

RADIANCE

directed by Markdavin Obenza

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THE HILLS

Shaking the Tree with Kevin Siegfried
Saturday, February 27th, 2021 at 7:00pm
on YouTube and Facebook Live

pre-show chat with the board at 6:30pm

The Hills: Shaking the Tree with Kevin Siegfried

The quiet humility of Shaker music and other American folk tunes take on a new dimension surrounded by the alpine forests of the Pacific Northwest. We'll learn about the history of the Shakers and their deep musical tradition, then embark on a choral adventure to perform hymns and new arrangements by guest composer Kevin Siegfried.



Kevin Siegfried (b. 1969) is a composer of distinctive and engaging musical works. Siegfried is actively involved in the research and performance of early American music and his arrangements of Shaker music have been performed and recorded by choirs across the globe.

The Tudor Choir's "Gentle Words" CD, the premiere recording of Siegfried's Shaker arrangements, received wide acclaim and was praised as "a stunning addition to the repertoire" by Fanfare Magazine. In recent years, Siegfried has performed at the Maine Festival of American Music, where he has presented concerts in collaboration with Brother Arnold Hadd, one of the few surviving Shakers at Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

Since 2014, Siegfried has served as Composer in Residence for the Capitol Hill Chorale in Washington, DC. While currently based in Boston, where he is a Professor at the Boston Conservatory, Siegfried began his choral composition career in Seattle, and maintains a close connection with many choral groups and directors in the Pacific Northwest.

RADIANCE

SOPRANO

Julia Baker
Ruth Schauble

ALTO

Lauren Kastanas
Lindsey Long

TENOR

Markdavin Obenza
Robin Wyatt-Stone

BASS

T.J. Callahan
Kevin Wyatt-Stone

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Willimark Obenza
Margaret Obenza

UPCOMING CONCERTS

THE FIELDS

Songs of Abundance
Sat, May 8, 2021 at
7:00pm
ONLINE

PROGRAM

Pre-show chat (6:30pm)	Radiance Board of Directors
Welcome	Markdavin Obenza
Sow the Seeds of Love and Kindness Solo: Julia Baker	Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1880s
Rolling On	Text and Tune: Canterbury, New Hampshire Arr. Kevin Siegfried
Chosen Spot	Watervliet, New York
In Yonder Valley	Text and Tune: Father James Whittaker Arr. K. Siegfried
The Savior's Cheering Promise Solo: Lauren Kastanas	Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1848
Holy Wisdom's Feast Solo: T.J. Callahan	Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1847
Morning Light	Text and Tune: Anonymous Shaker Arr. K. Siegfried
I Will Walk with My Children	Text and Tune: Enfield, New Hampshire Arr. K. Siegfried
The Waters of Life Solo: Markdavin Obenza	Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1846
Vum Vive Vum from <i>Angel of Light</i>	Kevin Siegfried
Now is the Cool of the Day	Text and Tune: Jean Ritchie Arr. Kevin Siegfried
Wintergrace from <i>Appalachian Carols</i> Solo: Lindsey Long	Text and Tune: Jean Ritchie Arr. K. Siegfried
Consolation	Text: Isaac Watts Music: K. Siegfried
Top of the Hill from <i>At the Water's Edge</i>	Text: Sarah Orne Jewett Music: K. Siegfried

TEXTS

Sow the Seeds of Love and Kindness

Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1880s

Sow the seeds of love and kindness
While on earth you do remain
Angel hands will guard the harvest
Till you reap the golden grain.

No harsh words* your tongues should utter
Tho' severe your trials are
Every wrong will yet be righted
We shall stand just as we are.

**According to Br. Arnold: "although the original might say 'tunes' we always sang 'words'"*

Reading 1:

read by Ruth Schauble

"The tract of land belonging to the Society was now a very large one. Pastures, woodlands, and meadows spread over hundreds of acres. There were large cow barns filled with blooded cattle, a hundred or more besides the young stock. Butter and cheese were made for the market. There were flocks of sheep, and pigs in great numbers, and poultry as well. Twenty yoke of the finest oxen to be found far or near dragged the heavy ploughs that turned up the rich earth, where in summer the corn, oats, rye,

and buckwheat swayed in the warm breezes. The vegetable gardens, with long, even rows of beets and carrots and onions...spread toward the south and joined the potato fields, from which they counted upon the yield of a thousand bushels. All this cultivation of the soil was done by the Shaker brethren."

*-Clara Endicott Sears (1916).
"Gleanings from Old Shaker Journals" p. 223*

Rolling On

Text and Tune: Canterbury, New Hampshire
Arr. Kevin Siegfried

I hear the gladsome song of love,
Of peace divine, of heav'nly mirth,
Like waves of music from the spheres above,
Rolling on o're the plains of earth.

Rolling on, no pow'r
The fullness of its might can stay,
The light of heaven breaking forth
Shall sweep the mists of doubt away.

Reading 2:

read by Kevin Wyatt-Stone and Lindsey Long

In 1844 a revelation at Lebanon directed that an outdoor place of worship be prepared on a high peak east of the village. This spot, named Holy Mount, was cleared and fenced and provided with a piled rock altar, a shelter, and a small enclosure called the spiritual fountain, within which stood a tall inscribed stone. Soon in all the societies the instruments labored to discover the proper site for similar feast grounds. At Gloucester one was set off on top of the hill rising above the village on the west. There for more than ten years the society would go to hold meetings on beautiful days in the summer.

lane, two brethren on the right and two sisters on the left, in their uniform of trimmed bonnets in light blue, their fringed mouse-colored shawls and white linen gloves. They sang as they marched...On reaching the enclosure they would switch to a "bowing song," which was simply a slow march, and bow on the song while marching in. Then, said Sister Aurelia, "the very heavens came down, the meeting would be so spiritual...Ancient spirits and prophets would often come, and bring messages, and a spiritual halo of light seemed to settle over the place — and a power which none could resist."

Aurelia Mace thought it a lovely sight to see the Believers marching four abreast up the

*-Daniel Patterson (1979).
"The Shaker Spiritual" p. 368*

Chosen Spot

Watervliet, New York

How pleasant the streams as they flow from
the fountain,
On this holy Mount of the Lord;
Encircling they borders, O! Beautiful Mountains,
Stand hosts of bright Angels of God.

From this chosen spot, saith divine inspiration,
The Most High shall utter his voice;
Proclaiming his laws to all kindreds and na-
tions,
And causing the weak to rejoice.

No wonder the earth with the heavens are
blended,
And forests with music resound,
For lo! on this mount has Jehovah descended,
And shed his bright glory around.

O Lord, we will praise and forever adore thee,
For righteous and holy art thou;
On this holy mount we will worship before
thee,
And round thy pure altar we'll bow.

Reading 3:

read by T.J. Callahan

Few experiences are more thrilling to a visitor
than sitting as an on-looker in the religious
exercises of these people, in their plain yet
exquisitely appropriate dress, watching the
harmonious movement of the march, which
signifies the onward travel of the soul to spir-
itual freedom and full redemption, the move-
ments of the hands, that mean the gathering
and scattering of blessing, and listening to the
singing, with no instrumental hindrance in the
way of an accompaniment, as the sweet, soul-
filled voices utter in simple melodies the hope

and aspiration of their souls. There is no striv-
ing after effect — it is pure devotion, the art-
less expression of sincere life efforts for purity
and holiness. Many, untouched by art's highest
efforts, are deeply affected in witnessing the
worship of these pure, true-hearted men and
women, who aim "to be what they appear to be
and to appear to be what they really are."

-Anna White and Leila S. Taylor (1910)
"Shakerism: Its Meaning and Message" P. 332

In Yonder Valley

Text and Tune: Father James Whittaker
Arr. K. Siegfried

In yonder valley there grows sweet union,
let us arise and take our fill.
The winter's past and the spring appears,
The turtle dove is in our land.
In yonder valley there flows sweet union,
let us arise and drink our fill.

-Father James Whittaker

The Savior's Cheering Promise

Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1848

I will lead my chosen people
To pleasant froves and vineyards fair,
I will be their constand Shepherd
and they shall feel my tender care.

For I am their holy Savior
And will spread my wings o'er them,
When with grief their souls are filled
I will soothe with healing balm.

Received of the Holy Savior's Angel
while at the Holy Fountain
Monday evening Sept 11th, 1848
For the Elders of the Chh Chosen Land

Reading 4:

read by Julia Baker

“Everyone who knew Sister Mildred knew of her love for music and singing, especially the Shaker spirituals. These Shaker songs soon became part of our lives. On Friday evenings it was common for Sister to gather us in the waiting room where we would learn Shaker songs. She had the foresight to teach us those

Shaker songs so that they would be carried on to another generation. She never realized at the time that her singing would be recorded for future generations. To her, the Shaker songs were something she loved and wanted to keep alive.”

-Sister Frances Carr (1995)
“*Growing Up Shaker*” p. 105

Holy Wisdom’s Feast

Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1847

Come come O come unto my Holy Fountain
And drink O drink at my living pool
The waters of Life that freely are flowing
To comfort and strengthen each needy soul.

My hand is extended my blessings are ready
My feast is prepared and my wine cups are fill’d
O come at my call O my people saith Wisdom
Partake of the Feast on my holy Hill.

*Given by inspiration of Holy Mother Wisdom
at the Holy Fountain, Chosen Land
Monday eve. May 24, 1847*

Reading 5:

read by Robin Wyatt-Stone

“As I attended Shaker School, I discovered that it had many special features. One of them was the walks which we took. We would go for walks as a group with Sister Muriel and an assistant, an older girl or a younger Sister from the Community. We would go to Aurelia’s Falls in the woods; to the apple orchard in spring time when the apple trees were in bloom; and to other places. During these outings we learned about wildflowers, trees, and birds; we

read about national events in the beauty of the apple orchard. Even though there were twenty-eight to thirty high-spirited students, there was never a behavior problem. If one misbehaved, that one was not allowed to go on walks in the future. And we all did love these excursions.”

*Sister Frances Carr (1995)
“Growing Up Shaker” p. 31*

Morning Light

Text and Tune: Anonymous Shaker
Arr. K. Siegfried

Tho life’s morn rose bright and cloudless
And the sun did brilliant appear,
There may be a fearful tempest,
Ere the noon of life draweth near.

Then stand firm as the rock of ages,
Tho the fiercest of winds may blow,
The light that illum’d they early morning
Again will appear ere the evening close.

-Anonymous Shaker song
ca. 1870s

Reading 6:

read by Lauren Kastanas

“Over the years I had seen so many young people leave. For the children whose parents [returned and] took them, it was easily understood. But it was more traumatic for the Community, and especially Sister Mildred, to have so many young people choose to go to the world when she had put so much of herself into their care. I can only imagine how disappointing, hurtful and hopeless it must have seemed. Yet, to this day, it amazes me how the Shakers, especially those who cared for young people, accepted the choices they made without recrimination. I mentioned this to Sister Mildred, and she replied that the young people who were left under the care of the Shakers

until they came of age, did not ask for it, and they had no choice. So now they were entitled to make a choice they felt would bring them happiness. I felt a great pity for the Shakers at this time and decided that I would be the one to remain. Those who knew me as a child and as a young teenager would never in their wildest dreams have expected that out of the ten, I would be the one to remain with the Community.”

-Sister Frances Carr (1995)
“Growing Up Shaker” p. 128

I Will Walk with My Children

Text and Tune: Enfield, New Hampshire
Arr. K. Siegfried

I will walk with my children in holy garments,
unspotted with sin,
I will dwell with the holy,
I will dwell with the lowly
And they with my spirit and power shall be
filled.

-from the singing of Sister Mildred Barker

The Waters of Life

Sabbathday Lake, Maine 1846

Here is the Holy Fountain
Here are the waters of life,
drink O drink and be ye refreshed
that your thirsty souls may live.

I will pour my blessings upon you
and feed you with the bread of heaven,
that when heavy trials roll
you may not faint by the way.

-Received at the Holy Fountain
on Chosen Land, 1846

Vum Vive Vum from *Angel of Light*

Kevin Siegfried

Reading 7:

read by Ruth Schauble

“There was never a time when Jean’s Ritchie’s voice wasn’t part of my life. Growing up as I did in a folk music community, she was a constant influence....Best of all was Jean’s own singing — gentle, unassuming and beautiful, with that clear, high voice that took you right to the hollers of Perry County, Kentucky.

This is a woman whose music had given voice to the beauties and tragedies of Appalachian life and culture, who had influenced millions, who had played the Royal Albert Hall and Carnegie Hall, whose singing had helped shape American music, who could rock a baby to sleep in one breath and dress down the strip miners in the next — and here she was, open-

ing her home to all of us without a second thought. In typical form, she found a kind word for everyone who sang that day.

We made music from afternoon to evening, and as shade began to spread over the yard, Jean sat in her garden and sang: (music plays) I’d heard the song dozens of times, but I don’t know that I’d ever really listened before. In that moment, its full impact hit me — the beauty and imagery of Jean’s words, echoing the biblical story of the Garden of Eden, but also Jean’s very contemporary message of responsibility and covenant with earth, the divine and one another.”

-Reverend Dan Schatz
“Jean Ritchie and the Cool of the Day”

Now is the Cool of the Day

Text and Tune: Jean Ritchie
Arr. Kevin Siegfried

My Lord, he said unto me,
“Do you like my garden so fair?
You may live in this garden
if you keep the grasses green,
And I’ll return in the cool of the day.”

Now is the cool of the day,
O, the earth is a garden,
the garden of my Lord,
And we walk in this garden
in the cool of the day.

Then my Lord, he said unto me,
“Do you like my garden so pure?
You may live in this garden
if you keep the waters clean,
And I’ll return in the cool of the day.”

Then my Lord he said unto me,
“Do you like my garden so free?
You may live in this garden
if you keep the people free,
And I’ll return in the cool of the day.”

- Jean Ritchie

Reading 8:

read by Kevin Wyatt-Stone and Lindsey Long

“We stepped out into the shivery still morning. The snow was ankle deep and the world was shining like silver beneath the wispy circle of a moon and the big Christmas star. The old earth was like it was holding its breath and waiting for a holy thing to happen. We went around to Granny’s window, keeping very still so as not to waken her too soon, and we sang ‘Brightest and Best’ for her. Then for Mom and Dad came ‘Good Christian Men Rejoice,’ and then ‘Wondrous Love’ that Grandpa Hall loved so well. As we sang, it seemed that thousands of people and a thousand years sang with us the simple words that know no time, that never fail to make me chill and tremble to my heart.”

“Ice and snow mean hardship to city people, as I learned when I came to New York and had my first taste of “rush hour” during a January storm. How different on our Kentucky mountainside farm! Here, the cold months mean a needed breathing space – the land, the animals, people all rest and gather strength of body and spirit to begin the growing cycle again, in the Spring. . . I wanted to sing about this feeling of winter grace and peace. There was no old song for it, so I made this one.”

-Jean Ritchie (1987)
“Kentucky Christmas Old and New”

-Jean Ritche (1988)
“Singing Family of the Cumberlands” p. 152

This is the time so well we love,
The time of all the year;
When winter calls with chilling breath,
For fireside and good cheer.

A time for men and beast to stand
And feel the season turn;
To watch the stars for secret signs,
And God's true lessons learn.

The time when the corn is all into the barn,
The old cow's breath's a frosty wine,
And the morn along the fallow field
Doth silver shine.

And when cold morning's radiant star,
Shines over hill and plain;
We know anew that little babe,
born to us again.

And man and beast and bird and tree,
Each one in his own place;
We bow our hearts and thank our God,
For winter rest and grace.

- Jean Ritchie

Reading 9:

read by T.J. Callahan

Singing schools thrived in 18th and 19th century New England and their graduates swelled the ranks of local church choirs, who quickly became bored with simply singing along with the congregation and wanted something more to do. Sections of the choir took pride in their sound and strove to shine brighter than the

next. Their music became increasingly complex and their singing began to take on the appearance of a performance. A new style of song — the fusing tune — grew in popularity. Each section of the choir had its own melody, independent of the others.

Consolation

Text: Isaac Watts

Once more, my soul, the rising day
Salutes thy waking eyes;
Once more, my voice, thy tribute, pay
To Him who rules the skies.

Dear God, let all my hours be thine,
Whilst I enjoy the light;
Then shall my sun in smiles decline,
And bring a pleasant night.

Music: K. Siegfried

Night unto night His name repeats,
The day renews the sound,
Wide as the heav'n on which He sits
To turn the seasons round.

-Isaac Watts

Reading 10:

read by Julia Baker

"I believe that we should know our native towns much better than most of us do, and never let ourselves be strangers at home.

With its high hills and pine forests, and all its ponds and brooks and distant mountain views, there are few such delightful country towns in New England as the one where I was born. Two large rivers join just below the village at the head of tidewater, and these, with

the great inflow from the sea, make a magnificent stream, bordered on its seaward course now by high-wooded banks of dark pines and hemlocks, and again by lovely green fields that slope gently to long lines of willows at the water's edge."

-Sarah Orne Jewett
"Looking Back on Girlhood"
Youth's Companion, January 7 1892

I love the steepled town,
The river winding down,
The slow salt tide that creeps
Beside a shore that sleeps,
Dark with its pine woods' crown.

Here, high above them all
Upon my broad-backed hill,
Far from shrill voices I,
And near the sun and sky,
Can look and take my fill.

I breathe the sweet air in,
While lower drops the sun,
And brighter all too soon
Grows the pale hunter's moon,
The whole year's fairest one.

Oh, lovely light that fades
Too soon from sky and field,
Oh, days that are too few,
How can I gather you,
Or treasure what you yield!

Oh, sunshine, warm me through,
And, soft wind, blow away
My foolishness, my fears,
And let some golden years
Grow from this golden day!

- Sarah Orne Jewett

RADIANCE is a Seattle-based professional vocal ensemble specializing in the performance of American choral music. The group primarily focuses on performing contemporary works by living composers, including local Pacific Northwest composers. Radiance also performs music from the shapenote and Shaker traditions to celebrate and connect the roots of American choral music to contemporary works

DIRECTOR MARKDAVIN OBENZA has dedicated his career to music. In addition to Radiance, Markdavin is Director and founder of Seattle-based chamber choir the Byrd Ensemble, an ensemble that performs Renaissance Polyphony, and Producer for Scribe Records, an independent record label. He is an active freelance singer who has performed with the Byrd Ensemble, Tudor Choir, Early Music Vancouver, and members of the Tallis Scholars. He is the Director of Choral Music at Trinity Parish Church in Seattle, WA and teaches choir at South Seattle College.