SONO LUMINUS
boyd meets girl
SONGS OF LOVE
& DESPAIR

Songs of Love & Despair

1.	Arabesque No. 1	- Claude Debussy (1862-1918) *	[4:30]
2.	A New York Minute	- Marián Budoš (b. 1968) †	[4:16]
3.	Gretchen am Spinnrade	- Franz Schubert (1797-1828) (arr. N. Coste)	[3:18]
4.	The Deserted Garden	- Florence Price (1887-1953) *	[2:15]
5.	Pray You Catch Me	- Beyoncé (b. 1981) *	[4:16]
	Mountain Songs	- Robert Beaser (b. 1954)	
6.	Barbara Allen		[3:19]
7.	The House Carpenter		[2:03]
8.	He's Gone Away		[5:30]
9.	Hush You Bye		[4:50]
	Sonata in A major, G. 4	- Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)	
10.	Adagio	(arr. V. Dešpalj)	[3:10]
11.	Allegro moderato		[4:38]
12.	Blackbird	- Lennon/McCartney *	[2:46]
13.	Eleanor Rigby	- Lennon/McCartney (arr. S. Metcalf)	[2:21]
14.	Filles de l'Élysée	- Paul Brantley (b. 1961) †	[5:38]
15.	Daydreaming	- Radiohead *	[5:15]
16.	Praise to the Eternity of Jesus (from Quartet for the End of Time)	- Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) (arr. R. Mosher)	[7:37]

* Arr. Boyd Meets Girl † World premiere recording Total Time: [65:52]

This is an album of love. But also of despair. And some things in between.

Largely conceived, arranged, rehearsed and recorded during the Covid-19 pandemic, *Songs of Love & Despair* contains the music that we were drawn to during this time -- a time of unprecedented stillness and solitude, traveling at most a few miles from our home for months on end. As a married couple we were fortunate to be able to play music together every day, and this collection of repertoire is half love, half longing; from the delicate beauty of Debussy and the joyousness of Boccherini, to the anguish of Messiaen and heartbreaking Appalachian folk songs, which tell the stories of love, life and loss.

The album is a testament to this time, and we welcome you to join us as we traverse the emotions that have enveloped us all. *- Rupert Boyd (December 2021)*

DEBUSSY: Arabesque No. 1

During the height of the pandemic, I craved music that would lift my spirits. One day I was listening to pianist Hélène Grimaud's gorgeous rendition of the beloved "Arabesque No. 1" for piano solo, and felt consumed by the need to arrange it for cello and guitar. We worked on the arrangement every day for a couple of weeks while our son was napping, and it came together quite naturally on our instruments. The rippling filigree sounds marvelous on the guitar and the soaring lines sing on the cello. The piece is pure beauty and light, something we needed in those darkest days. *–LM*

BUDOŠ: A New York Minute

A love letter to New York City, this piece was written for us by the Slovakian-born, Australian composer Marián Budoš. Although written from a distance of 10,000 miles, this piece perfectly encapsulates the vitality and vibrancy of New York, and on a more subtle note, includes the feeling of the ever-changing energy one experiences moving through the streets of the city. *–RB*

SCHUBERT: Gretchen am Spinnrade

"Gretchen am Spinnrade," the first of our trilogy of songs from the female perspective, was written by Franz Schubert when he was just 17 years old. In this song, a young Schubert manages to capture the roiling intensity of young Gretchen's overwhelming feelings as she experiences her first love. Throughout the song the guitar depicts the sound of her constantly spinning wheel, as she ruminates on her newfound passion: "I'll never find peace again, my heart is heavy." At one point in the song, the thought of "his kiss" is too much for her and she abruptly stops the wheel. After this outburst, she regains her composure and gets the wheel spinning again. The song was revolutionary when it was written 200 years ago, and is as impactful today as it was then. *–LM*

PRICE: The Deserted Garden

Florence Price was a truly remarkable woman. She was the first Black woman ever to have her music performed by a major American orchestra (the Chicago Symphony), and she composed much of her considerable output while also raising two children on her own. Much of her music is harmonically dense and dramatic. This song, composed in 1933 for violin and piano, is more straightforward, containing hints of jazz and blues harmonies that illuminate a melody that starts and ends with a somber tone but lightens and livens in the middle. *–LM*

BEYONCÉ: Pray You Catch Me

I am a lifelong Beyoncé fan, and had long wanted to arrange one of her tunes for our duo. Arranging a pop song with a lot of electronic effects for an acoustic duo is not easy, and it took time to choose the right song. We settled on her whispered, tender yet plaintive "Pray You Catch Me," the opening track of her album *Lemonade*. To make it work for our instrumentation, we changed the form of the song, and filled in some of the harmonies with our own vocals! Beyoncé's vocals on the tune are raw and emotionally rich, and we tried to capture that with our performance. Even those who don't know the original can appreciate it as a piece of contemporary chamber music. *–LM*

BEASER: Mountain Songs

Mountain Songs, by the New York composer Robert Beaser, brilliantly sets Appalachian and American folk melodies into virtuosic, through-composed works for guitar and flute, which we adapted for guitar and cello. The songs will be familiar to many listeners, but these beautiful melodies belie some dark parables of love, life and loss. *–RB*

BARBARA ALLEN:

This song tells the story of a young man in love with a girl named Barbara Allen. The love however is unrequited, and shortly thereafter on his death-bed, the man calls to see Barbara Allen one last time. She visits him and after taking one look says, "young man, I think you are dying," before turning on her heels and leaving. He then dies, and his last breath is represented in the music by the struck, penultimate chord of the piece, followed by the final chord, played in delicate harmonics, representing his soul rising to heaven. *–RB*

THE HOUSE CARPENTER:

In this song, a man returns from sea to find his former lover now happily married to a carpenter. In Beaser's setting you hear the discussion played out between the louder, low-pitched voice of the man, and the softer, higher-pitched responses of the carpenter's wife as he begs her to come for a ride on his boat. No, no, she says, I cannot leave my husband and children behind, but ever persistent, the man continues to ask until the wife acquiesces, kissing her three sons on their heads before boarding the boat. They go out to sea, the boat sinks, and they both drown (the guitar outro imitates the boat sinking to the bottom of the ocean, and bubbles rising to the surface). *–RB*

HE'S GONE AWAY:

In this third song, a young man tells his love that he is going away "to stay a little while," and that he'll be back when he's travelled 10,000 miles. And she's left wondering who will tie her

shoes, and who will glove her hands, and who will kiss her ruby red lips. In the middle of this song, Beaser incorporates an original, unbridled moment of hoedown before returning to the original tune. *–RB*

HUSH YOU BYE:

As if the first three songs weren't depressing enough, now comes Hush You Bye, an African-American spiritual from the South. In this lullaby, a baby is comforted with the words: "*Hush-a-bye, don't you cry, go to sleep little baby. When you wake, you shall have, all the pretty little horses*." These sweet sentiments take a sinister turn, when it is revealed that a Black nanny is singing these words to a child in her care, while her own child is going neglected: "*Way down yonder, down in the meadows, there's a poor wee little lamby. The bees and the butterflies pickin' at its eyes, the poor wee thing cried for her mammy*." Beaser, in this self-described Fantasia, effectively weaves the "pretty little horses" line with brooding, fast moving scales between the parts. *–RB*

BOCCHERINI: Sonata in A major

Luigi Boccherini was not only a prolific 18th-century composer but also a virtuoso cellist, and his music is beloved by cellists to this day. This charming, gracious sonata, which straddles baroque and early classical styles, has been a favorite of mine since my college days. The inviting and warm opening Adagio gives way to a rollicking, joyous Allegro Moderato, both chock full of Boccherini's signature ornamentation and high-register writing for the cello. We have the wonderful Croatian cellist and arranger Valter Dešpalj to thank for this perfectly balanced arrangement. *–LM*

LENNON/MCCARTNEY: Blackbird

One of the most covered songs of all time, "Blackbird" by Lennon/McCartney actually has a connection to J.S. Bach and the classical guitar. As story has it, one day George and Paul were sitting around, thumbing through a beginner's book on how to teach yourself to play the Spanish guitar, when they came across Bach's Bourree in E minor (BWV996 – originally for the lute, and nowadays a piece that is commonly learnt by students of the classical guitar). They were both quite taken with it, playing through it as best they could, and Paul went home that night with the sounds of the contrapuntal melody and bass line in his head. He returned to the studio the next day, having come up with "Blackbird." The song was released on the *White Album* in 1968; its lyrics were written in response to the Civil Rights movement, which the present social justice issues have shown is sadly in need of our attention as much today, as it was then. *–RB*

LENNON/MCCARTNEY: Eleanor Rigby

Unusual for a rock 'n' roll song, the original accompaniment to The Beatles' recording of "Eleanor Rigby" eschews the standard instrumentation of pop music (guitars, drums, bass, keyboards) and instead is backed solely by two string quartets. Given the "classical" sound of the original recording, "Eleanor Rigby" adapts itself naturally to the sound of the cello and classical guitar, and was given a creative and highly effective arrangement for our duo by Laura's father, Steve Metcalf, who is, like myself, an ardent Beatles fan. *–RB*

BRANTLEY: Filles de l'Élysée

Paul Brantley is a wonderful cellist and composer who I met in my early days of freelancing in New York City. I've admired and performed his music a lot over the years, and we are thrilled to release the world premiere recording of his "Filles de l'Élysée." Below are his words about the piece. *–LM*

"Sometimes I dream music and am able to remember it. Often I wish I had not, but occasionally my subconscious sends me a little ear-worm I can't shake until I do something with it. A few years ago I dreamt such a melody that now opens Filles de l'Élysée -- a kind of bebop-ish/medieval version of the Ode to Joy, or so it reminded me. What to do with that! But soon after my dear friend, Catherine Schneider, wrote from Limoges asking if I would (secretly) compose a piece to celebrate her sister Lucienne's upcoming birthday -- and for her sister's cello and

guitar duo! For some reason this tune rather demanded to be included. But then I remembered: I flashed on the joyful time I once had walking down the Champs-Élysée with both Catherine and Lucienne and thought, well those are my "Daughters of Elysium" right there; meine "Töchter aus Elysium." And so this happy, wistful piece."

RADIOHEAD: Daydreaming

Radiohead is my all-time favorite band. I still remember lying in my childhood bedroom in the dark, listening to their album *Kid A* on my stereo and feeling like this was the most miraculous music in the world. I still feel that way because the band keeps putting out incredible music decade after decade, with a style that evolves over time but retains its instantly recognizable sound. We chose to cover their song "Daydreaming," a gentle, pulsing odyssey through different states of consciousness. In our arrangement, we use only our instruments to capture many of the electronic effects used in the song, including slow "snores" at the beginning and end, recreated by dragging the cello bow up and down, rather than across, the strings. *–LM*

MESSIAEN: Praise to the Eternity of Jesus

Olivier Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time* is one of the masterpieces of the 20th century. An epic multi-movement work for violin, clarinet, cello and piano, it was composed under the most trying circumstances imaginable -- while Messiaen was imprisoned in a POW camp in Germany during World War II. With help from a sympathetic guard, Messiaen managed to get access to paper, pencils and a broken-down piano, and compose the piece for fellow musicians in the camp. Many of the movements do not use all four musicians at once, and this movement "Praise to the Eternity of Jesus" was composed just for cello and piano. Messiaen was deeply, devoutly religious, and this movement is a sort of meditative prayer. An "infinitely slow," timeless melody in the cello unfolds over a pulsing accompaniment of rich, relentless block chords in the piano (played here by the guitar of course). In the music, there is anguish and despair, to be sure, but it ends on a note of hope. *–LM*

Boyd Meets Girl

Rupert Boyd, guitar
Laura Metcalf, cello

Boyd Meets Girl combines the thrilling virtuosity of two world-renowned soloists, with thoughtful, eclectic programming and arranging of music from Bach to Beyoncé. About the duo *Gramophone* writes "They play like one, with a harmony of purpose as sure as their intonation." Comprised of Australian classical guitarist Rupert Boyd and American cellist Laura Metcalf, the duo has performed around the world, from Kathmandu to Hawaii, and from Sydney to their home in New York City. Boyd Meets Girl's debut album reached No. 3 on the *Billboard* Traditional classical charts and to date has received over 2 million streams on Spotify. A happily married couple, and proud parents of their young son Milo, they are also artistic directors of GatherNYC, a weekly Sunday morning concert series that has been featured in *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*.

www.boydmeetsgirlduo.com

Our most heartfelt thanks to:

Marty & Michele Cohen, Ronald Arevalo, Sean Doyle, Brad Rubenstein, Jane Metcalf & Yoni Berkovits, Dan Merceruio, Daniel Shores, Collin Rae, Josh Frey, Penleigh & Robyn Boyd, and Steve & Nancy Metcalf.

DSL-92255

Songs of Love & Despair

Guitar: Greg Smallman & Sons, 2011. **Strings:** D'Addario EJ46
Cello: David Caron, 1994

Producer: Dan Merceruio
Recording, Mixing & Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores
Editing Engineer: Dan Merceruio
Photography: Dario Acosta (Front/Back cover, centrefold), Joshua Frey (p.6)
Liner Notes: Rupert Boyd & Laura Metcalf
Graphic Design, Recording Technician: Joshua Frey
Executive Producer: Collin J. Rae

Recorded April 19-22, 2021 at Sono Luminus Studios, Boyce, VA
Released March 25, 2022

℗ & © 2022 Sono Luminus, LLC. All rights reserved.
PO Box 227, Boyce, VA 22620, USA
sonoluminus.com • info@sonoluminus.com
WARNING: Unauthorized reproduction is prohibited by law and will result in criminal prosecution.

DSL-92255 — ℗ & © 2022 Sono Luminus, LLC. All rights reserved.