



**First Mennonite Church**

**[430 W 9th Ave, Denver, CO 80204](#)**

Tickets available at **[safonia.org](https://safonia.org)**

Welcome from the Artistic Director

Dear Safonia community,

Welcome, and thank you for joining us for *Elements*.

This season's concert is rooted in the idea of returning to the essential truths that steady us, even as the world shifts rapidly beneath our feet. Like fire, water, air, and earth, the elements are ever-changing and unpredictable—yet they are the very forces that shape life. In much the same way, our voices, when united in song, offer both movement and anchoring: a way to navigate uncertainty and a way to rise above it.

Through repertoire inspired by the natural world and the human spirit, *Elements* explores not just the forces around us, but the forces within us. One of the pieces we sing, Gwyneth Walker's "Tree of Peace," sets to music the words of poet and Quaker minister William Penn, who writes:

*"To live rightly is to love one another."*

This message feels especially poignant right now. In a time of cultural noise, swift change, and deep division, we come together in song to listen, to connect, and to remember who we are—and who we strive to be. Safonia believes in the power of making voices heard: not just our own, but those historically silenced, those whispering truth, those calling for justice and joy.

We hope *Elements* will remind you, as it reminds us, that when we ground ourselves in love, community, and the natural rhythm of the world, we become stronger. We become whole. We become a choir in every sense of the word.

Thank you for being here. We're so glad you are.

We also hope to see you at the Colorado Treble Festival—either as a participant or as a member of the audience!

Warmly,

'Freddy'

Christa Fredrickson

Artistic Director, Safonia

### **MEMBERS OF SAFONIA**

Artistic Director: Christa Fredrickson

Wendy Allen

Erin McDermott

Robyn Reimers-Herrera

Sarah Dieter

Karen Lowenstein\*

Rebecca MacMahon\*

Adria Young

Lee Hamre

Patricia Nord

Laura VandeRiet

Andrea Wiens

Caitlin McKernan\*

Anne DiCola

Megan Funk

Vanessa Bishop

Faith Maronn

Gena Nichols\*

Suzanne Averill

Melissa Gillespie

Caroline Yates Deffenbaugh

\*Section Leader

Assistant Artistic Director: Laura VandeRiet

Accompanist: Kelli Horton

### **Guest musicians:**

David Moreno, cello

Richard Crowder, percussion

## I. EARTH

### The Tree of Peace

Gwyneth Walker

O, my sister and my brother,  
All who walk upon the earth,  
Fold to your hearts each other  
Where mercy dwells, the peace of the Lord is there.  
To live rightly is to love one another,  
Each kindness a gift, each deed a prayer.

Listen, listen to one another  
Walk with reverence in the steps of  
Those who have gone before,  
Where forgiveness and wisdom have stood.  
So shall the wide earth become our temple,  
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall.  
The violence of war over the earth shall cease.  
Love shall tread out the fire of anger  
And in its ashes plant a tree of peace

### From Earth to Heaven

Craig Courtney

Of harmless innocence.  
The thoughtless tongue

Which fills the world with sadness,  
Then shall be employed with noblest praise.  
Lover and friend  
And all the dearly cherished of the heart  
Who long have rested in the tomb  
Shall come and join the choral strain.

From earth aroused  
The voice of harmony that flows so sweet  
Around the throne their tongues shall ever swell.

Then there shall be peace  
A settled calm, a soft serenity.  
More gently mild than earth  
With all its gorgeous scenes  
Can hope to bring a fit comparison.

And all that peace shall live and reign  
Along forever there!  
And this eternity shall make that heaven  
A heaven.

## **Earth Song**

Frank Tichelii

Sing, Be, Live, See...

This dark stormy hour  
The wind, it stirs.  
The scorched earth  
cries out in vain:

O war and power,

You blind and blur.  
The torn heart  
cries out in pain.

But music and singing  
Have been my refuge,  
And musing and singing  
Shall be my light.

A light of song  
Shining strong: Alleluia!  
Through darkness, pain and strife, I'll  
Sing, Be, Live, See...

*Peace.*

## **Sure on This Shining Night**

James Agee, Morten Lauridsen

Sure on this shining night  
Of star made shadows round,  
Kindness must watch for me  
This side the ground.  
The late year lies down the north.  
All is healed, all is health.  
High summer holds the earth.  
Hearts all whole.  
Sure on this shining night  
I weep for wonder wand'ring far alone  
Of shadows on the stars.

## **Apple Tree**

Soloists: Melissa Gillespie

Wendy Allen

Andrea Wiens

Vanessa Bishop

Aurora Aksnes, Odd Martin Skjalnes,

Magnus Skylstad, Katrina Gimon

All of my life I've been hunting.  
I've been a girl, I've been a boy.  
Digging my feet into the ground like an apple tree.  
Wanting to live with a purpose.

Skin is a word, love is not a sin.  
People are bad, people are good.  
Just like the moon is a stone but it's a start when it's dark  
And now she's hiding.

If you've seen what a heart is,  
You've seen its color.  
If I ever know how we could guide it,  
I would take care of its children,  
Become their mother.  
If I ever knew how we could hide it.

Let her save the world, she is just a girl.  
Let him save them all, he is just a boy.

Hunger is quiet if you do it right.  
Hunter is loud and predictable,  
Scaring away every prey so they are gone  
Before the hunter arrives.

Would you be kind and put away your sword?

You cannot cut away what we got.  
You cannot kill what we are.  
We are not here in physical form.

You've seen where the knife is,  
Its dark location.  
If i ever knew how we could fight it,  
I would cut into our anger,  
Make pure emotion.  
If I ever knew how we could hide it.

Let her save the world, she is just a girl.  
Let him save them all, he is just a boy.

Can you carry the weight of mortality?  
The explosion around you is your symphony.

## II. AIR

### **Aer Enim**

Soloist: Gena Nichols

Hildegard von Bingen; arr. Lina  
Kavhelmeier

Aer enim volat  
Et cum omnibus creaturis  
Officia sua exercet et  
firmamentum eum sustinet  
Aer in viribus istius pascitur

As air flies  
Attending to all creatures  
The structure of heaven  
sustains it  
And the air is nourished  
through this enfolding



## Northern Lights

Ola Gjeilo

Soloist: Caroline Yates  
Deffenbaugh

Pulchra es amica mea,  
Suavis et decora filia Jerusalem,  
Pulchra es amica mea,  
Suavis et decora sicut jerusalem,  
Terribilis ut castrorum acies  
ordinata.  
Averte oculos tuos a me  
Quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Thou art beautiful, O my love,  
Sweet and beautiful daughter of  
Jerusalem,  
Thou art beautiful, O my love,  
Sweet and comely as Jerusalem,  
Terrible as an army set in array.  
Turn away thy eyes from me,  
For they have made me flee away.

## Elements

Eileen Berry, Dan Forrest

Soloists: Megan Funk  
Caroline Yates Deffenbaugh  
Anne Dicola

For so long wind was all I heard,  
When I heard anything at all.  
Winter held its silent spell.  
Nothing stirred.

Today when I kept still a time  
Sounds began small.  
Quiet on wind, a frail bell  
Posed a chime.

How often now I hear them peal.  
Liquid silver notes fall.  
A never-ceasing song to tell

How things heal.

## **I am the Wind**

Zoe Atkins, Elaine Hagenberg

I am the wind that wavers,  
You are the certain land;  
I am the shadow that passes  
Over the sand.

I am the leaf that quivers ,  
You are the unshaken tree;  
You are the stars that are steadfast,  
I am the sea.

You are the light eternal -  
Like a torch I shall die;  
You are the surge of deep music,  
I but a cry!

## *Intermission*

## **III. FIRE**

## **Wild Embers**

Nikita Gill, Melissa Dunphy

We are the descendants  
Of the wild women you forgot

We are the stories you thought  
Would never be taught.  
They should have checked the ashes  
Of the women they burned alive.  
Because it takes a single wild ember  
To bring a whole wildfire to life.

## **The Fire Dance of Luna**

Darium Lim

Awake all you who from the lands  
listen to the evening song.  
Fire burn alight the sky  
The deepest night arise!

Mighty Luna, sing out to Luna!  
Sing!  
Move the magic into the music  
Luna!

Sing, O sing,  
Powerful Luna,  
Dance the night away.

Dance away  
Sing away  
Dance away!

Let the world be filled with desire  
Oh magical Luna, light our fire.  
Through the mystic lights that appear  
You save all from fear of dark and grey.

Show us Luna, shine your light and power  
Trust our eyes to see.  
Make us see the beauty, glory,  
and enchanting mystery  
Magic beams!  
It begins!

#### **IV. Water**

##### **Stars**

Sara Teasdale, Eriks Esenvalds

Soloist: Megan Funk

Alone in the night  
On a dark hill  
With pines around me  
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars  
Over my head,  
White and topaz  
And misty red;

Myriads with beating  
Hearts of fire  
That aeons  
Cannot vex or tire;

Up the dome of heaven  
Like a great hill,  
I watch them marching  
Stately and still,

And I know that I  
Am honored to be  
Witness  
Of so much majesty.

## **Silver Rain**

Langston Hughes, B. E. Boykin

In time of silver rain  
The earth puts forth new life again,  
Green grasses grow  
And flowers lift their heads,  
And over all the plain  
The wonder spreads

Of Life,  
Of Life,  
Of life!

In time of silver rain  
The butterflies lift silken wings  
To catch a rainbow cry,  
And trees put forth new leaves to sing  
In joy beneath the sky  
As down the roadway  
Passing boys and girls  
Go singing, too,

In time of silver rain  
When spring  
And life

Are new.

## **Shadow River**

E. Pauline Johnson, Elaine Hagenberg

A stream of tender gladness,  
Of filmy sun and opal tinted skies;  
Of warm midsummer air that lightly lies  
In mystic rings,  
Where softly swings  
The music of a thousand wings  
That almost tones to sadness.

Mine is the undertone;  
The beauty strength, and power of the land  
Will neer stir or bend at my command;  
But all the shad is marred or make,  
If i but dip my paddle blade;  
And it is mine alone.

Midway twixt earth and heaven,  
A bubble in the pearly air i seem  
To float upon the sapphire floor, a dram  
Of clouds of snow,  
Above, below,  
Drift with my drifting dim and slow,  
As twilight drifts to even.

For others Fame  
And Love's red flame,  
And yellow gold I only claim

The shadow and the dreaming.

## V. ELEMENTS

### Elements

Katrina Gimon

Soloists: Laura VandeRiet

Adria Young

Caroline Yates Deffenbaugh

Caitlin McKernan

Megan Funk

earth

calm, constant

sturdy, still, steady

rock, sand, solid, and terrain

earth

air

wind, breath

free, dynamic transparent

moving, flowing, changing and fueling

air

fire

heat, light

strength, fuel, drive

burning, melting, evaporating, and transporting

fire

water  
growth, change  
deep, reflective, fluid  
flowing, connecting, nourishing, and cleansing  
water

## **Puppet's Dream**

Dairus Lim

A bright and shining flower  
The little forest shower  
The sun that shines and marvels  
The night that brings the owls  
Light of the dawn has a secret  
That you would not know that  
It hears where the night goes  
And where starry sky  
Hides the moon on high  
Shining hills and streams and  
The showers in the sunlight  
Fading stars at night and  
The moonlight still in silence  
Dance and stomp a little faster  
Dance for joy dance for the laughter  
The moon is shining  
The starlight beaming  
Around we go  
As soft as snow



## **Thank you to our friends and sponsors**

Stober Elementary School

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First Mennonite Church

Sue Knight

Nancy Young

## **Join us for the second annual Colorado Treble Festival!**

The Colorado Treble Festival is proud to present Soar, a concert celebrating the power and artistry of women composers. This year's program features the stunning works of Elaine Hagenberg, whose compositions capture the beauty of the natural world and the depth of human connection.

It's not too late to register! Treble singers of all experience levels are invited to come together for a day of singing and community as we explore the world of treble choral performance.

More information can be found at the [Colorado Treble Festival website](#).



Welcome spring with our friends the  
Rocky Mountain Ringers



ROCKY MOUNTAIN RINGERS IN CONCERT

# *Spring Handbell Concert*

MAY 10, 2025, 3:00 PM

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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