



Lisa Delan

The Hours Begin to Sing

Kristin Pankonin, piano
Matt Haimovitz, cello
David Krakauer, clarinet
Maxim Rubtsov, flute

William Bolcom
John Corigliano
David Garner
Gordon Getty
Jake Heggie
Luna Pearl Woolf



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To be part of the creative process of new songs from their inception to fruition is an exhilarating – and altogether humbling – experience. Myriad externalities influence the direction of the journey from the moment the text speaks to a composer until the moment the performers speak the text; but the great wonder is in what happens in between, in the mind and hand of the composer. As a mother, I can only liken this miracle to birth: an essential force comes into the world fully formed, through the conduit of another human being. And once it arrives, you cannot conceive of it never having been. I am grateful to have been some small part of such miracles.

When I recorded the partner CD to *The Hours Begin to Sing* – *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile* – I was delighted to include four premiere recordings, one of which I commissioned for the CD. I am thrilled with *The Hours Begin to Sing* to introduce four more premiere recordings, three of which were written specifically for this disc.

And although I cannot claim parentage in this drama of creation, I am honored to have been cast in the role of midwife.

During the recording of *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, I felt privileged to work with Bill Bolcom, John Corigliano, David Garner, Gordon Getty, Jake Heggie and Luna Pearl Woolf in lending my voice to their songs. To be able to renew these collaborations five years later for *The Hours Begin to Sing*, and to experience so much of the creative process along the way, have been unforeseen gifts. And what an exceptional gift to bring the words of Dickinson, Yeats, Kinnell, Rumi (translated by Coleman Barks), Sutzkever and Arnold Weinstein to life with Kristin Pankonin, Matt Haimovitz, David Krakauer and Maxim Rubtsov! Thank you Bill, John, David, Mr. G, Jake and Luna, for letting your kids come out and play with us.

- Lisa Delan
January 2013

The Hours Begin to Sing

More Songs by American Composers

Jake Heggie – David Garner – John Corigliano – Gordon Getty – Luna Pearl Woolf – William Bolcom

Lisa Delan, soprano

Kristin Pankonin, piano

Matt Haimovitz, violoncello

David Krakauer, clarinet

Maxim Rubtsov, flute

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Total playing time: 1.18.49

From the Book of Nightmares published by Bent Pen Music, Inc.

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Three Irish Folksong Settings published by G. Schirmer, Inc.

Four Emily Dickinson Songs published by Rork Music

Rumi: Quatrains of Love published by Oxingale Music

Cabaret Songs published by Edward B. Marks Music Company with Piedmont Music Company and Bolcom Music

Producer: Job Maarse

Balance Engineer: Jean-Marie Geijsen

Recording Engineers: Dann Thompson & Jason O'Connell

Editing: Jean-Marie Geijsen

Recording Venue: Skywalker Sound, San Rafael, California, USA, 2011-2012

Piano Technician: Marc Schecter

Special thanks to Leslie Ann Jones

Steingraeber & Söhne piano by R.KASSMAN Purveyor of Fine Pianos, Berkeley, California, USA

Cover and interior photos: Marika Rosenthal Delan

Back cover photo: Jean-Marie Geijsen

American soprano **Lisa Delan** has won acclaim as an outstanding interpreter of a vast repertoire and is recognized for her versatility and breadth of accomplishment in performance and recording. She has performed on some of the world's leading concert stages including Lincoln Center, the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, the Moscow Conservatory and Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Herbst Theater in San Francisco, St. John's Smith Square in London, and in a special appearance at Windsor Castle. Her festival appearances include the Bad Kissingen Festival in Germany, the Colmar Festival in France, Russia's Rachmaninoff Festival in Novgorod and Russian National Orchestra Grand Festival in Moscow, the Festival del Sole in Napa Valley, California, the Tuscan Sun Festival in Cortona, Italy, and the Domaine Forget Festival in Quebec.

As a recital artist, her repertoire encompasses the Baroque to the contemporary, and she is privileged to collaborate with composers whose musical lives are still works in progress: Ms. Delan has performed and recorded the music of William Bolcom, John Corigliano, David Garner, Gordon Getty, Jake Heggie, Andrew Imbrie, and Luna Pearl Woolf, among others. Ms. Delan won recognition from singing the title role in the world premiere of Gordon Getty's *Joan*

and the Bells in 1998, a role she has since reprised in France, Germany, Spain, the U.S., and Russia, and in the 2002 recording for PentaTone Classics. Critics have praised her depiction of Joan of Arc as "beautifully sung" (*International Record Review*), "refreshingly unpretentious" (*Gramophone Magazine*), and "a role she has made her own, with the kind of pure tone one expects of a saint-to-be and the passion one expects from a 19-year-old girl going to her death. Miss Delan is exceptional" (*Nevada Events*).

Ms. Delan was featured on three recordings released by PentaTone Classics in 2009: *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, her debut solo recording of songs by American composers (with pianist Kristin Pankonin and guest artists Matt Haimovitz and Susanne Mentzer); *The White Election*, a new recording of Getty's song cycle (with pianist Fritz Steinegger); and as a guest artist on *Phenomenon*, a recording of works by San Francisco-based composer David Garner. About these recordings, critics have noted, "The performance by Lisa Delan reveals her to be a singer with an unusually versatile voice, ranging from rich operatic tones to Broadway belt, with excellent diction and imaginative characterization. Delan has the ability to tell a story through song very effectively..." (*International Record Review*);

"Lisa Delan has a lovely, bright soprano voice that she can color appropriately..." (*Fanfare*); and "Her singing is full of thoughtful detail and rings clear (yes, you can actually hear the words), plus her acting is dramatic enough to be direct but is never over the top" (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*). After reviewing Ms. Delan's recent recordings, *Sequenza 21* declared that "As a song interpreter she may well be unequalled."

Pianist **Kristin Pankonin** performs regularly throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and has appeared in numerous recitals across the United States, Canada, and Europe. In recent seasons, she has appeared in concert with such artists as vocalists Frederica von Stade, Zheng Cao, Catherine Cook, Susanne Mentzer, Linda Watson, Marie Plette, Christine Abraham and Lisa Delan, cellist Matt Haimovitz, and many others. Audiences have heard her in various concert series including the Festival del Sole concerts in Napa, Carmel Music Society, San Diego's Mainly Mozart Festival, the Tuscan Sun Festival in Cortona, Italy, the Shenson Recital Series at Stanford, Maestro Foundation Concerts, Mills College Concert Series, San Francisco Conservatory of Music Faculty Artist Series, Old First Church Concerts, and Composers Inc.

Committed to performing the music of contemporary composers, Ms. Pankonin is featured on two recordings on the PentaTone Classics label: *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, performing vocal works of living American composers, and *Phenomenon*, songs by Bay Area composer David Garner with vocalists Lisa Delan, Susanne Mentzer, Francisco Araiza, William Stone and Stephanie Friede, cellist Matt Haimovitz, and members of the San Francisco Symphony. Ms. Pankonin currently serves on the faculties of Mills College and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Matt Haimovitz is acclaimed for both his tremendous artistry and as a musical visionary – pushing the boundaries of classical music performance, championing new music and initiating groundbreaking collaborations, all while mentoring an award-winning studio of young cellists at McGill University's Schulich School of Music in Montreal.

Mr. Haimovitz made his debut in 1984, at the age of 13, as a soloist with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic, and at 17 he made his first recording for Deutsche Grammophon (Universal Classics) with James Levine and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Haimovitz made his Carnegie

Hall debut when he substituted for his teacher, the legendary Leonard Rose, in Schubert's String Quintet, alongside Isaac Stern, Mstislav Rostropovich, Pinchas Zukerman and Shlomo Mintz.

Haimovitz's recording career encompasses more than 20 years of award-winning work on Deutsche Grammophon and his own Oxingale Records. His recent release, *Meeting of the Spirits* (Oxingale Records), was nominated for a GRAMMY® for Best Classical Crossover Album and won a GRAMMY® for Best Producer of the Year (Classical). A new recording with pianist Christopher O'Riley, *Shuffle.Play.Listen* (Oxingale Records), celebrating the evolution of the listening experience since the iPod, has received unanimous acclaim.

The solo cello recital is a Haimovitz trademark, both inside and outside the concert hall. In 2000, he made waves with his Bach "Listening-Room" Tour, for which, to great acclaim, Haimovitz took Bach's beloved cello suites out of the concert hall and into clubs. He was the first classical artist to play at New York's infamous CBGB, in a performance filmed by ABC News for *Nightline UpClose*.

Haimovitz's honors include the Concert Music Award from ASCAP, the Trailblazer Award from the American Music Center,

the Avery Fisher Career Grant, the *Grand Prix du Disque*, the *Diapason d'Or*, and the *Premio Internazionale "Accademia Musicale Chigiana"*. He was in the final studio of legendary cellist Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School and received a B.A. *magna cum laude* with highest honors from Harvard University. Haimovitz plays a Venetian cello, made in 1710 by Matteo Gofriller.

Clarinetist **David Krakauer** has been praised for his astounding ability to play a myriad of music genres with "prodigious chops" (*The New Yorker*) and "soulfulness and electrifying showiness" (*The New York Times*). Occupying the distinctive position of being a leading exponent of Eastern European Jewish klezmer music, Krakauer is also a master in classical music and avant-garde improvisation.

Krakauer has introduced his sound to symphonic audiences in the US and Europe, performing with distinguished orchestras across the globe. He continues to premiere concertos by new composers, such as Osvaldo Golijov, Jean Philippe Calvin, Ofer Ben Amots, George Tsontakis, and Mohammed Fairouz.

The New York Times has said that his ensemble, Klezmer Madness!, "hurls the tradition of klezmer music into the rock era." As

co-founder of the multi-genre supergroup Abraham Inc., Krakauer's klezmer style is merged with the musical traditions of funk legend Fred Wesley and hip-hop renegade So-called. The group's debut release *Tweet Tweet* (Table Pounding Records) peaked at No. 1 in Funk and No. 1 in Jewish and Yiddish Music on Amazon, one recording among Krakauer's extensive discography that can be purchased on Amazon.

A passionate educator, Krakauer is on the faculties of Mannes College of Music at the New School University, NYU, Manhattan School of Music, and Bard Conservatory of Music. He makes his home in New York, and is an artist and clinician for the Selmer, Conn-Selmer, and Rico companies.

Maxim Rubtsov has been called "one of the best flutists of the Modern Age." He is also one of Russia's best musical ambassadors. Appointed Principal Flute of the Russian National Orchestra in 2003, Rubtsov has been given unprecedented solo opportunities, including the Russian premiere of John Corigliano's *Pied Piper Fantasy* in 2004. Of the performance the composer said, "Maxim Rubtsov is the perfect Pied Piper. He has both the charm and excitement that a great performer must have. With his movie star looks and charisma,

and his magnificent playing and acting of the part, the legendary piper becomes alive for all to see." With Vladimir Jurowski and the RNO in 2007 Rubtsov performed Mozart's Flute Concerto in G Major, after which Maestro Jurowski wrote, "Mr. Rubtsov is the sort of person who can stand on the concert stages of the world and inspire harmonious relations through his music and his personality." Born in 1977 in Bryansk, Russia, Maxim Rubtsov began to study piano at age five. At age seven he danced with the famous Moiseyev Dance Company, and only later did he begin flute lessons. At age 13 he transferred to Moscow's Gnesin Academy of Music and subsequently graduated with an advanced degree in music from the Moscow State Conservatory. In addition to his extensive orchestral work, Rubtsov is the leader and a founding member of the Russian National Orchestra Wind Quintet, which took top honors in the Fifth Annual Osaka International Chamber Music Contest.

Chana Bloch, translator and language consultant for *Vilna Poems*, is the author of four books of poems: *The Secrets of the Tribe*, *The Past Keeps Changing*, *Mrs. Dumpty*, and *Blood Honey*. She is co-translator of the biblical *Song of Songs* as well as contemporary Israeli poetry -- *The Selected Poetry of*

Yehuda Amichai and his *Open Closed Open*, and *Hovering at a Low Altitude: The Collected Poetry of Dahlia Ravikovitch*. Her Yiddish translations include poems by Avrom Sutzkever and Yankev Glatstein as well as stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer.

Biographien auf Deutsch und Französisch finden Sie auf unserer Webseite.
Pour les versions allemande et française des biographies, veuillez consulter notre site.
www.pentatonemusic.com



From The Book of Nightmares

This song cycle is based on four poems from “The Book of Nightmares,” a magnificent volume by the great American poet Galway Kinnell. Specifically, it is from Section VII of that volume: a set called “Little Sleep’s-Head Sprouting Hair in the Moonlight.” A young child wakes up screaming from a nightmare and the parent goes to comfort him; this initiates a deep and tender meditation about our brief, impermanent time on the planet. The cello initiates a relentless, unsteady melodic and rhythmic figure that defines and permeates the cycle – reminding us that a sad, haunting truth always lurks in the corner. But this is exactly what makes the love and hope in these poems even more powerful and profound; and this is what ultimately inspired the music for the cycle. My beloved friend, soprano Lisa Delan, led me to this poetry, as she knew it would touch me deeply. She was right. These songs were composed specifically for her in early 2012 and are lovingly dedicated to her.

-Jake Heggie

from “Little Sleep’s-Head Sprouting Hair in the Moonlight” (from “The Book of Nightmares”)

Track 1

I. The Nightmare

You scream, waking from a nightmare.

When I sleepwalk
into your room, and pick you up,
and hold you up in the moonlight, you
cling to me
hard,
as if clinging could save us. I think
you think
I will never die, I think I exude

to you the permanence of smoke or stars,
even as
my broken arms heal themselves around
you.

Track 2

II. In a Restaurant

In a restaurant once, everyone
quietly eating, you clambered up
on my lap: to all
the mouthfuls rising toward
all the mouths, at the top of your voice

you cried
your one word, *caca! caca! caca!*
and each spoonful
stopped, a moment, in midair, in its wither-
ing
steam.

Track 3

III. My Father's Eyes

In the light the moon
sends back, I can see in your eyes

the hand that waved once
in my father's eyes, a tiny kite
wobbling far up in the twilight of his last
look:

and the angel
of all mortal things lets go the string.

IV. Back You Go

Back you go, into your crib.
The last blackbird lights up his gold wings:
farewell.
Your eyes close inside your head,
in sleep. Already
in your dreams the hours begin to sing.

Little sleep's-head sprouting hair in the
moonlight,
when I come back
we will go out together,
we will walk out together among
the ten thousand things,
each scratched too late with such knowl-
edge, *the wages*
of dying is love.

-Galway Kinnell

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Track 4

Vilna Poems

The work that has become *Vilna Poems* was first commissioned by the late mezzo-soprano Sylvie Braitman-Chouraki, whom I knew through the San Francisco Conservatory. I had completed only a couple of sketches when Sylvie passed away, and the piece languished for years. Then in 2011, while Lisa Delan and I were discussing another project dealing with the Holocaust, I suddenly remembered Sylvie's legacy. We both were very excited about completing the work, and doors have been opened for us ever since: We were very fortunate to have David Krakauer and Matt Haimovitz commit to the recording and premiere early enough so that I could write the parts specifically for them. Lisa and pianist Kristin Pankonin have worked with me in many, many projects, and both knew Sylvie. Most recently, poet Chana Bloch became involved through yet another coincidence, and her definitive English translations and insight into the poems and the poet (whom she knew personally) have completed the magic surrounding this intricate work of vocal chamber music.

-David Garner

Track 5

Unter dayne vayse shtern

Unter dayne vayse shtern
Shtrek tsu mir dayn vayse hant.
Mayne verter zenen trern,
Viln ruen in dayn hant.

Ze, es tunklt zeyer finkl
In mayn kelerdikn blik,
Un ikh hob gornit kayn vinkl
Zey tsu shenken dir tsurik.

Un ikh vil doch, got getrayer

Under Your White Stars

Under those white stars of yours
Reach out to me with your white hand.
For these words of mine are tears
That long to find rest in your hand.

See, their light is dimming now
In my blinkered cellarview,
And I have no corner where
I could offer them to you.

Dear God of mine, I'm yearning to

Dir fartroyen mayn farmeg,
Vayl es mont in mir a fayer
Un in fayer -- mayne teg.

Nor in kelern un lekher
Veynt di merderishe ru.
Loyf ikh hekher, iber dekher,
Un ikh zikh: vu bistu, vu?

Nemen yogm mikh meshune
Trep un hoyfn mit gevoy.
Heng ikh – a geplatste strune,
Un ikh zing tsu dir azoy:

Unter dayne vayse shtern
Shtrek tsu mir dayn vayse hant.
Mayne verter zenen trern,
Viln ruen in dayn hant.

Entrust to you what I have saved.
The fire in me demands no less;
In that fire -- all my days.

But in the pits and cellars weeps
A murderous serenity.
From roof to roof I run and seek:
Where, oh where, then, can you be?

Eerie courtyards, flights of stairs,
Pursue me daily, giving chase.
Here I hang, a blasted string,
And I sing to you like this:

Under those white stars of yours
Reach out to me with your white hand.
For these words of mine are tears
That long to find rest in your hand.

Vilna Ghetto, 1943

Track 6

Shpiltsayg

Dayne shpiltsayg mayn kind, halt zey tayer.
Dayne shpiltsayg noch klener vi du.
Un bay nakht, ven s'geyt shlofn dos fayer,
Mit di shtern fun boym dek zey tsu.

Loz dem goldenem ferdele nashn
Di farvolknte ziskayt fun groz,
Un dem yingl tu on di kamashn
Ven der odler fun yam git a bloz.

Playthings

Your playthings, my child, hold them dear,
Your playthings, even smaller than you.
And at night, when the fire goes to bed,
Cover them with the stars of the tree.

The golden pony -- let it nibble
The cloudheavy sweetness of grass.
Lace up the little-boy-boots
When the eagle of the sea blows past.

Un dayn lialke tu on a paname
Un a glekele gib ir in hant,
Vayl s'hot keyner fun zey nisht kayn mame
Un zey veynen tsu got bay der vant.

Hob zey lib, dayne kleyne bas malkes,
Ikh gedenk aza tog -- vey und vind!
Zibn geslekh, un ale mit lialkes,
Un di shtot iz geven on a kind.

In kartser

Nit andersh: di finsternish vil mikh dersh-
tikn!
Di blayene mayz grizhen oys mayne blikn.
Ikh varf zikh in kartser un zink tsvishn vent;
Volt epes geven vos iz mentshlek, bakent.

Dertap ikh a shtikele gloz, vu
gefangen
Es tsukt di levone in glezerne tsvangen.
Farges in mayn zinken, in fiber geshpant:
Dos hot dokh bashafn a mentshishe hant.

Un kh'tsertl in gloziker sharf di levone:
"Du vilst? Kh'gib mayn lebn dir af a matone!"
Nor s'lebn iz heys un dos glezl – a kalts,
Un s'iz mir a shod es tsu nemen tsum
haldz . . .

Tie a Panama hat on your dolly
And put a bell in her hand,
For none of your toys has a mother
And they wait at the wall to God.

Love each little princess of yours.
I remember a day -- woe betide!
Seven alleys, in all of them dolls,
And the city had not one child.

1956

Track 7

In the Jail Cell

The dark wants to choke me: no doubt
at all!
Leaden mice gnaw at the sights I have seen.
I flail in the cell and sink between walls,
Yearning for something human, known . . .

My hand finds a shard where a captive
moon
Twitches about in the grip of the glass.
Fever-taut, I forget I'm sinking down:
-- A human hand created this!

I stroke the moon in the sharp-edged glass:
"The gift of my life: You want it? It's yours!"
But life is hot, and the glass -- it's cold.
What a pity to take that shard to my
throat . . .

Vilna, late June 1942

Ekzekutsiye

Grob ikh a grub vi men darf, vi men
heyst,
Zukh ikh beys mayse in d'rerd oykh a treyst.

A grob un a shnit un a vereml kleyn
Es tsapelt fun untzn. Dos harts ken
tsegeyn.

Tseshnayt im mayn ridl, un vunder derbay:
Tseshnitenerheyt vern tsvey, vern dray.

Un vayter a shnit, vern dray, vern fir.
Un ale di lebns bashafn durkh mir?

Kumt vider di zun in mayn tunkl gemit
Un a gloybn nemt shtarkn mayn orem:

Oyb a vereml git zikh nit unter dem shnit,
Bistu vintsiker den fun a vorem?

Execution

On command, as one must, I'm digging
a pit,
Looking for solace down in the dirt.

A thrust and a cut, and there's a small worm
Trembling beneath me. My heart grows
warm.

My spade slices through it. A marvel to see:
Severed, it turns into two, into three.

Another cut, and three become four.
And all those lives owe their life to me?

The sun returns to my somber mood
And conviction bolsters my arm:

"If a worm does not succumb to the blade,
Are you any less than a worm?"

May 22, 1942

Vi azoy?

Vi azoy un mit vos vestu filn
Dayn bekher in tog fun befrayung?
Bistu greyt in dayn freyd tsu derfiln
Dayn fargangenkeys finstere shrayung,
Vu es gilvern sharbns fun teg

How?

How will you fill your goblet
On the day of liberation? And with what?
In your joy, are you ready to feel
The dark shrieking of your past
Where the skulls of days congeal

In a tohm on a grunt, on a dek?

Du vest zukhn a shlisl tsupasn
Far dayne farhakte shlessen.
Vi broyt vestu baysn di gasn
Un trakhtn: der friyer is besser.
Un di tsayt vet dikh egbern shtil
Vi in foyst a gefangene grill.

Un s'vet zayn dayn zikorn geglikhn
Tsu an alter farshotener shtot.
Un dayn droysiker blik vet dort krikhn
Vi a krot, vi a krot . . .

In a gaping bottomless pit?

You will seek out a key to fit
All your broken locks. You will bite
Into the streets like bread,
Thinking: It used to be better.
And Time will quietly gnaw at you
Like a cricket caught in a fist.

Then shall your memory be likened unto
A city destroyed of old
Where your outward gaze will crawl
Like a mole, like a mole . . .

*Vilna Ghetto
February 14, 1943*

In torbe funem vint

A borveser vandrovnik oyf a shteyn
In ovent gold
Varft fun zikh arop dem shtoyb fun velt.
Fun vald aroys
Derlangt a fli a foygl
Un tut a khap dos letste shtikl zun.

A verbe paze taykh iz oykh faran.

A veg.
A feld.
A tsapldike lonke.

In the Satchel of the Wind

A barefoot tramp on a stone
In evening gold
Shakes off the dust of the world.
Suddenly, out of the forest
Darts a bird
And snatches up the last scrap of sun.

And there's a willow by the river, too.

A road.
A field.
A quivering meadow.

Geheyme trit fun hungerike volkns.
Vu zenen di hent vos shafn vunder?

A lebedike fidl iz oykh faran.

Iz vozhe blaybt tsu ton in ot der sho,
O velt mayne in toyznt farbn,
Saydn
Tsunoyfklaybn in torbe funem vint
Di royte sheynkayt
Un bringen zi aheym oyf oventbroyt?

An elent vi a barg iz oykh faran.

-Avrom Sutzkever*

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Sutzkever, 2013.

Secret footsteps of hungry clouds.
Where are the hands that create wonders?

And there's a lively fiddle, too.

So what's left to do at a moment like that,
O my world of a thousand colors,
Except
To gather into the satchel of the wind
That red beauty
And bring it home for evening bread?

And there's desolation like a mountain, too.

1935

-Translated by Chana Bloch

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Three Irish Folksong Settings

In 1982, I composed *Pied Piper Fantasy* for flute and orchestra, a piece with stage action, inspired by the virtuosity of James Galway on the flute and the tin whistle. That was a fairy tale work, bubbling with the humorous, sometimes sardonic personality of Mr. Galway himself. Six years later, I tried to explore the more poetic side of Irish flute music in these settings of folk or folk-like texts by W.B. Yeats, Padraic Colum and an anonymous author. The tenor Robert White and the flutist Lisa Hansen gave the first performance in New York's Town Hall on June 18, 1988.

-John Corigliano

Track 11

I. The Salley Gardens

Down by the salley gardens my love and I
did meet;
She pass'd the salley gardens with little
snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves
grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her
would not agree.

Down by the salley gardens my love and I
did stand.
And on my leaning shoulder, she laid her
snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass
grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am
full of tears.

-William Butler Yeats

Track 12

II. The Foggy Dew

A-down the hill I went at morn, a lovely
maid I spied.
Her hair was bright as the dew that wets
sweet Anner's verdant side.
"Now where go ye, sweet maid?" said I.
She raised her eyes of blue
And smiled and said, "The boy I'll wed I'm
to meet in the foggy dew!"

Go hide your bloom, ye roses red, and
droop, ye lilies rare,
For you must pale for very shame before a
maid so fair!
Says I, "Dear maid, will ye be my bride?"
Beneath her eyes of blue
She smiled and said, "The boy I'll wed I'm
to meet in the foggy dew!"

*Avrom Sutzkever, the last great figure of modern Yiddish literature, known as the poet of the Vilna ghetto, was born July 15, 1913, in Smorgon, Lithuania. He lived in the Vilna ghetto from 1941 to 1943, when he escaped to the forests with his wife and fought as a partisan. He died January 20, 2010, in Tel Aviv, where he had lived since 1947.

A-down the hill I went at morn, a-singing
I did go.

A-down the hill I went at morn, she answered
soft and low.

"Yes, I will be your own dear bride, and I
know that you'll be true."

Then sighed in my arms, and all her
charms, they were hidden in the foggy
dew.

-Anonymous

Track 13

III. She Moved Through The Fair

My young love said to me, "My mother
won't mind,
And my father won't slight you for your
lack of kine."

And she stepped away from me and this
she did say,

"It will not be long, love, 'till our wedding day."

She stepp'd away from me and she went
thro' the fair,
And fondly I watched her move here and
move there,
And then she went homeward with one
star awake,
As the swan in the evening moves over
the lake.

Last night she came to me, she came
softly in.

So softly she came that her feet made no
din,

And she laid her hand on me and this she
did say,

"It will not be long, love, 'til our wedding
day."

-Padraic Colum

Four Dickinson Songs

These four poems were among those I considered when writing *The White Election* over twenty years ago. I had written what became the main music of "A Bird Came Down the Walk" in college days, in the spirit of Schubert or Schumann, but never whipped it into publishing shape. When Barbara Bonney kindly asked for a few songs to verse by an American poetess, I was grateful to be reminded of this unfinished business, along with the opportunity to suggest the oppressive cathedral tunes and the clip-clop of the hearse carriage in the second and last songs.

-Gordon Getty

Track 14

Safe in Their Alabaster Chambers

Safe in their alabaster chambers,
Untouched by morning and untouched
by noon,
Sleep the meek members of the Resur-
rection,
Rafter of satin, and roof of stone.

Grand go the years in the crescent above
them,
Worlds scoop their arcs, and firmaments
row,
Diadems drop and Doges surrender,
Soundless as dots on a disc of snow.

Track 15

There's a Certain Slant of Light

There's a certain slant of light,

Winter afternoons,
That oppresses, like the weight
Of cathedral tunes.

Heavenly hurt it gives us;
We can find no scar,
But internal difference,
Where the meanings are.

None can teach it anything
'T is the seal despair,
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the air.

When it comes, the landscape listens,
Shadows hold their breath;
When it goes, 't is like the distance
On the look of death.

Track 16

A Bird Came Down the Walk

A bird came down the walk.
He did not know I saw.
He bit an angle-worm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw.

And then he drank a dew
From a convenient grass,
And then hopped sideways to the wall
To let a beetle pass.

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around,
They looked like frightened beads, I
thought;
He stirred his velvet head

Like one in danger, cautious,
I offered him a crumb.
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home

Than oars divide the ocean,
Too silver for a seam.
Or butterflies, off banks of noon,
Leap, plashless, as they swim.

Track 17

Because I Could Not Stop for Death

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me.
The carriage held but just ourselves
And immortality.

We slowly drove. He knew no haste.
And I had put away
My labor, and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school where children
strove
At recess in the ring.
We passed the fields of gazing grain.
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, he passed us.
The dews drew quivering and chill,
For only gossamer my gown,
My tippet only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling in the ground.
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice in the ground.

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

-Emily Dickinson

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Rumi: Quatrains of Love

In Rumi's quatrains the sensuality, spirituality and revelation of his longer poems are distilled into short, concentrated vignettes. I chose ones that speak of passion, love, loss of control; some tell a story, others ask a question, but all reveal an internal conflict or a twist of perspective, illuminating a different plane.

Narrowing down Rumi's many quatrains, some immediately gave rise to simple musical textures and clear melodic outlines, while others were more resistant. Working closely with 9 texts I found that they fell into natural pairs, exploring love through loss of perspective, sacrifice, mystery, and the transition between life and death. There was one quatrain, however, which seemed to summarize the whole set, No. 1359:

Do you think I know what I'm doing?

That for one breath or half-breath I belong to myself?

This quatrain begins the cycle with solo soprano singing into the piano – with the sustain pedal down – so that her notes resonate in a veiled, sonic perfume.

A pair of quatrains follows, celebrating the state of love and questioning the lover's ability to see clearly the world around him. A stately walking bass and a transparent texture in movement II give way to intoxicated close harmonies in III.

Movements IV and V delve into the dangerous side of love: loss of identity and freedom, which the lover can't help but embrace. In IV a nervous, fluttering piano underlies a lover's anticipation and inner dialog. In V a pastoral duet between the voice and cello is abruptly spoiled by jealous discord.

A third pair of quatrains revels in the enigma that is love, its elusive, heady nature. VI is set

for voice and cello alone, in a mimicking children's song which blooms in its final confidence. The liquid ostinato of the piano in VII envelops a breathless, pleurably tortured soprano.

The fourth pair contrasts starkly. To death's heartbeat, the voice and cello chant a slow, hypnotized dirge. A spirited, bare-bones tango follows, imploring the lover to embrace both worlds wide-eyed.

Quatrain No. 1359 returns to frame the cycle, all three instruments now emphatically unified in declaiming the folly of trying to know anything about love.

-Luna Pearl Woolf

Track 18

I. No. 1359 (Introit)

Do you think I know what I'm doing?

That for one breath or half-breath I belong to myself?

As much as a pen knows what it's writing, or a ball can guess where it's going next.

Track 19

II. No. 25

Friend, our closeness is this:

Anywhere you put your foot, feel me in the firmness under you.

How is it with this love,
I see your world and not you?

Track 20

III. No. 1242

During the day I was singing with you.
At night we slept in the same bed.

I wasn't conscious day or night.
I thought I knew who I was,
but I was you.

Track 21

IV. No. 388

I would love to kiss you.
The price of kissing is your life.

Now my loving is running toward my life shouting,
What a bargain, let's buy it.

Track 22

V. No. 1797

We are walking through a garden.
I turn away for a minute.
You're doing it again.

You have my face here, but you look at flowers!

Track 23

VI. No. 1246

The minute I heard my first love story
I started looking for you, not knowing
how blind that was.

Lovers don't finally meet somewhere.
They're in each other all along.

Track 24

VII. No. 36

When I am with you, we stay up all night.
When you're not here, I can't go to sleep.
Praise God for these two insomnias!
And the difference between them.

Track 25

VIII. No. 64

When I die, lay out the corpse.
You may want to kiss my lips,

just beginning to decay. Don't be frightened
if I open my eyes.

Track 26

IX. No. 91

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth across the
doorsill

where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.

Track 27

X. No. 1359 (Finale)

Do you think I know what I'm doing?
That for one breath or half-breath I belong to myself?
As much as a pen knows what it's writing,
or a ball can guess where it's going next.

-Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī
-Translated by Coleman Barks

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Five Cabaret Songs

One day in the 1950's Arnold was visiting his friend Willem de Kooning's studio. Bill's brother had come to visit from Rotterdam, where they both had grown up – they had not seen each other for 30 years – and for Arnold's benefit they reminisced about the bohemian life in their home city in the 1930's. (Much of medieval Rotterdam was bombed flat by the Nazis in the Second World War and rebuilt in the fifties in the same ugly style as much of Germany.) The artists' and prostitutes' section of the city was the same quarter, with a lively street life. One of the most picaresque characters on the Rotterdam streets was "Zwarte Max": *Black Max* is his portrait "as told by the de Kooning boys."

Can't Sleep and *At the Last Lousy Moments of Love* are connected by a disturbing middle C on the piano, which takes us on a fast-forward cinematic jump to the end of the already tenuous relationship we see in the first song's lyric.

Angels are the Highest Form of Virtue, written for Barbara Harris, is a slightly amplified translation of something the famously religious composer Olivier Messiaen said at the Paris Conservatory after he and his wife-to-be Yvonne Loriod had performed "Visions de l'Amen" for the musical-esthetics class he taught. (Messiaen's original words in French, if memory serves, were: "*Il y a trois espèces de divinité au monde – les Anges, les Saints, et les Oiseaux – ah les oiseaux, je les aime parce qu'ils sont tout petits!*")

George is a composite portrait of a number of transvestite (if only in their singing selves) falsetto singers we knew who specialized in the female operatic repertoire. (Ira Siff's delicious La Gran Scena Opera Company performs in this style – not often enough! – in New York, inspiring great hilarity plus deep respect for the troupe's musicianship.) The kind of murder mentioned in *George* was all too common around Christopher Street when I lived there in the 1960's.

-William Bolcom

Track 28

Song of Black Max (As Told by the de Kooning Boys)

He was always dressed in black,
long black jacket, broad black hat,
sometimes a cape,
and as thin, and as thin as rubber tape:
Black Max.

He would raise that big black hat
to the big shots of the town
who raised their hats right back,
never knew they were bowing to
Black Max.

I'm talking about the night in Rotterdam
when the right night people of all the
town
would find what they could
in the night neighborhood of
Black Max.

There were women in the windows
with bodies for sale
dressed in curls like little girls
in little dollhouse jails.
When the women walked the street
with the beds upon their backs,
who was lifting up his brim to them!
Black Max!

And there were looks for sale,
the art of the smile—
(only certain people walked that mystery
mile:
artists, charlatans, vaudevillians,

men of mathematics, acrobatics, and
civilians).
There was knitting-needle music
from a lady organ-grinder
with all her songs behind her,
Marco, Vinto, Benno
(Was he strong! Though he walked like a
woman)
and Carlo, who was five.
He must be still alive!
Ah, poor Marco had the syph, and if you
didn't take the terrible cure those days
you went crazy and died
and he did.
And at the coffin
before they closed the lid,
who raised his lid?
Black Max!
I was climbing on the train
one day going far away
to the good old U.S.A.
when I heard some music
underneath the tracks.
Standing there beneath the bridge,
long black jacket, broad black hat,
playing the harmonica, one hand free
to lift that hat to me:
Black Max, Black Max, Black Max.

Track 29

Can't Sleep

Can't sleep
dreaming of you
dreaming of me
turning to you
woken by me.

Hush now,
don't cry.
All I was doing was dreaming.

Track 30

At the Last Lousy Moments of Love

At the last lousy moments of love
he wanted to tell me the truth.
At the last writhing rotten moments of
love
he wanted to tell me the truth—
about me of course. Thanks, I'll need this.
At the last lousy moments of love,
he wanted to tell me
that I wasn't doing too well.
I was eating and drinking and talking too
much.
He wanted to tell me
as a friend at the end
Of those last lousy moments of love.

He wanted to tell me he was leaving,
he'd waited too long to tell me
that I was self-righteous
even when I wasn't wrong.
And I spoke about friendship
till our friends gave me up as a friend for
the season,
For which reason he wanted to tell me the
truth.

He wanted to tell me these things, as a
friend,
He wanted to tell me, but he didn't in the
end.
At those last lousy moments of love
He said it all, with his body,
to my best friend.

Track 31

Angels are the Highest Form of Virtue

Angels are the highest form of virtue
Saints are the very best of men
Heroes are so strong they wouldn't hurt
you
And martyrs gladly die and die again

But the birds, the birds
I love the most
because they're teeny-weeny

Track 32

George

My friend George
used to say
"Oh call me Georgia, hon,
get yourself a drink,"
And sang the best soprano
In our part of town.
In beads, brocade and pins,
he sang if you happened in
through the door he never locked
and said, "Get yourself a drink,"
and sang out loud
till tears fell in the cognac
and the chocolate milk and gin
and on the beads, brocade and pins.

When strangers happened through
his open door,
George said, "Stay,
but you gotta keep quiet
while I sing
and then a minute after.
And call me Georgia."

One fine day
a stranger in a suit
of navy blue
took George's life
with a knife
George had placed

beside an apple pie he'd baked
and stabbed him in the middle
of *Un bel di vedremo*
which he sang for this particular stranger
who was in the United States Navy.

The funeral was at the cocktail hour.
We knew George would like it like that.
Tears fell on the beads, brocades and pins
in the coffin
which was white
because George was a virgin.
Oh call me Georgia, hon,
get yourself a drink.
"You can call me Georgia, hon,
get yourself a drink!"

-Arnold Weinstein

SONG OF BLACK MAX (As told by the de Kooning boys)
Poem by Arnold Weinstein, Music by William Bolcom
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GEORGE
Poem by Arnold Weinstein, Music by William Bolcom
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ANGELS ARE THE HIGHEST FORM OF VIRTUE
AT THE LAST LOUSY MOMENTS OF LOVE CAN'T SLEEP
Poem by Arnold Weinstein, Music by William Bolcom
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Am kreativen Entstehungsprozess neuer Lieder von Beginn an bis zum Ende beteiligt sein zu dürfen, ist eine beglückende Erfahrung, die einen geradezu demütigt werden lässt. Unzählige Einflüsse von außen beeinflussen diese kreative Reise von dem Moment an, in dem die textliche Vorlage zum Komponisten spricht bis hin zu dem Augenblick, in dem der ausführende Künstler die Worte erstmals in den Mund nimmt. Aber das eigentliche Wunder ereignet sich doch in der Entstehungsphase selber, wenn der Komponist ans Werk geht. Dieses Wunder kann ich als Mutter nur mit der Geburt eines Kindes vergleichen: eine grundlegende Macht tritt geradezu formvollendet in diese Welt und zwar durch die Verbindung mit einem anderen menschlichen Wesens. Und wenn es das Kind dann einmal da ist, kann man sich nicht mehr vorstellen, dass es einmal anders war. Ich bin sehr dankbar, dass ich zumindest ein kleiner Teil eines solchen Wunders sein darf.

Ich war begeistert, dass ich bei den Sitzungen für die CD *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile* gleich vier Erstaufnahmen von Liedern einspielen konnte, von denen ich eines selber in Auftrag gegeben hatte. Bei der nun vorliegenden CD *The Hours Begin to Sing* sind gleich vier weitere Erstaufnahmen hinzugekommen, drei Stücke wurden eigens

für diese CD komponiert. Auch wenn ich bei diesem Schöpfungsprozess keinesfalls die Mutterrolle beanspruchen darf, so fühle ich als künstlerische Hebamme doch gleichfalls sehr geehrt und wohl.

Es war für mich ein Privileg, bei den Aufnahmen zu *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile* mit Kreativen wie Bill Bolcom, John Corigliano, David Garner, Gordon Getty, Jake Heggie und Luna Pearl Woolf zusammenarbeiten zu dürfen, indem ich ihren Liedern meine Stimme verlieh. Und dass wir diese Zusammenarbeit nun fünf Jahre später mit *The Hours Begin to Sing* fortsetzen konnten, war für mich ein unvorhergesehenes Geschenk – genauso wie das Erfahrung des gesamten kreativen Prozesses. Den intensiven künstlerischen Austausch mit so wunderbaren Kollegen wie Kristin Pankonin, Matt Haimovitz, David Krakauer und Maxim Rubtsov habe ich ebenfalls als Geschenk empfunden, denn wir konnten den Worten von Dickinson, Yeats, Kinnell, Rumi (übersetzt von Coleman Barks), Sutzkever und Arnold Weinstein somit echtes Leben einhauchen. Bill, John, David, Mr. G, Jake und Luna – ich danke euch dafür, dass wir mit euren (künstlerischen) Kindern spielen dürfen!

- Lisa Delan im Januar 2013

Aus Das Buch der Alpträume

Dieser Liederzyklus basiert auf vier Gedichten aus „Das Buch der Alpträume“, einem prachtvollen Buch des großen amerikanischen Dichters Galway Kinnell (*1927). Sie stammen aus dem 7. Abschnitt des Buches unter der Überschrift „Little Sleep’s-Head Sprouting Hair in the Moonlight“. Ein kleines Kind wacht weinend aus einem Alptraum auf und wird von einem Elternteil getröstet; diese Szene gibt den Anstoß zu einer tiefgründigen Meditation über unser kurzes Gastspiel hier auf Erden. Das Violoncello stößt eine uner müdliche, unbeständige melodische und rhythmische Figur an, die den ganzen Zyklus bestimmt und durchdringt. Sie erinnert uns stetig daran, dass die traurige, quälende Wahrheit irgendwo auf uns wartet. Aber genau das verleiht der Liebe und Hoffnung jener Gedichte noch mehr Kraft und Tiefe und inspiriert schlussendlich die Musik dieses Zyklus. Dir mir so liebgewonnene Lisa Delan hat mich auf diese Gedichte gebracht, weil sie ahnte, dass ich dafür empfänglich wäre. Und sie hatte Recht. Diese Lieder schrieb ich Anfang 2012 für Lisa und so sind ihr diese Stücke auch von Herzen gewidmet.

- Jake Heggie

Die „Vilna Poems“

Ursprünglich wurde das heute „Vilna Poems“ benannte Stück von der 2006 verstorbenen Mezzosopranistin Sylvie Braitman-Chouraki bei mir in Auftrag gegeben, die ich vom San Francisco Conservatory kannte. Ich hatte lediglich einige Skizzen abgeschlossen, als mich die Nachricht von Sylvies Tod erreichte und so schlief das Werk für einige Jahre ein. Als ich mit Lisa Delan dann 2011 über ein anderes Projekt sprach, das sich mit dem Holocaust beschäftigen sollte, erinnerte ich mich plötzlich an Sylvies Vermächtnis. Mit Feuereifer machten Lisa und ich uns an die Vollendung des Werkes und irgendwie lief von da an alles wie von selbst: Wir hatten großes Glück, dass David Krakauer und Matt Haimovitz früh genug ihre Zusage für die Aufnahme und die Uraufführung gaben, sodass ich die Stimmen auf sie maßschneidern konnte. Lisa Delan und die Pianistin Kristin Pankonin haben zusammen mit mir in zahlreichen Projekten gearbeitet – und beide kannten auch Sylvie. Zuletzt kam dann Chana Bloch mehr oder weniger zufällig mit ins Boot und ihre entschiedenen Übersetzungen und ihre tiefen Einblicke in die Gedichte und deren Verfasser Avrom Sutzkever (den sie persönlich kannte) haben den wundervollen Kreis um dieses vertrackte Stück vokaler Kammermusik geschlossen.

- David Garner

Drei irische Volkslieder

Im Jahr 1982 komponierte ich die „Fantasie über den Rattenfänger von Hameln“ für Flöte und Orchester, ein halbszenisches Stück. Zu diesem Stück war ich von der Virtuosität des großen James Galway auf der Flöte und der Zinnpfeife inspiriert worden. Es handelte sich um ein märchenhaftes Werk, das von James Galways humorvoller, teils süffisanter Persönlichkeit nur so übersprudelte. Sechs Jahre später unternahm ich dann den Versuch, die eher poetische Seite der irischen Flötenmusik in diesen drei irischen Volksliedern zu untersuchen, deren Texte von W.B. Yeats, Padraic Colum und einem unbekannten Verfasser stammen. Uraufgeführt wurde das Werk am 18. Juni 1988 von Robert White (Tenor) und Lisa Hansen (Flöte) in der Town Hall von New York.

- John Corigliano

Vier Lieder nach Emily Dickinson

Als ich vor mehr als 20 Jahren den Zyklus *The White Election* komponierte, hatte ich diese vier Gedichte im Auge. Zu Studienzeiten war der Hauptanteil der Musik zu *A Bird Came Down the Walk* entstanden, (und zwar im Geiste Schuberts oder Schumanns) allerdings nie für eine Veröffentlichung vorbereitet worden. Als mich Barbara Bonney nach eini-

gen Liedern auf Texte einer amerikanischen Dichterin bat, erinnerte ich mich an diese unvollendete Arbeit und war dankbar, die beklemmenden kirchlichen Melodien und das Getrappel des Leichenwagens im zweiten und im letzten Lied nun doch in Töne fassen zu dürfen.

- Gordon Getty

Rumi: Quartette der Liebe

In Rumis Quartetten finden sich die Sensibilität, die Spiritualität und die Offenbarung seiner längeren Gedichte in kurze, konzentrierte Skizzen gegossen. Ich habe hier solche Vierzeiler ausgewählt, in denen es um Leidenschaft, Liebe und Kontrollverlust geht; einige Gedichte erzählen eine Geschichte, andere stellen eine Frage - aber alle geben einen inneren Konflikt oder einen Perspektivwechsel preis, und beleuchten somit unterschiedliche Ebenen.

Beschränkt man sich auf einige von Rumis zahlreichen Quartette, so weisen einige von ihnen gleich simple musikalische Texturen und klare melodische Ausprägungen auf, andere erschließen sich nicht auf den ersten Blick. Bei der eigentlichen, engeren Arbeit mit neun der Gedichte zeichneten sich für mich gleichsam natürli-

che Pärchen ab, in denen Rumi die Liebe ins Zentrum seiner Untersuchungen rückt - mal geht es um den Verlust der Perspektive, mal um ein Opfer, dann wieder um ein Rätsel und schließlich um den Übergang zwischen Leben und Tod. Ein Quartett schien für mich letztlich die gesamte Sammlung zusammenzufassen, es ist die Nr. 1359:

Meinst Du, ich weiß, was ich tue?

Dass ich auch nur für einen Atemzug
oder einen halben Atemzug mir selbst
gehöre?

Von diesem Quartett wird der Zyklus eröffnet, indem der Solo-Sopran quasi in die durch das vom Pedal gehaltene Klaviermusik hineinsingt - die Töne der Sängerin breiten sich somit wie ein verhangenes Klangparfüm über das Stück aus.

Es folgt ein Quartett-Paar, das die Liebe feiert und gleichzeitig die Fähigkeit der Liebenden in Frage stellt, die Welt um sie herum mit klarem Blick zu durchschauen. Auf den majestätischen „Walking Bass“ unter einer transparenten Faktur im zweiten Satz folgen geradezu berauschende enge Lagen im dritten Satz.

Die Quartette IV und V beschäftigen sich eingehend mit der dunklen Seite der Liebe - etwa dem Verlust von Identität und Freiheit, dem ein Liebender hilflos gegenüber steht. Dem vierten Satz liegt ein nervöses, zuck-

endes Klavier zugrunde, als Basis für die Erwartungen des Liebenden und für dessen inneren Dialog. Der pastorale Zwiegesang zwischen Stimme und Cello im fünften Satz wird von einer eifersüchtigen Disharmonie abrupt verdorben.

Ein drittes Quartett-Paar schweigt in jenem Rätsel namens „Liebe“, mit ihrer berausenden und nur schwer fassbaren Beschaffenheit. In Nr. 6 agieren nur Stimme und Cello und zwar in einem nachgeahmten Kinderlied, das in seinem schlussendlichen Vertrauen in Schönheit erstrahlt. Das dahinfließende ostinato des Klaviers in Nr. 7 umgibt einen atemlosen, geradezu vergnüglich gequälten Sopran.

Das vierte Paar kontrastiert geradezu schonungslos. Zum Herzschlag des Todes singen Stimme und Cello einen langsamen, hypnotisierten Klagegesang. Es folgt ein lebhafter, auf das Minimum reduzierter Tango, der den Liebenden anfleht, doch beide Welten mit offenen Augen zu umarmen.

Das Quartett Nr. 1359 kehrt wieder und beschließt den Zyklus, jetzt sind alle drei Instrumente geradezu emphatisch vereint, wenn sie voller Torheit behaupten, alles über die Liebe zu wissen.

- Luna Pearl Woolf

Fünf „Cabaret Songs“

In den 1950er Jahren besuchte Arnold Weinstein seinen Freund Willem de Kooning. Dessen Bruder war zu Besuch aus Rotterdam gekommen, wo beide ihre Kindheit verbracht hatten. Seit 30 Jahren hatten sich die beiden nicht mehr getroffen und zum Glück für Arnold erinnern sie sich an das Künstlerleben in ihrer Heimatstadt während der 1930er Jahre. (Große Teile des mittelalterlichen Rotterdam wurden im Zweiten Weltkrieg von der deutschen Luftwaffe bombardiert und in den Fünfzigern dann genauso hässlich wiederaufgebaut wie zahlreiche deutsche Städte.) Das sehr lebendige Rotterdamer Künstler- und Rotlichtviertel der Stadt lagen eng beieinander. Einer der pikaresken Charaktere aus diesem Viertel war der „Zwarte Max“ – und so ist „Black Max“ denn auch ein Porträt dieser Person, „wie es die Kooning-Brüder erzählt hatten“.

„Can’t Sleep“ und „At the Last Lousy Moments of Love“ sind durch ein eher verstörendes C in mittlerer Lage im Klavier miteinander verbunden. Im filmischen Schnelldurchlauf werden wir an mit einem Sprung an das Ende der bereits eher dürtigen Beziehung geführt, die wir den Worten des ersten Liedes entnehmen konnten.

„Angels are the Highest Form of Virtue“

wurde für Barbara Harris persönlich geschrieben. Es handelt sich hierbei um die leicht erweiterte Übersetzung eines Satzes von Olivier Messiaen. Der hatte (wenn ich mich korrekt erinnere) nach einer Aufführung von „Visions de l’Amen“ für seinen Musikästhetik-Kurs am Pariser Conservatoire folgende Worte gesprochen „Il y a trois espèces de divinité au monde – les Anges, les Saints, et les Oiseaux – ah les oiseaux, je les aime parce qu’ils sont tout petits!“

Der Song „George“ porträtiert montageartig einen der Falsettgesang praktizierenden Transvestiten, die auf Frauenrollen in der Oper spezialisiert sind. (Die La Gran Scena Opera Company von Ira Siff tritt mit dieser Stil – leider nicht oft genug! – in New York auf. Sie begeistert dabei sowohl mit ihrer Ausgelassenheit und gekonntem Musizieren, das großen Respekt verdient.) Der in „George“ beschriebene Mord war rund um die Christopher Street in den 1960er Jahren (als ich dort lebte) leider nur allzu gewöhnlich.

-William Bolcom

Übersetzungen: Franz Steiger

Faire partie du processus créatif de nouveaux chants, de leur début jusqu’à leur réalisation, est une expérience exaltante – de même qu’une leçon d’humilité. Des myriades d’influences extérieures s’exercent sur l’orientation du voyage, à partir du moment où un texte plait à un compositeur, jusqu’à celui où l’interprète le déclame. Toutefois, le plus merveilleux miracle est celui qui s’accomplit entre-temps, dans l’esprit et à travers la main du compositeur. En tant que mère, je ne peux comparer ce miracle qu’à la naissance d’un enfant : une force essentielle voit le jour, entièrement formée, par l’intermédiaire d’un autre être humain. Et une fois qu’elle est là, vous ne pouvez concevoir qu’elle ne l’ait jamais été auparavant. Je suis reconnaissante d’avoir apporté ma petite contribution à ce genre de miracles.

Lorsque j’ai enregistré le CD partenaire de *The Hours Begin to Sing – And If the Song Be Worth a Smile* – j’ai été enchantée d’y inclure des chants enregistrés pour la toute première fois, dont un que j’ai commandé pour ce CD. À présent, avec *The Hours Begin to Sing*, je suis particulièrement ravie d’inclure quatre chants supplémentaires enregistrés pour la première fois, dont trois ont été écrits tout spécialement pour ce CD. Et bien que je ne puisse revendiquer la parenté de ce drame de la création, je suis honorée d’avoir reçu le

rôle d’accoucheuse.

Au cours de l’enregistrement d’*And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, je me suis sentie privilégiée de travailler avec Bill Bolcom, John Corigliano, David Garner, Gordon Getty, Jake Heggie et Luna Pearl Woolf en prêtant ma voix à leurs chants. Pouvoir renouveler ces collaborations cinq ans plus tard *The Hours Begin to Sing* et faire l’expérience d’une si grande partie du processus créatif, a été pour moi un cadeau imprévu. Et quel cadeau exceptionnel que de donner vie aux mots de Dickinson, Yeats, Kinnell, Rumi (traduits par Coleman Barks), Sutzkever et Arnold Weinstein, avec Kristin Pankonin, Matt Haimovitz, David Krakauer et Maxim Rubtsov ! Merci Bill, John, David, M. G, Jake et Luna, d’avoir laissé vos enfants venir jouer avec nous.

-Lisa Delan
Janvier 2013

Du Livre des cauchemars

Ce cycle de chants s’appuie sur quatre poèmes du « Livre des cauchemars », un magnifique ouvrage du grand poète américain Galway Kinnell, et plus précisément sur son Chapitre VII, appelé « Little Sleep’s-Head Sprouting Hair in the Moonlight. » Un jeune

enfant se réveille en criant parce qu'il a fait un cauchemar et ses parents vont le réconforter, initiant ainsi une méditation profonde et pleine de tendresse sur la brièveté et l'impermanence du temps que nous passons sur la planète. Le violoncelle introduit une figure mélodique et rythmique incessante et irrégulière qui définit le cycle et l'imprégné – nous rappelant qu'une vérité triste et obsédante guette toujours dans un coin. Mais c'est exactement ce qui rend l'amour et l'espoir contenus dans ces poèmes encore plus puissants et profonds ; et en fin de compte, c'est ce qui a inspiré la musique de ce cycle. Ma très chère amie, la soprano Lisa Delan, m'a fait connaître cette poésie, sachant qu'elle me toucherait profondément. Elle avait raison. Ces chants, composés spécialement pour elle début 2012, lui sont tendrement dédiés.

-Jake Heggie

Vilna Poems

L'œuvre qui est devenue *Vilna Poems* a tout d'abord été commandée par feu la mezzo-soprano Sylvie Braitman-Chouraki, que j'ai connue au Conservatoire de San Francisco. Je n'avais achevé que quelques ébauches lorsque Sylvie est décédée et l'œuvre est restée de côté pendant de longues années. Puis en 2011, alors que je parlais avec

Lisa Delan d'un autre projet se rapportant à l'Holocauste, j'ai soudain repensé au legs de Sylvie. Nous étions tous deux fort impatients de terminer l'œuvre et depuis lors, les portes n'ont fait que s'ouvrir devant nous : nous avons eu l'immense chance de voir David Krakauer et Matt Haimovitz nous assurer qu'ils participeraient à l'enregistrement et la première suffisamment tôt pour que je puisse écrire les partitions à leur intention. Lisa et la pianiste Kristin Pankonin ont travaillé avec moi à une foule de projets, et toutes deux connaissaient Sylvie. Plus récemment, la poétesse Chana Bloch est venue participer à cette entreprise suite à une autre coïncidence, et ses traductions anglaises définitives, de même que sa compréhension des poèmes et du poète (qu'elle connaissait personnellement) sont venues parachever la magie qui entoure cette œuvre complexe de musique de chambre vocale.

-David Garner

Trois chants folkloriques irlandais

En 1982, j'ai composé *Pied Piper Fantasy* pour flûte et orchestre, un morceau comportant une action scénique, inspirée par la virtuosité de James Galway à la flûte et au tin whistle (flûte en métal). C'est une

œuvre de conte de fées, qui pétillait de la personnalité humoristique, parfois sardonique, de Monsieur Galway lui-même. Six ans plus tard, j'ai tenté d'explorer le côté plus poétique de la musique de flûte irlandaise dans ces arrangements de textes folkloriques ou de genre folklorique de W.B. Yeats, Padraic Colum et d'un auteur anonyme. Le ténor Robert White et la flûtiste Lisa Hansen ont joué l'œuvre en première au Town Hall de New York le 18 juin 1988.

-John Corigliano



Quatre chants de Dickinson

Ces quatre poèmes sont parmi ceux que j'avais à l'esprit en écrivant *The White Election*, il y a environ vingt ans. J'avais écrit ce qui est devenu la musique principale d'*A Bird Came Down the Walk* lorsque j'étais à l'université, dans l'esprit de Schubert ou de Schumann, mais ne l'avais jamais finalisé sous forme publiable. Quand Barbara Bonney me demanda aimablement quelques chants sur des vers d'une poétesse américaine, je fus heureux qu'elle me donne l'occasion de repenser à cet ouvrage inachevé, ainsi que de l'opportunité de suggérer les airs oppressants de cathédrale et le clip-clop de l'équipage du corbillard dans le second et le dernier chants.

-Gordon Getty

Rumi : Quatrains d'amour

Dans les quatrains de Rumi, la sensualité, la spiritualité et la révélation de ces poèmes relativement longs sont distillées en courtes esquisses concentrées. J'ai choisi ceux qui parlent de passion, d'amour, de perte de contrôle ; certains racontent une histoire, d'autres posent une question, mais tous révèlent un conflit interne ou une perspective déformée, illuminant un plan différent.

Lorsqu'on examine de plus près les nombreux quatrains de Rumi, certains donnent

immédiatement naissance à des textures musicales simples et à des cadres mélodiques clairs, tandis que d'autres sont plus résistants. En travaillant à près à neuf textes, j'ai vu qu'ils formaient tout naturellement des paires, explorant l'amour à travers la perte de perspective, le sacrifice, le mystère et la transition entre la vie et la mort. Un quatrain, toutefois, semblait résumer toute la série. Il s'agit du no 1359 :

Do you think I know what I'm doing?
That for one breath or half-breath
I belong to myself?
(Crois-tu que je saches ce que je fais ?
Que je m'appartienne une seconde
ou une demi-seconde)

Ce quatrain débute le cycle avec une soprano solo qui chante avec le piano – pédale de sourdine abaissée – de façon à ce que ses notes résonnent dans un parfum sonore voilé.

Une paire de quatrains suit, célébrant l'état amoureux et posant des questions quant à la capacité de l'amoureux de voir clairement le monde qui l'entoure. Une basse s'avancant majestueusement et une texture transparente dans le deuxième mouvement, ouvrent la voie à des chants enivrés de tessiture restreinte dans le troisième mouvement.

Les quatrième et cinquième mouvements plongent dans l'aspect dangereux de

l'amour: la perte d'identité et la liberté, que l'amoureux ne peut rien faire d'autre que d'épouser. Dans le quatrième mouvement, un piano nerveux et palpitant sous-tend une anticipation et un dialogue interne de l'amoureux. Dans le cinquième mouvement, un duo pastoral entre la voix et le violoncelle est brusquement interrompu par une dis-corde jalouse.

Une troisième paire de quatrains révèle l'énigme qu'est l'amour, sa nature insaisissable et grisante. Le sixième mouvement est arrangé uniquement pour voix et violoncelle, dans un chant imitant celui d'enfants et qui s'épanouit dans sa confiance finale. Dans le septième mouvement, l'ostinato liquide du piano enveloppe une soprano hors d'haleine et plaisamment torturée.

La quatrième paire contraste nettement avec les précédents quatrains. Au rythme des pulsations de la mort, la voix et le violoncelle chantent un hymne funèbre lent et hypnotisant. Vient ensuite un tango dépouillé et plein de verve, implorant l'amoureux d'étreindre les deux mondes les yeux grand ouverts.

Le quatrain no 1359 revient pour encadrer le cycle, les trois instruments, à présent emphatiquement unifiés, déclament la folie qu'il y a à essayer de tout savoir sur l'amour.

-Luna Pearl Woolf

Cinq chants de cabaret

Une jour, en 1950, Arnold rendit visite au studio de son ami Willem de Kooning. Le frère de Willem était venu de Rotterdam, où ils avaient tous deux grandi - ils ne s'étaient pas vus depuis 30 ans - et pour Arnold, ils se remémorèrent la vie de bohème qu'ils avaient vécue dans leur ville natale dans les années 1930. (Une grande partie de la ville médiévale de Rotterdam fut détruite par les bombes des nazis durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale et rebâtie dans les années cinquante dans le même style affreux qu'une grande partie de l'Allemagne.) Les artistes et les prostituées de cette ville vivaient dans le même quartier, et les rues étaient particulièrement animées. L'un des personnages les plus pittoresques des rues de Rotterdam était « Zwarte Max » : *Black Max* est son portrait tout craché, comme l'ont dit les De Kooning .

Can't Sleep et *At the Last Lousy Moments of Love* sont reliés par un Do moyen troublant, joué par le piano, qui nous fait faire un bond cinématographique en avance-rapide et nous mène à la fin de la relation déjà ténue exprimée dans les paroles du premier chant.

Angels are the Highest Form of Virtue, écrit par Barbara Harris, est une traduction légèrement amplifiée de quelque chose que déclara le fameux compositeur de musique

sacrée Olivier Messiaen au Conservatoire de Paris, après que sa fiancée Yvonne Loriod et lui avaient interprété « Visions de l'Amen » pour la classe d'esthètes musicaux à laquelle il enseignait. (De mémoire, les mots de Messiaen furent : « Il y a trois espèces de divinité au monde - les Anges, les Saints, et les Oiseaux - ah les oiseaux, je les aime parce qu'ils sont tout petits ! »)

George est un portrait composite de plusieurs chanteurs de fausset travestis (si ce n'est dans leur moi chantant) dont nous savons qu'ils étaient spécialisés dans le répertoire opératique féminin. (La délicieuse Gran Scena Opera Company d'Ira Siff donnait des interprétations - dont on ne se lasse pas ! - dans ce style à New York, inspirant la plus grande hilarité et le plus profond respect pour les troupes de musiciens.) Le genre de meurtre mentionné dans *George* n'était que trop répandu dans les environs de la Christopher Street, lorsque j'y vivais, dans les années 1960.

-William Bolcom

Traduction française :
Brigitte Zwerwer-Berret

A woman with red hair is smiling and looking back over her shoulder while riding a carousel. The background is filled with warm, out-of-focus lights from the carousel and surrounding area.

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