

*Fridays in the Valley* 

**Presents:**

Momoko Tanno, soprano

Valerie Hennig, piano

& music composed by Ishaya Yarison

**Friday, September 13, 2024**

**7:00 pm**

Valley Community  
Presbyterian Church

# Fridays in the Valley Chamber Music Series

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**Remarks by Composer, I. J. Yarison  
Soprano, Momoko Tanno &  
Pianist, Valerie Hennig**

## SANCTUARY: A SONG CYCLE FOR SOPRANO AND PIANO

### **I. Old Home: Pleasant Place**

(Reminiscence on Mother-Home)

1. Harmony
2. The Shepherd
3. Kites

### **II. New Home: Disorienting Place**

(Challenges in Sanctuary)

4. Healing
5. Silence
6. Prayer

### **III. New Place: Planting Roots**

(Anchors in Sanctuary)

7. Nature's Song
8. Melody
9. Sanctuary
10. Grace

# TEXT OF THE CYCLE

## 1. HARMONY

In the meadow I lie,  
the silver stream flowing by.  
The sky is soft and blue.  
My soul gets still, still and calm.

Across the stream cattle graze,  
a maze of white dotting the verdant plain,  
like the fluffy clouds across the azure sky.

The shepherd's tune glides over the gentle  
breeze that stirs the grass and caresses my face.  
The song falls upon my ears like gentle dew  
and joins the trio of the breeze, the field, and  
the stream.  
And I am gently lulled into harmony and  
peace.

## 2. THE SHEPHERD

The morn is taking her golden bath;  
The dew is climbing away.  
Beyond the rise, the old shepherd comes,  
leading his flock on its daily round.

"Old shepherd, your flock is white like cotton."

"I take good care of it."

"Old shepherd, don't work today your flock is fat."

"Then it would grow lean."

"Old Shepherd, why do you blow so oft your tuneful pipe?"

"It cheers the heart and nourishes the spirit  
and makes me remember the shepherd who takes care of me."

### **3. KITES**

The kites are flying again.

The rains have said their farewell.

Happy children play in swinging branches.

Merrily gurgles the blue stream.

See, the western sky wears its amber raiment, and fair maids  
return from the stream with rolling hips and happy, happy songs.

Life is good.

Life is bright.

My spirit soars like floating kites above.

Life is a gift, a blessing from God.

He brings back the season of merry and cheer!

### **4. HEALING**

The wound, it smarts and tears at me!

It won't heal. Am I losing my senses?

Innate order slipping through my fingers:

the tempest rages and tears at the calm.

Sharp fingers of yellow light

grope through the dark,

searching out the tunnel,

a quest for sense.

I saw the flower open up her golden self

to suck in the sunny glow of the sky.

I saw the gentle drops of rain

revive the withering grass.

I felt the breeze;

I saw the rippling waves rolling

upon the lolling surface of the blue sea.

Then I heard it, like a whisper,

a single drop of word:

Peace.

## **5. SILENCE**

When these trees stand silently, tall,  
reaching to the sky with bare arms,  
naked, devoid of clothing,  
what do they say?  
Do they proclaim the death of love?

No, maybe they sing the silent song of love.  
Look above them, see the blue sky,  
tinged with soft hues of grey;  
see how they reflect its glory.

Look beyond them, see the solid buildings,  
clothed in slabs of concrete and shiny marble:

Hear them sing a sweet lullaby,  
a serenade of love.

No. When these trees stand here,  
naked, bare,  
they stand in the silence,  
the silence of love.

## **6. PRAYER**

Touch me also, fair moon, with your silver sprays that glisten off  
the rustling leaves  
of autumn tufted trees.

Fill me also, fair moon, with luminous rays  
that make the nightly sky to glow  
with hues of blue and white.

## **7. NATURE'S SONG**

The fields are blooming with the color of gold,  
The flowers celebrate the spring.  
The trees are clapping;  
O come and behold,  
Come, come! Hark, all nature sings.

Yonder mountains in purple are dressed.  
Its feathers of rainbow that hovering bird displays.  
Wafted on the gentle breeze, the piper's tune I hear.

And mingled with the rhythm of this soft purling brook, it is a song  
of praise and love.

Glory, glory, it is the song all nature sings.  
Glory, glory unto the maker of all things.  
The song is ringing; the fields are dancing.  
Glory, glory to God!

The song is sweetly ringing,  
creation's grand sonnet unending,  
boldly proclaiming God's glory and praise.

Come adoring,  
Come let us sing  
Loud praises God  
Who made heaven and earth  
and clothed them with beauty.  
Sing God's glory,  
Sing God's glory  
Who in splendor surpasses them all.

The fields are blooming,  
and the trees are clapping.  
All nature praises the Lord.

## **8. MELODY**

Sing your melody, sweet singing bird,  
my listening ears attend with rapture.  
Waft your twirling notes upon the air  
and cause the troubled heart to cease its panting and bid its  
cares to fly to the realm of darkest night.

For here your notes enchant and lull to peace the soul who  
hears your song.

Sing, sing your melody, sweet singing bird,  
The One who gave you voice inspires the song you sing.  
Sing, sing, your notes attune the ear to hear his voice.

## **9. SANCTUARY**

When through nature's sanctuary you walk  
And in awe behold its beauty and grandeur,  
Pause you may to meditate on this wonder.

But beware, beware of what you worship.  
Bow the knee to the creator alone.  
Give praise to the architect.  
Fair nature you may admire,  
But to God alone, to God alone  
You may bow the knee.

## **10. GRACE**

God, give me the grace to be humble,  
to give glory to you, not to myself.

It is God who works in us to will and to do,  
to do what is right and pleasing.

Not to me, not to me,  
but to you alone be the glory, and honor, and dominion forever.

# MUSICIAN BIOS



Dr. Ishaya Yarison is part of a group of composers of African descent who seek to promote a genre of music called African Art Music, music that highlights topics and themes from Africa. Yarison works in a variety of forms, including opera, instrumental music, vocal music, and choral music. His sacred opera, *I AM Meditation*, was featured by the National Opera Association in 2014. He has received commissions and performances in the UK and works as a church musician in the Twin Cities. "Sanctuary" is one of three song cycles Yarison has composed. He currently teaches at the University of St. Thomas, Saint Paul, Minnesota.





Valerie Hennig graduated from Wartburg with a degree in Piano Performance (BM) and minor in religion. Following graduation, she moved to the Twin Cities where she has taught piano lessons for 20+ years to students of all ages and abilities. She played organ at Christ the King Lutheran Church in White Bear Lake for 15 years, and is currently subbing as organist at other churches in the community. She currently lives in Vadnais Heights with her husband, Andy and three children. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, cooking, playing harp and taking road trips with the family.



Momoko Tanno is a singer/actor who actively performs in the Twin Cities, nationally, and abroad. BA from Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan and MM from the University of Minnesota, privately studied with Camille Maurane, a legendary Baryton Martin in Paris and Elizabeth Mannion in St. Paul. Performed with the Guthrie, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, Theater Mu, Mixed Precipitations, In the Heart of the Beast Puppet Theatre, and more. Momoko has worked with the Glocal Mission Collective for the ELCA for ten years, and has been a voice faculty member at University of Wisconsin River Falls and St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists and will be a soloist for the Messiah with Dakota Symphony Orchestra in December.

[www.momotanno.com](http://www.momotanno.com)



# District 281: EVERY MEAL

The Every Meal program provides supplemental food to children and families who are eligible for free/reduced lunch during the school year.

This program is part of Valley's Noble Vision. Another facet of our Noble Vision is our tutoring partnership with the school. Our volunteers help with reading, math, and homework needs during the school day.



[Give Online](#)

## UPCOMING CONCERT

**FRIDAY, Oct 11, 2024 | 7:00 pm**

**The Metro Brass:**

Dan Julson, Graham Taylor, Steve Ecklund,  
Bruce Alpern, Gary Bird

The Metro Brass Quintet is a standard brass quintet made up of members of the larger Metro Brass ensemble. These incredibly versatile musicians will deliver an evening of tunes sure to please any and every audience member. Ranging from folk to blues, from Vivaldi to Freddie Mercury, the program promises to surprise and delight at every turn!

The Fridays in the Valley concert series was established in 2012.  
Funding is made possible by a gift from Greg & Mary Rom.



# Valley Community

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Valley Community Presbyterian Church sits on the ancestral and contemporary land of the Dakota people, for whom the land holds historical, spiritual, political, and cultural significance.

We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota people and pledge to interrupt this legacy. We will educate ourselves about Indigenous history and recognize, support, and advocate for our Native neighbors.



LOGO DESIGN BY WÓOKIYE WIN  
(SISSETON WAHPETON DAKHÓTA  
AND OJIBWAY)

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