

5-4-2012

The University Choir And The University Singers In Concert

Chapman University Choir

Chapman University Singers

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

Conservatory of Music

presents

The University Choir

And

The University Singers

In Concert

Stephen Coker, Conductor

featuring

Hye-Young Kim, pianist and accompanist

May 4, 2012 ▪ 7:30 P.M.

Memorial Hall, Chapman Auditorium

Program

I.

1 Come Now, All Creative Spirit Jeffrey H. Rickard
(b. 1942)

2 We Shall Walk through the Valley in Peace arr. William Appling
(1932-2008)

Choose Something Like a Star Randall Thompson
(1899-1984)

The Choral New Yorker: Irving Fine
(1914-1962)
Four Choral Patterns with Piano Obligato-
Based on texts originally published in The New Yorker

3 I. Hen Party (Prologue)
Chelsea Chaves, soprano

4 II. Caroline Million (Scherzando)
Janet Orsi and Clara Chung, mezzo sopranos

5 III. Pianola d'amore (Concertante)

6 IV. Design for October (Epilogue)
Daniel Shipley, baritone

Music to Hear (excerpts) George Shearing
(1919-2011)

7 Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind

8 Sigh No More, Ladies
Ann Marie Kawai, double bass

9 My Gentle Harp arr. Alice Parker
(b. 1925)

Mindy Ball, harp
The University Singers

II.

Five Hymns in Popular Style (excerpts) John Gardner
(1917-2011)

10 Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning

11 Abide with Me

Elaine Cha, mezzo soprano

22 Fight the Good Fight

The University Choir

III.

Chichester Psalms Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)
Movement III. (excerpt)

13 Kyla McCarrel, soprano; Janet Orsi, mezzo soprano
Eric Parker, tenor; Brett Gray, baritone

Mindy Ball, harp
William Wells, organ

14 The Storm Is Passing Over Donald Vails
arr. Barbara Baker

Mayuri Vasan, soprano

15 *encore* **The Combined Choirs**

Texts and Translations

Come Now, All Creative Spirit

Come now, all creative spirit,
Tune the humble heart to thee.
From the flame of love now kindle
Wisdom, faith, and unity.

Come now, joyful celebration,
Let the noise of nature rise.
Come delight and exultation,
Be our wonder and surprise.

Choose Something Like a Star

(Robert Frost)
O Star (the fairest one in sight),
We grant your loftiness the right
To some obscurity of cloud –
It will not do to say of night,
Since dark is what brings out your light.
Some mystery becomes the proud.
But to be wholly taciturn
In your reserve is not allowed.
Say something to us we can learn
By heart and when alone repeat.
Say something! And it says "I burn."
But say with what degree of heat.

Hen Party (Peggy Bacon)

The Pack gathers on the black Sunday.
Mrs. Lathers and Mrs. Grundy
Give a party for all the witches;
The food is hearty, there are no hitches;
One stitches, another chatters,
All blather of small matters.
A-sudden enter
In aged ermine
The Queen Viper,
The Ace of Vermin;

Come now, peace in quiet splendor,
Let creation's music ring.
Let your healing sounds now render
Clear the anthem we would sing.

Come now, blessings of creation,
Blessings wrought of mystery.
Let your light of loving wisdom
Guide our hope and destiny.

Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade.
Use language we can comprehend.
Tell us what elements you blend.
It gives us strangely little aid,
But does tell something in the end.
And steadfast as Keats' Eremite,
Not even stooping from its sphere,
It asks a little of us here.
It asks of us a certain height,
So when at times the mob is swayed
To carry praise or blame too far,
We may choose something like a star
To stay our minds on and be staid.

The pied piper overlooked her,
Cotton Mather should have cooked her;
A clacking racket, a great stir,
In the centre the dowager.
Old Hecate comes seldom;
Each hag and Hell beldam
Tells the scandal, bites a sandwich,
Lights a candle to the Grand Witch.
After the curses and incantations,
Fetch the hearses for the reputations.

Caroline Million (Isabel MacMeekin)

Caroline Million is a hundred years old.
She feels pretty good but her feet are cold.
She's sitting by the chimney in a nice warm nook.
She's fingering her corn cob and the Lord's good book.
She's sitting in the firelight, She's sitting by the fire.
She's looking at her daughter, hot with desire
To kill her lumpy daughter, and feed her to the crows.
Crows love fat meat ev'rybody knows.

Pianola D'Amore (David McCord)

Sing hey, sing ho, and heigh-o,
From Calais, Maine, to Cal.,
For the blue that's in the sky-o,
For the will that's in the shall;
For the ding as in the dong-o,
For the larynx in the lad,
And the ping preceding pong-o,
And the sweet succeeding sad.

Sing April so embry-o
From Cal. to Calais, Maine,
And the little bow tie awry-o,
And the Queen of the Can't Complain.
Sing popular, sing classic, " "
Now doth the merry what?"
Sing tenor, boy, or bassic,
Or maybe better not.

Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind (As You Like It)

(William Shakespeare)
Act II., Scene 7
Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho!
unto the green holly:

Most friendship if feigning,
most loving mere folly:
Then heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,
That does not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As a friend remembered not.

Sigh No More, Ladies (Much Ado about Nothing)

William Shakespeare

Act II, Scene III. Leonato's Garden.

[Balthazar sings]

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more.

Men were deceivers ever,

One foot in sea, and one on shore,

To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so, but let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo

Of dumps so dull and heavy.

The fraud of men was ever so

Since summer first was leavy.

Then sigh not so, but let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into hey, nonny, nonny.

My Gentle Harp (Thomas Moore)

My gentle harp, once more I waken

The sweetness of thy slumbering strain;

In tears our last farewell was taken,

And now in tears we meet again.

Yet even then, while Peace was singing

Her halcyon song o'er land and sea,

Tho' joy and hope to others bringing,

She only brought new tears to thee.

Then, who can ask for notes of pleasure,

My drooping Harp, from chords like thine?

Alas, the lark's gay morning measure

As ill would suit the swan's decline!

But come--if yet thy frame can borrow

One breath of joy, oh, breathe for me,

And show the world, in chains and sorrow,

How sweet thy music still can be.

Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning (Reginald Heber)

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning, Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine

aid; Star of the East, the horizon adorning, Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid. Cold

on His cradle the dewdrops are shining; Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;

Angels adore Him in slumber reclining, Maker and Monarch and Savior of all! Say, shall we

yield Him, in costly devotion, Odors of Edom and offerings divine? Gems of the

mountain and pearls of the ocean, Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine? Vainly

we offer each ample oblation, Vainly with gifts would His favor secure; Richer by far is the

heart's adoration, Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Abide with Me (H. F. Lyte)

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide. When

other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me. Swift to its

close ebbs out life's little day; Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away; Change and

decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me. I need Thy presence

every passing hour. What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power? Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me. I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless; Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness. Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory? I triumph still, if Thou abide with me. Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**Fight the Good Fight (J. S. B. Monsell)**

Fight the good fight with all thy might; Christ is thy Strength, and Christ thy Right; Lay

hold on life, and it shall be Thy joy and crown eternally. Run the straight race through

God's good grace, Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face; Life with its way before us lies,

Christ is the Path, and Christ the Prize. Cast care aside, upon thy Guide, boundless His

mercy will provide; Trust, and the trusting soul shall prove Christ is its Life, and Christ its

Love. Faint not nor fear, His arms are near, He changeth not, and thou art dear. Only

believe, and thou shalt see That Christ is all in all to thee.

Chichester Psalms, Movement III.**Psalm 131**

Adonai, Adonai,

Lo gavah libi,

V'lo ramu einai,

V'lo hilachti

Big'dolot uv'niflaot

Mimieni.

Im lo shiviti

V'domam'ti,

Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,

Kagamul alai naf'shi.

Lord, Lord,

My heart is not haughty,

Nor mine eyes lofty,

Neither do I exercise myself

In great matters or in things

Too wonderful for me.

Surely I have calmed

And quieted myself,

As a child that is weaned of his mother,

My soul is even as a weaned child.

Yahel Yis'rael el Adonai

Me'atah v'ad olam.

Let Israel hope in the Lord

From henceforth and forever.

Psalm 133, verse 1

Hineh mah tov,

Umah nayim,

Shevet ahim

Gam yahad.

Behold how good,

And how pleasant it is,

For brethren to dwell

Together in unity.

Program Notes

This evening's program features choral compositions and arrangements of American and British musicians. Jeffrey Rickard is Director of Choral Activities at nearby University of Redlands; his *Come Now, All Creative Spirit* creates a beautifully ethereal atmosphere through simple yet artful musical means. The text of the African-American spiritual *We Shall Walk through the Valley in Peace* is probably based on portions of Psalm 23 ("Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me..."). William Appling's arrangement of this folk song is for four-part men's chorus and is also striking in its simplicity, seemingly letting the beauty of tune and directness of the text speak for itself.

There are several connections between some of the composers featured on the program, many of which are based on the locale of Massachusetts—particularly the Boston area. Randall Thompson studied and eventually taught at Harvard University (where one of his pupils was Leonard Bernstein). Thompson's choral suite *Frostiana* (1959), comprised of settings of Robert Frost poems, was composed for the 200th anniversary of the town of Amherst, Massachusetts. From it, "Choose Something Like a Star" arguably became his second most popular work after his *Alleluia*.

Native Bostonian Irving Fine (also educated at Harvard) was considered a member (along with others such as Lukas Foss, Aaron Copland, and Bernstein) of the so-called Boston Six or "Boston School" of composers that flourished there in the mid-20th century. Fine's four-movement choral cycle *The Choral New Yorker* (1944) presents formidable challenges to the choir as well as to the accompanist (the composer was an excellent pianist and was on the Boston Symphony's roster as its second pianist after Lukas Foss). The text of the opening movement wryly likens a social gathering of fussy old women to a pack of jeering witches, meeting on "the black Sunday." Indeed, Fine's opening motives of "Hen Party" with their repeated, almost pecking pitches do seem to try to create a "fowl mood." "Caroline Million" is a juicy little poem about an eccentric old hag who secretly dreams of killing her pudgy daughter and feeding her to the crows ("Crows love fat meat/Everybody knows"). The upbeat textual nonsense of "Pianola d'amore" seems to have inspired the brilliance of the suite's third movement. "The guys" seem to be having great fun—anything for a rhyme and another chance to show off some keyboard skills. "Design for October" has the ability to catch a listener by surprise. This epilogue's beautiful first half so lulls one into a placid state with its nostalgic, pastoral images, that one hardly suspects that the composer has contrived to transform the seemingly harmless poem into a vehement lament. Here, surely the aspect of the loss or end of summer must have been symbolic of a much deeper personal loss or painful transition of life.

The well-known jazz pianist George Shearing was born in England but made his home in the United States for many years. Commissioned in 1985 by the Dale Warland Singers, *Musical to Hear* is a choral suite of five jazz/pop settings of Shakespeare texts. That cycle's outer

movements use text fragments from plays: "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind" is from *As You Like It* (Act II, Scene 7); "Sigh No More, Ladies," is an excerpt from *Much Ado About Nothing*. In this latter's second act, Balthazar's song opines that because men will never change their ways, women should simply accept the way things are, exchanging their laments for the simple resignation of "hey, nonny, nonny"

One of the "grand dames" of American choral music, Alice Parker, was born in Boston and now resides in western Massachusetts. Well known for her many folksong arrangements—especially the many done in collaboration with Robert Shaw—Ms. Parker writes:

"I believe that melody is the foundation of human music-making, and that song issuing from one human throat is the essential first-step to a musical life. I am fascinated with the combination of words and music, thus I have concentrated on choral and vocal works, using the very best texts that I can find.

I am a devotee of folk songs from many cultures...Melodies which last teach me about the nature of melody itself, and I never tire of composing, arranging, conducting and teaching from these ever-flowing sources.

The recently deceased British composer John Gardner wrote for many genres but is perhaps best known in the United States for his choral music. His 1962 *Five Hymns in Popular Style* now exists in a number of choral voicings with various accompaniment options ranging from large orchestra to four (or two) hands piano. The lighthearted "Brightest and Best..." features much choral unison and a brisk faux-waltz; "Abide with Me" is a bluesy torch song for alto and piano with "back-up" choir; and "Fight the Good Fight" is a muscular sacred romp.

Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* (1965) may well be the best known and most frequently performed American major choral-orchestral work. Originally scored for an orchestra of strings, brass, and percussion section of 6-8 players, the work's popularity was bolstered even moreso when the Massachusetts-born composer prepared a reduced accompaniment version of the work for organ, harp, and single percussionist. Recorded many times, this pared down instrumentation is the version that will be heard this evening.

The hymn and hymn tune "The Storm Is Passing Over" was composed by Charles Tindley (1851-1933), an African-American minister and the son of former slaves. Its text was the source of and perhaps the inspiration for the gospel tune of the same name, written by the Rev. Donald Vails (1948-1997), a legend in the world of American gospel music.



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Hye-Young Kim, accompanist

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