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2023-24 Season



College of Music  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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# Jamaican Choral Music Symposium

The University Singers, Mona, in concert

Franklin E. Halliburton, musical director

7:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024

Macky Auditorium

The event is sponsored by the **Roser Visiting Artists Program**.

## Message from the Founder

### The Jamaican Choral Music Symposium

As a Caribbean native studying the choral arts as practiced in the wider world, my interests were piqued when I realized the music of my people was not part of the conversation in any sphere. As I thought through the many pieces of Jamaican choral music I had experienced in my formative years, it became more apparent that our own storied choral history was not documented nor shared with the choral fraternity at large.

Against this background, **The Jamaican Choral Music Symposium** was founded with the goal of expanding the choral canon by increasing accessibility to Jamaican choral music. This all while promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging through direct interaction with Jamaican natives who share their cultural identity through song.

This venture would not have been possible without the generous contribution of the Roser Visiting Artist Program and their management team. Special thanks to John Davis, Dean of the College of Music; Carrie Howard, Assistant Dean for Budget and Finance; Elizabeth Swanson and Jessie Flasschoen of CU Boulder Choirs; Susan Thomas, for the inspiration; and Casey Klopp, for her stellar navigation of all the logistics that led to this culminating event.

It is my sincere hope that the mission of the Jamaican Choral Music Symposium strikes a chord with those in attendance as we continue sharing choral music born of our creative musical imaginations rooted in an Afro-Caribbean identity with the wider world.

O'Neil Jones  
Founder



# Message from CU Boulder Choirs

Welcome. On behalf of the CU Boulder choral program, we are deeply honored to host the University of the West Indies (UWI) University Singers, Mona, from Kingston, Jamaica and their director, Mr. Franklin E. Halliburton. This evening's concert is considered to be the highlight of the Jamaican Choral Music Symposium.

We have been looking forward to hosting the Symposium for more than one year, and we believe that this week marks a first of many future opportunities to foster relationships with the musicians of the esteemed University Singers, Mona. We are thankful for their expertise and generosity of spirit, and we have been grateful to learn about and celebrate Jamaican choral music traditions through direct interaction with such esteemed culture bearers.

Also, as part of the Symposium, CU Boulder choirs hosted a daylong choral festival at the First United Methodist Church of Boulder, which included hundreds of singers from several Colorado high school choirs and CU choirs. This musical and cultural exchange included a lecture presentation, intensive rehearsals with Halliburton and the University Singers, Mona, and a collaborative performance of three Jamaican choral pieces.

There are many people to thank for making the Jamaican Choral Music Symposium possible. First and foremost, we must express our deep gratitude to the Roser family and the Roser Visiting Artist Program; without this program and generous grant, this residency would have not been possible.

This residency also would not have been possible without third year DMA student in choral conducting and literature, O'Neil Jones, the recipient of the 2023-24 Susan L. Porter Memorial Fellowship. Jones, along with support from Susan Thomas and the AMRC, spearheaded this idea and was instrumental in bringing this residency to fruition. **[You can read more about the Jamaican Choral Music Symposium and its purpose by clicking here.](#)**

Last, but not least, we are indebted to those who have worked tirelessly to coordinate logistics for the Symposium. In particular, we wish to thank our incredible College of Music administrative staff Casey Klopp, Rachele Crowell, Assistant Dean for Budget + Finance Carrie Howard, and Dean John Davis, as

well as Macky staff Trevor Isetts, Chris Evans and Director of Macky Auditorium Rudy Betancourt. Also, a special thank you to the director of CU Boulder's Thompson Jazz Studies Program, Professor John Gunther, for the use of amplification equipment and a drum set in this concert. The choral faculty and TAs have also helped tremendously with the planning of this event—thank you to Jessie Flasschoen, Noelle Romberger, Abby Thompson and Jun Young Na.

Thank you again for joining us this evening. Please enjoy this enriching concert.

Elizabeth Swanson

Associate Director of Choral Studies, CU Boulder

# Program

## FIRST HALF

### Psalm 24

Noel G. Dexter (1938-2019)

Text adapted from Psalm 24 - KJV

*Althea McKenzie, soprano*

*Roy Thompson, tenor*

### Redemption Song

Bob Marley (1945-1981)

arr. Noel G. Dexter and George M. Roberts (b.1953)

*Melonie Morgan, soprano*

*Gavane Ferguson, tenor*

### Ave Maria

Franklin E. Halliburton (b. 1978)

### Bright Soul

Noel G. Dexter

### Alleluia! Laudes Creaturarum

Hymn by St. Francis of Assisi

Franklin E. Halliburton

### Ode to Nana Tano

Franklin E. Halliburton

Text by Edward Kamau Braithwaite (1930-2020)

*Ránice Barrett, soprano*

## **No Woman, No Cry**

Bob Marley

arr. George M. Roberts

*Christopher Whyte, tenor*

## **South African Medley (with “Busa” by Lebo M.)**

arr. Katherine Brown (b.1970)

*Shanique Leon, mezzo soprano*

*Stephan Sinclair, percussion*

### **SECOND HALF**

## **Wash Day**

*from the 1986 LTM Pantomime, Jamaica—*

**“Riva Mumma & the Golden Table”**

Noel G. Dexter

## **Sunday Day Clothes**

arr. Franklin E. Halliburton

## **One Han Cyaan Clap**

Astley “Grub” Cooper (b.1948)

Text by Barbara Gloudon (1935-2022)

arr. Noel G. Dexter

*Carolyn Reid Cameron, soprano*

## **Roas’ Breadfruit**

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

*Heston Boothe, baritone*

*Kester Bailey, baritone*

## **Yellow Yam**

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

## **Charlie Marley**

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

Text adapted by The University Singers

## **Rastaman Chants**

Traditional

arr. Ewan Simpson (b. 1972) and O'Neal Mundle (b. 1970)

*Stephan Sinclair, baritone and Kette Drum*

## **One Love**

Bob Marley

arr. George M. Roberts

*Kemar Lee, tenor*



# Program notes

## Psalm 24

Noel G. Dexter (1938-2019)

Text adapted from Psalm 24 - KJV

***“The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein.”***

Noel Dexter’s setting of Psalm 24, written in the mid 1970s, completes a set of four Psalms (Psalm 23, 24, 27 and 150) composed by him. The work is a majestic treatment of sacred, religious text, expanding to eight-part harmony (SSAATTBB) at its zenith. The anthem opens with a stirring proclamation by the female chorus “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein”, followed by an antiphonal response from the male chorus.

Dexter also uses solo voices to create a dynamic and textural contrast within the piece. He maintains the essence of antiphony by introducing a lyric soprano solo, then immediately creates a contrast with a tenor solo, as if in answer to the theme established by the female voice. This call and response feature is used to full effect throughout the entire piece, to drive its momentum towards a climactic end, “He is the King of Glory!”

## Redemption Song

Bob Marley (1945-1981)

arr. Noel G. Dexter and George M. Roberts (b.1953)

***“Emancipate yourself from mental slavery...”***

***A universal anthem of freedom, rebellion & unity.***

Robert Nesta Marley (Bob Marley) is the greatest and most influential reggae icon that Jamaica has ever produced. His *Redemption Song* is considered to be one of his most well-known works. Written circa 1979, the song is the final track on Marley’s twelfth album *Uprising*, released in June 1980, and produced by British/Jamaican record producer Chris Blackwell, founder of the record label Island Records. Some of the lyrics, central to the song, were taken from the speech given by first national hero of Jamaica, The Right Excellent Marcus Mosiah Garvey, at Menelik Hall, Sydney, Nova Scotia, in October 1937. “Emancipate yourself from mental slavery ... none but ourselves can free our mind”.

George Roberts is an Antiguan national who studied medicine at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus, during the 1970s and early 1980s. While on campus, he associated with The University Singers, under the musical directorship of Noel G. Dexter. Roberts initially penned an a capella outline of *Redemption Song* which Dexter later expanded, refining and shaping the harmonies for full choir. The song is resolute in its theme, but Dexter's treatment of it is contemplative and reflective.

## Ave Maria

Franklin E. Halliburton (b. 1978)

***Hail Mary, full of grace...and rhythm.***

Franklin E. Halliburton's *Ave Maria*, written in December 1999, represents a fusion of the neo-classical harmonies for full choir, over a bed of rhythm. The use of the conga drums to provide a steady 6/8 beat, gives the piece a distinctive Jamaican setting. The song builds from a chant-like call from the male voices, emulative of a monastic cry and climaxes with the soaring descants from the female voices. All the voices keep an ostinato rhythm throughout the piece, shifting slightly only to allow for the song to transition seamlessly across each segment. Halliburton's *Ave Maria*, one of his most popular works, was premiered by The University Singers in its annual concert season in June 2000 and, to this day, remains a part of the choir's active repertoire. More significantly, Halliburton's *Ave Maria* is the only known setting of the *Ave Maria* to have been written by a Jamaican composer.

## Bright Soul

Noel G. Dexter

***A Jamaican Spiritual questioning the backslider's fall from grace.***

Dexter uses a religious setting as the framework for this rhythmic Jamaican spiritual. The spiritual utilizes the Jamaican folk rhythm *mento* to drive it forward. There are several rhythmic patterns across each voice part which all overlap to form an interesting layer and tapestry of beats. The song charts the fall from grace of a "bright soul"; a saint; a believer; who has been to the River Jordan, a metaphor for the fount of sanctification and blessing, and who has now turned away from the righteous path. "*Yuh go a Ribba Jerdan an' yuh tun back!*" The piece is written in the Jamaican language, the lexicon of which is

largely drawn from English and heavily influenced by a syntax from the enslaved people of West Africa who inhabited the island for centuries. The composer interrogates the protagonist's spiritual crisis. The tenors repeatedly pose a question to the "bright soul" throughout the entire song, "*Wah mek yuh tun back?*"—Why have you turned back to your worldly ways?

## **Alleluia! Laudes Creaturarum**

Hymn by St. Francis of Assisi

Franklin E. Halliburton

### ***All Creatures of Our God & King!***

The famous hymn by St Francis of Assisi, Catholic friar and mystic, is the backdrop for this powerful anthem. Halliburton punctuates the piece with drums, syncopation and movement. The anthem begins with a dramatic, chromatic introduction in the piano accompaniment, followed by a stentorian "Alleluia!" by the full choir. It then launches into the strains of the well-known hymn, before returning to a series of "alleluias" that crescendo towards its end. Halliburton builds out the rhythmic foundation of this piece around a compound time signature.

## **Ode to Nana Tano**

Franklin E. Halliburton

Text by Edward Kamau Braithwaite (1930-2020)

### ***The river "Tano" holds many a mystery, and eternal hope of life's journey.***

The famous Caribbean poet and scholar Edward Kamau Braithwaite examines the harrowing journey of Africans across the Atlantic to a "New World" in his critically acclaimed anthology *The Arrivants*, published in 1974. The poem "Nana Tano", featured in the anthology, is an homage to the river Tano, a popular transshipment route during slavery, which runs from Ghana through the Ivory Coast and into the Atlantic Ocean. In the poem, the river Tano personifies the all-knowing, all-caring matriarchal figure "Nana" (grandmother). She embraces the lived experiences, the pain and struggles, the loss and anguish, the hopes and aspirations of the many enslaved souls who sailed its waters into the unknown.

Halliburton uses the opening words of the poem “*Dam, dam, dam-a-ri-fa, dam-a-ri-fa, dam-a-ri-fa-du-e, dam-a-ri-fa-du-e, du-e, du-e, dam!*” to create an onomatopoeic drumbeat; the metaphoric heartbeat running throughout this ode.

## **No Woman, No Cry**

Bob Marley

arr. George M. Roberts

***“Woman, don’t cry!”***

***“Everything is gonna be alright.”***

This popular reggae song by Bob Marley was recorded in 1974 and released on his seventh studio album *Natty Dread*. The title of the song is often misconstrued outside of Jamaica to mean, “if there is no woman, there is no reason to cry”. However, the true meaning lies in the linguistic rendering and delivery of the lyric within its language of origin, Jamaican creole ... “*No, woman, nuh cry*”. The “nuh”, which replaces the English “no” in the title lyric, is pronounced with a short schwa (i.e., a mumbled, clitic or weakened form of the English “no”) which impacts the meaning. The title of the song means “Woman, don’t cry” for “Everything is gonna be alright”.

## **South African Medley (with “Busa” by Lebo M.)**

arr. Katherine Brown (b.1970)

***The rhythms of Africa are still an integral part of the Jamaican cultural expression which connect us umbilically with our ancestral roots.***

Katherine Brown is a classically trained pianist who has ventured into the realm of neo-classical, jazz, gospel and contemporary/popular music. She is a composer and arranger who has also emerged and benefitted from her years of tutelage under the musical directorship of the late Noel G. Dexter. Her exploration of African sounds, beats and text began long before her pilgrimages to the “motherland” in 2012 and again in 2018. She has composed and/or arranged several pieces with an African influence and theme for The University Singers. Her dedication to reclaim the afro-centric aesthetic of our syncretic history is captured in her work. Brown’s musical prowess is widely acclaimed and she currently serves as the musical director of two of

the country's premiere performing arts ensembles, The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica (NDTC) and the Jamaica Youth Chorale (JYC). This medley of African songs explores the multiple rhythms, all of which have been derived from the continent and which play a connective role with our past and our present-day cultural expressions.

## **Wash Day**

### ***from the 1986 LTM Pantomime, Jamaica— “Riva Mumma & the Golden Table”***

Noel G. Dexter

***Doing the laundry by the riverside brings much laughter & revelry.***

*Wash Day* was composed specifically for the Jamaican National Pantomime, a musical theatre production, of varying subjects and themes, which opens to the Jamaican public every year on Boxing Day. The piece is a riotous and rollicking affair which depicts the rustic scenery set on the bank of a river, where villagers gather to wash the week's laundry. The experience is bright, colorful and spirited. Dexter uses the mento folk rhythm and the drums to keep the song blithe and merry.

## **Sunday Day Clothes**

arr. Franklin E. Halliburton

***The women pine after their long-lost love.***

At the turn of the 20th century, thousands of Jamaicans migrated to Panama to help in the excavation and construction of the Panama Canal and the country's railroads. Many left their families in Jamaica to settle in the cities and townships along the Panamanian peninsula. The city of Colón, a seaport and industrial town, lying beside the Caribbean Sea, was a popular Panamanian destination inhabited by many Jamaican workers. As a result of this historical connection between the two countries, the name of the city, Colón, found its way into several local Jamaican folk songs around that time. This mournful lament by the treble chorus is a cry for their lost love who has gone to Colón, “so far away.” The women are committed, however, to ensuring that their best fineries and laces are washed and ready for the promised return of their lover.

# One Han Cyaan Clap

Astley “Grub” Cooper (b.1948)

Text by Barbara Gloudon (1935-2022)

arr. Noel G. Dexter

***Two hands are required to clap. Always remember, we need others to survive.***

The title *One Han’ Cyaan Clap* translates to “One hand cannot clap.” The sentiment expressed in the poem “No man is an island” by English poet John Donne, is *ad idem* with the theme of this piece. The song encourages the listener towards a spirit of community and togetherness, to help our neighbors and others around us. It warns against selfishness and against isolating and relying on oneself to survive, to the exclusion of others.

# Roas’ Breadfruit

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

***The breadfruit, a beloved staple, is prepared and eaten in many different ways; roasted, boiled, baked or fried.***

The breadfruit (or *breshe* in the local Jamaican creole) is a starchy fruit that was first introduced from the islands of the South Pacific to Jamaica in 1793 by Captain William Bligh, the experienced English navigator of HMS *Bounty* fame. He considered it to be an inexpensive and nutritious way of feeding the large number of enslaved people on the island’s several sugar plantations. The breadfruit can be prepared in several different ways and is now a staple within the local cuisine, eaten for breakfast, lunch, dinner or even as a snack. Breadfruit, in its roasted form, is arguably the most preferred way of eating this fruit.

# Yellow Yam

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

***The yellow yam; the magic food of Jamaican champions.***

The Jamaican Yellow Yam is a popular tuber which grows in the earth and is born of a perennial vine plant which can stretch up to two meters above ground. This root originates from Africa (and Asia to a lesser extent). The Yellow Yam was first brought to Jamaica to help with the feeding of the



enslaved masses on the island. There are different varieties of the Yellow Yam in Jamaica. It generally has a rough, hardy outer exterior and when cut, reveals a golden yellow, soft potato-like interior. Some are dry and starchy, some are sweet and soft, while a few are even waxy in texture. The Yellow Yam is now firmly a part of Jamaica's culinary identity and legend has it that the Yellow Yam, in particular, is the magic food behind Usain Bolt's sprinting prowess and legendary sporting success.

## Charlie Marley

Traditional Folk

arr. Noel G. Dexter

Text adapted by The University Singers

***A playful interplay between men & women.***

This song is a repartee between the men and the women, each telling the traits they least admire in the opposite sex. The choreography of the piece by the late Prof the Hon Rex Nettleford, former vice chancellor of the UWI and Rhodes Scholar, may be best described as a high-paced interweaving and matrix formation of the human bodies on stage, stopping only to deliver a humorous punchline.

## Rastaman Chants

Traditional

arr. Ewan Simpson (b. 1972) and O'Neal Mundle (b. 1970)

***The Rastafarian experience is characterized by an abiding faith to one day go to "Zion" and by the perennial fight with the establishment or "Babylon."***

Rastafarianism is an afro-centric religious order which developed in Jamaica, circa the 1930s. Many scholars regard it not just as a religious movement, but also as a social movement. The Rastafarian ideology is an amalgamation of several beliefs drawn from Christianity, Mysticism and a Pan-African consciousness.

The colors associated with Rastafarianism are typically, red, green, gold and black. These respectively symbolize the life force of blood, natural herbs, royalty and Africanness. The drums are essential to the music of Rastafarianism. The music is typically in 4/4 time and played across three drums. The *Thunder* drum is the largest of the three drums used; it is a double-headed bass drum, played with a mallet. It maintains an open toned stroke on beat 1 and a closed dampened stroke on beat 3. The *Funde* drum or the mid-sized drum, maintains the rhythm on beats 2 and 4 and is played with the open palm of the hand. The *Repeater*, also called the *Kette* drum, is the smallest and highest in pitch. It resembles a single, elongated bongo drum. The *Kette* drum plays an improvisational role, provides syncopation and is often seen as the “carrier of the spirit.” The *Kette* is typically played with the fingertips.

## One Love

Bob Marley

arr. George M. Roberts

**“The Song of the Millenium.”**

*One Love*, Bob Marley’s most famous song, was originally composed as a ska tune (precursor to reggae) in 1965. The more famous reggae version of the song was re-recorded in 1977 and released on one of Marley’s most triumphant studio albums, *Exodus*. The song’s message of harmony and solidarity has had a profound socio-political impact on the world. It stands as a universal anthem of love and hope, which transcends all different cultures, races, classes and creeds. The message is intergenerational, resonating powerfully with people today as it did when it was first released. *One Love* has received critical acclaim and recognition from many different sources. The song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and was named the Song of the Millenium by both the World Health Organization and the BBC. It is an iconic anthem of love and unity, and a true anthem of the world.

# Personnel

## The University Singers, Mona

### Soprano I

Ránice Barrett  
Kamilah Brown  
Carolyn Reid Cameron, principal  
Rochelle Daley  
Althea McKenzie  
Kristal Morgan  
Melonie Morgan  
Christine Walters

### Soprano II

Katherine Brown  
Amba Chevannes  
Faith Francis Knowles, principal  
Kaldeen Fullwood  
Shari Williams

### Alto

Lurane Allen, principal  
Paulan Henry  
Claudine Hyatt  
Shanique Leon  
Charnelle Lewin  
Daviann Lindo  
Shanequa Thompson

### Tenor

Karmichael Anthony  
Jerren Chambers  
Gavane Ferguson  
Kemar Lee  
Sean Moncrieffe, principal  
Roy Thompson  
Christopher Whyte

### Bass

Anthony Alexander  
Kester Bailey  
Heston Boothe, principal  
Devon Brewster  
Chevaughn Channer  
Leighton Mamdeen  
Bradley Ramhing  
Stephan Sinclair  
Tahir Thompson

### Instrumentalists

Archie Dunkley, piano  
Katherine Brown, keyboard  
Wayne Fearon, bass guitar  
Stephan Sinclair, percussion  
Jonathan Pearson, trap set

### Technical Team

Kenardo Phillips, stage manager  
Taryn Bridgewater, lighting director

### Musical Director

Franklin E. Halliburton

# Message from the Principal

## The University of the West Indies, Mona

We are pleased to have The University Singers, our very own cultural ambassadors, participating in the Choral Music Symposium being staged by The University of Colorado, Boulder. This invitation speaks to the high regard in which The University Singers is held in the artistic world.

Back home, The University Singers is our premier performing arts ensemble on the Mona Campus of The University of the West Indies (UWI). The choir has the reputation as one of the leading choral groups in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean and is well-known for its versatility, boasting a repertory which spans an eclectic mix of musical genres, including classical, American negro spirituals, jazz, Jamaican folk, gospel and local and international popular music such as reggae and dancehall. Most notably, the choir also has a strong catalogue of original music by Caribbean composers. It is a testament to the choir's creative leadership that some of these composers have emerged from and are current members of the group.

We are truly proud that The University Singers has continued on a path of excellence, in the tradition of a strong institutional architecture that is built to last.

We say thanks to the University of Colorado Boulder for hosting this Symposium to showcase Jamaican choral music. I wish for the organizers a very successful event and hope that the outputs from the deliberations at the Symposium will be used to advance the development of this important aspect of Jamaican culture over the years to come.

One Love!!!

Densil A. Williams  
Pro Vice-Chancellor & Principal

# Message from the Musical Director

## The University Singers, Mona

We are truly delighted to have been invited by The University of Colorado, Boulder to participate in this rich cultural exchange. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase our musical heritage and pedigree, forged out of a syncretic history; the coming together of two different worlds; and an amalgamation of cultures and experiences.

Let me use this medium to extend our deepest gratitude to John Davis, the Dean of the College of Music, The University of Colorado Boulder and his hardworking team for making this symposium a reality.

It is our hope that the universality of our music will transcend all cultural barriers. We hope that it will resonate with our audiences on a level that speaks deeply to each person's humanity. It is our fervent hope that the music we present will radiate the message of fellowship and unity.

To one and all, we say One Love!

Franklin E. Halliburton  
Musical Director

# Message from the President

## The University Singers, Mona

*"One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain."*

This quote by the late Bob Marley encapsulates the power of music to unite, heal, and transcend cultural and linguistic barriers. It reflects the spirit of our participation in the cultural exchange hosted and supported by the University of Colorado Boulder.

Our members are filled with immense pride and gratitude as we prepare for this enriching experience. We see it as an honor to represent both The University of the West Indies and our beloved country internationally. This exchange transcends the typical bounds of performance; it is a mission fueled by our passion for sharing the vibrant and diverse tapestry of Jamaican Choral Music with the world.

As such, we extend special thanks to John Davis, the Dean of the College of Music at the University of Colorado Boulder, and his team for making this symposium possible. We eagerly anticipate the cultural exchanges ahead and are confident they will foster lasting friendships and deepen our global community ties.

Gavane Ferguson  
President



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Thank you to all individuals who have contributed. This list comprises all gifts of \$50+ made to the College of Music Dean's Annual Fund between June 1, 2022 and Nov. 30, 2023. If you are interested in making a donation to the Dean's Annual Fund, please contact Assistant Dean for Advancement Andrew Todd at [atodd@colorado.edu](mailto:atodd@colorado.edu).



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As of Jan. 10, 2024

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