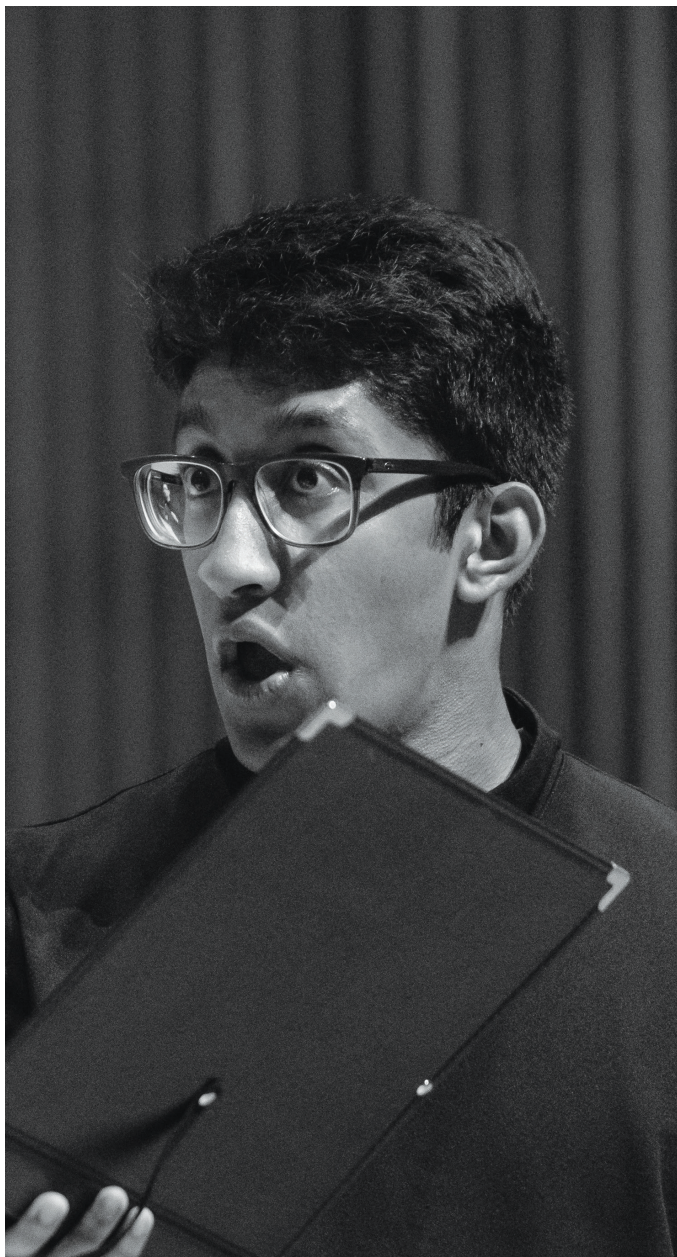


University of Maryland School of Music Presents
SPRING CHORAL SHOWCASE
UMD Chamber Singers



Sunday, May 4, 2025 • 7:30PM

DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



**SCHOOL OF
MUSIC**

University of Maryland School of Music
Presents

SPRING CHORAL SHOWCASE

UMD Chamber Singers

Jason Max Ferdinand, *Conductor*
Trevor Tran, *Assistant Conductor*

Today (interlude) James Quitman Mulholland
(b. 1935)

“Versus 1 (Coro)” Johann Sebastian Bach
from *Nun danket alle Gott*, BWV 192 (1685–1750)

Hail, gladdening light Charles Wood
(1866–1926)

Veni Sancte Spiritus, KV 47 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

Isabel Marcus, *soprano*
Grace Null, *alto*
Lily Galilhue, *tenor*
Francesco Berrett, *bass*

What Have We Done Today? (Interlude)

To Sit and Dream Rosephanye Powell
(b. 1962)

Hold Fast to Dreams Joel Thompson
(b. 1988)

Fyer, fyer, my hart Thomas Morley
(1557–1603)

Carissimi J. Aaron McDermid
(b. 1974)

Cecilia Plumer, *soprano*

Songs From Old Plum Grove Arr. David Ashley White
(b. 1944)

- I. Ye Banks and Braes
- II. Skip to my Lou

What Have We Done Today? (Interlude)

Prayer René Clausen
(b. 1953)

Death Came A-Knockin' Ruthie Foster
(b. 1964)
Arr. Paul Rardin

Sydney Black, *soprano*
Mykayla Brown, *alto*
Abha Phillips, *alto*

The Hymn! Arr. Stacey V. Gibbs
(b. 1962)

Ana Lane, *soprano*
Kirsten Holmes, *alto*
Joshua Pelzer, *tenor*

Little Blue Jacob Collier
(b. 1994)
Arr. Ben Bram

Caledonia Dougie MacLean
(b. 1954)
Arr. Blake Morgan

Sydney Black, *soprano*
Paige Peercy, *soprano*
Mykayla Brown, *alto*
Lily Gallihue, *tenor*
Francesco Berrett, *bass*
Jason New, *bass*

Today James Quitman Mulholland
(b. 1935)



JASON MAX FERDINAND serves as the director of choral activities at the University of Maryland, College Park, assuming the role in Fall of 2022. He is very humbled to be standing on the shoulders of his mentor, Edward Maclary, who guided the choral program for over 20 years. He is the founding artistic director of The Jason Max Ferdinand Singers — an ensemble of exceptional talents — and was the director of choral activities, chair of the music department, and professor at Oakwood University, where he conducted the Aeolians of Oakwood University. He is also the author of the book “Teaching with Heart: Tools for Addressing Societal Challenges Through Music,” published by GIA, and the editor of “The Jason Max Ferdinand Choral Series,” available through Walton Music as well as a new series under Gentry Publications. He maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and lecturer at schools, universities, churches, and choral festivals and conferences, both domestic and international. As conductor of the Aeolians of Oakwood University, he distinguished himself on the national and international choral stages. In 2017, he earned the Outstanding Director Award, and the Aeolians were awarded the coveted “Choir of the World” title at the Llangollen International Musical Festival in Wales. In 2018, his choir won three gold medals at the 10th World Choir Games held in South Africa and won the competition’s overall championship in both the Spirituals and University Choir categories. In 2018, he was named Teacher of the Year by Oakwood University. The Aeolians made their first appearance at the national conference of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) in 2019 and the term “they broke ACDA” was used to describe their outstanding presentation. The Jason Max Ferdinand Singers were the featured ensemble for the 2023 ACDA National Conference. Ferdinand holds degrees from Oakwood University, Morgan State University, and the University of Maryland, College Park, where he earned a doctorate in choral conducting. He serves on the board of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and is a former board member of the Alabama Choral Directors Association.



TREVOR TRAN is a conductor and educator based in the Washington, D.C. area and is a current graduate student at the University of Maryland, College Park. During his time here, Tran has served as director of various UMD choruses, taught courses in conducting and prepared ensembles for the National Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Previously, Tran was head of performing arts and director of vocal arts at Fort Myers High School in Southwest Florida. Through his work, Tran was recognized as a 2023 Yamaha “40 under 40” Educator and a 2024 Temple University “30 under 30” Artistic Visionary. Besides being an educator, Tran is a composer with organizations such as Resounding Achord, CORO, Choral Arts Initiative and San José State University having sung his music. In addition, he has presented at state, regional and national music educator conferences for organizations such as ACDA and NafME. Tran holds a bachelor’s degree in music composition from San José State University, concurrent master’s degrees in choral conducting and music composition from Temple University and is currently pursuing a doctorate in choral conducting at the University of Maryland, College Park.

THE UMD CHAMBER SINGERS have achieved international renown with acclaimed performances of the most challenging repertoire ranging from the 16th through the 21st centuries. The ensemble made its first European tour in 2007 with a prize-winning appearance at the International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. In 2011, they won the Premier Prix for Mixed Choirs and the Prix Ronsard for the performance of Renaissance music at the 40th Florilège Vocal de Tours in France. They also appeared by invitation at the International Federation for Choral Music for acclaimed performances at the 10th World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul, South Korea, in 2014. The UMD Chamber Singers collaborate frequently with the National Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in major works such as Bach's Mass in B minor, Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's Mass in C minor and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Alongside their regular symphonic collaborations, the ensemble specializes in the most significant a cappella repertoire of the 20th and 21st centuries, having presented masterpieces of Barber, Britten, Copland, Howells, Ives, MacMillan, Penderecki, Poulenc, Schönberg and Shaw. The UMD Chamber Singers work regularly with internationally renowned conductors such as Christoph Eschenbach, Iván Fischer, Gianandrea Noseda, Matthew Halls, Laurence Cummings, James MacMillan, Nicholas McGegan, Nathalie Stutzmann, Laurence Equilbey and Jonathon Heyward. The ensemble appears frequently by invitation of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and the National Collegiate Choral Organization (NCCO). In the fall of 2019, the UMD Chamber Singers hosted and were the featured artists for the NCCO biennial conference. In 2022, the ensemble was featured in the ACDA Eastern Division conference.

Nun danket alle Gott, BWV 192

Now all thank God
with heart, mouth and hands;
He does great things
for us and all our purposes;
He for us from our mother's womb
and childish steps
countless great good
has done and still continues to do.

Veni Sancte Spiritus, KV 47

Come Holy Spirit:
fill the hearts of your faithful,
and kindle your love in them.

You have gathered the nations
together in the unity of faith.
Alleluia.

Carissimi

Dearly beloved,
let us love one another,
for love is of God.

And everyone who loves
is born of God and knows God:
For God is love.

No one has ever seen God.
But if we love one another,
God abides in us,
and his love is perfected in us.

God is love:
and those that abide in love
abide in God, and God in them.

Today

JAMES QUITMAN MULHOLLAND

James Mulholland's choral setting of *Today* brings to life the timeless wisdom of Nixon Waterman's uplifting poem—a meditation on the importance of living fully in the present. Waterman's text speaks with gentle urgency, encouraging us to let go of past regrets and future anxieties, and to embrace the beauty, potential and responsibility held within this very day.

Mulholland's music mirrors this message with elegant simplicity and heartfelt lyricism. The composer, known for his expressive vocal writing and sensitivity to text, crafts a setting that flows naturally with the cadence and meaning of the words. Rich, warm harmonies and flowing melodic lines capture both the serenity and quiet power of the poem's theme.

In a world where time often rushes by unnoticed, *Today* serves as both a musical and philosophical pause — a moment to reflect, to be grateful, and to recommit to living with purpose. Mulholland's setting is not only a tribute to the poem's message, but an invitation to experience it in the very moment of performance.

I am profoundly honored that Mulholland has chosen to dedicate this exquisite piece to me and my work. His music unfailingly wraps itself around my soul, stirring something deep within. I am endlessly grateful for his boundless talent—and even more so for his cherished friendship.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Nun danket alle Gott, BWV 192

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

BWV 192 is a cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach, titled *Nun danket alle Gott*, which translates to “Now Thank We All Our God.” The first movement of this cantata is a joyful opening chorale, with a celebratory tone. It is based on the hymn *Nun danket alle Gott* which was written by Martin Rinkart in 1636. The music is lively and rich in orchestration, with the choir singing the hymn melody in four parts. The movement is in the key of D major, with a strong, uplifting rhythmic structure.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Hail, gladdening light

CHARLES WOOD

Charles Wood was an English composer and influential music teacher of the Romantic era. He taught at Cambridge and the Royal College of Music, and his students include composers like Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells. Wood is primarily known and remembered for his Anglican church music, which was the bulk of his compositional output. *Hail, gladdening light* is one of his more famous pieces from this genre. The work is written for a double choir, where the ensemble is split into two choirs. Often, the two choirs interact with each other in a call-and-response manner, and they come together at cadential points or ends of phrases. In addition, Wood divides the voices in other combinations besides choir one and choir two like grouping the lower voices together and the upper voices together in response. The piece culminates with both choirs joining together in powerful soaring harmony as it fades into a closing “amen.”

– Program note by Trevor Tran

Veni Sancte Spiritus, KV 47

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was one of the major composers during the Classical era. He demonstrated great musical proficiency in his performances and compositions from a young age. In addition, his symphonies, operas and choral orchestral works are still popular today over two hundred years later. *Veni Sancte Spiritus* is one such work that illustrates Mozart’s young age musical proficiency, as it was written when Mozart was twelve. This sacred work was written in Vienna, and scholars contend the piece was meant to be played during the offertory section of a church service as Mozart included the subtitle “Offertorium” in the work. The piece is split into two sections where the first section is in a triple meter and the second section is faster and in a duple meter. The choir sings throughout the work with some solos interspersed in the choral sections. The choral parts are mostly homophonic, singing the same rhythms with different pitches, but there are some spots where the choir sings in imitative polyphony, where each voice part enters in on the same theme one after another.

– Program note by Trevor Tran

To Sit and Dream

ROSEPHANYE POWELL

This is based on a reflective and introspective poem that explores the themes of hope, imagination and the power of dreams. Langston Hughes yearns for a peaceful moment of solitude where he can sit and dream freely, away from the pressures of the world. Through this act of dreaming, we hope to reconnect with our inner selves and envision possibilities beyond our immediate reality. Rosephyne Powell's writing captures the quiet yet profound significance of these moments of pause and reflection.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Hold Fast to Dreams

JOEL THOMPSON

This piece was inspired by Martin Luther King Jr.'s iconic "I Have a Dream" speech. It engages in a dialogue between two of Langston Hughes' poems: *Harlem* and *Dreams*. One poem reflects the anguish of broken promises, while the other offers a message of hope, urging faith in a better future, for without it, there is only despair. Both poems convey enduring truths that remain relevant in today's turbulent world. Though the text may evoke sentiments of youthful idealism and innocence, the music itself carries a sense of unrest, perhaps alluding to the cynicism that marks our present age. Dramatic and compelling, with powerful choral writing and a virtuosic piano accompaniment, this piece offers an unforgettable experience.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Fyer, fyer, my hart

THOMAS MORLEY

Fyer, fyer, my hart is a ballet written by English composer Thomas Morley. A ballet is a secular English piece from the Renaissance era, and it includes a section with the text "Fa, la, la". Thomas Morley was one of the most influential composers of ballets and other genres of the time. This was partially due to the access Morley had to publishing and printing, as he was granted a printing patent by the monarchy. This printing patent gave him exclusive rights and essentially a monopoly over music printing. *Fyer, fyer, my hart* uses the imagery of a burning heart to express the longing for love. The music starts lively and paints the energy of fire with its vibrant, moving lines. This contrasts with slow sections that appear on the text "Ay me." The slow sections are a cry of heart-ache, and this is musically expressed by the dissonances, two notes that clash against each other, in the section.

– Program note by Trevor Tran

Carissimi

J. AARON MCDERMID

J. Aaron McDermid is an active composer whose works have been performed by choirs in the United States and Europe. Ensembles that have commissioned McDermid include The National Lutheran Choir, The Singers: Minnesota Choral Artists and The Dale Warland Singers. In addition, his music has been performed at conferences for the American Choral Directors Association and by All-State Choirs from multiple states. Along with his career as a composer, McDermid also conducts ensembles and holds degrees in music education and choral conducting from Concordia College, the University of Michigan and the University of Arizona. *Carissimi* was written for Lee Nelson and the Wartburg Choir in Waverly, Iowa. The text comes from verses in Chapter 4 of the Book of John, and these verses all revolve around the theme of love. McDermid conveys this theme through the slow, smooth and connected lines in the voice parts. The piece also incorporates a wide range of dynamics that could be interpreted as the rise and fall of love that occurs in life. Listen for the moving lines that generate the momentum in the piece and the unexpected harmonies that appear throughout the work.

– Program note by Trevor Tran

Songs From Old Plum Grove

ARR. DAVID ASHLEY WHITE

Songs from Old Plum Grove takes its name from a settlement that once existed west of LaGrange, Texas; all that remains now is a cemetery. It was here that some of my maternal ancestors—the Scallorns, McClures and Youngs—all of Scottish heritage, settled in the early 19th century. Allowing some poetic license, I have imagined that the two songs that form this set, “Ye banks and braes” and “Skip to My Lou,” were sung in that community.

– Program note by the composer

Prayer

RENÉ CLAUSEN

René Clausen has composed a deeply moving and contemplative piece that invites reflection and introspection. This piece beautifully explores themes of hope, longing and the universal desire for peace and understanding. The text, by Mother Teresa, conveys a sense of yearning for making this world a better place. The composition is marked by rich harmonic textures and expressive vocal lines that gradually build in intensity. Clausen's intricate use of choral dynamics, along with his skillful weaving of the voices, creates a lush, ethereal atmosphere that allows the listener to feel the depth of the human spirit's plea for solace and grace. This offering captures a powerful and universal message through its meditative tone, offering a serene yet profound moment of musical reflection. It is a piece that speaks to the heart, encouraging listeners to consider their own personal moments of quiet. With its emotionally resonant choral writing and dynamic contrasts, *Prayer* is a powerful reminder of the enduring human need for connection, comfort and peace.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Death Came A-Knockin'

RUTHIE FOSTER

Arr. Paul Rardin

Following in the footsteps of her family of singers, Ruthie Foster is an American singer and songwriter that mixes a wide variety of American genres. These genres include gospel, blues, jazz, folk and soul. Foster is most known for her blues and folk music, where she has been nominated for multiple Grammy Awards in the categories of Best Blues Album and Best Contemporary Blues Album. Paul Rardin, chair of vocal arts at Temple University, took Foster's arrangement of *Death Came A-Knockin'* and arranged it for soloists and chorus. He wrote the following about the arrangement:

American blues icon Ruthie Foster released her arrangement of *Death Came A-Knockin'* (a spiritual originally titled *Travelin' Shoes*) on her 2002 recording *Run-away Soul*. Foster's arrangement is driving and relentless, her voice ringing with steely determination to be "ready to go" into the kingdom of God. The list of characters—mother, sister, brother, neighbor, preacher and finally self—remind us that we all will face this journey, so we had best live right, and shout "Hallelujah" when our turn comes.

This choral adaptation utilizes three treble soloists that present the melody individually and together. The chorus provides sparse background support with music that imitates instruments used by Foster in her performances. This leads to the apex of the piece where the ensemble takes the text on the words, "And then he shout." The piece leads to a close with the soloists returning, and the piece ends with a final statement by the choir singing, "got on my travelin' shoes."

– Program note by Trevor Tran

The Hymn!

ARR. STACEY V. GIBBS

This is a contemporary a cappella arrangement that blends some of the most iconic and inclusive American patriotic hymns: *My Country*, *'Tis of Thee*, *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. This powerful arrangement, crafted by the prolific choral arranger and composer Stacey V. Gibbs, weaves these hymns into an epic montage. The 12/8 rhythmic pulse, underscored by a lone snare drum, symbolizes the drum major for justice and peace, resonating throughout the entire piece. With its exceptional choral writing and a meaningful message for today, this arrangement has quickly become a favorite of ours.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Little Blue

JACOB COLLIER

Arr. Ben Bram

Little Blue is a captivating piece that showcases the unique musicality of Jacob Collier, known for his genre-defying style and intricate harmonies. This arrangement by Ben Bram takes Collier's original composition and adapts it for an a cappella ensemble, maintaining the rich texture and emotional depth that is characteristic of Collier's work. The piece features intricate vocal layering, shifting harmonies and a distinctive rhythmic pulse that creates a sense of intimacy and wonder. *Little Blue* is a reflection on life's fleeting beauty, evoking feelings of nostalgia, hope and introspection. Through its lush vocal arrangement and expressive dynamics, this work highlights the power of the human voice to convey both vulnerability and strength. We had a lot of fun learning this, and we hope you sense that!

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

Caledonia

DOUGIE MACLEAN

Arr. Blake Morgan

This setting of the Scottish folk ballad has lyrics that speak of life lessons learned, the passing of time, and enduring affection for “home”. This tune has been a constant on my lips, especially as we went through the lockdown of the pandemic. Blake Morgan, who is a member of Voces8, has penned this astonishingly beautiful arrangement that upholds the simplicity of the original song, yet pushes our ears harmonically. *Caledonia* was the Latin name the Romans used for Scotland, and Dougie MacLean's original song has become somewhat of an unofficial anthem for the country. This arrangement of the textures throughout range from the signature “blended” sound of Voces8 to a roaring climb through the Scottish Highlands, before returning to the final refrain in a hymn-like harmonization, bringing us to back to the place we call home.

– Program note by Jason Max Ferdinand

UMD CHAMBER SINGERS

Jason Max Ferdinand, *Conductor*

Trevor Tran, *Assistant Conductor*

Rachel Flicker, *Accompanist*

Erica Axtell*
 Francesco Berrett
 Sydney Black
 Sarah Borruso*
 Mykayla Brown
 Kai Daley
 Magnolia Flynn-Lebischak
 Lily Gallihue
 Samuel Gray
 Wentao Guo
 Kirsten Holmes
 Henry Horst
 Julie Huang Tucker*

Eric Beomjin Kim*
 Joshua Kinsinger
 Mary Shea Kealey Kustas*
 Ana Lane
 Joshua Lee
 Isabel Marcus*
 Nicholas Mathew
 Jason New
 Grace Null
 Paige Peercy
 Joshua Pelzer
 Keira Perry
 Abha Phillips

Cecilia Plumer
 Matthew Podsednik
 Jude Reagan
 Cyrus Rishel
 Sammy Shay
 Trevor Tran*
 Kevin Webb
 Ella Weikert
 Madison Weil*
 Aidan Wilbur

*Graduate Conductor

*Ensemble Assistant

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Violin 1

Sasha Kandybin
 Eleanor Sturm
 Abijah Zimmerman

Violin 2

Alexandra Fitzgerald
 Evan Ducreay

Viola

Yu-Hsuan Chen
 Kara Woolcock

Cello

Jenna Bachmann

Bass

Daphine Henderson

Flute

Daniel Lopez
 Julion Beckham

Oboe

Aaron Emerson
 Lauren Nelson

Bassoon

Meghan Freer

Horn

William Hernandez
 Josh Sharp

Percussion

Patrick Bain

Piano

Rachel Flicker

CHORAL ACTIVITIES AT THE UMD SCHOOL OF MUSIC offers students, faculty and staff, and the community a wide variety of ensembles. The UMD Chamber Singers, University Chorale, UMD Treble Choir, Tactus, Opera Chorus and UMD Summer Chorus perform works from all eras and styles from early Renaissance music to the 20th century. Director of Choral Activities Jason Max Ferdinand also oversees the School's graduate program in choral conducting. Rehearsals and concerts take place in the state-of-the-art Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and the intimate Memorial Chapel.

For more information, contact:

UMD CHORAL ACTIVITIES

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Associate Professor of Music & Director of Choral Activities

KENNETH ELPUS

Professor and Division Coordinator of Choral Music Education

LAURI JOHNSON

Choral Administrator

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Eric Beomjin Kim
Mary Shea Kealey Kustas
Trevor Tran
Julie Huang Tucker

CHORAL ASSISTANTS

Erica Axtell, *Artistic Operations*
Sarah Borruso, *Senior Artistic Operations*
Isabel Marcus, *Senior Artistic Operations*
Madison Weil, *Artistic Operations*

UMD SCHOOL OF MUSIC VOICE FACULTY

Diba Alvi, *Soprano and Diction & Pedagogy*
Teri Bickham, *Soprano*
Natalie Conte, *Soprano and Assistant Artist-in-Residence*
John Holiday, *Countertenor*
Kevin Short, *Bass-Baritone*
Gran Wilson, *Tenor*
Delores Ziegler, *Mezzo-Soprano*
Kenneth Elpus, *Choral Music Education*
Jason Max Ferdinand, *Director of Choral Activities*
Craig Kier, *Director of Arts for All & Advisor of Maryland Opera Studio*

UPCOMING CHORAL EVENTS

UMD SUMMER CHORUS

Sat, July 26 • 8 PM
DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL, THE CLARICE
FREE - NO TICKETS REQUIRED

Open to college students, community singers and high school choristers.
No auditions required.

Featuring Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* and Brahms' *Schicksalslied & Nänie*.
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To register, visit music.umd.edu

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