

13 | THE THIRTEEN

presents

Not For the Sun I Sing

September 18, 2020 | 7:30 PM

St. Thomas' Parish | 1517 18th St. NW | Washington, DC 20036

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THE THIRTEEN

Artists

Katelyn Aungst, *soprano*

Steven Berlanga, *bass-baritone*

Julie Bosworth, *soprano*

Sylvia Leith, *mezzo-soprano*

Oliver Mercer, *tenor*

Caroline Olsen, *mezzo-soprano*

Gilbert Spencer, *baritone*

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CONDUCTOR'S NOTE

Welcome! What a start to our season! It is my bittersweet delight to welcome you tonight, although I wish we could be together in person.

This season, *Transfigured*, was completely planned prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and is marked by a search for the apotheosis of beauty through transfiguration. While each concert will seek out beauty in ways new and old, they are a continuation of our commitment to life-affirming performance, music-making at its finest, and constant innovation.

Yet this concert has certainly required more innovation than I planned when we programmed it in December 2019! We had planned a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment featuring twelve singers, with Elena Ruehr and Gretchen Henderson's *Cassandra in the Temples* at its core. In fact, this concert's title is lifted (the aphorism 'good artists borrow...' comes to mind) from Gretchen Henderson's libretto for *Cassandra in the Temples*.

Unfortunately, we won't be able to perform this work for you tonight, but we look forward to sending each and every audience member a complimentary recording of it at a later date. Instead, we have plumbed the depths of the art song and small ensemble repertoire and found abundant beauty and meaning there.

Tonight's concert is inspired by intimate version of music-making that arose in the 19th century when suddenly - due to the rise of the middle class, availability of pianos and sheet music - families and friends made music in small groups in their homes. We explore this intimate vision in six scenes, which begin in angst that is transmuted to peace.

I'm grateful to our wonderful singers for changing their programming on a dime, to our Assistant Conductor, Gilbert Spencer, for his tireless work on this program, and to you all, for spending your evening with us. I hope that you find as much meaning in the powerful voices of the composers represented on tonight's program as I have.

-Matthew Robertson

PROGRAM

I. Shine and Glimmer

Hor che la vaga Aurora

Vittoria Aleotti (c. 1575 - 1620)

White Moon; from *Five Songs*

Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901 - 1953)

Sylvia Leith, *mezzo-soprano*

The Voice

Ellen Mandel (dates not provided)

Oliver Mercer, *tenor*

II. Longing

IV. What Only Poetry Can Do; from *What Only Poetry Can Do*

Dale Trumbore (b. 1987)

Katelyn Aungst, *soprano*

En Sourdine

Poldowski (1879 - 1932)

Oliver Mercer, *tenor*

Night

Florence Price (1887 - 1953)

Gilbert Spencer, *baritone*

The empty song; from *Love After 1950*

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Sylvia Leith, *mezzo-soprano*

III. Come Along

Dolce Cantavi

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Katelyn Aungst and Julie Bosworth, *sopranos*; Sylvia Leith, *mezzo-soprano*

Den Abschied Schnell Genommen

Josephine Lang (1815 - 1880)

Steven Berlanga, *bass-baritone*

Hai Luli

Pauline Viardot (1821 - 1910)

Julie Bosworth, *soprano*

IV. Spring

O Frondens Virga

Hildegard von Bingen (1098 - 1179)

Julie Bosworth, *soprano*

I. Why I Write; from *What Poetry Can Do*

D. Trumbore

Katelyn Aungst, *soprano*

The Year's at the Spring

Amy Beach (1867 - 1944)

Julie Bosworth, *soprano*

V. The Fall the Angels Fell

O Vivens Fons

H. von Bingen

Caroline Olsen, *mezzo-soprano*

Strings for Elijah (after Cornelius Eady)

Jenny Olivia Johnson (b. 1978)

WORLD PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

Sylvia Leith, *mezzo-soprano* and Gilbert Spencer, *baritone*

Heyr þú oss himnum á

Anna Thorvaldsdottir (b. 1977)

VI. Goodness Running Like a Stream

Be Like The Bird

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980)

Come And Taste

arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925)

Hard Times Come Again No More

arr. Amy Broadbent (b. 1992)

Underneath the Stars

Kate Rusby (b. 1973)

*The Thirteen gratefully thanks tonight's concert sponsor
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Upcoming

The Thirteen's Fall Fête

Friday, October 16, 2020 | 7:30 PM

A festive virtual event with exclusive performances by members of The Thirteen and a silent auction.

Greta van Susteren, *Special Guest*

Sorrow to the Stars

Saturday, October 24, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Schütz | Musikalisches Exequien

Schoenberg | Friede auf Erden



NOTES

Hor che la vaga Aurora

V. Aleotti

Vittoria Aleotti was, like many of her contemporaries, a nun. She is believed by many to be the same person as Raffaella Aleotti, who achieved tremendous fame during her lifetime for her work as the organist and maestro at the Augustinian convent in Ferrara; works by Vittoria do not exist after works by Raffaella begin to appear. *Hor che la vaga Aurora* glimpses Apollo, riding across the Alpen landscape, playing his lyre for those below; his music so beautiful as to send the souls below to heaven.

*Hor che la vaga aurora,
sopra un caro di foco
appar in ogni loco,
co'l figlio di Latona,*

Now that lovely dawn,
Riding a fiery chariot
Appears everywhere,
with Latona's son (Apollo),

*che'l suo dorato crine
a l'Alpi e a le campagne
à noi vicine mostra
con dolci accenti
questi la ben temprata lira suona*

And show's her flaxen hair
To the Alps and to the countryside
Near us,
with sweet tones,
He plays his well-tuned lyre

*onde gli spirti
pellegrini intenti
odono l'armonia
che l'alme nostre al ciel erg'et invia.*

So that wandering spirits
Listen intently
To the harmony
That lifts and sends our souls heavenward.

White Moon; from *Five Songs*

R.C. Seeger

Ruth Crawford Seeger composed some of the most enduring music of the 20th century, influencing many of the most recognized composers of the modern era. The first woman to win a Guggenheim Fellowship, her compositions can be categorized into three main stylistic periods, 20th century modernism, avant-garde serialism and experimental music, and the works for which she is most well-known: arrangements and transcriptions of American folk music. Seeger's *Five Songs* sit firmly at the end of the first period, a product of her studies with Marion Bauer at the famed MacDowell Colony in Upstate New York. Here Seeger sets the words of close friend and Pulitzer Prize-winner Carl Sandburg in a hauntingly sparse musical adaptation.

White Moon comes in on a baby face.
The shafts across her bed are flimmering.
Out on the land White Moon shines,
Shines and glimmers against gnarled shadows,
All silver to slow twisted shadows
Falling across the long road that runs from the house.
Keep a little of your beauty
And some of your flimmering silver
For her by the window tonight
Where you come in, White Moon.

Composer Ellen Mandel has made her career setting the words of great poets such as Yeats, Hardy, and Cummings. *The Voice* sets a Thomas Hardy poem of the same name, which tenderly recounts the almost-hallucinatory experience of hearing a recently deceased spouse's voice.

*Woman much missed, how you call to me, call to me,
Saying that now you are not as you were
When you had changed from the one who was all to me,
But as at first, when our day was fair.*

*Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you, then,
Standing as when I drew near to the town
Where you would wait for me: yes, as I knew you then,
Even to the original air-blue gown!*

*Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness
Travelling across the wet mead to me here,
You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness,
Heard no more again far or near?*

*Thus I; faltering forward,
Leaves around me falling,
Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
And the woman calling.*

IV. What Only Poetry Can Do; from *What Only Poetry Can Do*

D. Trumbore

Dale Trumbore is a Los Angeles-based composer and author. Setting a poem by Barbara Crooker, Trumbore's evocative and richly-textured writing twists and turns in beautiful and unexpected ways as she asks the listener to consider the beauty and mystery of the night sky.

*Make us stop, in our harried multi-tasking modern
(or post-modern) lives, away from the ambient light
of electricity and all that follows, and look up,
into the great glass eye of night, gazing in dumb
struck wonder at the coded messages of the stars.*

En Sourdine

Poldowski

Régine Wieniawski, later adopting the mononymous pseudonym Poldowski, was the daughter of notable Polish violinist and composer Henryk Wieniawski. Born in Belgium, Poldowski lived and worked in England for most of her life, eventually marrying into a noble family and assuming pseudo-royal duties. Known particularly for her art songs, Poldowski's writing is expressive and heavily influenced by the romantic movement of the late 19th century.

*Calmes dans le demi-jour
Que les branches hautes font,
Pénétrons bien notre amour
De ce silence profond.
Mélons nos âmes, nos cœurs
Et nos sens extasiés,
Parmi les vagues langueurs
Des pins et des arbousiers.
Ferme tes yeux à demi,
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,
Et de ton cœur endormi*

*Chasse à jamais tout dessein.
Laissons-nous persuader
Au souffle berceur et doux
Qui vient, à tes pieds, rider
Les ondes des gazons roux.
Et quand, solennel, le soir
Des chênes noirs tombera
Voix de notre désespoir,
Le rossignol chantera.*

Calm in the twilight
Cast by loft boughs,
Let us steep our love
In this deep quiet.
Let us mingle our souls, our hearts
And our enraptured senses
With the hazy languor
Of arbutus and pine.
Half-close your eyes,
Fold your arms across your breast,
And from your heart now lulled to rest

Banish forever all intent.
Let us both succumb
To the gentle and lulling breeze
That comes to ruffle at your feet
The waves of russet grass.
And when, solemnly, evening
Falls from the black oaks,
That voice of our despair,
The nightingale shall sing.

Night

F. Price

Florence Price was born in Arkansas at the tail end of Reconstruction. Her parents were highly respected members of their community, and Price was educated at the New England Conservatory, where she identified as Mexican so as to avoid discrimination towards African Americans. In 1932, she won the Wanamaker competition for her 3rd symphony, and the next year became the first African American woman to have a piece performed by a major orchestra (Chicago). *Night* sets a poem by Louise C. Wallace and demonstrates Price's unique voice: distinctly American, yet steeped in the European art music tradition.

*Night comes, a Madonna clad in scented blue.
Rose red her mouth and deep her eyes,
She lights her stars, and turns to where,
Beneath her silver lamp the moon,
Upon a couch of shadow lies
A dreamy child,
The wearied Day.*

What a pleasure and honor it is to create a new set of songs...! We wanted songs that are little real life-dramas which is exactly what the songs in *Love After 1950* are. I love the image of the empty shampoo bottle as the metaphor for the draining of emotion from a failed love affair. In the case of the poem, *The Empty Song*, the shampoo happens to be Spanish. With extraordinary genius, Liz Lochhead has crafted her words to create the cadence of a slow Tango. It seemed so natural to marry her words with a haunting Tango of resignation. This work, virtuosic in its performance and understanding of life, is no *Frauen Liebe und Leben*, rather *Love After 1950* is the new-woman's Frau, Love 'em and Leave 'em.

-Program note by the composer.

*Today saw the last of my Spanish shampoo.
Lasted an age now that sharing with you,
such a thing of the past is.
Giant Size. The brand
was always a compromise.
My new one's tailored exactly to my needs.*

*Non-spill. Protein-rich.
Feeds Body, promises to solve my problem hair.
Sweetheart, these days it's hard to care.
But oh oh insomniac moonlight
how unhoneeyed is my middle of the night.
I could see you
far enough. Beyond me
how we'll get back together.
Campsites in Spain, moonlight,
heavy weather.
Today saw the end of my Spanish shampoo,
the end of my third month without you.*

Dolce Cantavi

C. Shaw

Caroline Shaw is the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Music, awarded in 2013 for her work *Partita for 8 Voices*. In *Dolce Cantavi*, Shaw takes a 16th century poem by Francesca Turina Bufalini Contessa di Stupinigi and re-imagines it through her unique compositional lens as a sort-of contemporary madrigal. Shaw is renowned for her melismatic and recognizable style; her writing often incorporates elements of speech, whispers, sighs, murmurs, wordless melodies and novel vocal effects.

*Vago augellin, che per quei rami ombrosi
dolce cantavi a minüir mie pene,
di sentirti al mio cor gran desir viene
per fare in tutto i giorni miei giocosi.
Deh vieni, e teco mena i più famosi
cantor che quella selva in sen ritiene,
ché goderete in queste rive amene,
ed a l'estivo di starete ascosi.
Il boschetto vi attende, e 'l bel giardino
là dove in fra le fronde e l'onda e l'ora
gareggian mormorando a me vicino.
A cantar sorgeremo in sul mattino:
io con le Muse invocarò l'aurora,
e voi col vostro gorgheggiar divini.*

Lovely little bird, who, among those shady branches,
used to sing so sweetly to mitigate my sorrows,
a great desire comes to my heart to hear you again,
to make my days complete in their joy.
Come, and bring with you the most famous singers
that the forest nurtures in its breast,
for you will have the pleasure of these fair waters
and be hidden away from the heat of the summer day.
The little wood awaits you, and the lovely garden where,
among the leaves, the ripples and the breeze
compete in their murmuring beside me.
We will rise together before sunrise:
I will herald the dawn with the Muses,
and you with your warbling divine.

Den Abschied Schnell Genommen

J. Lang

The daughter of successful musicians, Josephine Lang was a child prodigy with ample opportunity and access to the upper echelons of German artistic society. Both Felix Mendelssohn and Clara Schumann were champions of her work and went to great lengths to ensure publication and performance. *Den Abschied Schnell Genommen* begins with a somewhat melancholic text, which ultimately turns hopeful: with resolve, the poet writes, the pain of love lost shall be defeated.

*Nur den Abschied schnell genommen,
Nicht gezaudert, nicht geklagt,
Schneller als die Thränen kommen,
Losgerissen, unverzagt.*

Only take leave quickly,
Do not linger, do not lament,
More quickly than the tears can come,
Tear yourself away!

*Aus den Armen losgewunden,
Wie in der Brust auch brennt,
Was im Leben sich gefunden,
Wird im Leben auch getrennt.*

Disentangle yourself from arms,
No matter how much it burns in you
Those who have found each other in life
Are also separated from each other in this life.

*Sollst du tragen, mußt du tragen,
Trage nur mit festem Sinn,
Deine Seufzer, deine Klagen
Wehen in die Lüfte hin.*

If you are destined to bear, if you must bear pain,
Only bear it with a steadfast spirit!
Your sighs, your laments
Are wafted away in the breezes!

*Soll der Schmerz dich nicht bezwingen,
So bezwinde du den Schmerz,
Und verwelkte Blüten schlingen
Frisch sich um dein wundes Herz.*

If pain is not to overcome you,
You must overcome pain,
And wilted flowers, refreshed, shall entwine
Themselves around your wounded heart!

Another child prodigy, Pauline Viardot, was the daughter of an internationally recognized tenor (Manuel Garcia, who performed in the first American production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*) and her early studies in piano were with Franz Liszt. As an adult, she rubbed elbows with friends Frederic Chopin, Camille Saint-Saens, and other notable composers, many of whom have left accounts of her astonishing musicianship. *Hai Luli* (which translates to a sort of French "tra la") is a lament dripping with anguish and melodrama.

*Je suis triste, je m'inquiète,
Je ne sais plus que devenir.
Mon bon ami devait venir,
Et je l'attends ici seulette.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Où peut donc être mon ami ?*

I am sad, I am troubled,
I no longer know what will happen!
My lover ought to come,
And I await him here alone.
Hai luli
Ah! how said it is without my love.

*Je m'assieds pour filer ma laine,
Le fil se casse dans ma main :
Allons ! je filerai demain,
Aujourd'hui je suis trop en peine.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Qu'il fait donc triste sans mon ami !*

Alas, I languish in waiting,
And the ingrate enjoys himself far from me!
Perhaps he betrays his oath to me
Beside a new lover.
Hai luli!
Could I have lost my love?

*Si jamais il devient volage,
S'il doit un jour m'abandonner,
Le village n'a qu'à brûler
Et moi-même avec le village !
Hai luli, hai luli,
À quoi bon vivre sans ami ?*

Ah! if it is true; if it is true that he is faithless,
If one day he should abandon me,
The only thing is for the village to burn
And myself with the village.
Hai luli!
What use is it to live without my love

O Frondens Virga

H. von Bingen

Hildegard von Bingen was a German nun noted for her divine visions. These visions inspired her to create some of the most treasured and widely studied texts and music from the Middle Ages. *O Frondens Virga* employs imagery of blooming branches to associate the divine with earthly beauty and fertility.

*Ofrondens virga,
in tua nobilitate stans
sicut aurora procedit:
nunc gaude et letare
et nos debiles dignare
a mala consuetudine liberare
atque manum tuam porrige
ad erigendum nos.*

O blooming branch,
you stand upright in your nobility,
as breaks the dawn on high:
Rejoice now and be glad,
and deign to free us, frail and weakened,
from the wicked habits of our age;
stretch forth your hand
to lift us up aright.

Why Write, another entry from Trumbore's *What Only Poetry Can Do*, sets a poem by Barbara Crooker. Here, the singer considers the necessity of recording one's experiences, and the fragility of the natural world around us.

*Because I'm here, this late in the century,
looking at the ink-filled sky,
seeing the April comet, a luminous exclamation,
not believing, with the alternatives
of nuclear char or unchecked epidemic,
that anything from our time will last.
But still, I was here, on this rock,
this shaley hillside, violets blooming
in the grass, for a short time. I suffered,
I lived, I loved in the face of everything,
and I have to write it down.*

The Year's at the Spring

A. Beach

Amy Beach was an extraordinarily prolific and much-admired composer; indeed she was the only female member of the "Second New England School" of composers. She is best known for her large work *The Gaelic Symphony*, which was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1896, and her oeuvre is also replete with art song, chamber music, and sacred music. *The Year's at the Spring* is a miniature, with Beach's European education and influence noticeable as she romps through Robert Browning's poem.

*The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!*

O Vivens Fons

H. von Bingen

*O vivens fons, quam magna est suavitas tua,
qui faciem istorum in te non amisisti,
sed acute previdisti
quomodo eos de angelico
casu abstraheres,
qui se aestimabant illud habere quod non licet sic stare.
Unde gaude, filia Sion,
quia deus tibi multos reddit
quos serpens de te abscidere voluit,
qui nunc in maiori luce fulgent
quam prius illorum causa fuisset.*

Living fountain, how great is your sweetness:
you did not reject the gaze of these upon you—
no, acutely you foresaw
how you could avert them from the fall the
angels fell,
they who thought they possessed a power
which no law allows to be like that.
Rejoice then, daughter Jerusalem,
for God is giving you back many
whom the serpent wanted to sunder from you,
who now gleam in a greater brightness
than would have been their state before

Strings for Elijah (after Cornelius Eady)

J.O. Johnson

Jenny Olivia Johnson is an electroacoustic composer and sound artist whose work has been installed at such institutions as the Kennedy Center, National Portrait Gallery, and numerous museums throughout the world, including the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, The Galeria Machina in Santiago, Chile, and the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, where she is also a member of the faculty. This work, which receives its world premiere tonight, was written in collaboration with poet Cornelius Eady and is meant to honor the memory of Elijah McClain, who was a musician and massage therapist killed by on-duty members of the Aurora, Colorado police department last year.

Text taken from the last words of Elijah McClain and a poem by Cornelius Eady,:

*But the cops have a point, don't they?
After they gas the notes, and try to shove the bows away
And beat harsh time on their Billy Club
It really can't be unheard, Elijah's soft song
As they toss him down, and apply the weight of failure
On his back and neck, the cat-gut scrape of forgiveness
As he's pressed away; forgive me. I love you. I don't eat meat.
All I was doing was trying to be become better. So high and lonely
In the air. An awkward score in their helmets.*

Heyr þú oss himnum á

A. Thorvaldsdottir

Anna Thorvaldsdottir is an Icelandic composer and DJ based in London. *Heyr þú oss himnum á* sets an ancient Icelandic prayer in Thorvaldsdottir's ethereal and haunting compositional voice; her writing evokes the stark landscape of her home country and its otherworldly beauty.

*Heyr þú oss himnum á,
hýr vor faðir, börn þín smá, lukku oss þar til ljá
líf eilíft þér erfum hjá,
og að þér aldrei flæmumst frá.
Þitt ríki þróist hér,
það þín stjórna og kristni er, svo að vér sem flestir,
safnist, Guð, til handa þér, fegin yfir því fögnum vér.
Síst skarta sönglist má,
sé þar ekki elskan hjá,
syngjum þvíþýtt lof þá,
Þér, Guð drottinn, himnum á, Maður rétt kristinn
mun þess gá. En þegar aumir vér,
öndumst burt úr heimi hér, oss tak þá, Guð, að þér,
Í þá dýrð, sem aldrei þver. Amen, amen það eflaust sker.*

Hear us in heaven,
loving Father, as we, your small children, ask for the fortune
to receive eternal life.
We shall not stray from your path.
May we help your kingdom
to grow here on earth. Following your guidance,
we gather around in your name, and gladly celebrate.
We cannot make a joyful song unless we are moved by love.
So let us sing our gentle praise to you, Lord God, in heaven,
as the truly faithful have done.
When our poor souls
pass away from this world,
take us God to you,
into your everlasting glory. Amen, Amen, may this be done.

Be Like The Bird

A. Betinis

I wrote this canon just after completing cancer treatment for the second time. My family and I sent it out as our annual Christmas card in 2009. And — while I couldn't have foreseen it at the time — it would turn into my mantra over the next year, while I underwent a third cancer diagnosis and bone marrow transplant. My cousin Sarah Riley and I discovered the

text quite by accident. In October 2009, our grandfather, the Rt. Rev. John H. Burt (a.k.a Christmas reveler and merry-maker, lover of music and literature, and inspiring leader and activist) had died. After his funeral, and after an impromptu family round-sing (common in the Burt family), Sarah and I were sitting on Grandpa's old couch, reading through some of the sermons he had written and delivered throughout his long life. Sarah and I realized that Grandpa had quoted this lovely Victor Hugo text in a few sermons over the years, always to inspire courage in the face of adversity.

-Program note by the composer.

*Be like the bird that,
pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight,
feels them give way beneath her -- and sings -- knowing she hath wings.*

Come And Taste

A. Parker

Alice Parker has enjoyed an extraordinarily prolific career as an arranger, conductor, and teacher. Educated at Smith College and the Juilliard School, Parker is closely associated with Robert Shaw, the two collaborating on nearly 250 arrangements of folk songs, spirituals, hymns, and songs. While many of these works bear both Mr. Shaw and Ms. Parker's names, the musical work was almost solely Parker's, Shaw serving as editor and publisher. Come And Taste is a rarity in that it bears Parker's name alone, and is a haunting rendition of an old Appalachian tune.

*Come and taste along with me,
Consolations running free,
From my Father's worthy home,
Sweeter than the honey comb.*

(refrain)
*I'll praise God, and you praise God
And we'll all praise God together.
We'll praise the Lord for the work that He has done
And we'll bless His Name for ever*

*All that come with free goodwill
Make the banquet sweeter still
Now I go to mercy's door
Asking for a little more.*

(refrain)

*Goodness running like a stream
Through the new Jerusalem;
By its constant breaking forth,
Sweetens earth and heaven both.*

(refrain)

*O return, ye sons of grace,
Turn and see God's smiling face.
Hark, he calls the wayward home,
Then from him no longer roam.
(refrain)*

Hard Times Come Again No More

arr. A. Broadbent

Stephen Foster's influence on American music is vast, and though he remains a controversial historical figure, in his short life, his musical output set the stage for American popular music for decades to come. This parlor song was published in 1854, a turbulent time in American history, just prior to the Civil War. Foster takes a unique perspective: rather than counting blessings, we're asked to "count [life's] many tears." Still, I view this song not as a cry of despair, but a song of hope in a better future. Today, the lyrics speak to a people recognizing inequities, injustices, and evils, and hoping to overcome them. In 2020, many of us have found moments to pause and reflect on the nature of our collective grief. Yet as we reflect, we move forward, always move forward. While these dark times will trouble and grieve us, they will also serve to illuminate all that is good in the world - all that we cherish and strive for.

-Program note by the composer.

*Let us pause in life's pleasures and count its many tears,
While we all sup sorrow with the poor;
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears;
Oh, hard times, come again no more.*

*'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.
Many days you have lingered all around my cabin door;
Oh, hard times, come again no more.*

*While we seek mirth and beauty and music light and gay,
There are frail frames fainting at the door;
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say
Oh, hard times, come again no more.*

*'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door;
Oh, hard times, come again no more.*

*'Tis a sigh that is wafted across a troubled wave,
'Tis a wail that's heard upon the shore.
'Tis a dirge that is murmured around the lowly grave,
Oh hard times come again no more.*

*'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door;
Oh, hard times, come again no more.*

Underneath The Stars

K. Rusby

Kate Rusby is one of the great British singer-songwriters of our time and is one of the few folk musicians to have been nominated for the prestigious Mercury Prize, which recognizes excellence in popular music that has been created by British and Irish musicians. This arrangement of her song, *Underneath the Stars*, is a nod to the work of arranger Jim

Clements, but reimagined for this strange and distant time and for the musicians we have at hand. It is a beautiful parting song, and we hope you will “go gently” and that we will meet underneath the stars again, in person, soon.

*Underneath the stars I'll meet you,
Underneath the stars I'll greet you.
There beneath the stars I'll leave you
Before you go of your own free will.*

Go gently.

*Underneath the stars you met me,
Underneath the stars you left me.
I wonder if the stars regret me?
At least you'll go of your own free will.*

Go gently.

*Here beneath the stars I'm landing,
And here beneath the stars not ending.
Why on earth am I pretending?
I'm here again, the stars befriending.
They come and go of their own free will.*

Go gently.

*Underneath the stars you met me,
And Underneath the stars you left me.
I wonder if the stars regret me?
I'm sure they'd like me if they only met me.
They come and go of their own free will.*

Go gently...

The Thirteen

Praised for performing with “striking color and richness” (The Washington Post) and “a tight and attractive vocal blend and excellent choral discipline” (American Record Guide), **The Thirteen** is an all-star professional ensemble known for reimagining the potential of vocal music. Since its founding in 2012, the choir has been at the forefront of invigorating performances of choral masterworks ranging from early chant to world premieres and the centuries in between.

The Thirteen draws its artists from among the finest ensembles in the world, including Chanticleer, Seraphic Fire, Apollo’s Fire, Conspirare, I Fagiolini, Opera Philadelphia, Boston Early Music Festival, and Trinity Wall Street. The choir’s peerless singers are best described by National Public Radio commentator M.D. Ridge: “to talk about the remarkable abilities and sound of the individual singers would... be like trying to say which whitecaps on the ocean reflect the sun most beautifully, or which leaves on a tree dance most gracefully with the wind... I stand in awe.”

The Thirteen’s growing discography includes “Truth and Fable,” which premiered in October 2019, “Voice Eternal,” which was pre-nominated for a Grammy® award, the critically-acclaimed Christmas album “Snow on Snow,” “RADIANT DARK,” which features the finest works of the late Tudor period and reached #28 on the iTunes Classical Charts, as well as The Thirteen’s debut recording “...to St. Cecilia.”

In past seasons, The Thirteen has performed and been in residency at Yale University, Bowling Green State University, Eastern Illinois University, the University of Central Oklahoma, York College, The University of Tampa, Virginia Wesleyan University, St. Ambrose University, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Guilford College, as well as concerts at colleges and concert series throughout the United States. In 2018 The Thirteen was awarded the Greater Washington Area Choral Excellence award for Most Creative Programming.

The Thirteen is committed to educating and inspiring the next generation of musicians, and frequently coaches students at the high school and collegiate levels in masterclass, workshop and collaborative performance sessions.

For more information about The Thirteen, please visit www.TheThirteenChoir.org



Matthew Robertson



Matthew Robertson, praised for his “sensitive and nuanced” conducting, is acclaimed as the driving force behind the all-star professional choir, The Thirteen, and is hailed as a leader in the field. As Founder and Artistic Director of The Thirteen, he has conducted the ensemble throughout the United States and on multiple recordings.

Robertson’s 2019-2020 season promises to be unlike any before it, with numerous live-streamed performances, including performances of Schütz’s *Musikalisches Exequien*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Lang’s *the little match girl passion*, a staged performance of J.S. Bach’s *St. John Passion*, Monteverdi’s *The “Lost” Mass*, and more.

Robertson’s 2018-2020 seasons with The Thirteen saw nearly forty performances, repertoire spanning more than half of a millennium, collaborations with many of the finest instrumentalists of his generation, and world premieres by Scott Ordway, Melissa Dunphy, and Daniel Elder. Additional highlights of his 2018-2020 seasons included performances of Mozart’s *Requiem*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Monteverdi’s *The “Lost” Vespers (1641)*, Ordway’s *The Outer Edge of Youth*, Kile Smith’s *The Consolation of Apollo*, Handel’s *Dixit Dominus*, Steffani’s *Stabat Mater*, Lang’s *the little match girl passion*, Poulenc’s *Figure Humaine*, Duruflé’s *Requiem*, and much of J.S. Bach’s oeuvre including his *St. John Passion*. Additionally, from 2018-2020 Robertson led workshops throughout the East Coast and served on the faculty of Oberlin Conservatory’s Baroque Performance Institute, a premiere summer institute and festival dedicated to music of the Baroque.

From 2010-2012 Robertson served as Assistant Conductor for the Westminster Symphonic Choir, conducting the choir in performance and assisting in preparation for concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, for such conductors as Yannick Nezet-Seguin, Peter Schreier, Alan Gilbert and Jacques Lacombe.

Mr. Robertson was the Robert P. Fountain Scholar at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, earning a degree in Organ Performance. While at the Oberlin Conservatory he conducted the Oberlin College Choir, College Singers, Musical Union, Conservatory Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra.

Robertson received his M.Mus. in conducting from Westminster Choir College where he studied with Andrew Megill and Joe Miller. He has also worked with such luminary conductors as Norman Scribner, Stan Engebretson, Robert Spano, Joseph Flummerfelt, Gary Graden and JoAnn Falletta.

A Washington, DC native, Robertson serves as Director of Music at Bradley Hills Church, in Bethesda, MD. Additionally active as an organist, Mr. Robertson has performed throughout the United States and in Western Europe.

SUPPORT US

The Thirteen is grateful for your generosity, and never more so than in navigating these unprecedented times. Like most organizations, The Thirteen depends for its existence upon the generosity of those who have come to know and love the music we make.

While the Board of Trustees has taken steps to help The Thirteen survive the first months of the Covid-19 pandemic, we ask you to please consider giving now to support our season. No matter how much you give, it is important that you do give—whether \$5 or \$5,000. It is vital to us that as much of our audience as possible is part of our musical family. Join us in making music.

To donate, please visit TheThirteenChoir.org and click on “Donate,” or send your check payable to The Thirteen to:

The Thirteen
P.O. Box 32065 Washington, DC 20007

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If you have made a bequest to The Thirteen, please let us know so that you can be recognized as a member of The Thirteen's Legacy Society. Your gift will serve as an inspiration for others.

For more information about making a gift to The Thirteen through your will or trust, or if you have already included The Thirteen in your plans, please contact Valerie Simonsen at valerie@thethirteenchoir.org.

Legacy Society
Dr. Patricia Stocker