

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS



VOCAL ACCORD

“Laudate Dominum” – W.A. Mozart
Psalm 117

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes;
laudate eum, omnes populi.

Praise the Lord, all nations;
praise the Lord, all peoples.

I Am the Sunlight – Reginal S. Wright
Text by Clare Harner (1909-1977)

Immortality

Do not stand
By my grave, and weep,
I am not there,
I do not sleep--

I am the thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints in snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle, autumn rain.
As you awake with morning's hush,
I am the swift, up-flinging rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight.
I am the day transcending night.

Do not stand
By my grave, and cry--
I am not there,
I did not die.

Slant of Light – Sam Scheibe
Text by Emily Dickinson

There's a certain Slant of light,
Winter Afternoons –
That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes –

Heavenly Hurt, it gives us –
We can find no scar,
But internal difference –
Where the Meanings, are –

None may teach it – Any –
'Tis the seal Despair –
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the Air –

When it comes, the Landscape listens –
Shadows – hold their breath –
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death –

“All of Me” – Kyle Pederson

Look at my skin.
Do you see only skin, or the soul within...
do you see what’s true?

Look who I love.
Do you view me as less,
like none of the rest of me
matters to you?

Turn off the talk on the air,
and the voices who seem to just care
about dividing and hiding us where
you won’t see.

Look at my faith
Do you see my creed, and choose to believe
that’s all of me?

Look at my vote.
On that alone are you likely to show
contempt for me?

You don’t have to see.
But if you take time to look at me,
you’ll see the same fears and a good heart,
and the same tears that tear you apart.
See the same love, the same hope,
the same need, the same joy.

So look at my skin.
See the skin and the soul within.
See what’s true.

Look who I love.
And see my faith and my vote,
but not those alone,
seek to know me, too.

Turn up the voices of truth.
Learn to let mercy through.
Love will guide us to
a world where we
see
All of me.

Turn and see
Will you see?
All of me.

***On the Common Ground* – Alice Parker (1925-2023)**

Help me, Lord. Help me find the common ground, yes, the
common ground.

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 between the shouting and
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.

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, We can play together on the common
ground.

Help me Lord, Open us, Lord. Come, let us meet together on
the common ground.

***When Memory Fades* – Eric Nelson**

Text by Mary Louise Bringle

When memory fades and recognition falters,
When eyes we love grow dim, And minds confused,
Speak to our souls of love that never alters;
Speak to our hearts by pain and fear abused.
O God of life and healing peace,
Empower us with patient courage, by your grace infused.

As the frailness grows, and youthful strengths diminish,
In weary arms, which worked their earnest fill.
Your aging servants labor now to finish...
Their earthly tasks as fits your mystery’s will.
We grieve their waning, yet rejoice, believing,
Your arms, unwearied, shall uphold us still.

Within your spirit, goodness lives unfading.
The past and future mingle into one.
All joys remain, un-shadowed light pervading.
No valued deed will ever be undone.
Your mind enfolds all finite acts and offerings.
Held in your heart, our deathless life has won.

Temporal – Diana Sáez and Suzette Ortiz

Allá viene, allá viene el temporal
Temporal, temporal
Allá viene el temporal.
Que será de Puerto Rico
Quando llegue el temporal?
Que sera de mi Borinquen
Cuando llegue el temporal?
Se levanta el pueblo
Al son de los tambores
No nos tumba el Viento
Ni diez mil temblores
Somos resilientes,
Somos luchadores
No nos tumba el viento
Ni diez mil temblores.

There comes! There comes the storm!
Storm, storm
There comes the storm
What will become of Puerto Rico
When the storm arrives
The people arise
To the rhythm of the drums
The wind cannot bring us down
Nor ten thousand earthquakes
We are resilient
We are warriors
The wind cannot bring us down
Nor ten thousand earthquakes.



WEST SIDE SINGERS

Thixo Onothando - Michael Barrett

Thixo onothando,
Ndimi phambi kwakho
Thixo onothando,
ndiph' uthando ndifakaze ngawe.
Hosanna phezulu,
hosann' enyangweni
Thixo ndila namhla,
hosanna.

God of love,
I stand before thee
God of love,
Give me love so I may testify about you
Hosanna above,
hosanna in the highest.
God I am here today,
hosanna.

“Beati Quorum Via” - Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Psalm 119:1

Beati quorum via integra est,
qui ambulant in lege domini.

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless
who walk according to the law of the Lord.

The Road Home - Stephen Paulus (1949-2014)

Text by Michael Dennis Browne (1940-2026)

Tell me, where is the road I can call my own
That I left, that I lost, so long ago?
All these years I have wandered,
Oh, when will I know
There's a way, there's a road that will lead me home?
After wind, after rain, when the dark is done,
As I wake from a dream in the gold of day,

Through the air there's a calling from far away,
There's a voice I can hear that will lead me home.
Rise up, follow me,
Come away is the call,
With the love in your heart as the only song
There is no such beauty as where you belong
Rise up, follow me,
I will lead you home.

Total Praise - Patrick Barrett and Doreen Rao
Words and Music by Richard Smallwood (1948-2025)

Lord, I will lift mine eyes to the hills,
Knowing my help is coming from You.
Your Peace, you give me in time of the storm.

You are the source of my strength,
You are the strength of my life,
I lift my hands in total praise to You.
Amen.



UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Measure Me, Sky! – Elaine Hagenberg
Text by Leonora Speyer (1872-1956)

Measure me, sky!
Tell me I reach by a song
Nearer the stars;
I have been little so long.

Horizon, reach out!
Catch at my hands, stretch me taut,
Rim of the world:
Widen my eyes by a thought.

Sky, be my depth,
Wind, be my width and my height,
World, my heart's span;
Lovelieness, wings for my flight

Healing Heart – Jacob Narverud
Text by Robert Bode

Here, time is moving
In quiet breaths and
In the long, slow turn of seasons,

Here, the pain of love's arrow,
Once scarlet,
Fades to memory

Here, the sigh of tides
And fall's surrender into snow
Mark a white forgetting.

Here, layers of wonder
And the heart's gentle song
Call us out again
Into the morning
Into the light.

Laudate Dominum – David von Kampen
Psalm 150:1-2, 6

Alleluia laudate Dominum
in sanctis ejus laudate eum
in firmamento virtutis ejus
Laudate eum in virtutibus ejus
laudate eum secundum
multitudinem magnitudinis eius
omnis spiritus laudet Dominum

Praise ye the Lord.
Praise God in His sanctuary:
praise Him in the firmament
of His power.
Praise Him for his might acts:
praise Him according to His
excellent greatness.
Let everything that hath
breath praise the Lord.
Praise ye the Lord.

When Thunder Comes – M. E. Valverde
Text by J. Patrick Lewis

The poor and dispossessed take up the drums
For civil rights – freedoms to think and speak,
Petition, pray, and vote. When thunder comes,
The civil righteous are finished being meek.
Why Sylvia Mendez bet against long odds,
How Harvey Milk turned hatred on its head,
Why Helen Zian railed against tin god,
How Freedom Summer's soldiers faced the dread
Are tales of thunder that I hope to tell
From my thin bag of verse for you to hear
In miniature, like ringing a small bell,
And know a million bells can drown out fear.
For history was mute witness when such crimes
Discolored and discredited our times.

For the Sake of Our Children – Jeffrey L. Ames
Lamentations 2:11-13, 18 & 21

O God save Your children.
Shelter them with Your loving arms.
May Your angels guard and protect them we pray.

Victimae Paschali laudes (Praise the Paschal Victim)

We bring before You the tribulations of the world.
The violence and the pain.
Human greed, injustice, all hatred and strife.
O Lord, establish peace on earth.
Bind us with a band of unity we pray.
O Lord, we pray.

Mors et vita duello (Death and life duel)

Children are dying all across the land,
Victims of war and disease.
“Father, do you feel their pain when they are killed by the sword of the enemy?”
“Can you hear the mothers cry in agony, who hold their suff’ring children in their arms?”
Tell me, “Who has seen such sorrow?”
O Lord we pray for Your justice and peace.

People rise up, pour out your hearts unto the Lord.
May He send His wondrous love o’er all the earth,
and grant us peace which the world cannot give.
Let there be peace, never-ending peace.

O God save Your children
Shelter them with Your loving arms.
May Your angels guard and protect them we pray.
O Lord, we pray.

Light of a Clear Blue Morning – Craig Hella Johnson
Text by Dolly Parton

It's been a long dark night
And I've been a waitin' for the morning
It's been a long hard fight
But I see a brand new day a dawning
I've been looking for the sunshine
You know I ain't seen it in so long
Everything's gonna work out just fine
Everything's gonna be all right, it's gonna be okay.

I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay.

Invictus – Joshua Rist
Text by William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord – Moses Hogan

In the Lord, in the Lord,
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.
Before I'd stay in hell one day,
My soul's been anchored in the Lord;
I'd sing and pray myself away,
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.
I'm going to pray and never stop,
My soul's been anchored in the Lord;
Until I've reached the mountain top,
My soul's been anchored in the Lord.

Ezekiel Saw de Wheel – William L. Dawson

Ezekiel saw the wheel
Way up in the middle of the air
Ezekiel saw the wheel
Way up in the middle of the air

And the little wheel run by faith
And the big wheel run by the grace of God
A wheel in a wheel
Way up in the middle of the air

Some go to church to sing and shout
Way in the middle of the air
Before six months they've shouted out
Way in the middle of the air

Ezekiel saw the wheel
Way up in the middle of the air
Ezekiel saw the wheel
Way up in the middle of the air
And the little wheel run by faith
And the big wheel run by the grace of God
A wheel in a wheel
Way up in the middle of the air

We Shall Overcome – Robert T. Gibson

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome someday.
Deep in my heart,
I do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
Deep in my heart,
I do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace someday.
Deep in my heart,
I do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

We are not afraid,
We are not afraid,
We are not afraid today.
Deep in my heart,
I do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

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PERFORMER AND ENSEMBLE BIOGRAPHIES



ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The **MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY CHORAL PROGRAM** is an inclusive and dynamic community built on artistic excellence, humanistic values (INTEGRITY - COMPASSION - RESPECT), and service through music. Under the direction of Dr. Heather J. Buchanan since September 2003, the Montclair State choral program has been recognized for its successful collaborations with world-renowned artists and celebrated professional musicians in national and international venues. Collaborative pianist Greg Stout is the choral accompanist.

VOCAL ACCORD

VOCAL ACCORD (chamber choir) is recognized for its superb artistry, creative programming, and cutting-edge collaborations. This season's members comprise UG and GR students and alumni. Vocal Accord made its debut performance as a project-based choir in the Cali School of Music's Leshowitz Recital Hall in January 2010. Their May-June 2012 European tour of Austria (Vienna, Graz, Gleisdorf, Ottendorf) and Italy (Venice) included a week-long residency at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Graz, Austria and performing with members of the Vienna Philharmonic strings in the *HÖRgenuss 2012* festival. *American Voices*, a documentary of this tour, was released in February 2013 and subsequently aired on NJTV network.

Previous season highlights include performances of *The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses: the First Quest* in August 2013 at NJPAC with the NJS, and the *Second Quest* at the Theater at Madison Square Garden with the Orchestra of St. Luke's. The choir's Carnegie Hall debut performance in the Weill Recital Hall included the World Premiere performance of *Reflection: Innocent thoughts on Peace* (James Conrad Smith) which was the winning score in the *Inaugural Cali Choral Composition Competition*. Additional collaborations include live performances of the Harry Potter film *The Prisoner of Azkaban* with the NSO, the European summer festival *The Passion of Italy* (July 2017), and a June 2019 tour of Vienna, Salzburg, and Munich.

Vocal Accord's collaborations with the internationally acclaimed Richard Alston Dance Company (UK) remain an ensemble highlight. Four performances of Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* for Montclair's December 2014 *Peak Performances* series lead to a subsequent invitation to perform at the historic Sadler's Wells, UK for the RADC 2015 season opening where the choir received further critical acclaim. Fall 2015 heralded an additional invitation to the prestigious *Fall For Dance* festival in NYC, their final RADC collaboration before the founder's retirement.

Beginning in the 2022-23 season, Vocal Accord has become a curricular chamber choir and maintained a focus engaging with Cali Artists in Residence, Immersive Residency artists, and student composers. Recent highlights include performing with VOCES8, Rhiannon Giddens, Eric Whitacre and Jake Runestad. In 2025-26 they will premiere music by alumnus composer Ian Kearney and perform with IMR guest conductor Dr. Anton Armstrong.

UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Montclair State's flagship choir, **UNIVERSITY SINGERS** is a mixed-voice elective ensemble comprising undergraduate and graduate students who are experienced musicians. Students from all schools/colleges in good academic standing may audition. The University Singers perform a wide variety of sacred and secular repertoire encompassing genres from the Renaissance to the 21st Century, with special interest in contemporary composers. Under Dr. Heather J. Buchanan's leadership, the choir has enjoyed numerous collaborations with Internationally renowned musicians, including composers Meredith Monk, Morten Lauridsen, Chen Yi, Tarick O'Regan, Sarah Hopkins, Kamala Sankaram, Eric Whitacre, Jake Runestad, and Jocelyn Hagen; and NJS conductors Xian Zhang, Jacques Lacombe, George Manahan, Patrick Dupré Quigley, Roderick Cox, Nicholas McGegan, and Jeannette Sorrell.

Previous season highlights include Carnegie Hall performances as guest artists for Manhattan Concert Productions, Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall appearances for the New York Choral Festival Showcase Concerts, and conference performances for ACDA Eastern Division, NAFME All-Eastern, and NJMEA. The choir has toured the Mid-Atlantic region of the USA as well as Central Europe and Russia with performances in Prague, Budapest, Bratislava, Debrecen, Moscow, Pushkin, and St. Petersburg. An important ensemble in the NJ arts community, the University Singers perform regularly with the NJS, presenting Handel's *Messiah* annually since 2014. They have also performed Mozart's *Requiem* under Jacques Lacombe (2013) and Xian Zhang (2018), and in October 2018 they gave the US Premiere performance of *Speak Out!* by Kate Whitley (UK), an inspiring work based on texts by Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala, for the NJS's 2018-19 season opening.

The choir's relationship with renowned composer-artist Meredith Monk began with their historic collaboration in December 2006 and continued with the critically acclaimed March 2009 performances of *Ascension Variations* at the Guggenheim Museum, NYC. They recorded the CD *Songs of Ascension* with Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble on the prestigious European label ECM Records under the legendary producer Manfred Eicher, released May 2011. This collaboration was included in the Producer of the Year section of the 2012 Grammy nominations. The choir's first solo CD recording, *I Sing Because...* was released in March 2020 and is also available for digital download on Spotify and iTunes.

During 2020-21, and in the face of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, the University Singers continued to function in the vanguard of best choral practices, with socially distanced outdoor rehearsals and innovative recording projects. The choir's activities received widespread regional and national media attention, including TV appearances on *The Today Show*, *NBC Nightly News*, *The Kelly Clarkson Show*, and *News 12 NJ* in addition to print and digital media stories. Post-pandemic the choir has enjoyed collaborations with the internationally acclaimed UK-based vocal ensemble VOCES8 (Merkin Hall and Our Lady of the Lake, Verona); performing the NY metropolitan premier of the new social justice piece *Weather* (Rollo Dilworth) in collaboration with the Montclair Wind Symphony (Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*), singing the World Premiere of *Les Colombes* by composition student/baritone Ian Kearney ('25), and collaborating with international choral icons Eric Whitacre (April 2024) and Jake Runestad (April 2025). They will perform under the director of IMR guest conductor Dr. Anton Armstrong in March 2026. The University Singers' performances are broadcast on Cali Live and the Cali YouTube Channel.

Dr. Heather J. Buchanan

MSU Conductor



Australian-born conductor **HEATHER J. BUCHANAN, PhD**, is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Montclair State University (MSU) where she conducts the Chorale (symphonic choir), University Singers, Vocal Accord (chamber choir), and Prima Voce (SSAA). Choirs under her direction have won critical acclaim for their “heartfelt conviction” “grace and precision,” “vibrant sound,” “eloquence”, and for singing with the “crispness and dexterity of a professional choir.” During her 22-year tenure, Montclair choirs have collaborated with a variety of renowned national and international performing artists and composers including Eric Whitacre, VOCES8, Rhiannon Giddens, Meredith Monk, Neeme Järvi, Jacques Lacombe, Xian Zhang, Nicholas McGegan, Patrick Duprè Quigley, and Richard Alston Dance Company (UK), with Jake Runestad upcoming in April 2025. Her numerous mainstage orchestral collaborations with the New Jersey Symphony (NJS) include

Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem*, Fauré’s *Requiem*, Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Mahler *Symphony No. 3*, Mendelssohn’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses*, *Harry Potter & The Prisoner of Azkaban*, and Howard Shore’s Academy Award winning *The Lord of the Rings Symphony*, with Handel’s *Messiah* annually since December 2014. In June 2023, the NJS honored her 20-year relationship with the orchestra at the New Millennium Gala, the culminating event of their Centennial Season. Dr. Buchanan’s choirs have also sung on commercially produced recordings with Meredith Monk (*Songs of Ascension*) and the NJS (*Carmina Burana & Verdi Requiem*), and in March 2020 the University Singers released their own professionally recorded CD *I sing because...* which is also available for digital download on Spotify and iTunes.

Dr. Buchanan holds degrees from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music (Australia), Westminster Choir College of Rider University (U. S.), and the University of New England (Australia). A licensed Body Mapping Educator since 2002, she specializes in the teaching of this neuro-anatomical educational technique that trains musicians to attain freedom of expression through effective movement. A vibrant teacher, dynamic performer, and passionate musicians’ health advocate, Dr. Buchanan is in demand as a guest conductor, somatic educator, and choral clinician in the U.S. and abroad. Her 30-day 2023 choral tour hosted by the Australian National Choral Association was a comprehensive educational and artistic undertaking involving dozens of choirs and hundreds of choristers from all ages, amateur to professional, participating in clinics, festival choirs, rehearsals, and workshops across the nation. In January 2026, she returns to Melbourne, Australia for a third return invitation to headline the Australian Choral Conductor’s Education and Training summer school. In March 2025 she will conduct the Festival Chorus and New York City Chamber Orchestra in the Carnegie Hall premiere performance of Dan Forrest’s *the breath of life* for Manhattan Concert Productions’ 25th Anniversary Season.

Gregory Stout
MSU Collaborative Pianist



An active collaborative artist in the tri-state area, **GREGORY STOUT** joined the Cali School of Music this season in the role of choral accompanist. He previously served as a staff accompanist at Westminster Choir College of Rider University (2018 - 2025), playing for the Westminster Choir, Westminster Symphonic Choir, Westminster Williamson Voices, Chapel Choir, and Schola Cantorum, and also for Scene Study classes in the Musical Theatre department. Since 2020 he has also served as a solo vocal, instrumental, and choral accompanist at Ramapo College of New Jersey. Gregory can be heard on the Westminster Choir album *A Serenity of Soul*, the Westminster Williamson Voices album *A Scattered Light in Winter*, and on the The Same Stream recording *A Time for Healing: The Music of Roger Ames*.

He earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education (choral emphasis) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, studying piano with George Kiorpes. He pursued further studies at Westminster Choir College in piano accompanying and vocal coaching as a student of James Goldsworthy and J.J. Penna. An active church musician, Gregory has served as director of music at Flemington United Methodist Church in Flemington, NJ since 2017.

Jenna Ferrera
Soprano



Soprano **JENNA FERRERA** is completing the third year of her Bachelor's of Voice Performance at MSU. She studies in the voice studio of Dr. Lori McCann. Previous opera roles include Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* and Destino in *La Calisto*. This past summer, she performed in the Montefeltro Festival Opere e Concerti 2025 concert series across Italy's Emilia-Romagna region with Classic Lyric Arts. Additionally, she is the recipient of multiple NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) awards such as two 1st Place wins at the NATS Eastern Regional competition in March 2025 and 2026.

Arianna Joseph
Mezzo Soprano



ARIANNA JOSEPH is a senior Music Education major at Montclair State University, where she studied classical voice under the guidance of Dr. Lori McCann. As a dedicated mezzo-soprano, Arianna performs with Vocal Accord at the John J. Cali School of Music. Throughout her time at MSU, she has developed a deep passion for music education and vocal performance, striving to inspire others through the power of music. Arianna aspires to become an elementary general music and choir teacher, sharing her love of singing and music-making with young students. She is grateful for the many opportunities to collaborate with talented peers and mentors, which have helped shape her artistry and teaching philosophy. Arianna looks forward to continuing her musical journey and contributing to the vibrant community of music educators in the years to come.

Alexa Tammone
Soprano



ALEXA TAMMONE ('21, '22), holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Education (Voice) and a Master of Arts in Teaching Music & Students with Disabilities from Montclair State University. During her membership in the Montclair State Choral Program, Ms. Tammone studied Choral Conducting under Dr. Heather J. Buchanan, was a member of all choirs, and held multiple leadership roles.

Ms. Tammone is currently in her fourth year as Vocal Music Teacher and Choral Program Director at Liberty Middle School (West Orange, NJ), where she teaches over 280 students in grades 6-8 and leads four choral ensembles. A passionate educator from the start, Ms. Tammone has been recognized as a Distinguished Clinical Intern awarded with Distinction by the New Jersey Department of Education, and named the Top Music Student Teacher in the state for the 2021-22 academic year.

Gabrielle Cintron
Mezzo-Soprano



GABRIELLE CINTRÓN is a first-year graduate student and Teaching Assistant for Choral Activities at Montclair State University, where she is pursuing a Master's degree in Choral Conducting Performance, with additional studies in Voice. A dual-certified educator, Gabrielle holds a B.M. in Music Education and an M.A. in Special Education from MSU. Gabrielle has performed as a soloist and chorister in the MSU select choirs for six years and held various leadership positions. Outside of school, she has also participated in the 2024 Respiro Opera Young Artist program in NYC.

Yuna Lee
Violin



YUNA LEE is a violinist in her senior year at the University of Seoul and a 2026 exchange student at Montclair State University. She has received prizes in several competitions and performed with the University of Seoul Orchestra. Lee is active in music education and community projects, working with youth orchestras and inclusive ensembles of musicians with and without disabilities.

Kathryn Radcliffe
Mezzo-Soprano



KATHRYN RADCLIFFE is a sophomore Music Education major at Montclair State University, where she studies voice under Dr. Lori McCann. In 2023, she was the recipient of the Governor's Award for Arts Education in Opera. Kathryn frequently participates in NATS events (National Association for Teachers of Singing), and most recently placed first in the CL-5 category. She sings in all three of Montclair's choirs and serves as the Soprano II section leader for the Montclair State University Chorale.

Brian Corona
Baritone



BRIAN CORONA is a third year Music Education student from Linden, NJ. Studying under Peter Stewart, Brian is a part of all three choirs at Montclair State: Chorale, University Singers, Vocal Accord. Brian is a founding member of the Acapella Group “Mixolydian”. Some of Brian’s highlight performances include University Singers’ rendition of *Sleep* by Eric Whitacre during his Immersive Residency in 2024.

Armando Atanda
Viola



Originally from Jacksonville Florida, Violist **ARMANDO ATANDA** is a performer of numerous specialities, extending from solo, chamber, orchestral, opera, musicals, and more forms of music. Currently within the New Jersey/New York area, he is an avid collaborator and musician within orchestras and groups within the great area. Armando’s artistry has been recognized through numerous accolades, including receiving first prize at the Kings Peak Music Competition, and prizes at both the Landon Classical Music Competition and the Marker Pioneer International Competition.

He has performed with many orchestras and professional ensembles, including the Adelphi Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet, Stockton Symphony, Modesto Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Golden Gate Symphony, Nicaragua Symphony at the Rubén Darío National Theatre, First Coast Opera, and the Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville. He also was a fellow for San Francisco Ballet and most recently for the Classical Lake Tahoe Music Festival.

He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Music Performance from Jacksonville University and both a Master’s degree and a Performance Diploma in Viola Performance from the San Francisco Conservatory. He is currently a member of the Cali Collective Ensemble at Montclair State University’s John J. Cali School of Music. Outside of music, Armando enjoys skateboarding through the city with friends, exploring nature trails, and sharing his passion as an avid movie reviewer.

Megan Huber
Soprano



MEGAN HUBER is a Junior undergraduate Soprano singer majoring in Early Childhood Education with a minor in Music. She is involved in two of the collegiate choirs, the Montclair State University Chorale and Singers. She has had the opportunity to perform with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra many times, including, Handel's Messiah, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, and Carl Orff's Carmina Burana. She was also a part of the small choir, Prima Voce, as a part of the New Jersey Symphony's performances of Holst's The Planets. She also had the opportunity to perform alongside the University Singers in Carnegie Hall for a spotlight performance of the choirs repertoire at a masterwork festival.

Hailey Morin
Soprano



HAILEY MORIN, soprano, is an undergraduate Music Therapy student, studying voice with Jeffrey Gall. From Franklin, Massachusetts, she has performed in various opera scenes and musical theatre productions in her hometown, and sings in Montclair State's Chorale and University Singers choirs. Most recently, Hailey played the role of Second Spirit in the Cali Opera Program's production of *Die Zauberflöte*, directed by Janine Colletti.

Anna Kodak
Soprano



Emerging soprano, **ANNA KODAK**, from Perth Amboy, NJ, is a second year Music Education student with a voice primary under the guidance of Karen Driscoll. Anna performs in all three curricular choirs under the direction of Dr. Heather Buchanan including the Montclair State University Chorale, Vocal Accord, and acts as the Manager of the University Singers.

Chloe Stavis
Soprano



CHLOE STAVIS, from Santa Monica, CA, is a senior Musical Theatre BFA student at Montclair State University. Chloe has been involved with University Singers since her sophomore year, which has been such a highlight throughout her college career. She has also collaborated with other Cali School of Music programs such as the Jazz & Opera programs, partaking in the chamber opera, being a soloist for the MSU Big Band, and participating in the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Vocamotion, directed under Aubrey Johnson. Previous projects of hers include *The Great Comet of 1812* (Alexander Kasser Theatre), directed by Ryan Dobrin, *Blind Injustice* (Lincoln Center), directed by Robin Guarino and music directed by Ted Sperling, and *Hansel & Gretel* (Alexander Kasser Theatre), directed by Karen Driscoll. Stavis had the privilege of performing as a soloist for the Jake Runsestad residency that took place last year at Montclair State University, being featured in his anthem for hope, "Please Stay." She prides herself on being a grounded and versatile performer, engaging constantly in the classical, jazz, musical theatre, and A Cappella genres. She is also very interested in pursuing a career in voiceover (both with acting and singing). Upcoming engagements include her Green Room 42 debut with the Musical Theatre Class of 2026, as well as her Dizzy's Jazz Club debut, performing alongside the MSU Jazz Ensemble. Stavis will be receiving her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree this coming May!

Brianna Coppolino
Cello



BRIANNA COPPOLINO is pursuing her MM in vocal performance in the studio of Anya Fidelia. Performing in the US and Europe, she recently participated in the BRIDGES vocal arts intensive in Paris and Savatteri Produzioni's *Il Risveglio degli Dei* in Agrigento. At MSU, she is a member of the University Singers, Baroque ensemble, and will perform as Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium*. As an artist, Brianna strives to embody the tapestry of conversation between composers, writers, characters, audiences, and our own inner worlds. In addition to voice, Brianna is a proficient cellist and writer, featured in the anthology *Performing Character: from Stage to Page* and currently translating *Il Risveglio degli Dei* into English.

Gabrielle Guida
Mezzo Soprano



Emerging mezzo-soprano, **GABRIELLE GUIDA**, from Hazlet, NJ, is a second year Vocal Performance Master's student under the guidance of Dr. Lori McCann. Acting as the Graduate Assistant for Choral Activities under Dr. Heather J. Buchanan, Gabrielle sings in all three curricular choirs: the Montclair State University Chorale, University Singers, and Vocal Accord. Previous opera roles include "Endimione" in *La Calisto*, directed by Rebecca Jo Loeb, "Mere Marie" in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, directed by Malena Dayen, "Cherubino" in *Le nozze di Figaro*, directed by Nathan Troup at Chautauqua Opera Conservatory, "Maestro Spinelloccio"/"The Notary"/"The Magistrate" in *Gianni Schicci* and *Buoso's Ghost*, directed by Anna Rebek as well as "Jo" in scenes from *Little Women* and "Prince Orlofsky" in scenes from *Die Fledermaus*, directed by Karen Driscoll. She has also been featured in Master Classes taught by John Holiday as well as J'nai Bridges. Gabrielle had the privilege of performing as the Alto Soloist for Montclair

State University's *Highlights from Messiah* Concert as well as the Alto Solo from *Chichester Psalms* by Leonard Bernstein. Gabrielle prides herself on being a dynamic performer, dabbling in opera, oratorio, and musical theater. Musical theater performances include "Cinderella" in Roundtable Theater Company's production of *Into the Woods* as well as "Number 13" in Roundtable Theater Company's premiere of their original show *Next!* at the New York Theater Festival. Upcoming engagements include her debut of "Madame Flora" in *The Medium*, directed by Prof. Karen Driscoll at Montclair State University. Gabrielle received her undergraduate degree in Vocal Performance also from Montclair State University under the guidance of Barbara Dever.

Madelynn McDevitt
Soprano



MADELYNN MCDEVITT, a rising Soprano from Manchester, New Jersey, is a second year English student, with a Music minor. She has the privilege of singing under the guidance of Dr. Darian Clonts. Madelynn performs in all three curricular choirs, Chorale, University Singers, and Vocal Accord, under the direction of Dr. Heather Buchanan, serving as the soprano one section leader of the Chorale.

Negin Saidian
Soprano



NEGIN SAIDIAN, soprano from Clifton New Jersey, is a second year Recording Arts and Production Major, studying classical voice under Julia Rolwing. She is privileged to have been a part of University Singers for two semesters. Negin enjoys singing classical music, but also studies singer-songwriter and jazz genres, and writes original music.

Ava Defebbo
Soprano



AVA DEFEBBO, from Nazareth, PA, is a first year Film and Television major, and Musical Theatre minor. In addition to her academics, she sings in the Montclair State University Chorale, and University Singers. She is grateful for the opportunity to sing in an amazing group with incredible people and direction. Ava would like to thank her mom, and former teachers for always supporting her. She is ecstatic to see where the rest of her collegiate career takes her!

Aizhan Soltanova
Soprano



AIZHAN SOLTANOVA was born on Christmas Day in the small town of Zhelezinka, Kazakhstan. She began studying piano at the age of six at a local music school, and by fourteen she had already embarked on a professional path in choral conducting at the Music College of Pavlodar.

In 2018, Aizhan was awarded the National Scholarship of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The following year, she moved to Yekaterinburg, Russia, to continue her studies in choral conducting at the Ural State Conservatory, where she also served as assistant conductor of the ensemble Sinara Singers.

In 2023, Aizhan entered Montclair State University, pursuing a degree in piano performance with additional concentrations in choral conducting and organ. In 2024, she was appointed Conducting Fellow of the New York City Master Chorale. Since 2025, she has been serving as organist at Grace Lutheran Church.

Taylor Kitzman
Mezzo Soprano



TAYLOR KITZMAN, mezzo-soprano, is studying classical voice with Dr. Darian Clonts. She is currently in her 3rd year of her Bachelors in Music Education, and has been an active member of the choral department for the entirety of her degree thus far. She currently serves as section leader for the University Singers, and has previously served as a student accompanist and Chorale section leader. With the university choirs, Taylor has sung at venues such as Carnegie Hall, NJPAC, Richardson Auditorium, and the State Theater, and has performed a variety of masterworks, such as Handel's Messiah, Orff's Carmina Burana, and Beethoven's 9th Symphony. She is also the president of Montclair's ACDA chapter. On this concert, she will be featured not only in the SSA trio, but also playing assorted percussion.

Olivia Willms
Mezzo Soprano



OLIVIA WILLMS, an alto from Rockaway, New Jersey, is a third-year Psychology student at Montclair State University. She sings in both the Montclair State University Chorale and University Singers and is an active member of the choral community, with a strong passion for choral performance.

Lydia Gebker
Soprano Recorder



LYDIA GEBKER is a vocalist and performer currently studying abroad at Montclair State University. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Music Education and Literature in Münster, Germany, and further expanded her studies during a semester abroad in Montpellier, France. Lydia is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Music and Theater Mediation in Graz, Austria.

With a strong foundation in both classical and contemporary performance, Lydia has appeared in a variety of musical theater productions, including roles such as Serena in *Fame* at Theater Münster, Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Gabriella in *High School Musical*.

Lydia's classical experience includes performances with the University Choir in Münster, where she sang in major works such as Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* and Mozart's *Requiem*. At Montclair State University, she performed with the jazz choir "Vocamotion" in 2025 and is currently a member of the "University Singers."

An instrumentalist from a young age, Lydia plays the piano as well as the soprano, alto, and tenor recorder. As a child, she was awarded a first prize at the German music competition *Jugend musiziert* for her recorder performance.

Beyond performance, Lydia is a dedicated educator, having spent three years working as a vocal teacher at a music school in Germany. She is passionate about connecting performance, education, and artistic expression, and hopes to contribute to making the arts more accessible to everyone.

Benjamin Silvesti
Baritone



BENJAMIN SILVESTI is a fourth year undergraduate studying Music Education. He has been an active member of the choral program at Montclair State since his freshman year, acting as a Tenor Section Leader for both the University Chorale and the University Singers. Studying under Jeffrey Gall, he has also performed in several opera productions, with roles including Mr. Gobineau in “The Medium,” Pane in “La Calisto,” and the Jailer in “Dialogues des Carmelites.” Though an aspiring educator with a special love for all things choral music, he hopes to always continue performing.

Eddie Morel
Tenor



EDDIE MOREL, a Dominican American Tenor from Teaneck, New Jersey, is a sophomore Vocal Performance major under the guidance of Dr. Peter Gillis. At Montclair, Eddie is an active member of the university’s premier choral ensembles, including the Montclair State University Chorale, University Singers, and Vocal Accord, and serves as a section leader within the Chorale.

Eddie has had the opportunity to refine his artistry through masterclass work with internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano J’nai Bridges. He prides himself on being a versatile performer, with experience spanning multiple musical genres and cultural traditions, including salsa, merengue, and bachata, reflecting his rich Dominican heritage.

Upcoming engagements include performing in Montclair State University Chorale’s presentation of Requiem by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in collaboration with the New Jersey Symphony.