

VOICES



O F F O R T W O R T H

Dr. Jerome M Bierschenk, Founder and Artistic Director



Winter Conference

University of Texas at Arlington

January 15, 2022

~~~~Program~~~~

The Sun Never Says

Dan Forrest (b. 1978)

*Even  
After  
All this time  
The sun never says to the earth,*

*"You owe  
Me."*

*Look  
What happens  
With a love like that,  
It lights the  
Whole  
Sky.*

-Daniel Ladinsky

**Healing Heart**

**Jacob Narverud (b. 1986)**

*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.*

-Robert Bode

**Caedmon's Hymn  
(7<sup>th</sup> century Old English Poem)**

**Blake Wilson (b. 1994)**

*Now we must honor the guardian of heaven,  
The might of the architect, and his purpose,  
The work of the father of glory  
As he, the eternal lord, established the beginning of wonders;  
He first created for the children of men  
Heaven as a roof, the holy creator  
Then the guardian of mankind,  
The eternal lord, afterwards appointed the middle earth,  
The lands for men, the Lord almighty.*

**Why the Caged Bird Sings**

**Jake Runestad (b. 1986)**

**Elena Walter, soloist**

*I KNOW what the caged bird feels, alas!  
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;  
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,  
And the river flows like a stream of glass;  
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,*

*And the faint perfume from its chalice steals –  
I know what the caged bird feels!*

*I know why the caged bird beats his wing  
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;  
For he must fly back to his perch and cling  
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;  
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars  
And they pulse again with a keener sting –  
I know why he beats his wing!*

*I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,  
When he beats his bars and he would be free;  
It is not a carol of joy or glee,  
But a prayer...  
I know why the caged bird sings!*

- Paul Laurence Dunbar

**Unclouded Day**

**Rev. J.K. Alwood (1828-1909), arr. Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)  
from "Heavenly Home: Three American Songs"**

*Verse One*

*O they tell me of a home far beyond the skies, they tell me of a home far away,  
And they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise:  
O they tell me of an unclouded day.*

*Chorus*

*O the land of cloudless days, O the land of an unclouded sky,  
O they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise:  
O they tell me of an unclouded day.*

*Verse Two*

*O they tell me of a home where my friends have gone,  
They tell me of a land far away, where the tree of life in eternal bloom  
Sheds its fragrance through the unclouded day.*

*Verse Three*

*They tell me of a King in his beauty there, they tell me that mine eyes shall behold  
Where He sits on a throne that is bright as the sun  
In the city that is made of gold!*



About the choir.....

VOICES of Fort Worth is proud to kick off its ninth season during 2021-2022.

VOICES gave its premier performance on May 1, 2012 in conjunction with the Wesleyan Chorale in a concert presented in Martin Hall on the campus of Texas Wesleyan University. Both groups were conducted by Dr. Jerome M. Bierschenk, who was then the Director of Choral Activities at Texas Wesleyan University. Voices of Fort Worth has since presented concerts throughout the DFW Metroplex, and in 2016 was an invited choir to the SWACDA Conference held in Kansas City, Missouri .

VOICES is a consort of highly skilled singers whose vocal blend and exceptional reading skills and musicianship combine to create a unique presentation that spans every musical period from early Renaissance to the 21st century. Specializing in a cappella literature, the vocal chamber ensemble creates the full spectrum of vocal colors ranging from the most intense and dramatic dissonance to the most palliative and soothing consonance.



### **About the director.....**

A native of Fort Worth, **Dr. Jerome M. Bierschenk** has been a music educator in Texas for over 45 years. After earning a bachelor's degree in music education at the University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Bierschenk started a teaching career in instrumental music education, and was a band director for 20 years. He taught in the Austin, Birdville, and Weatherford school districts, and in Weatherford was the Director of Bands as well as the Coordinator of Music for the district.

Dr. Bierschenk's interest began to include voice and choral conducting, and after earning the Master of Music Education degree and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from the University of North Texas, he began his tenure as Artistic Director of the Texas Boys Choir and as the Director of Fine Arts for the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts. In 2007, Dr. Bierschenk was appointed Director of Choral Activities at Texas Wesleyan University, where, in addition to directing the choirs, he taught Aural Skills, Composition, Voice, and Conducting. He was named Chair of the Department of Music in 2014, and retired in 2021.

With both extensive experience as a tenor soloist and as a trumpet player, he has performed solo tenor roles with Schola Cantorum of Fort Worth, the University of

North Texas Choirs, as well as various other groups in the Fort Worth community, and is active as a free-lance trumpet player.

Most recently, Dr. Bierschenk became founder and artistic director of **Voices of Fort Worth**. He is also a member of Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Choral Directors Association, American Choral Directors Association, Collegiate Choral Organization, and National Association of Teachers of Singing. He is a member of Phi Kappa Lambda, and an honorary member of Sigma Alpha Iota and Kappa Kappa Psi music fraternities.

**The singers.....**

| <b>Soprano</b>    | <b>Alto</b>           | <b>Tenor</b>    | <b>Bass</b>      |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Marla Ringel      | Emily Davis           | Rashaad Calaham | Calab Benetch    |
| Regena Tarkington | Kayla Noriega         | Ryan Maxey      | Johnathan Conlon |
| Elena Walter      | Jillian Price         | Adam Peters     | Nathan Kasten    |
| Amanda Wise       | Mary Margaret Soknich | Daniel Wingard  | Lance Newman     |



For more information about Voices of Fort Worth, please visit our website at

[voicesoffortworth.com](http://voicesoffortworth.com)

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