbara and Amos Hostetter, Joseph Mari, Sallie and Jim McGregor, Nicie and Jay Panetta, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which is supported by the state of Massachusetts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Kindly turn off all electronic devices during the concert and refrain from any photography or filming in the hall. Also, please note the location of the emergency exit doors: across the hall from the doors through which you entered.