

Seattle Peace Chorus presents

A New World: Demanding Freedom and Justice

featuring
"Let America Be America Again"

text by Langston Hughes, composed by
Frederick N. West

with **Miho & Diego Duo** and
baritone soloist **Yusef Seevers**



Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church

SUNDAY 1 JUNE

3:00 pm



SATURDAY 7 JUNE

7:30 pm

Support for this
concert comes from:



The Program

A New World: Demanding Freedom and Justice

*Featuring Special Guests Dr. Miho Takekawa and Diego Coy
and Baritone Soloist Yusef Seevers*

Sicut Cervus — by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
Singers Miriam Blau, Elliot Kraber, Olivia Sohn, and Straton Spyropoulos

This year we celebrate the 500th anniversary of Palestrina's birth. Palestrina was an Italian composer of late Renaissance music. To honor Palestrina, we begin our program with an homage to the great choral classics that evolved during the Renaissance period.

Translation from the Hebrew scriptures:

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.	The deer longs for springwater as my soul longs for you, O Creator.
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Peace Chant — by Frederick N. West
Frederick N. West on marimba

This is one of several pieces recently written by our director that is meant to evoke the power of musical chant in our fervent wish for peace on earth.

Let there be peace in the world,
Let there be peace in this land,
Let there be peace on earth.

Musical Set: Let Justice Roll Down — by Frederick N. West

The phrase "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" is a well-known quote from Amos 5:24, urging a society to embrace fairness and righteousness in the same way a river flows abundantly. This was later quoted by Martin Luther King Jr. in his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech: "No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness, like a mighty stream."

I. Now Let Justice Roll
Soloist Jeff Carter

II. The Hymn

III. Ring the Bells
With added words by Frederick N. West:
Roll on, roll on, roll on down
Ring the bells and gather round
Let the drums' roll resound
Let America stand up for the long-held dream
Roll on, roll on, roll on down

Musical Visit to a Unique Cultural Blend in Colombia
Dr. Miho Takekawa and Diego Coy (Miho & Diego)

Now we visit a unique world of music crafted in the rich cultural landscape of colonial Colombia, where the traditions of Indigenous Colombian people and African people who were brought over as slaves blended together over the centuries. We are proud to present this set of traditional Afro-Colombian songs, which come from the lived experience of Diego growing up in Colombia. Diego brings his expertise in performing



Seattle Peace Chorus is a dynamic, diverse group dedicated to promoting peace and justice through the sharing of music and ideas locally and globally. Founded in 1983 to help bring an end to the threat of nuclear war, the chorus produces meaningful, collaborative concerts, and tours internationally.

Seattle Peace Chorus Board of Directors

Tom Sharp, <i>President & Communications</i>	Olivia Sohn, <i>Auditions Coordinator</i>
Sylvain Slaton, <i>Treasurer</i>	Beth Loots, <i>Director</i>
Elliot Kraber, <i>Secretary</i>	Greg Bishop, <i>Director</i>
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Dale Rector, <i>Action Ensemble Liaison</i>	Frederick N. West, <i>Music Director</i>

Contact Us

Want to keep up with upcoming performances? Interested in auditioning or serving on the Board of Directors or a committee?

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www.seattlepeacechorus.org

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Thank You

Thank you for supporting the Seattle Peace Chorus! Thanks also to our concert volunteers. We gratefully acknowledge the generous family and friends who have volunteered to make this concert possible.

Seattle Peace Chorus Action Ensemble

Seattle Peace Chorus Action Ensemble, a group of SPC current and alumnus singers, appears at local peace and social justice events and rallies. If you are interested, contact Dale Rector, 612-327-6515 or Margarita Muñoz, 206-310-4606.

Do you sing?

If so, Seattle Peace Chorus welcomes you to audition to join us for our Fall 2025 concert. Please visit our auditions page by scanning the QR code here, or email us at auditions@seattlepecechorus.org.



Donate

Ticket sales cover only a fraction of our operating costs. Your tax-deductible contribution helps pay for basic chorus needs such as our Music Director, guest instrumentalists, rehearsal space, concert venue costs, and printing. You can donate by mailing us a check or scanning the QR code here.



Seattle Peace Chorus gratefully accepts bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and insurance, and gifts of securities. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, so donations are tax-deductible. Our identification number is 91-1380540. Your gift will be an enduring legacy to ensure that we can continue to sing for peace and social justice for future generations.

In a Democracy

Frederick West

3
In a de - mo - cra - cy we have the right to vote. We

3
must have free - dom of the press. This is what the found - ers

6
wrote. All ty - ra - ny we must pro - test.

9
We have the right to speak out, and ga - ther peace - ful - ly.

13
Sure ly we will sing and shout. This is what we call lib - er - ty.
That is why we have de - mo - cra - cy.

Verse 2

We have the right to petition,
our voices raised now listen,
look at what the founders wrote,
we have freedom of religion,
we have the right to speak out,
and gather peacefully,
surely we will sing and shout, this is what we call liberty
that is why we have democracy

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The Program (contd.)

traditional flutes, percussion, and vocals. Miho, a virtuoso marimba player, provides a wonderful embellishment with her instrument to these songs.

In Colombia, there are various rhythm styles within Afro-Colombian and Afro-Indigenous Colombian music, and the name of the rhythm style is noted for each piece.

Prende La Vela — by Lucho Bermudez
Soloist Elliot Kraber

The rhythm style of this piece is called Mapalé.

Velo Que Bonito
Soloist Sherry Tuinstra

This piece was composed by Alejandro Zuleta, but many say it is a traditional song from the Pacific Coast of Colombia. The rhythm style is called Bumde.

Llego la Cumbia — by Alejandro Petkevicius

The rhythm style of this piece is called Cumbia. The live Cumbia radio station CumbiaFM shares this description on their website: “In colonial Colombia, Cumbia was more than just music; it was a social and cultural phenomenon. It began as a courtship dance, evolving into a form of expression for the lower classes. The dance’s inclusive nature, inviting everyone to partake, is captured in events like cumbias en vivo y algo más and cumbia club gatherings.”

Instrumental Set: The Wondrous World of Miho & Diego

El Sanjuanero — by Anselmo Duran

The rhythm style is called Bambuco, the Colombian national heritage.

Mi Buenaventura — by Petronio Alvarez

The rhythm style is called Currulao.

Somebody to Love — by Freddie Mercury
Soloists Elliot Kraber and Shaylyn Zimay

We now bring you full circle from the liturgical chant of Sicut Cervus to the rock and roll classic of modern times. Both pieces employ exquisite harmonies to express the human longing for love. This iconic song is written by the extraordinary singer-songwriter and pianist Freddie Mercury, who made such a mark on the rock and roll tradition.

INTERMISSION

Let America Be America Again — composed by Frederick N. West
Baritone Soloist Yusef Seevers

Commissioned by the Seattle Peace Chorus in 2007, Fred West sets the powerful poetry of Langston Hughes to music with the permission of the Langston Hughes Foundation. Hughes was best known as one of the leaders of the Harlem Renaissance and an early innovator of the early form called Jazz Poetry. Langston Hughes (1901-1967) was an American poet, social activist, playwright, and columnist from Joplin, Missouri. This poem was written in 1935 and it is still precisely relevant in today’s political climate. The issues of freedom in America, the profound contributions of immigrants in our country, and the dream of America being a homeland for the free are issues and ideals that we must acknowledge and uphold now more than ever.

The Program (contd.)

Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.
Let it be the pioneer on the plain
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—
Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
But opportunity is real, and life is free,
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There’s never been equality for me,
Nor freedom in this “homeland of the free.”)

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?
And who are you that draws your veil across the
stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
I am the Negro bearing slavery’s scars.
I am the red man driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—
And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,
Tangled in that ancient endless chain
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying need!
Of work the men! Of take the pay!
Of owning everything for one’s own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.
I am the worker sold to the machine.
I am the Negro, servant to you all.
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—
Hungry yet today despite the dream.
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!
I am the man who never got ahead,
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I’m the one who dreamt our basic dream
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,
That even yet its mighty daring sings
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned
That’s made America the land it has become.
O, I’m the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home—

For I’m the one who left dark Ireland’s shore,
And Poland’s plain, and England’s grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa’s strand I came
To build a “homeland of the free.”

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?
The millions shot down when we strike?
The millions who have nothing for our pay?
For all the dreams we’ve dreamed
And all the songs we’ve sung
And all the hopes we’ve held
And all the flags we’ve hung,
The millions who have nothing for our pay—

Except the dream that’s almost dead today.
O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet—
And yet must be—the land where every man is
free.

The land that’s mine—the poor man’s, Indian’s,
Negro’s, ME—
Who made America,
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the
rain,

Must bring back our mighty dream again.
Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people’s
lives,
We must take back our land again,
America!

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath—
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,
We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain—
All, all the stretch of these great green states—
And make America again

Sing with us at the end of the show! *Alleluia* and *In a Democracy* are written by Frederick N. West and are meant to be short, uplifting pieces that are easy to learn and teach to others.

Alleluia

Frederick West

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Al-le-lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia. Al-le-lu -

Al - le - lu - ia.

Al le lu lah -

Al - le - lu - ia.

4

1.

2.

-ia. Al-le-lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia. Al-le-lu -

Al - le - lu. lu - ia.

Al le lu lah -

Al - le - lu. lu - ia.

7

ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu -

Al - le - lu - ia.

Al le lu lah -

Al - le - lu - ia.

9

ia. Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu -

Al - le - lu.

Al - le, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu.

Fred has toured the chorus to Venezuela, Chile, Cuba, and our Southwest border states—participating in international choral festivals, and building bridges based on a common love for choral singing. He has invited a broad array of gifted musicians from many cultural backgrounds to collaborate with SPC such as the AACE Gospel Choir; Thion Diop, master drummer from Senegal; virtuoso Lakota hoop dancer, Kevin Locke; and Brazilian singer Eduardo Mendonca. Outside of SPC, Fred has served on the board of Greater Seattle Choral Consortium. For 42 years, he also directed the Seattle City Cantabile Choir, which he founded in 1981.

This is only a snapshot of all that Fred West has done for the Seattle Peace Chorus. We wish him the very best in all his future endeavors and we hope to maintain close contact with him as we move forward, as we strive to make a changing world a better one for all our listeners.

Fred has recently been asked by Marcia Davis to write a suite of songs honoring Tokitae, the captive Orca of the southern resident population who was held at Miami Seaquarium for over half a century. Marcia was Tokitae’s trainer and part of the care team that aimed to bring Tokitae back to her home waters of Puget Sound. Tokitae passed away at Seaquarium soon after the relocation plans were announced and Marcia has since vowed to do whatever she can for Tokitae’s family. Tokitae’s mother, Ocean Sun, still swims in Puget Sound today. This October, Marcia will give a local presentation about Tokitae and Fred will perform his new pieces. Keep an eye out for this evolving project.



The Performers

Seattle Peace chorus

Altos

Donna Austin
Martha Cohen
Mary Giordano
Vandana Goel
Rachel Hamstra
Jennifer Hardin

Sue Hurley Rector
Nikki Nichols
Molly Ryan
Olivia Sohn
Sherry Tuinstra
Wendy Zieve

Sopranos

Martha Baskin
Miriam Blau
Janette Brown
Dee Knapp

Beth Loots
Rosalyn Schiller
Shaylyn Zimay

Tenors

Jeff Carter
Bill Cote
Elliot Kraber

Bass

Robert Andrews
Steve Bauck
Greg Bishop
Peter Colino
Stephen Ernst

Wakil Davd Matthews
Dale Rector
Tom Sharp
Straton Spyropoulos

Instrumentalists

Rosemary Bell – *Percussion*
Tom Bell – *Piano*
Diego Coy – *Percussion and Flutes*
Wade Demmert – *Bass Trombone*
Patrick Hunninghake – *Trumpet*
Mike Labrecque – *Oboe*

John Landis – *Trumpet*
Zach Maclurg – *Trombone*
Becky Miller — *French horn*
Miho Takekawa — *Marimba*
Emmy Ulmer — *Timpani*

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Biographies

Miho & Diego

The Miho & Diego Duo has been boldly blending Latino, Japanese and American musical traditions since 2006. Both accomplished musicians in their own right, Miho Takekawa and Diego Coy came together after years of admiring each other’s work and discovering that their sounds could be combined to make something genuinely new and unique. Fittingly, the title of their debut CD, “Quenarimba”, combines the names of their primary instruments, the quena, a traditional Andean flute, and the marimba. “Quenarimba” showcases their distinctive combination of warm, natural wood sounds and takes the listener on a musical trip from Japan to South America.



Playing a brand of music that is truly their own and not easily categorized, the Duo’s repertoire covers an amazingly wide range of styles with an innovative approach. They play from an extensive catalog of Andean, traditional South American, jazz, Latin jazz and Japanese compositions, as well as original compositions. Their award-winning youth program “Musical Trip Around the World” has been sponsored by the King/Pierce/Sno-Isle County and City of Seattle Public Library Systems. They often visit various K-12 schools for morning assemblies and multicultural festivals, nursing/retirement homes all over Washington State. Their invitations have been extended to perform in Oregon, California, Chile and Japan.



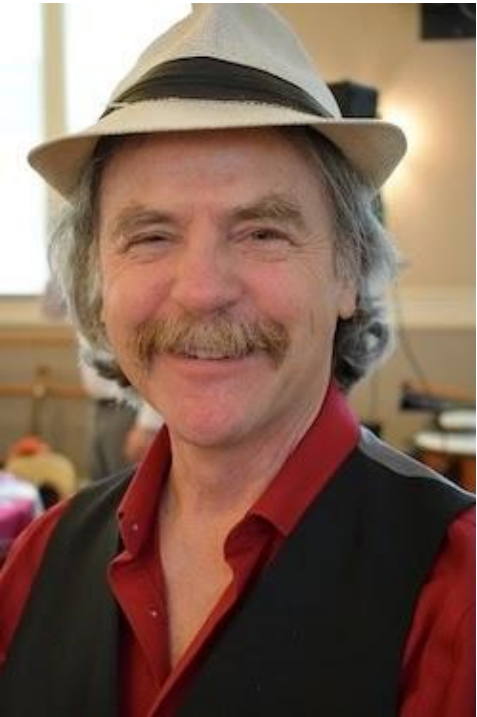
Yusef Seevers

Yusef Seevers, a new Seattle Local, is excited to collaborate with the Seattle Peace Chorus in bringing this composition to life again. He holds an MFA from Southern Methodist University and a BFA from Santa Fe university. As a Queer Detroit native, he’s worked professionally in West African Dance for the last 20 years and coaching movement, voice and acting for individuals and communities all over the country. Here in Seattle, you might have seen him as Sweeney Todd in 5th Avenue’s production, or In the world premiere of Last Drive to Dodge at Taproot. Other credits include: Waitress (The 5th Avenue Theater), Blues for an Alabama Sky (Seattle Rep), Seattle Something’s Afoot (The 5th Avenue Theater), Black Nativity (Intiman Theatre 2023 and 2024), As you Like it (Pacific Conservatory Theater), Angels in America (Greer Garson Theater). He is also the founder of (in)joy, a wellness company that works in advocacy for somatic health in educational and non-theatrical environments. Yusef dedicates his performances to his late father and all he committed to his family and community.

Elliot Kraber

Elliot is a versatile vocalist and performer who has been active in the Seattle music scene for over a decade. He has sung with a wide range of choirs and ensembles and has performed in both operatic and musical theater productions throughout the region. His stage credits include roles in Into the Woods, Les Misérables, The Last Five Years, Little Shop of Horrors, The End of the Affair, and Turn of the Screw, as well as performances with Spokane Opera and the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society. In addition to his work on stage, Elliot serves as Music Coordinator at Keystone United Church of Christ, where he contributes as a vocalist and music creator.

Frederick N. West



Seattle Peace Chorus honors our fabulous music director as he passes the baton to the next generation so he can explore other musical paths. We can never thank him enough for his contributions to the development and success of the Seattle Peace Chorus. His dedication and creativity have made a tremendous difference to us all.

Frederick N. West has directed the Seattle Peace Chorus since 2001. Under his leadership, SPC has provided beautiful music in support of peace and social justice everywhere, with an adventurous mix of multicultural and classical programming, which includes the Vaughan Williams masterpiece, Dona Nobis Pacem; Pablo Neruda’s Canto General composed by Mikis Theodorakis; Missa Luba, a Latin mass set to Congolese rhythms; Rachmaninoff’s All Night Vigil; Beethoven’s Ode to Joy; Mozart’s Requiem in D Minor; Leonard Bernstein’s Chichester Psalms; and Carl Orff’s Carmina Burana.

Fred studied composition with Edwin LaBounty, choral conducting with Robert Scandrett, and instrumental conducting with William Cole at Western Washington University. He participated in conducting workshops with distinguished luminaries including Rodney Eichenberger, Doreen Rao, Weston Noble, and Robert Shaw.

Fred’s choral compositions include the Balkan-inspired Christmas Cantata for strings, hand bells, timpani, and tapan (1987); an environmental oratorio, Upon This Land for winds, cello, four vocal soloists, and percussion (1990); Mass for the Children for choir, bass and soprano soloists, marimbas, cello, flute, and oboe (1998); a setting of the Langston Hughes poem titled Let America Be America Again for brass quintet, choir, baritone soloists, and percussion (2008); Diarmaid and Grainne—a Celtic fable for choir and Irish instruments (2013); and hundreds of shorter works. He also led an annual “OrcaSing” on San Juan Island, which was filmed and broadcast by 60 Minutes to millions of viewers in 2000 and continues to be a rallying cry for environmental stewardship focused on preserving the Salish Sea.

In 2018, SPC commissioned Fred to compose a work for our spring concert to honor the legacy of Native Americans in our time. People of the Drum, scored for choir, strings, and woodwind quintet, featured Haida singer Sondra Segundo-Cunningham, Tulalip storyteller Johnny Moses, and Saanich flutist and drummer Cheoketen. The performance opened with a Duwamish blessing by elder Edie Loyer Nelson.

During the pandemic years, Fred kept the momentum of SPC going, conducting rehearsals on Zoom which evolved into remote performances. Through this challenging and difficult time, Fred showed incredible patience and ingenuity at bringing out the best in our singing.

As a result of Fred’s long friendship and collaboration with Kent Stevenson, a well-known local gospel director, composer, and pianist, our chorus has often presented gospel pieces and concerts celebrating our African American community and Black History. One highlight came in 2022 when SPC commissioned Kent to write Jubilation in my Soul: A Song Gallery of Dynamic Black Lives. The resulting composition and performance was uplifting and enlightening for all.

