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# ST. OLAF CHAPEL CHOIR

JOSEPH KEMPER '11, *CONDUCTOR*

## HEAL OUR LAND

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

*BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL*

# PROGRAM

*Please hold applause until the end of the program.*

## **While My Guitar Gently Weeps**

George Harrison (1943–2001)

Mar McGrath '26, Luna McLeod '28, Norah Purcell '28, *soloists*

## **Reading: U.S.-Mexico Border**

Shruthi Rajasekar, ed. Joseph Kemper '11

Kaspar Czuk '26, *speaker*

## **Reading: Untitled**

Romina Soto-Solari '26

Romina Soto-Solari '26, *speaker*

## **did you know?**

Shruthi Rajasekar (b. 1996)

## **Lamb of God**

F. Melius Christiansen (1871–1955)

## **Reading: Changing Global Temperatures**

2025 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Report

ed. Joseph Kemper '11

Zoë Larson-Harris '26, *speaker*

## **Reading: Climate Action**

Greta Thunberg (b. 2003)

Riley Peterson '26, *speaker*

## **Apple Tree**

Aurora Aksnes (b. 1996), Odd Martin Skaalnes (b. 1986),  
and Magnus Skylstad (b. 1983); arr. Katerina Gimon (b. 1993)

Mackay Campbell '28, Matteo Machado '27, Gavin Rose '28, Sofie Urberg-Carlson '26, *percussion*

## **Reading: Global Food Crisis**

2024 UN Global Report on Food Crises

ed. Joseph Kemper '11

Hannah Gaff '27, *speaker*

Kurt Claussen '82, *saxophone*; Elizabeth Chen '27, *piano*

## **Reading: Untitled**

Evgenia Roth '26

Evgenia Roth '26, *speaker*

Kurt Claussen '82, *saxophone*; Elizabeth Chen '27, *piano*

## **Famine Song**

VIDA and Moira Smiley (b. 1976)

arr. Matthew Culloton (b. 1976)

## **Reading: News Report on Gaza**

2025 Al Jazeera Report and St. Olaf Students for Justice in Palestine

Zoe Zaruba '26, *speaker*; Elizabeth Chen '27, *piano*

***Lao Rahal Soti*** (“If My Voice Departs”)

Samih Choukeir (b. 1957)  
arr. Shireen Abu-Khader (b. 1972)

**Drop, Drop, Slow Tears**

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)

Jack Fuerstenberg ’26, David Reed ’26, Ana Sofia Remolina ’26, Romina Soto-Solari ’26, *quartet*  
Kurt Claussen ’82, *saxophone*

**Reading: Musical Response to Videla’s Dictatorship**

Moisés Duarte ’26, ed. Joseph Kemper ’11

Jack Fuerstenberg ’26, *speaker*

***Honrar La Vida*** (“Honoring Life”)

Eladia Blázquez (1931–2005)

Moisés Duarte ’26, *soloist*

**Reading: Silence**

Moisés Duarte ’26

Moisés Duarte ’26, *speaker*

**Heal Our Land**

Oscar Williams Jr.

Matteo Machado ’27, *drums*; Cecilia Percy ’27, *soloist*; Romina Soto-Solari ’26, *electric bass*  
Kurt Claussen ’82, *saxophone*; Elizabeth Chen ’27, *piano*

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**Kurt Claussen ’82** has taught saxophone and band for over 20 years, working with students from beginners to adults. He serves as adjunct instructor of saxophone at St. Olaf College and maintains a select private studio. An active freelancer in the Twin Cities, Mr. Claussen has appeared as a soloist, quartet performer, and clinician across the U.S., Canada, Norway, and Germany. He holds a performer’s certificate from the Conservatoire National de Région de Bordeaux, where he studied with Jean-Marie Londeix, as well as a master of music in saxophone performance from the University of Minnesota and a bachelor of arts in music education from St. Olaf College.

# CHORAL TEXTS

## did you know?

Shruthi Rajasekar (b. 1996)

This work was born from composer Shruthi Rajasekar's anger at injustice and her reckoning with complacency after witnessing repeated tragedies at the U.S.-Mexico border. She writes, "Did you know?" means 'were you complicit?' Time and time again, our ancestors have not prevented atrocity because it was not their own issue to solve — will we continue the cycle?"

— Joseph Kemper '11

did you know?  
did you know how they'd see us?  
only hearts for their own blue-veined kin. *Your* own.  
but did you know that I bled from the hands?  
would that change your heart?  
did you know about the lamb?

— Shruthi Rajasekar

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## Lamb of God

F. Melius Christiansen (1871–1955)

Lamb of God most holy!  
Who on the cross didst suffer,  
Patient still and lowly,  
Thyself to scorn didst offer;  
Our sins by Thee were taken,  
Or hope had us forsaken:  
Have mercy on us, O Jesus!

— Nicolaus Decius  
trans. Arthur T. Russell



## Apple Tree

Aurora Aksnes (b. 1996), Odd Martin Skaalnes (b. 1986),  
and Magnus Skylstad (b. 1983); arr. Katerina Gimon (b. 1993)

Mackay Campbell '28, Matteo Machado '27, Gavin Rose '28, Sofie Urberg-Carlson '26, *percussion*

All of my life I've been hunting.  
I've been a girl, I've been a boy.  
Digging my feet into the ground like an apple tree.  
Wanting to live with a purpose,  
Skin is a word, love is not a sin.  
People are bad, people are good.  
Just like the moon is a stone.  
But it's a star when it's dark and now she's  
hiding.

If you've seen where the heart is, you've seen  
its color.  
If I ever knew how we could guide it,  
I would take care of its children, become their  
mother.  
If I ever knew how we could hide it.

Let her save the world, she is just a girl.  
Let him save them all, he is just a boy.

Hunger is quiet if you do it right.  
Hunter is loud and predictable, scaring away every prey  
So they're gone before the hunter arrives.  
Would you be kind to put away your sword?  
You cannot cut away what we've got.  
You cannot kill what we are.  
We are not here in physical form.

You've seen where the knife is, its dark location.  
If I ever knew how we could fight it,  
I would cut into our anger, make pure emotion.  
If I ever knew how we could hide it.

Let her save the world, she is just a girl.  
Let him save them all, he is just a boy.

Can you carry the weight of mortality?  
The explosions around you are your symphony.

Let her save the world, she is just a girl.  
Let him save them all, he is just a boy.

— Aurora Aksnes, Odd Martin Skaalnes, and Magnus Skylstad

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## Famine Song

VIDA and Moira Smiley (b. 1976)  
arr. Matthew Culloton (b. 1976)

Ease my spirit, ease my soul,  
Please free my hands from this barren soil.  
Ease my mother, ease my child,  
Earth and sky be reconciled.

Rain.

Weave, my mother, weave, my child,  
Weave your baskets of rushes wild.

Rain.

— VIDA

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**Lao Rahal Soti** (“If My Voice Departs”)

Samih Choukeir (b. 1957)  
arr. Shireen Abu-Khader (b. 1972)

Written by Syrian composer Samih Choukeir, *Lao Rahal Soti* resonated deeply with arranger Shireen Abu-Khader, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin who believes that voices and songs never truly depart. Her calm and hopeful arrangement is a personal dedication to the ongoing Palestinian struggle for freedom and dignity, reminding us that the voices of the silenced continue to echo through music.

— Joseph Kemper '11

SUNG IN ARABIC

لَوْ رَحَلَ صَوْتِي مَا يَثْرَحَلْ حَنَاجِرُكُمْ

*If my voice departs, your voice will not*

غَيُّونِي عَلَى بُكْرَا وَقَلْبِي مَعَكُمْ

*I look unto tomorrow, and my heart is with you*

لَوْ رَاحَ الْمَغْنِّي تَبَقَّتْ الْأَغَانِي

*If the singer dies, the songs will remain*

تَجْمَعُ لِقُلُوبِ الْمَكْسُورَةِ وَالْبُعْدَانِي

*Bringing together the broken and suffering hearts*

— Samih Choukeir

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**Drop, Drop, Slow Tears**

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)

Jack Fuerstenberg '26, David Reed '26, Ana Sofia Remolina '26, Romina Soto-Solari '26, *quartet*

Kurt Claussen '82, *saxophone*

Drop, drop, slow tears, and bathe those beauteous feet,  
which brought from heaven the news and Prince of Peace.

Cease not, wet eyes, his mercies to entreat;  
to cry for vengeance sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods drown all my faults and fears;  
nor let his eye see sin, but through my tears.

— Phineas Fletcher



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SUNG IN SPANISH

¡No! Permanecer y transcurrir,  
    *No! To remain and pass by,*  
No es perdurar, no es existir,  
    *Is not to endure, is not to exist,*  
¡Ni honrar la vida!  
    *Nor to honor life!*  
Hay tantas maneras de no ser,  
    *There are so many ways of not being,*  
Tanta conciencia sin saber,  
    *So much consciousness without knowing,*  
Adormecida.  
    *Numb and unseeing.*  
Merecer la vida no es callar y consentir,  
    *To deserve life is not to stay silent and consent,*  
Tantas injusticias repetidas...  
    *So many repeated injustices...*  
¡Es una virtud, es dignidad!  
    *It's a virtue! It's dignity!*  
Y es la actitud de identidad ¡más definida!  
    *It's the clearest act of identity!*  
Eso de durar y transcurrir  
    *To last and pass by*  
No nos da derecho a presumir,  
    *Doesn't give us any right to boast,*  
Porque no es lo mismo que vivir.  
    *Because it's not the same as living.*  
¡Honrar la vida!  
    *Honoring life!*

¡No! Permanecer y transcurrir  
    *No! To remain and pass by*  
No siempre quiere sugerir  
    *Doesn't always suggest*  
¡Honrar la vida!  
    *Honoring life!*  
Hay tanta pequeña vanidad,  
    *There is so much petty vanity,*  
En nuestra tonta humanidad enceguecida.  
    *In our foolish, blinded humanity.*  
Merecer la vida es erguirse vertical,  
    *To deserve this life is to rise and stand tall,*  
Más allá del mal, de las caídas.  
    *Beyond evil, beyond falls.*  
Es igual que darle a la verdad,  
    *It's to welcome the truth,*  
Y a nuestra propia libertad  
    *To open our hearts*  
La bienvenida.  
    *To our own freedom.*  
Eso de durar y transcurrir  
    *To last and pass by*  
No nos da derecho a presumir,  
    *Doesn't give us any right to boast,*  
Porque no es lo mismo que vivir.  
    *Because it's not the same as living.*  
¡Honrar la vida!  
    *Honoring life!*

— Eladia Blázquez

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**Heal Our Land**

Oscar Williams Jr.

Matteo Machado '27, *drums*; Cecilia Percy '27, *soloist*; Romina Soto-Solari '26, *electric bass*  
Kurt Claussen '82, *saxophone*; Elizabeth Chen '27, *piano*

If my people who are called by my name  
Would humble themselves and pray,  
Seek my face, turn from their wicked ways,  
Then I'll hear from heaven.  
I'll forgive their sins  
And I will heal their land.

Heal our land, Lord. Heal our land.

I know you can, Lord, and you will, Lord.  
So we ask, “Please, heal our land.”

— Based on 2 Chronicles 7:14

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# ST. OLAF CHAPEL CHOIR

## JOSEPH KEMPER '11, CONDUCTOR

### SOPRANO I

Jenna Baumgartner, *Woodbury, Minn.*

Ryan Brentner, *Iowa City, Iowa*

Emilia Holm, *Blaine, Minn.*

Anna Jacobsen, *Cedar Falls, Iowa*

Luna McLeod, *St. Paul, Minn.*

Evgenia Roth, *Hudson, Wis.*

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Clara Smith, *Austin, Texas*

Ava Torres, *Cedar Falls, Iowa*

^ Sofie Urberg-Carlson, *Minneapolis, Minn.*

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