PROGRAM NOTES

Quincy Symphony Chorus
November 7, 2026 Illinois

Spirit of the Winding Water incorporates Navajo rhythms and phrases into a prayer that captures Native American awareness of the sacredness of the natural world. Respect for the spirituality in Native American philosophy guided Rev. Ronald W. Cadmus as he crafted the text and suggested the chant-like motifs and timbres which Robert S. Cohen adopted and adapted for chorus and traditional instruments. *~CM*

Composer Randall Thompson is revered for the legacy he left in the wake of his life and compositions. Much can be said of Thompson; his attending and teaching at Harvard (as well as teaching Leonard Bernstein), teaching at the University of California at Berkley, and heading up the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia from 1939 to 1941. Thompson's ***The Testament of Freedom*** is a powerful, patriotic choral masterpiece composed during World War II. Setting the stirring words of Thomas Jefferson to music, this work celebrates liberty, democracy, and the enduring human spirit. Its robust melodies and defiant harmonies serve as a timeless tribute to American freedom. *~DO*

Carol Barnett's vibrant choral arrangement of the traditional American folk song ***Cindy*** is an upbeat, lighthearted, and delightfully saucy rendition. Originally a 19th-century mountain string band tune. ***Cindy*** tells the story of an enthusiastic, sweet-natured girl whose bold affection leaves her suitor both enchanted and overwhelmed. Barnett breathes fresh life into the familiar melody by employing syncopated rhythms, spirited vocal interplay, and an accompanying guitar or piano part. Balancing rich choral textures with the raw, foot-stomping energy of a traditional hoedown, this spirited adaptation captures the enduring, joyful essence of American folk music. *~AI*

Soon and Very Soon / Saints Bound For Heaven displays musical Americana in its typical folk-like nineteenth-century style. ***Soon and Very Soon*** is a gospel hymn written in 1976 by American gospel artist and minister Andrae Crouch. While a young boy, Crouch sang and played piano in his father's church. As a Gospel singer, he soon formed groups in Los Angeles who were in demand on the Gospel circuit, and launched his recording career. ***Soon and Very Soon*** has a simple text: "Soon and very soon we are going to see the King! Hallelujah!" The composition builds in power and complexity throughout, but comes to a quiet ending. ***Saints Bound for Heaven*** is a traditional American folk hymn originating in the early 19th century. Upbeat and swingy, the melody, based on the pentatonic scale, gives the tune its folk-like nineteenth-century sound, presenting a small musical manifestation of Americana. *~LW*

SONGS OF LINCOLN'S TIME:

Few tragic events in the annals of human history equal the conflagration that transpired between 1861-1865 in this country. Like all wars, songs sprang up to encourage both soldier and civilian alike. Especially in the North, the call went out for new composers to come forth and write music appropriate for the moment. Men like George F. Root, Walter Kitteredge, and Patrick Gilmore answered the call and came forward with timeless songs and lyrics. Abraham Lincoln is quoted as saying that men such as George Root were as responsible for the North winning the war as were the generals.

In his ***Civil War Medley*** Gilpin chose five tunes which are the most familiar of the tunes of the war. Root wrote *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and *Just Before The Battle, Mother*. Two songs represent the South: *Dixie* and *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. Interesting facts emerge as discussions center around Civil War music: *Dixie* was written by a Northerner, Daniel Emmett, as a walk-around song in a minstrel show; *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* was sung by both Northern and Southern armies.

Nancy Hanks is a somewhat unknown song about the mother of Abraham Lincoln. The text is from "A Book of Americans," copyright 1933, by Rosemary and Stephen Benet. The song tells the story of Abe's

mother who returns as a ghost and constantly asks the questions as to where is Abe? Did he grow up? Did he learn to read? Basically, just what happened to him? *~DO*

George M. Cohan was an American entertainer, playwright, composer, lyricist, actor, singer, dancer and theatrical producer. He began his career as a child, performing with his parents and sister in a vaudeville act. Beginning with *Little Johnny Jones* in 1904, he wrote, composed, produced, and appeared in more than three dozen musicals on Broadway. Cohan wrote more than 50 shows and published more than 300 songs during his lifetime. ***Cohan's Big Three*** puts together *Yankee Doodle Boy, Give My Regards to Broadway* and *You're a Grand Old Flag* to create a wonderful choral medley full of patriotic spirit and fun. *~PR*

Arranged by Hawley Ades, ***Twentiana*** is a dazzling musical montage that serves as a vibrant time capsule of the Roaring Twenties. This fast-paced medley seamlessly weaves together six of the decade's most enduring pop standards, capturing the syncopation, optimism, and unbridled joy of the Jazz Age. The nostalgic journey begins with the bouncy, joyful *I Want to Be Happy* (1924) from the Broadway musical *No, No, Nanette*. The arrangement then dives into the exuberant luck and optimism of *I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover* (1927), before transitioning down south for the bright, pastoral *Carolina in the Morning* (1922). The medley touches on the comforting, slightly bittersweet standard *Bye Bye Blackbird* (1926) before the energy ramps back up with the infectious *Charleston* (1923) which sparked a global dance craze and symbolized the era's liberated youth culture. The medley rounds out its carefree spirit with a charmingly syncopated rendition of *Tea for Two*. Through Ades' brilliant transitions, these timeless melodies stand as a living testament to an era of sophisticated songwriting and enduring hope. *~AI*

Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy is one of the most famous songs to come out of WWII. It was written, recorded, and featured in a movie before America ever entered combat. With Europe and Asia at war in 1941, a peacetime draft began to expand our forces so America would be prepared. Don Raye and Hughie Prince wrote *Bugle Boy* as an advertising promotion for this effort. The Andrews Sisters recorded it and several months later, they sang it in the Abbott and Costello movie *Buck Privates*. By the time America entered WWII, the song was a huge hit.

It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing for chorus is set from the original 1931 jazz standard written by Duke Ellington with words by Irving Mills. The chorus arrangement sung today is full of rhythmic energy that is fun to perform and reaches out to the audience. The Duke felt that rhythm and drive matter more than strict notes. *~PR*

Over the Rainbow was Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg's collaboration for *The Wizard of Oz*, and it won the 1939 Oscar for best song. Many singers made recordings of it in original form, but in 1993, Hawaiian singer Israel Kamakawiwo'ole walked into a recording studio with his ukulele and recorded his own version in one take. It went platinum. *~CM*

Love is All You Need – A Tribute to the Beatles The impact of the Beatles upon popular music cannot be overstated. They revolutionized the music industry and touched the lives of all who heard them in deep and fundamental ways. Landing in America on Feb. 7, 1964, they literally stood the world of pop culture on its head, beginning with their appearances on the Ed Sullivan show, seen on nationwide TV. Their buoyant melodies, playful personalities, and mop-top charisma were just the tonic needed by a nation left reeling by the senseless assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Adults who scorned rock and roll were forced to concede that there was quick-witted substance in this music. The Beatles transformed American culture as it was known at the time, ushering in a new importance of youth in today's world. Today's performance includes three well-known hits from Roger Emerson's choral medley: *Imagine, Strawberry Fields, Yesterday* and *All You Need is Love*. *-LW*

The Moon, by Andy Beck, has a haunting piano motive representing the moon throughout, as the inquisitive child-like text ignites the audience's collective imagination.

For the Fallen was a poem written in 1914 after the outbreak of WW1 written by Laurence Binyon. After reading the poem, Eleanor Daley, b. 1955 in Canada, composed the musical setting, extrapolating the words to fit a melody she composed in 2001 in tribute to fallen citizens of 9-11. This anthem of hope finds release and solace in the memories of loved ones and the brightness of their lives. This choral statement resonates for all, especially with the addition of a solo trumpet. *~PR*

Three Patriotic Treasures begins with the song *A New Colossus* (Give me your tired your poor) from the famous sonnet written in 1883 by Emma Lazarus and inscribed on the Statue of Liberty. *My Country Tis of Thee* served as the unofficial national anthem of the U.S. until 1931 when The Star-Spangled Banner was selected. The final song, *America the Beautiful*, has been another unofficial national anthem of the U.S. The poem was written by a Wellesley College Professor and later combined with a 19th -century church hymn. Arranger Greg Gilpin has set these three iconic songs, transitioning beautifully from one well-known piece to the next. *~PR*

CM – Carol Mathieson
DO – Dick Otey
LW – Lavern Wagner
PR – Phyllis Robertson