



International
Voices Houston
2025/2026 Season

Snow Angel



Produced in part by the
City of Houston
through the Office of Arts & Culture

houston

Dr. Jake Taylor
Artistic Director

MATCH

MIDTOWN ARTS & THEATER CENTER HOUSTON

3400 Main Street/Midtown

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Special thanks to our rehearsal host



and our performance venue

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MUSICAL LEADERSHIP

Dr. Jake Taylor, Artistic Director

Dr. Jake Taylor's work as a choral conductor and music educator spans a wide variety of settings, including positions with academic, community, and professional choirs. Alongside his new appointment as the Artistic Director of International Voices Houston, Dr. Taylor serves as a choral music educator in Katy ISD. Previous positions have included Director of Choral Activities at Appalachian State University, Director of Choral Studies at New Mexico State University, and conductor of The Matador Singers at Texas Tech University. In addition to his work in education, He has served in numerous sacred music settings, including Director of Worship at Peritte Memorial Methodist in Nacogdoches, Texas, Peace Lutheran in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and First Baptist Church in Marion, North Carolina.



In 2014, he co-founded The Houston Men's Choir, a collaborative ensemble of tenor-bass singers that rehearses and performs without a traditional conductor and is a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to the art of singing and its positive impact through performance and education. While no longer directly affiliated with the ensemble, he is immensely proud of its continued impact on the choral arts in Houston since its inception.

Dr. Taylor earned his Doctorate of Musical Arts in choral conducting from Texas Tech University, a master's degree in choral conducting, and a bachelor's degree in music education from Stephen F. Austin State University. He maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and clinician and has given numerous presentations on score study, conducting gesture, rehearsal techniques, and music literacy in the secondary choral classroom.

Paul Butt, Accompanist



Paul was born in Alaska, grew up in Oregon, and now lives in Houston. He began studying music seriously when he was awarded lessons from the American Guild of Organists in High School.

Paul attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and graduated with a degree in piano performance. He moved to Houston to attend Rice University and graduated with a Master's degree in organ performance.

Paul has played for choirs on tour in Ireland, France, Austria, and most enjoyed playing for choral events at St. Patrick's, Dublin, and Notre Dame and La Madeleine, Paris. He has been a musician for Lutheran, Methodist, Christian Science, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, and Episcopal churches.

Paul is presently organist at First Methodist Houston. He has been accompanying International Voices Houston since 2007.

INTERNATIONAL VOICES HOUSTON LEADERSHIP

ARTISTIC STAFF

Artistic Director	Dr. Jake Taylor
Accompanist	Paul Butt

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Choir Manager	Lindsay Reilly
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INTERNATIONAL VOICES HOUSTON

International Voices Houston is a multicultural choir in Houston, Texas, that inspires, educates, and brings joy to its audiences through world music. We perform international choral works in their unique styles and languages. We celebrate our cultural diversity as part of the greater Houston community through our collaborative environment of camaraderie, learning, and growth.

SOPRANO I

Mariah Almack
Brittany Henry
Lisa Irwin
Maddie Ivonye
Yue Jiang
Priscilla "Prill" McAfee
Alexis Mobley
Roma Polanska
Lindsay Reilly
Victoria Stoddard

SOPRANO II

Christina Boroughs
Karen Chew
Sally Goodroe
Terri Kosten
Ksenia Krylova
Carolyn Leap
Doreen Lee
Victoria Linares
Mamta Mehta
Leslie Moore
Karoline Mueller
Anya Porter
Mary Rocke
Rita Saylor
Rachel Sheno
Emily Smith
Susan Steinhardt
Amanda Stelly
Natalia Todorova
Sue Tsai
Gerry Waters

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Betty Clark
Rachael Fernandez
Isabelle Ganz
Oznur Gurbuz
Birnur Guven
Diana Guzman
Ema Halimi
Kat Hastings
Lesley Kellet
Maite Leal
Kelly Levitt
Leticia Neves
Suzanne Rickles
Anjana Singhal
Debra Sodimu
Rebecca Tirrell

ALTO II

Antoinette Boecker
Soizic Bonnet
Kayla Clark
Magdalena Cuevas
Lisa Ferrell
Dinah Godwin
MaryScott Hagle
Jan Hill
Lorraine Kristal
Midge Leonard
Kiara Moncada
Sarah Myint
Caroline Petrin
Lorraine Schroeder
Samantha Vacanti

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Jenkau Chen
Meryl Ettelson
John Glaser
Alexander Martinez
Joe Milano
Eta Paransky
Shrey Satish

TENOR II

Carlos Barrera
Michael Battey
Victor Cabrera
John Clement
David Collins
Griff Godwin
Matt Hickey
Martin Kagan

BARITONE

Jeff Basen-Engquist
Martin Braun
Thorpe Butler
Thomas Kosten
Eric Larsen
Andrew McDiarmid
James McGehee
Jon Naylor
Edmund Pantuliano
Robert Stewart

BASS

Anthony Adam
Phil Berrie
Dom Berta
Marko Dutta
Feng-Cheng Hseih
Derrick Huang
Henry W. (Hank) Jones III
Sung Kim
Ralph Krog
Jordan B. Young

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Contact development@voiceshouston.org

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The theme for our concert season is “Through the Eyes of a Child,” and our Winter Concert, *Snow Angel*, explores several childhood traits: vulnerability and resilience, playfulness, and hope for the future. We open with the energetic **It Takes a Village** by Joan Szymko. Inspired by the West African saying, “it takes a village to raise a child,” the composer weaves together musical elements of West African praise music (call and response, vocal ostinati, and lively percussion) to depict a diverse community uniting for the betterment of its children.

Our second set explores the contrast of vulnerability and resilience. The Spanish carol, **A La Nanita Nana**, tells of the Babe asleep in his mother’s arms while fragments of the English **Coventry Carol** remind us of the slaughter of innocents. **This Little Babe** from Benjamin Britten’s “A Ceremony of Carols” sets a 16th-century text, relating the vulnerable attributes of the Babe to the martial elements of war with phrases such as, “With tears he fights and wins the field, his naked breast stands for a shield.” To match this vivid imagery, Britten utilizes a fanfare-like accompaniment with tightly-spaced canonic vocal parts, creating a combative sonic landscape.

With most of the concert focused on childhood, Rachmaninov’s **Bogoroditse Dēvo** stands as a lovely tribute to mothers. This particular piece is excerpted from the composer’s monumental All-Night Vigil. The text is a hymn of praise to the Virgin Mary, similar to the Hail Mary or Ave Maria.

The next two pieces shift from themes of vulnerability and resilience to one of playfulness. **Hydom, Tiddlydom** is an English translation and arrangement of a Czech carol in which the words of the title serve as onomatopoeic descriptions of bagpipe and drum. Mark Patterson’s lively arrangement of **Chantons Noël** adds layers of interest to this familiar carol with intense choral build-ups, percussion, and a dramatic piano accompaniment.

The final two pieces before intermission place a spotlight on hope. **Bashana Haba’ah** is a modern Israeli Hebrew folk song that speaks of how good life will be next year. **Hope for Resolution** is subtitled “a song for Mandela and de Klerk” and celebrates their efforts to end apartheid in South Africa. The arrangers of the work, Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, provide these notes: “*In its juxtaposition of a European chant melody and an anti-apartheid song from South Africa, this piece is a celebration of diversity. The arrangement reflects our respect for divergent musical styles and points us toward our innate (though sometimes neglected) potential for peaceful coexistence.*”

Intermission

Snow Angel by Canadian composer Sarah Quartel serves as the anchor and primary inspiration for the entire concert. The publisher has described the work with these words, “*Snow Angel is an evocative five-movement choral work that explores themes of love, rebirth, and beauty through the eyes of children and the heavenly army of angels that watch over them, yearning to make a difference in their lives.*” In addition to the musical score for choir, piano, cello, and djembe, *Snow Angel* contains three brief narratives written by Lisa Helps, an author, activist, and former Mayor of Victoria, BC. These are delivered by three guardian angels who recall pivotal moments in their divine task, and the last contains a line that beautifully resonates with our ensemble’s mission, “The energy of generosity, of compassion, of love, is circular. Inside, we know no differently.”

Our concert closes with a reflective and simple work. **No Other People’s Children** reminds us that there are no such things as *other* people’s children, *other* people’s sorrows, or *other* people’s injuries; rather, we share them. This provides a circular connection to our concert opener which states, “we all, everyone, must share their burdens; we all, everyone will share their joy.”

International Voices Houston

presents

Snow Angel

Jake Taylor, Artistic Director

Paul Butt, Collaborative Pianist

Daniel Saenz, cello

Benson Kwan and Blake Wilkins, percussion

Eric Ruyle, flute/saxophone

It Takes a Village

Joan Szymko

Baks Martinez, John Glaser, and Matt Hickey, *soloists*

A La Nanita Nana (with Coventry Carol)

Arr. Greg Gilpin

This Little Babe from “A Ceremony of Carols”

Benjamin Britten

Bogoroditse Dēvo

Sergei Rachmaninov

Hydom, Tiddlydom

Arr. Mark Burrows

Chantons Noël

Arr. Mark Patterson

Bashana Haba'ah

Arr. John Leavitt

Hope For Resolution: a Song for Mandela and de Klerk

Arr. Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory

MaryScott Hagle, Maddie Ivonye, Yue Jiang, Victoria Linares, Prill McAfee, Kiara Moncada,
Lindsay Reilly, Debora Sodimu, Victoria Stoddard; *semi-chorus*

Intermission

Snow Angel

Sarah Quartel

- I. Prologue
- II. Creatures of Light
- III. God will give orders
- IV. Sweet child
- V. Snow Angel

Lisa Irwin, Maddie Ivonye, Maya Elahmad, *narrators*

No Other People's Children

Elizabeth Alexander

Brittany Henry, Marko Dutta, *soloists*

Tina Boroughs, John Glaser, David Collins, *small ensemble*

It Takes a Village

It takes a whole village to raise our children
It takes a whole village to raise one child
We all every one must share the burden
We all every one must share the joy.

A La Nanita Nana (with Coventry Carol)

Come, let's sing a little lullaby,
Come, let's sing a little,
My Jesus is sleepy.
Blessed be, blessed be.

Little spring that runs clear & sonorous,
Nightingale that in the forest,
Weeps as it sings,
Hush, while the cradle rocks.

Lullay, thou little tiny child.
Bye, bye, lully lullay.

This Little Babe

This little babe so few days old
Is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake
Though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this week unarmed wise
The gates of hell he will surprise

With tears he fights and wins the field
His naked breast stands for a shield
His battering shot are babish cries
His arrows looks of weeping eyes
His martial ensigns Cold and Need
And feeble flesh his warrior's steed

His camp is pitched in a stall
His bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes
Of shepherds he his muster makes
And thus as sure his foe to wound
The angels' trumps alarum sound

My soul with Christ join thou in fight;
Stick to the tents that he hath pight
Within his crib is surest ward;
This little Babe will by thy guard
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy, then
Flit not from this Heavenly boy!

Bogoroditse Dēvo

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with Thee.
Blessed art Thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of Thy womb,
For Thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.

Hydom, Tiddlydom

Shepherds in the fields at night
All behold a wondrous sight.
Hear the song the angels sing.
Hear the happy news they bring.
Hydom, hydrom, tiddlydom.

Hurry shepherds far and wide,
Gather near the baby's side.
Play the pipe and beat the drum.
Now a joyous time has come.
Hydom, hydrom, tiddlydom.

Peace so precious, love so small,
Sleeping in a cattle stall.
Gentle Joseph, Mary mild,
Tending to the little child.
Hydom, hydrom, tiddlydom.

Chantons Noël

Sing we Noel
A new noel, let us sing Noel here
Devoted people, let us thank God
Sing we Noel for the newborn King
A new noel, let us sing Noel here

Bashana Haba'ah

Next year we will sit on the porch
and count migrating birds.
Children on vacation will play catch
between the house and the fields.

You will yet see, you will yet see,
how good it will be next year.

Hope for Resolution

Of the Father's love begotten,
E'er the worlds began to be.
He is Alpha and Omega
He the source, the ending he.
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav'n adore him,
Angel hosts his praises sing,
Pow'rs, dominions bow before him,
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring.
Evermore and evermore

Nation, do not cry.
Jehovah will protect us.
We will attain freedom
Jehovah will protect us.

Snow Angel

1. Prologue

All his angels, all his heavenly armies, ah.
Open your eyes, sweet child.

2. Creatures of Light

Creatures of light, such as still play, like motes in the sunshine, round the Lord,
And through their infinite array, transmit each moment, night and day,
The echo of His luminous word!
Creatures of light,
When earth lay nearer to the skies than in these days of crime and woe,
And mortals saw, without surprise, in midair,
Angelic eyes gazing upon the earth below.
Creatures of light.

3. God Will Give Orders

God will give orders to his angels about you,
And all his angels, all his armies sing: "ah!"
Do not think poorly of these little children, all of them have an angel in heav'n,
And all of the angels can see the face of the Father.

4. Sweet Child

Sweet child, o sweet child!
Faith, like a child, can hear the song,
A song that falls on ears of those who wait,
Like a child, for peace to come.
And trust that we will learn to show them love,
Like a child, who knows no wrong from being loved by those who've taught them.
Faith, like a child, forever strong.
The circle goes on.
Sweet child! Sweet child, hear my song.
I will show you how to love!

5. Snow Angel

I went to my window one bright winter's morn and gazed at the new fallen snow.
The world overtaken by flurries of white had set my surroundings aglow.
I looked to the heavens seeking the source of this wonderland newly appeared.
When there I spied a snow angel holding the flakes and spreading them near.

She sang: "Even though the snow may blow, there's not a wind can stop my music.
For I know that winter shelters life."

On silver blue wingtips she soared through the air ensuring the flow'rs were warm.
She knew that her snowflakes would blanket the earth
and keep all its friends safe from harm.
I thought for a moment she must be a dream, this angel with silvery wings.
But then I discovered she was heaven sent as her icy lips opened to sing.

She sang: "even though the wind may blow there's not a wind can stop my music.
For I know that winter shelters life."

When she knew that the flow'rs were asleep she beat her wings faster to go.
But soon, looking back on the work she had done,
She let herself fall to the snow.
I saw for a moment the smile on her face 'fore she launched herself back in the air.
I'm sure there are many snow angels in heav'n, but now I have one down here.

I sing: "Even though the snow may blow there's not a wind can stop my music.
For I know that winter shelters life!"

No Other People's Children

How did we get to this place
Where we could look at each other's face
And see anything but beauty and understanding?
I want to know who you are,
And face the suffering that keeps us far apart
I can never truly see the world through your eyes
Or take away your pain,
But I'm listening, and I'm hoping you can hear me saying:

You are my neighbor. You are beloved. You are worth seeing for who you are.
You are my neighbor. You are beloved. You are worth seeing for who you are.
I'm here, I'm listening. I'm here listening with you:

Break bread with me.
Make peace with me.
Speak the truth with me.
Begin again with me.
Relate with me.
Create with me.
Be the change with me
That keeps our children safe and free:
There are no other people's heartaches.
There are no other people's injuries.
There are no other people's children in this world.

See what is unseen, Say what is unspoken,
Believe that there's no wall between our beating hearts.

You are my neighbor. You are beloved. You are worth seeing for who you are.
You are my neighbor. You are beloved. You are worth seeing for who you are.
I'm here, I'm listening. I'm here listening with you:

Hold hands with me.
Forgive with me.
Make mistakes with me,
And take a chance with me.
Be whole with me.
Be real with me.
Start to heal with me
So we can live courageously.
There are no other people's heartaches.
There are no other people's injuries.
There are no other people's children in this world.

Audience/Congregation Part

No Other People's Children

(♩ = 92-104) **Gently, directly, intimately**

Words and Music by Elizabeth Alexander

D
Bm
G
G/A
A(sus4)

D
Bm
G
G/A
A

G⁹
Dmaj7/A
G⁹/B
G/A

D
Bm

G
D/A
A(sus4)

D
Bm

G
G/A
A

G
Em
A(sus4)
A
G
Em
A(sus4)
A

G
Em
A
G/A



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IN 2026**

**Through the Eyes
of a Child**

May 2nd & 3rd

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