

# LiveConnections

## A Song Everyone Can Sing: A Community Sing featuring VOCES8

March 10, 2019 • 3:00 p.m. • Temple Performing Arts Center, Philadelphia

### WELCOME

#### COMMUNITY SING

Baiskeli traditional folk song  
Music on the Waters

arr Herbert/Smith (b. 1981)  
Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)/arr. P. Smith

#### PERFORMANCE

Sing Joyfully  
The Road Home  
Caledonia  
One Note Samba  
Sway

William Byrd (1543-1623)  
Stephen Paulus (1949-2014)  
Dougie MacLean (b. 1954)  
Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994)  
Pablo Beltrán Ruiz (1915-2008)

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

#### COMMUNITY SING

A Song Everyone Can Sing

Jay Fluellen (b. 1967)  
Lyrics by Daniel Simpson (b. 1952)

*World premiere, commissioned by LiveConnections*

Thuda Mama

Traditional

#### VOCES8

Paul Smith, *conductor, VOCES8 Method*

**Merakey Behavioral Health**, Eric Battestelli, *choir director*

**Northeast High School**, Jay Fluellen, *choir director*

**Our Lady of Confidence**, Kathy Maher, *instructor, &*

Jake Mauersberg, *music therapist*

**Overbrook School for the Blind**, Christopher Sapienza, *choir director*



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## WELCOME FROM LIVECONNECTIONS

Welcome to today's singing extravaganza! Nearly 11 years ago, LiveConnections started with a vision for a different kind of music-making. One where boundaries would be crossed and barriers dismantled. One where artists and audiences would interact in new ways, through unique collaborations that would respond to the needs of our communities. One where music would inspire learning, build connections, spark joy.

LiveConnections' Community Sing today represents the culmination of nearly 3 years of planning and dreaming, 2 years of relationship-building, and this past year of intensive creative process between our artists and community partners. We're excited to share our "A Song Everyone Can Sing" experience with all of you.

What IS a Song? Who is Everyone? What does it mean to Sing?

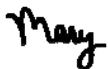
We welcome you to this place knowing that we all arrive with different backgrounds and experiences. We arrive with different vocabularies, different identities, different ways of expressing ourselves. It is our hope that you will participate fully in this Community Sing in ways that honor who YOU are, and that also celebrate who WE are together.

Some of us will sing, and some of us will hum, and some of us will be silent. Some of us will dance, and some of us will be still. Some of us will stretch our arms wide, and some of us will keep our hands close together. Some of us will need a quiet place, and some of us will need the company of friends. Some of us will look with our eyes, some of us will listen with our ears, some of us will feel this in our bodies.

All of us will share in making music together. We are all welcome here.



Melinda Steffy  
Executive Director



Mary Wheelock Javian  
Concert Curator

*"exciting and much-needed programming"*  
—Arblog

## THE PROCESS

In celebration of LiveConnections' 10th anniversary in 2018, we've been dreaming big about accessibility and inclusion in our city. We've been asking: *What is a Song? Who is Everyone? What does it mean to Sing?*



We invited school and community partners to collaborate with our artists to create and perform the world premiere of fully accessible choral work. Beginning in the **fall of 2017**, we hosted workshops with **Paul Smith** on the "VOCES8 Method." Co-founder of the renowned British *a cappella* group VOCES8, Smith developed the Method to tie rhythm and sound to neurological development. Public school teachers and students, teens with intellectual disabilities, and adults receiving therapeutic services had opportunities to sing and move to a range of music from folk and popular styles. In the spring of 2018, three participating choirs joined **VOCES8** on stage for a sold-out LiveConnections Presents concert at World Cafe Live.

In year two of the initiative (2018-2019), we took the ideas even further, commissioning a new multimedia choral work that invites people with diverse abilities to participate through singing, movement, visuals and technology.



In **October 2018**, **Dan Simpson**, poet and alumnus of Overbrook School for the Blind, met with participants from each choir to generate text that would become the lyrics to the new choral work.



Composer **Jay Fluellen**, also director of partner choir Northeast High School, finalized this composition in **January 2019**, which highlights the distinct voices of each choir and also creates moments for everyone to sing as one ensemble.



From **January to February**, Drexel University's **ExCITE Center** worked with the creative team to design technology-based expressive visuals for the new composition, allowing the music to take on a non-aural form.



Throughout **February**, movement artist **Shavon Norris** met with the participants of each partner choir to collaboratively create movement that will accompany the choral piece, allowing each body to participate artistically.



Simultaneously, **Jay Fluellen** and **Paul Smith** met with each partner choir to rehearse the new choral music that highlights their voices and experiences, and prepare for the Community Sing.



And our partners at **Art-Reach** helped embed accessibility throughout the program and event design to create a universally accessible experience.

At this culminating Community Sing, **VOCES8** returns and joins with local partner choirs to present the world premiere of the multi-faceted new work. We invite you to join in the music-making, celebrating human ability and the joy of singing together.

*Special thanks to the Connelly Foundation, Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation, Musical Fund Society and Presser Foundation for supporting our "A Song Everyone Can Sing" project.*

*LiveConnections is supported in part by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Additional support provided in part by the Philadelphia Cultural Fund.*

## A SONG EVERYONE CAN SING

Lyrics by Dan Simpson, in collaboration with partner choirs

### *I. Merakey Behavioral Health*

It hurts to be teased  
and to be left alone.  
I'm sad when people don't  
understand my mental illness.

Here's what makes me happy:  
Being known for my accomplishments,  
having second chances,  
staying clean and sober,

dancing, drawing, painting,  
playing the guitar,  
good friends, grandchildren,  
singing in a choir.

**REFRAIN: How do we find a song that everyone can sing?**

### *II. Overbrook School for the Blind*

I wish I could drive  
like my sighted friends.  
It's hard being dyslexic  
and a little bit shy,  
trusting too easily  
and then getting hurt.

I wish people could remember  
it can take me longer  
to do certain things,  
but I hate when they assume  
I can't do something  
just because I'm blind.

The worst is people  
feeling sorry for me.

I have a passion for learning  
and for being alive.  
I love being independent  
and having my good mind.

**(refrain)**

### *III. Our Lady of Confidence*

It's hard when people don't  
understand what I'm saying,  
hard when they stop dancing  
and walk away.

It's hard to make friends.  
It's hard to watch the news.  
It makes me sad to see  
people killing people.

I've learned to keep trying  
and to ask for help.  
I believe in me,  
not what other people think.

**(refrain)**

### *IV. Northeast High School*

One day, our vibrant planet  
will no longer be here.  
We will have destroyed  
the place we call home.

Our world is corrupt  
with greed for power and money.  
Please, no more racism,  
no more hate, no more judging.

I want people to like me  
for who I am,  
for my family to be happy  
and proud of me,  
to believe in myself  
and know I'm loved,  
for God to watch over me  
and keep my brother safe.

I want a stable mind,  
one that lets me sleep  
and makes me eager  
to get up in the morning.

Though, on the outside,  
I may be ordinary,  
I can close my eyes  
and hear music playing.

I can't express  
these words and songs,  
but that's all I really  
want to do.

I love music.  
It makes me think of the past—  
people I lost,  
people I left behind.

What I want most is peace.  
I wish for a community  
where people of all kinds  
can be brought together.

**(refrain)**

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**VOCES8.** The British vocal ensemble VOCES8 is proud to inspire people through music and share the joy of singing. Touring globally, the group performs an extensive repertoire both in its *a cappella* concerts and in collaborations with leading orchestras, conductors and soloists. Versatility and a celebration of diverse musical expression are central to the ensemble's performance and education ethos.

VOCES8 is passionate about music education and is the flagship ensemble of the music charity VCM Foundation. Engaging in a broad range of outreach work that reaches up to 40,000 people a year, the group runs an annual program of workshops and masterclasses at the Foundation's home in London, the Gresham Centre at St Anne & St Agnes Church. Dedicated to supporting promising young singers, the group awards eight annual choral scholarships through the VOCES8 Scholars initiative. These scholarships are linked to the annual Milton Abbey Summer School at which amateur singers of all ages are invited to work and perform with VOCES8. The ensemble is proud to be the Associate Ensemble for Cambridge University and delivers a Masters program in choral studies.

As official Ambassadors for Edition Peters, the ensemble publishes educational material including the "VOCES8 Method." Developed by Paul Smith, co-founder of VOCES8, this renowned and unique teaching tool is available in four languages and adopts music to enhance development in numeracy, literacy and linguistics. Also available are two anthologies of its arrangements, and an ever-expanding "VOCES8 Singles" range. This season the ensemble becomes Ambassador for the Tido App, an inspirational resource and learning tool created by Edition Peters. The VOCES8 Method and music arrangements will be made available via Tido during the 2018/19 season. Learn more at [voces8.com](http://voces8.com).

**Paul Smith.** Paul Smith is an innovative and creative performer, conductor, composer, an inspirational educator and an empowering public speaker. As co-founder of VOCES8, author of The VOCES8 Method and CEO of the VCM Foundation, he has enjoyed more than a decade of work globally in prestigious concert venues, festivals, schools and universities.

**Jay Fluellen.** Composer Jay Fluellen is a Philadelphia-born musician known as a composer, college professor, educator, accompanist, pianist, singer and organist/choir director. He is currently a teacher with the School District of Philadelphia at Northeast High School and an organist and choir director at the historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas.

**Shavon Norris.** Movement artist Shavon Norris is an artist, educator and facilitator. As a dance maker, Norris' work has been presented at Manhattanville College, The Philadelphia Live Arts and Fringe Festival, Temple University, The National Constitution Center, Art Sanctuary, Chester Eastside Ministries, the CEC and at Joyce Soho.

**Daniel Simpson.** In 2017, Daniel Simpson and his wife, Ona Gritz, collaborated on two books, as co-authors of *Border Songs: A Conversation in Poems* and as co-editors of *More Challenges for the Delusional: Peter Murphy's Prompts and the Writing They Inspired. School for the Blind*, his first collection of poems, came out in 2014. His blog, *Inside the Invisible*, can be found at [insidetheinvisible.wordpress.com](http://insidetheinvisible.wordpress.com).

**ExCITE Center of Drexel University.** Drexel's institute for technology and creative expression employs the integrated approach of STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Design, and Math. Their mission is to inspire transdisciplinary research and discovery, connecting technology and communities. Learn more at [drexel.edu/excite](http://drexel.edu/excite).

**Art-Reach.** Art-Reach has grown into a connector, leader and advocate for accessible cultural opportunities for people with disabilities and communities facing economic adversity. Art-Reach leverages its position between the human service and cultural sectors to create social change and increase cultural opportunities to people who are typically under-considered by the cultural sector. Art-Reach is working toward cultural accessibility on a scale that includes over 425 organizations, creating over 160,000 interactions each year between underserved audiences and the arts. Over the last three years, their programmatic impact has increased by more than 1000%— from 13,000 people using their programs to over 160,000 in 2017. Learn more at [art-reach.org](http://art-reach.org).

## ABOUT THE CHOIRS

**Merakey Behavioral Health.** Merakey is a leading developmental, behavioral health and education non-profit provider offering a breadth of integrated services to individuals and communities across the country. They leverage their size and expertise to develop innovative solutions and new models of care to meet the needs of individuals, their families, public and private healthcare funders and community partner organizations. They recognize that complex needs require a holistic approach. With their experience, expertise and compassion, they empower everyone within their communities to reach their fullest potential.

**Northeast High School.** Northeast High School is a diverse community that empowers students to explore and achieve within their own areas of interest. Their students become contributive, socially responsible, goal-oriented, and productive members of a global society. Their faculty and staff are a community of lifelong learners who serve as trusted educational resources to the greater Philadelphia area and beyond.

**Our Lady of Confidence.** As an accredited Catholic, premier special education school of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, their mission is to facilitate the complete development of students with intellectual disabilities to their fullest potential, spiritually, intellectually, mentally, physically and emotionally. Their program embraces the value of life and is committed to guiding students towards seeking God's purpose for their life and fostering independence to become vital, contributing members of the local community and the greater global society.

**Overbrook School for the Blind.** Overbrook School for the Blind (OSB) prepares their students—all of whom are blind, visually impaired or living with other challenges—to have the greatest opportunity to experience active and fulfilling lives. OSB is a school where compassion, dedication, expertise and instructional excellence are immediately evident.

## NEXT UP

### LiveConnections Presents **Imani Winds + Alex Shaw**

**Friday, May 3, 2019 | 8:00 PM**

World Cafe Live, 3025 Walnut St., Philadelphia

LiveConnections brings you the best of our “musical match-making” through an extraordinary artist pairing. The Grammy-nominated quintet **Imani Winds** has created a distinct presence in the classical music world through their dynamic playing, culturally relevant programming and virtuosic collaborations. **Alex Shaw** is a Philadelphia-based percussionist, vocalist, composer and arts educator (and a LiveConnections teaching artist since our founding nearly 11 years ago), specializing in Brazilian music traditions. Together these musicians will take you on a journey through Brazilian and Latin American music, with works by Pixinguinha, Villa-Lobos and Jobim.

#### **Tickets:**

\$25 general admission

\$20 student with ID

(prices include fees)

[liveconnections.org/imani](http://liveconnections.org/imani)



## ABOUT LIVECONNECTIONS

LiveConnections is a nonprofit organization specializing in music education, arts accessibility and collaborative concerts. Since our founding in 2008, we have reached more than 38,000 participants through our educational Bridge Sessions and in-school residencies, and have presented more than 45 concerts and 12 commissions through our critically acclaimed LiveConnections Presents concert series.

LiveConnections believes live music is an essential part of the human experience: it fosters joy and is one of the most powerful ways to build bridges between people. LiveConnections collaborates with artists from diverse music traditions to create our unique programming. We create opportunities for audiences with limited arts access — such as youth from Philadelphia public schools and people with disabilities — to be active participants in music-making.

The music we create intersects with significant social issues, amplifying marginalized voices and encouraging creative responses to our world.

## BECOME A SUPPORTER

Your donation to LiveConnections gives music experiences to thousands of young people each year and supports artists who sustain the vibrant cultural life of our city. [liveconnections.org/give](http://liveconnections.org/give)

## SPONSORS 2018-2019

Thanks to LiveConnections Big Hurrah sponsors who support our programs all season long! (List includes \$2500+, current at time of printing.)



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