

*The Mansfield University Music Department presents*

# *Sing 'til the Spirit Moves!*



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*I could think of no better way to celebrate* the 50-year history of the Mansfield University Concert Choir than a compilation recording of 25 years of the choir's legacy! Since my tenure as Director of Choral Activities began in 1990, I have made a commitment to the performance of African American spirituals and gospel music. While spirituals originated as improvised unison songs, the magnificent choral arrangements beginning with the Fisk Jubilee Singers tour in 1871 through those composed by William Dawson, Moses Hogan, and Stacey Gibbs, among others, have evolved into true American art treasures!

The African American spiritual (also called the Negro Spiritual) comprises one of the largest and most significant forms of American folksong. Sadly, the spiritual was born on the rural slave plantation as millions of Africans were brought to this country beginning with the first ship in 1619 and ending with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. When African people were taken captive and brought to America, their old religious beliefs often could not survive in their new world. The first organized campaigns to convert slaves to Christianity were led by Quaker, Moravian, and Anglican missionaries during the early 18th century. By the second quarter of the 18th century, a growing number of slave owners believed that Christianity made slaves more servant-like. The stories of miracles found in the King James Version of the Bible about the blind man, the lame man, and the dead man captured slaves' imagination and brought them hope for a better life beyond this world. They also related to the Israelites, who were persecuted, and sang about horrors experienced everyday as a slave, hoping for a new life in the kingdom of heaven. These powerful songs refer to the liberation of the spirit and to eternal joy. Thus, we should treat them as prayers in our performances.

Gospel music, while influenced by the spiritual, is more closely tied to secular blues and jazz originating in the cities of New Orleans and Chicago. These songs often speak of the despair of being trapped in a

city ghetto and incorporate piano and drums into the musical fabric to capture the religious fervor.

As a director leading an almost all-white choir, I believe that singers of all ages and background must learn about the history of these powerful American folksongs and approach our performances with deep respect and earnest understanding. Thus, as you listen to the selections performed through the years, you will find that we learned more about style, vocal timbre, and the approach to dialect so important in the interpretation of these works of art. In the words of Lawrence Burnett, who coached the Mansfield University Concert Choir at a festival of spiritual and gospel music held at Penn State University in 2003: “There is a challenge of performing music from a folk tradition in a classical setting. Continue to strive to fuse the high art and the soulful frenzy.” I hope that you will find this statement to be true in the performances captured in this compilation recording.

-Peggy Dettwiler, Director of Choral Activities



*Peggy Dettwiler* is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Mansfield University, where she conducts the Concert Choir, Festival Chorus, and Chamber Singers, and teaches choral conducting and methods. She holds the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. She also has a Master of Music Degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Texas at San Antonio and a Master of Music Degree in Music Education from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. In 2010, Dr. Dettwiler received the Elaine Brown Award for Choral Excellence from the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association, and she placed second in 2011 and 2013 for the American Prize for Choral Conductors at the College/University level. Dettwiler has served as a guest conductor and lecturer throughout the country and has given presentations at

numerous NAfME and ACDA Conventions. She has produced two DVDs, one entitled, “Developing a Vocal Color Palette for Various Choral Styles” and the second, “Sing in Style.” Dettwiler made her conducting debut in Carnegie Hall in January of 2014 and presented an interest session at the World Choral Symposium in Seoul, Korea, in August of 2014. Most recently, Dettwiler received the Presidential Coin for Excellence from General Francis Hendricks, President of Mansfield University and was designated “Honored Artist of the American Prize.”

*The Mansfield University Concert Choir* is the premier touring ensemble representing the university at choral events across the country and abroad. While the majority of the singers are undergraduate music majors, membership is open to all students at the university through an audition process. The group has achieved an impressive reputation of excellence, having been chosen for twenty consecutive years by audition to perform at conventions or festivals around the world: the Pennsylvania Music Educators State Conference; the Eastern Division Music Educators National Conference; the Music Educators National Convention; the American Choral Directors Association Pennsylvania State Conference, the ACDA Eastern Division Convention, and two National Collegiate Choral Organization conferences. On the international stage, the Concert Choir has won eight gold medals at the World Choir Games including a Championship and four second-place prizes as well as first place and two second-place prizes at the International Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales. The MU Concert Choir won the American Prize in Choral Performance for the College & University Division in 2011 and gave their debut performance in Carnegie Hall as a part of the Performing Arts Educators 8th Annual Invitational in 2014. The Concert Choir has performed in sixteen countries during their seven European Tours, and the group has produced eighteen CD recordings on the Mark Custom Recording Label. The singers are frequently praised for the emotional spectrum in their performances, their diverse vocal color, and their varied repertoire.

*Mansfield University* is beautifully positioned in the mountains of north central Pennsylvania amid one of the best outdoor sports and recreations spots in the country, surrounded by thousands of acres of Pennsylvania State Game Lands, pristine lakes, and breathtaking mountain views. As Pennsylvania's premier public liberal arts institution and as a member of the PA State System of Higher Education, Mansfield University exemplifies academic rigor and affordability. In January of 2015, Mansfield University was accepted as Pennsylvania's only member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities (COPLAC.) Most recently, MU was listed among the Colleges of Distinction for 2015-2016 and as one of 100 best values for colleges, number 14 for the Northeast.

With about 2500 students, almost 40 academic degree programs, and 80-plus student organizations, students can find many ways to get involved at Mansfield University, develop leadership skills, build a resumé and establish a lifelong network of supporters. Founded in 1857, Mansfield was the first state institution to grant a certificate to teach music and has a long, rich tradition of musical excellence.

The Mansfield University Music Department is known for its excellence throughout the state, region, nationally and internationally. The music department is located in the Will George Butler Center, which contains the Steadman Theatre, two large rehearsal halls, fifty-five practice rooms, music faculty studios, and state-of-the art technology facilities. The Music Department is staffed by twenty-one faculty members with degrees from some of the most prestigious music schools in the country. The department enrolls over 160 music majors and offers Bachelor of Music degrees in Music Education, Elective Studies in Business, Emphasis in Music Technology, Performance, and the Bachelor of Arts in Music and is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).

For further information, write to the Music Department at 18 Campus View Drive—Butler Music Center, Mansfield University, Mansfield, PA 16933, call (570) 662-4710, or log on to <http://music.mansfield.edu>

# Praise for *Sing 'til the Spirit Moves!*

Congrats to Dr. Peggy Dettwiler and the Mansfield University Concert Choir as you celebrate 26 years of choral excellence through the release of this exciting recording project of African American music. You have achieved recognition within Pennsylvania, the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and other professional music organizations for your superior singing of this repertoire while maintaining the cultural integrity, style and vocal nuance required to help listeners to grow deeper in their understanding of the music and its historical significance. I remain one of your most enthusiastic supporters as your journey in choral music continues to sustain itself in the years to come.

*-Tony Leach*

Professor of Music/Music Education, The Pennsylvania State University



*“The essence of the spiritual and gospel music digs deep into the hearts of so many African Americans. When there is little hope, ‘Steal Away’, I Ain’t Tired Yet’, ‘Soon A-Will Be Done’, ‘Precious Lord, Take My Hand’ and thousands of others, give solace and consolation to many a soul. Thank you, Peggy Dettwiler and the Mansfield University Choir, for preserving this art form in the beautiful mountains of Pennsylvania.”*

*-Ronald D. Johnson*

Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland

*“The African American Spiritual* has reemerged as one of the most significant genres in choral literature. The Mansfield University Concert Choir celebrates its 50th anniversary with a unique CD compilation performing spirituals and gospel music coming out of the African American tradition. From 1993 to 2016, under the masterful direction of Dr. Peggy Dettwiler, the CD displays how the choir expanded their knowledge of early performance practices including style, dialect, and vocal color. This is a rare and beautiful project!”

*-Dr. Felicia Barber*

Director of Choral Activities, Westfield State University



*“Dear Dr. Dettwiler, I am thrilled that you and your fabulous choir will be recording an album of Spirituals and Gospel music. My mentor, Hall Johnson, had but three dreams in his final years: that his beloved Spirituals would continue to be performed, that they would be performed authentically, and that they would be performed by all people. I’m sure you meet the criteria admirably and that he is sending you a smile along with his favorite compliment, “Grand!” I can’t wait for my copy. My very best wishes to you and your singers.”*

*-Dr. Eugene Thamon Simpson*

Founding Curator, The Hall Johnson Collection



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Sing 'til the Spirit Moves!

# Disc 1

## I'm Gonna Sing (1993-1996)

1. I'm Gonna Sing 'til the Spirit Moves . . .  
    . . . Moses Hogan 2:30

## Around The World in Song (1997-1999)

2. Turn the World Around. . . . . Larry Farrow 3:59  
    Mo Sze But, *piano*
3. The Battle of Jericho . . . . . Moses Hogan 2:10

## How Can I Keep From Singing (2000-2001)

4. My God is So High. . . . . Moses Hogan 3:06  
    Adam Bennett, *tenor*
5. My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord . . .  
    . . . Moses Hogan 2:49
6. Sinner Man . . . . . Howard Roberts 2:42  
    John Manning, *tenor*  
    Michael Reed, *drum*

## Live from Europe: Singet dem Herrn (2002)

7. Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel . . .  
    . . . Moses Hogan 2:50

## I Can Tell The World (2003)

8. Born To Die . . . . . Glenn Burleigh 6:52  
    Brian Carl, *piano*  
    Rich Cummings, *drums*

## Cantemus - Let Us Sing (2004)

9. This Little Light of Mine . . . Moses Hogan 4:40  
    Amanda Delbo, *soprano*  
    Stephen Fox, *baritone*

## Istanbul, Turkey (2005)

10. Walk Together Children . . . Moses Hogan 2:57

## Choral Kaleidoscope (2006)

11. Hold On! . . . . . Moses Hogan 3:13

## Consecrate the Place and Day to Music (2007)

12. This Little Light of Mine . . .  
    . . . Paul Christiansen 3:00  
    Matthew Petrozilli, *baritone*
13. True Light. . . . . Keith Hampton 4:30  
    Laura Haffner, Sarah Best; *soloists*  
    Taylor Smith, *piano*

## Mansfield Strikes Gold (2008)

14. Soon Ah Will Be Done . . . Diane Loomer 4:12  
    Elizabeth Kennedy, *soprano*
15. Mary Had a Baby. . . . . William Dawson 3:14  
    Belinda Martz, *mezzo-soprano*
16. Go Tell It on the Mountain . . .  
    . . . Carolyn Jennings 2:21

# Disc 2

Sing 'til the Spirit Moves!

## Sing Joyfully (2009)

1. I'm Gonna Sing 'til the Spirit Moves . . .  
Moses Hogan 2:26  
Masashi Kishimoto, *graduate student conductor*

2. Deep River . . . . . Anders Paulsson 4:35  
Joseph Murphy, *saxophone*

3. The Drinking Gourd . . . . . André Thomas 3:37

## Sing to the Lord (2010)

4. I Can Tell the World . . . . . Moses Hogan 2:57

## The Road Home (2011)

5. Joshua . . . . . Norman Luboff 2:44  
Melanie DeJesus & Brandon Russell, *soloists*  
Jeffrey Sievers, *percussion*

6. Dan-u-el . . . . . Kirke Mechem 4:31  
Nicholas Webb, *baritone*  
Jesse Martins, *piano*

7. I Want Jesus to Walk with Me . . . Howard Helvey 4:11  
Hingrid Kujawinski & Jesse Martins, *piano*

## Hark, I Hear The Harps Eternal (2012)

8. Hold On! . . . . . Eugene Thamon Simpson 1:57

## Changed My Name (2013)

9. Wade in the Water . . . . . Moses Hogan 3:31  
Steven Miller, *graduate student conductor*  
Brandon Russell, *baritone*  
Angelo Stokes, *percussion*

10. Changed My Name . . . . . Linda Twine 2:01  
Lindsay Brown, *mezzo-soprano*  
Steven Miller, *baritone*  
Kyle Rusk, *piano*

11. The Good Old Righteous Way . . . . Linda Twine 3:27  
Jordan Schreiner, *tenor*  
Erin Haafke, *mezzo-soprano*  
Jannis Floyd, *speaker*

## Clap Praise (2014)

12. My God Is a Rock . . . Alice Parker/Robert Shaw 5:33  
Brett Helmus, *bass*

13. Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen . . .  
Gail Poch 3:29

14. Ezekiel Saw de Wheel . . . . . William Dawson 2:48  
Jordan Schreiner, *tenor*

## Further Goals (2015)

15. John Saw de Numbuh . . . . . Stacey V. Gibbs 2:51  
Darrick J. King, *graduate student conductor*

## Homeward Bound (2016)

16. I've Been In the Storm So Long . . . Jeffrey Ames 5:15  
Zoe Noyes, *mezzo-soprano*

17. Don't Bend Down . . . . . Stephen Hatfield 4:47  
Kyle Rusk, *piano*

