

SEATTLE **SYMPHONY**

APRIL 15—21

DEAR HUMANITY

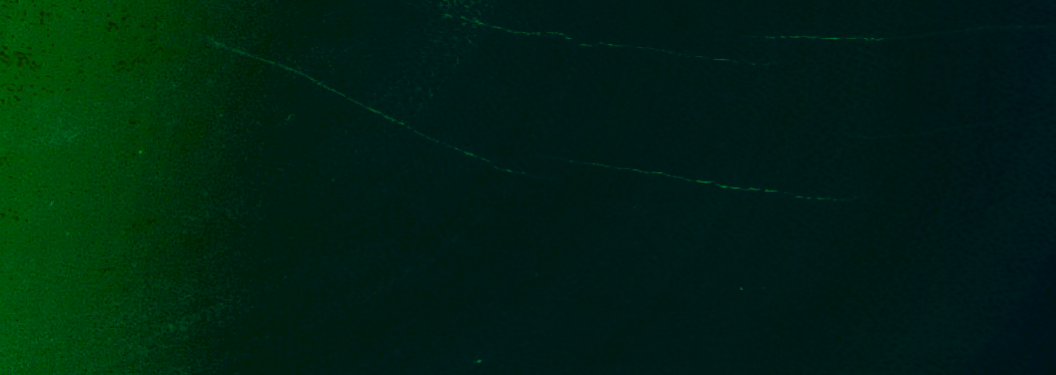
Youth Art Festival & Concert

SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2023

YOUTH-LED PERFORMANCE DAY

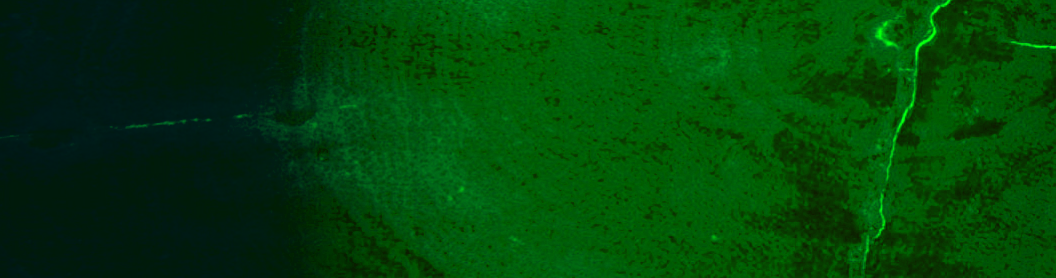
Elaina Stuppler is an award-winning composer and multi-instrumentalist. She was selected for the All-State Honor Band, All-Northwest Honor Band and is Principal Trombonist for the Portland Youth Conservatory Orchestra. Her pieces have been performed by the Oregon Symphony, Portland Youth Philharmonic and Metropolitan Youth Symphony. She is a Luna Composition Fellow and recipient of the U.S. Presidential Award for Academic Excellence. Elaina works at All Classical Portland/ICAN Radio Station as a youth reporter, recently interviewing Itzhak Perlman.

Elaina Stuppler's composition, ***Anxious Alignment***, explores her tumultuous journey moving to the Pacific Northwest during the pandemic. Her music follows the adventures of discovering a new magical environment juxtaposed with evacuating from historic wildfires, enduring ice storms and navigating the peculiar world of online schooling. "Anxious Alignment" reflects the damaging effects of climate change, bringing Elaina's harrowing experiences to life through her music. During the fires, she described the sky turning hazy gray and how peculiar that it was snowing in September! Quickly, she realized it wasn't snowflakes, but ash. "Our smoke-filled city had the worst air quality in the world and I'll never take for granted breathing clean air." Epic ice storms also occurred that year, causing major, city-wide power outages. Her neighbors said the destructive weather was unprecedented. Elaina realizes how easy it is to ignore climate change if you haven't lived through a catastrophic event, and ruminates, "How are future generations going to survive?" "Anxious Alignment" features flute, clarinet, strings and percussion. It is a momentous piece that will keep the listener suspended with both cascading tension and grace. Elaina is grateful to the Seattle Symphony for creating this impactful event.



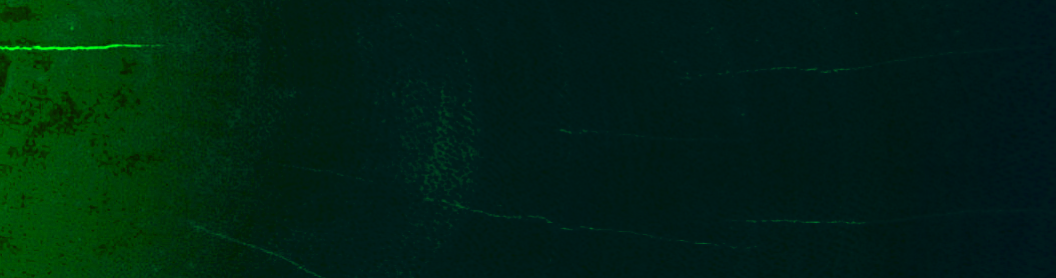
Abigail Rihanna ‘Hanna’ Timajo is an eighth grader in the Tahoma School District Highly Capable Program. She won first place in the Tahoma S.D.’s “Math is Amazing” competition, third place in the regional Math is Cool Championships, a superior medal in Washington State Math Olympiad, 13th place in the National Math Kangaroo Contest, and first place in literature and music composition at the districtwide Reflections contest. Hanna is also a three-time winner of the KCLS Terrifying Tales Short Stories Writing Contest.

About her work, she writes, “Our world is filled with people unaware of how every piece of garbage carelessly floating in the ocean is a threat to not only aquatic life, but human life as well. Plastic emits greenhouse gases as it decomposes, contributing to a long-term problem: global warming. If global warming continues, water levels will rise and threaten the health and biochemistry of our oceans and countless lives with flooding from melting ice. My poem spreads awareness of how we must not wait for the consequences of our actions to pile up and drown us all before we act against the injustices laid upon the ocean and mistakes wrought upon Mother Nature. To prevent our beautiful world from being swallowed up by inaction and ignorance, take action to prevent your children and future generations from experiencing nature through pictures of what no longer exists. **‘Ocean Waves’** symbolizes how you can help turn the tide against climate change by making a difference in your daily life, from using less plastic to cleaning up trash in nature, for even the slightest contribution can lead to something much bigger.”



Brannon Warn-Johnston, an enthusiastic composer, violinist and pianist, loves to spend time outside and go backpacking with her violin. She often takes inspiration for her compositions from nature and the outdoors. This is Brannon's second year in the Merriman-Ross Family Young Composers Workshop; her composition will be premiered by the Seattle Symphony at Benaroya Hall on May 18. She also enjoys playing in orchestras and ensembles, and has served as a concertmaster for Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestras and West Seattle Community Orchestras.

Seascape describes beaches on the coast where I've backpacked annually since I was 3, bringing violin and staff paper as I got older. It expresses nature's beauty, especially the ocean's. I hope experiencing this beauty and understanding climate change encourages people to act more responsibly — toward our planet, oceans, and the creatures living in and around them. 'Seascape' has two movements each describing a beach and its different moods, weather, tides and climate change's impacts on them. *Tide Pools* starts at calm low tide; herons fish from rocks; seals swim in the distance; birds soar overhead; there are colorful creatures and plants. Then the tide rushes in and it all disappears. Later, afternoon sun sparkles on the water and warms the sand. If we continue to harm the earth, these beaches and animals' homes will disappear — from sea level rise, erosion and scouring rocks. *Moods of the Sea* evokes the — sometimes sudden — changes in feeling and weather increasing with climate change: a music-filled evening looking out at waves rolling in under a beautiful sunset; out at sea, where huge storm waves crash against rocks in pounding rain as sea levels rise, flooding the land; then, more gradually back to the calm waves before dawn."



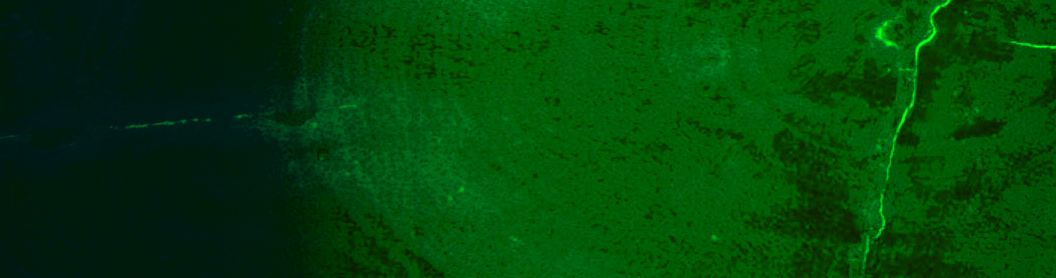
Maret Edlund is a 13-year-old student at Jane Addams Middle School, where she pursues her passion for theatre and music (and her love of Dungeons & Dragons). Over the last few years, she found herself growing frustrated at the lack of response to climate change. She takes inspiration from Greta Thunberg, another girl with a funny-sounding Swedish last name.

“Do you ever have that idea that hits you all at once, and you have to jot it down before you lose it? That’s what this speech was for me. It’s composed of a bunch of lighting-flash ideas, written down in my phone, over the course of about a month.

“My name is Maret Edlund, and my speech, **‘The Next Great Leap,’** focuses on trying to bring real awareness to the ongoing climate crisis. I’ve always thought that humanity doesn’t really have a firm grasp on the whole ‘there is no planet B’ thing, and I hope that my performance shows that we need to actually realize it, instead of just repeating it. I hope that what you take away from my speech isn’t a pessimistic ‘we’re all doomed’ kind of tone, but rather, the feeling that if we stand together, we can fix what we created. And I hope that we begin to make some changes, and start moving towards fixing this, instead of moving further away from solutions.”

Sula Yogi-Adams and Calista Chan are both 13 years old, and live in Seattle, Washington. They are classmates in the eighth grade at Washington Middle School. Apart from working hard in class, they play for the school orchestra and also played together on the middle school basketball team.

Calista plays violin and Sula plays cello in this original twist on Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*. The artists move back and forth between portions of Winter and Summer, interrupting settled expectations with sudden, and at times, jarring results. The piece was created to illustrate the current impact of climate change, interrupting seasonal patterns, at times with chaotic and catastrophic results.

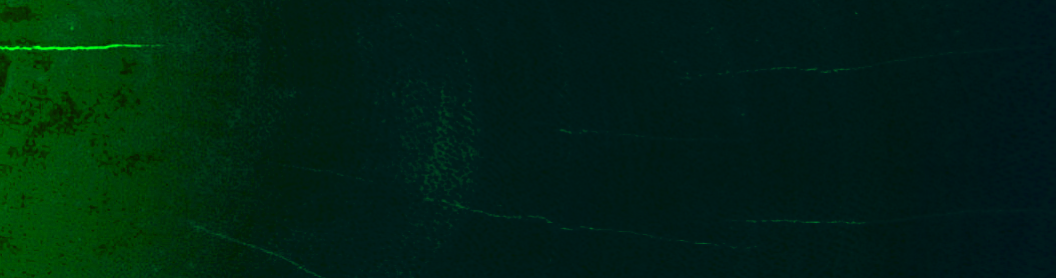


Kyle Gerstel (he/him) is a writer and director who firmly believes in the importance of innovative, equitable storytelling. He occasionally hangs out at Mercer Island High School to apply integrals, argue with his English teacher about interpretations of poems, perform in the drama program and serve on the editorial board of the school newspaper, *The Islander*. Kyle is frequently made fun of for his love of Walter Isaacson's biography of Steve Jobs.

Full Mailbox is a surreal comedy-drama about two wanderers, one with homies and one without, who find connection through time and space in Seattle's Be'er Sheva Park. Inspired by telephone conversations during the pandemic, the play uses heightened theatrical elements and a wide variety of characters played by few actors to illustrate how we lose relationships. The piece was commissioned for Penguin Productions' 2022 Finding Trails Festival.

Samuel Bastardo is a high school student currently attending Dekaney High School. While he's been composing music for the past two years, he still considers himself a novice in the field. His ultimate dream is to become a professional composer, and he understands that there are many challenges and opportunities ahead to achieve this goal. "I'm deeply passionate about music, and I am continuously striving to improve my skills as a composer."

The Three of Us highlights how human activity, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation, has caused climate change. The music serves as a reminder of the consequences of our past actions and emphasizes the importance of learning from our mistakes. Our ancestors prioritized economic growth over environmental preservation, leading to severe consequences for future generations. However, we have the opportunity to support renewable energy and sustainable practices to limit the effects of global warming. It is essential to take responsibility for our past actions and work towards a more sustainable future. By making conscious choices, we can create a better tomorrow for ourselves and future generations, even if we can only hope to lessen the damage already done.

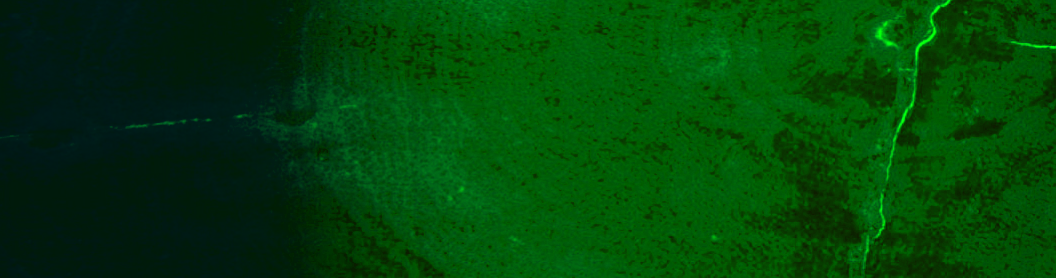


Hannah Lindell-Smith is a community and political organizer, dancer, speaker and writer. Her work centers on climate justice — holding corporations, governments and systems responsible, and empowering youth, women, queer and trans people, and communities. She currently works with 350 Seattle and Zero Hour, and was a 2022 EarthGen Medalist for her student work in her home of Southwest Seattle. She is also a multidisciplinary dancer and aerialist training at SANCA. She attends Summit Atlas High School.

March March is a call to attention. Choreographed from a mix of styles and to the 2020 song of the same name by The Chicks, it calls attention to all the organizers who don't get the credit they deserve. Bodily autonomy, self-determination, liberation, safety for our families, communities, people and homes —we are armies of one, and many. Dance is not usually thought of as political, but I think it should be, and telling stories with our bodies makes them impossible to ignore: makes them powerful. The climate crisis, and our own battles, deserve all the forms of storytelling we have. For this, we march to our own drums.”

Lily Cerda was born (and currently lives) on Whidbey Island. She is 14 years old, in eighth grade, and attends the ALE (Alternative Learning Program) in the South Whidbey School District. Some of her favorite hobbies and activities include anything music-related, writing, sleeping, acting and countless others. She also really enjoys working with USL (United Student Leaders) on Whidbey to raise awareness about equity, climate action, intersectionality and educational reform.

“I’ve always loved music. I’ve used it as a way to help me navigate my experiences, thoughts and ideas. I wrote this song thinking of everything I wanted our world to be. Everything it could be. Hoping we might be able to understand, learn, with open minds, and work together to keep each other and our earth safe. It is my way of asking for help. A wish, that maybe together we can create a true community. Without injustice, inequity and fear. Everything that keeps us from the world we could create. A wish for things to be **‘undone’**.”

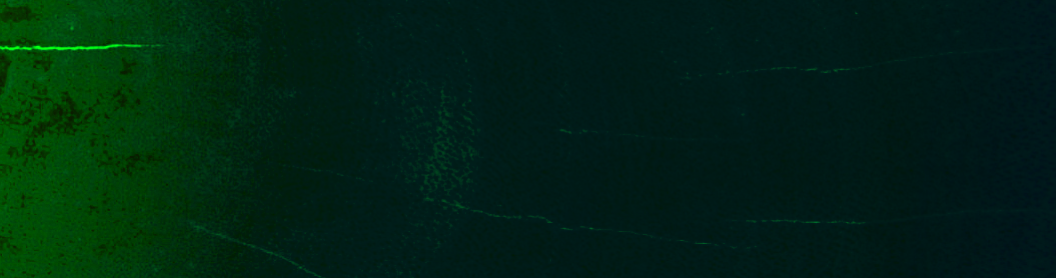


Speak With Purpose (SWP) is the only public speaking program in school districts throughout the Greater Seattle area that is offered in elementary through high school as part of the common core curriculum. SWP works side-by-side with scholars who are silent in the back of their classrooms, and teaches them to become the leaders in the front. By learning to celebrate who they are, scholars invest in their self-authored identities and their ability to lead on a local, national and global level.

Orca K–8 Middle Schoolers have been collaboratively creating a group spoken-word piece inspired by a SWP alumni's passion piece. Every SWP scholar writes a passion piece as a culmination and delivers it while also working on their presentation skills. In this work, the scholars will use their voices and body movement to convey the urgency and importance of the climate crisis and its effects on their futures.

Makenna York (Yorkie) is a budding composer and cellist from Reno, Nevada. While she attends school for composing at University of Nevada, Reno, she prioritizes time with her loving friends and family, and writes orchestral pieces dedicated to people and places she loves.

Her piece, ***Oihana in A Major***, is dedicated to the composer's best friend Oihana, whose name means "forest" in the Basque language. The piece depicts rivers and breezes flowing through forests and trees, especially those in the Northwestern area. It is calm like a lullaby, and aims at showing the beauty and serene qualities of natural environments. The D-minor interlude within the piece shows the dangers of what can happen when we do not protect our environments. It ends in a major key, a hopeful tone for prioritizing and loving our planet.



Lexi Lalauni soars through skies with her dynamic sounds and contemplative lyrics, painting a picture with her voice, and drawing inspiration from the essence of life, the rivers and trees. With a brilliant mix of dreamy pop and indie soul, Lexi Lalauni moves you along on her musical journey.

‘Gaia’s peace’ is for the earth and all that grows here. I wrote this song a few Earth Days ago, for a fundraiser for the Woodland Park Zoo. Inspired by the song “Imagine” by John Lennon, I sat in my car at the waterfront watching the waves and my chorus came to my heart instantly, and my song ‘Gaia’s peace’ was created. My hope for this song is that it will remind us, we are all here together, to love is why.

“I wrote my song **‘The Unknown’** on a day I felt overwhelmed by life, and not knowing where we were headed collectively. My emotions took over as I pondered this mysterious dream we call life. I cried in my room, feeling confusion, sadness and hope for happier dreaming. I let myself melt into the abyss, having to accept the unknown. Life is truly a journey of the unknown. This song brings me comfort in that.”

Durojaiye Gyasi Kweku Heru, stage name Gyasi, is 19 years of age. According to Gyasi, “I started music seriously when I was 15 and since then I’ve focused on spreading messages through my music. My motto is: Feel More to Heal More. Now if I can get you to feel what I’m saying, and not just listen to the words, then I’ve done my job as a Master of the Ceremony. Ae y’all ready to heal with me?”

“I’m a lyricist, a writer, a savant of literature. To understand my work, you’re gonna have to use your cognitive thinking. My work requires you to listen with your heart, not just your ears. Above all else, my work is healing.”

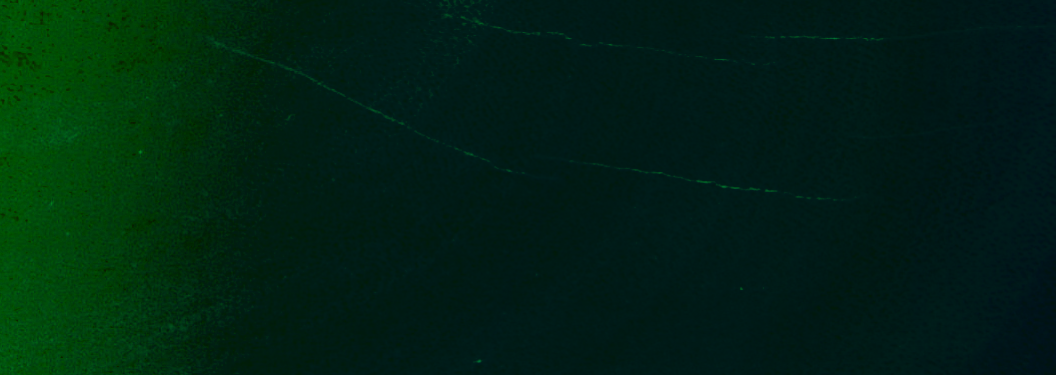
Kylie Rae Colvin aka Savvy Rae (The Residency): A 23-year-old emcee and singer/songwriter who says “I’m not a trend –setter, I’m a mold breaker.” Art compiled is a mixture of lyricist-style rap, conscious music and singing.

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023

PUBLIC ART EXHIBITION DAY

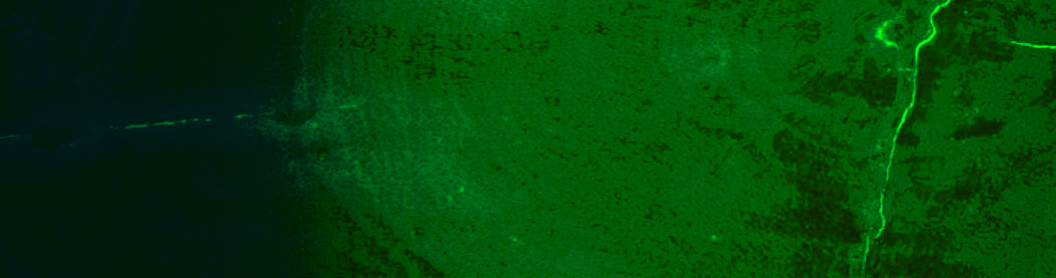
Arden Marburg was born in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2008 and moved to the United States in 2015. They are based in Seattle, and work mostly in watercolor and embroidery.

Their piece, “**SOS**”, mainly focuses on “our current state of danger with climate change. Currently, our oceans are rising as our land is burning, and we can’t see for smoke. This piece portrays the desperation and, really, our state of crisis, in which we must protect the land we have while it’s still here. I wanted the hand reaching upwards to truly portray the jeopardy we’re in. We’re reaching up for help, but there’s nothing there to help us except ourselves, which is something we are going to need to collectively realize very soon. The best thing for us right now is to honestly realize that we’re going to have to help ourselves, and that we can’t expect things to magically get better without putting in the effort. This piece was meant to show our struggle on a smaller, more understandable scale, and to draw connections to things we can truly comprehend and fight for.”



Steven Rolan is 15 years old and currently in the ninth grade. His favorite subject in school is history, but he likes the rest of his classes a lot, too. His favorite activities are painting with oils, snowboarding during the winter, sailing during the summer, and airsoft during the spring and fall seasons. Also, he loves cooking and trying recipes from various world cuisines.

In reference to his work, he states “I believe that working out and working hard on oneself is the only way to improve the rest of the world, because how can we heal our world when we aren’t fully healed ourselves? My favorite quote is from the movie *Rocky*: ‘There is no tomorrow.’ One painting, **‘Life of a tree,’** shows a sad story of three phases of a tree’s life in the modern polluted world: from a bloomy condition to a weaker state and then to slow death in the desert. Another painting, **‘Beauty and pollution,’** shows a beautiful bay and mountains, but the oil spills are in the water and smog fumes are covering mountain peaks. We live in a beautiful world but it’s tragic to watch how we pollute it. We need to take care of our oceans, forests, trees, animals, birds, etc., and not harm them, but protect them from losing their habitats. People need to litter less, recycle more and watch their level of consumption.”



Mika Kodama Chew is drawn to the wisdom of plants and how glass sparkles and refracts light. She's been studying medicinal plants under Herbalist Rachael Witt for five years. She has studied glassblowing with glass artists Jeanne Marie Ferraro and Mary Quinn at Pratt Fine Arts Center for the past year. Mika is 13 years old and enjoys spending time with plants in their natural habitat as well as harvesting and processing them for tea blends, honeys and glycerites.

REFLECTING & REFRACTING: USING GLASS AS A LENS TO EXPLORE THE WISDOM OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

In this project, hand blown glass is used to affect the viewer's perception of common and often overlooked plants.

I use glass to distort the image of plants that have a significant relationship with our environment and offer medicinal benefits to us.

BLACK COTTONWOOD (POPULUS TRICHOCARPA)

You may be familiar with the cottonwood tree's fluffy white seeds you see floating along a breeze and blanketing the street during the spring to early summer.

One of the most striking things I learned about cottonwoods is they can fix nitrogen through a relationship with bacteria within its leaves and branches. This is a process most non-leguminous plants can't do. Perhaps because of this, they are some of the first trees to return after a disturbance to the soil on a floodplain.

Cottonwoods, like many plants, offer medicine. Their resin inside the buds is used for healing salves. The ointment has been the mainstay for indigenous cultures and soldiers to use when injured in battle.

Cottonwood resin contains salicin; the same compound that gives aspirin pain relieving and fever reducing benefits. The resin is analgesic, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and antiseptic. The medicine can be used in cuts, scrapes, bumps and bruises.

I made glass rods as the lens to view the cottonwood, because standing the rods together reminded me of soldiers.

There's an indigenous Dakota legend that stars are birthed into the sky from the branches of cottonwood trees. They say stars form underground and look for the roots of a cottonwood tree. They travel up through the roots, into the trunk and wait in the branches. When the wind gusts bring down the branches of the tree, the stars shoot out of them into the sky.

When you cut a branch of the cottonwood tree, you'll find a shape of a star in the wood.



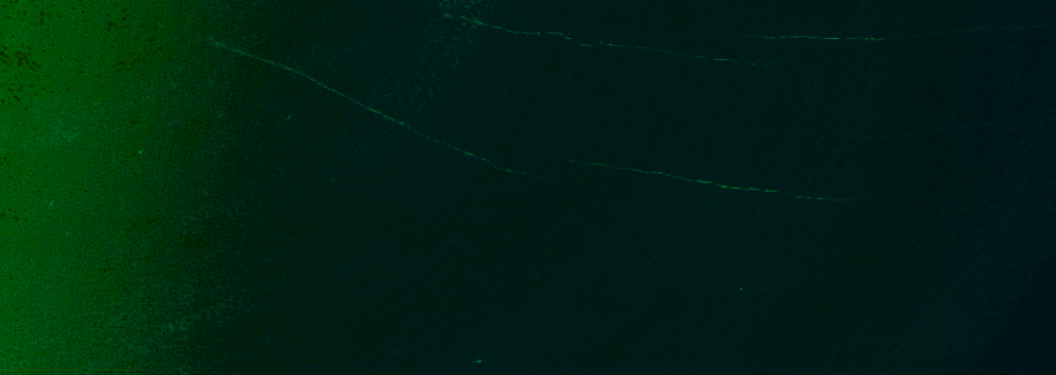
FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2023

DEAR HUMANITY CONCERT

“As part of the Seattle Symphony’s 2020 Beethoven Festival, I was given the opportunity to co-create a piece of music with a group of high school vocalists from all over the King County area: the Seattle Symphony Community Youth Chorus. It would be presented in a concert with Beethoven’s First and Third symphonies, connecting Beethoven’s own young and powerful voice with young voices from our own community. The piece that we created together is *Dear Humanity* for Youth Chorus and Orchestra, though due to the COVID pandemic, we were unable to premiere it until now.

Co-creating a large work for choir and orchestra with a group of youths who didn’t have much experience composing music was a monumental task, requiring the development of a curriculum that incrementally broke down and recreated creative processes in a group environment. I wanted this piece to belong to the students, so I took on a multifaceted role of educator, guide and orchestrator/ arranger, welcoming all contributions from the students as they were willing to share them. To start the process, the Community Youth Chorus was asked to reflect on issues that had a strong impact on their personal lives, leading to a unifying thread of climate change, which eventually created the narrative for the piece. Over the course of five months, week by week, I paired short educational lessons about small and manageable tasks that we needed to accomplish with interactive activities that would help to achieve these tasks. Throughout the process, I stitched together their contributions into a larger, cohesive work, regularly getting student feedback about how to tailor the piece more closely to their collective vision.

Dear Humanity is a work in four movements. The first speaks of the past in hindsight, longing for the childish view of a healthy earth but giving way to expectations of a dying world. The melodic material echoes this starting with a sing-song simplicity, eventually transitioning to something with more muted descending gestures. The second movement begins by evoking a sense of numbness, then inquiring about its cause. The answer



comes in a rhythmically charged dance reminiscent of “boss” video game music. The text examines corporate impact on our planet while the music aims to overstimulate and distract from the darkness of this impact. The third movement starts with many languages being spoken by the choir to aurally depict the text, “Waves upon waves, an unbreaking surf,” which reflects on the rising sea levels. “Smoke fills your lungs” transitions to the tense latter half of the movement, where a constant timpani line pulses like a heartbeat as the lyrics marvel at the destruction of the planet. The final movement recalls some of the themes from earlier movements, reframing them with a more optimistic call to action.”

– Angelique Poteat © 2023

Delta Air Lines proudly supports the Seattle Symphony's Community Partnerships for Youth and Education.

The Dear Humanity Youth Art Festival is generously sponsored by Susan M. Coughlin and John K. Lauber.

Dear Humanity is presented as part of the Seattle Symphony's New Music WORKS initiative, which is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. New Music WORKS features commissions, concerts and educational activities that use composition as a catalyst for collaboration and engagement in music.

The Seattle Symphony's Family, School & Community programs are supported by 4Culture, Marco Argenti, ArtsFund, D.A. Davidson, Delta Air Lines, J.P. Morgan Private Bank, the Klorfine Foundation, the Merriman-Ross Family, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, and individual contributions to the Seattle Symphony Annual Fund.