

VOX GRATA

presents

“Solace”

Finding the Sacred in Loss

to benefit



Thursday, November 10, 2022, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Friday, November 11, 2022, Second Presbyterian Church

Conducted by

Jeanette MacCallum, Susan Kelly and Kathryn Duncklee

John Semingson, Accompanist

Solace

Finding the Sacred in Loss

A Requiem compiled

Please hold your applause until the conclusion of the first half of the program

A Requiem of Hope

Elizabeth Browne, cello

J. Reese Norris

Kyrie from Mass No. 6

György Orbán

Dies Irae

Z. Randall Stroope

Sanctus and Agnus Dei

David P. Rossow

Lux Aeterna

Mareike Sattler, soloist

Ēriks Ešņvalds

Pie Jesu from Requiem

Donna Stokes-Rogers, soloist; Elizabeth Browne, cello

Maurice Duruflé

In Paradisum from Requiem

Gabriel Fauré

A Word from our Beneficiary

Faithfully Restored

Sorrow-fed

Solace

Sean Ivory

Fire Flowers

Don Macdonald

Crossing the Bar

Gwyneth Walker

Vox Grata Women's Choir

Sopranos

Jan Allison, Bailey Anderson, Hannah Baisley, Sidney Campbell, Brittany Carnegis, Carissa Cascio, Amanda Craft, Kathryn Duncklee, Amy Finka, Jennifer Haendel, Susan Kelly, Janice Kemp, Katherine Kimbrough, Lauren King, Hannah Meyers, Diana Neely, Anne Osborne, Kitty Schleimer, Sandra Shepherd, Brittany Smith, Caroline Spencer, Deborah Torgersen-Paul, Ashley Vance, Kelly Walsh, Susan Wood

Altos

Annabelle Absar, Julie Birdsong, Kelly Christie, Brianna Corbett, Jane-Coleman Cottone, Emily Fenech, Alexis Fleming, Molly Gillespie, Jeanette MacCallum, Linda McFadyen-Ketchum, Dory Miller, Lily Norton, Mareike Sattler, McKenna Schmidt, Haley Smith, Rosie Smith, Suzanne Stiles, Donna Stokes-Rogers, Maggie Ward, Karen Weir

Board of Directors

Jan Allison, Jill Austin, Bill Christie, Hattie DeWalt, Jane Ferrell, Janice Kemp, Jeanette MacCallum, Lea Maitlen, Kimberly Pace, Pam Schneller, Sandra Shepherd, Rosie Smith, Martha Trammell, David Williams

Vox Grata is grateful to John Semingson and Westminster Presbyterian Church for providing rehearsal space for us each week!

**Would you be willing to provide us with valued feedback about this concert?
If so, we invite you to participate in a 1-minute survey by scanning this QR code:**



Thank you for helping us GIVE VOICE TO WOMEN IN SONG!

These concerts are supported, in part, by federal award number SLFRP5534 awarded to the State of Tennessee by the U.S. Department of Treasury, by the Tennessee Arts Commission, by Metro Arts Nashville and by donors like you.



Did you know? When you purchase an Arts Specialty License plate in Tennessee, your fee is supporting the arts in your state through the grants provided by the Tennessee Arts Commission? Approximately 75% of all grant funding to Vox Grata and other arts organizations is provided through the specialty license plate program! Learn more at <https://tnspecialtyplates.org>.

Song Texts/Poetry Credits

A Requiem of Hope

Translation and Scripture

Grant them eternal rest, Lord
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
He is the resurrection and the life.
He that believeth in Him, though dead,
yet shall he live!
I who was dead am alive today!
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Kyrie

Translation

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Dies Irae

Translation

Day of wrath,
day that will dissolve the world into burning coals,
as David prophesied with the Sibyl.
How great trembling there will be,
when the judge comes
to strictly sentence all.
Merciful Lord Jesus,
grant them rest.

Sanctus

Translation

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!
Hosanna in the highest!

Agnus Dei

Translation

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Grant us peace.
Alleluia, Amen.

Lux Aeterna

Translation

May eternal light shine on them, Lord,
as with your saints in eternity,
because you are merciful.
Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.
Alleluia, Amen.

Pie Jesu

Translation

Merciful Jesus, grant them
everlasting rest.

In Paradisum

Translation

May the angels lead you into paradise;
may the martyrs greet you at your arrival
and lead you into the holy city of Jerusalem.
May the choir of angels greet you
and like Lazarus, who once was a poor man,
may you have eternal rest.

Solace

Text by Yehuda Halevi

'Tis a fearful thing
to love what death can touch.
A fearful thing
to love, to hope, to dream, to be –
to be,
and oh, to lose.
A thing for fools, this,
and a holy thing;
a holy thing to love.

For your life has lived in me,
your laugh once lifted me,
your word was gift to me.
To remember this brings painful joy.

'Tis a human thing, love,
a holy thing, to love
what death has touched.

Fire Flowers

Text by Emily Pauline Johnson

And only where the forest fires have sped,
scorching relentlessly the cool north lands,
a sweet wildflower lifts its purple head,
and, like some gentle spirit sorrow-fed,
it hides the scars like almost human hands.

And only to the heart that knows of grief,
of desolating fire, of human pain,
there comes some purifying sweet belief,
some fellow-feeling, beautiful, if brief.
And life revives and blossoms once again.

Crossing the Bar

Text by Lord Alfred Tennyson

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Program Notes

A Requiem of Hope

J. Reese Norris

J. Reese Norris is Director of Choral Studies at Northwest Mississippi Community College. He and his wife Joelle Norris are co-founders and co-directors of CoroRio, the initial ensemble now part of MidSouth Music Institute, a community choral program with four choirs for students in grades 1-12 and an adult choir and most recently, a program for preschool children. Like Joelle, Reese has served in various leadership positions within the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and as a clinician and adjudicator.

As a composer, Norris has been commissioned by children, middle school, high school, university, church and adult community choirs. His compositions have been performed in all-state choirs, at ACDA conferences and in Carnegie Hall. *A Requiem of Hope* was composed as a memorial to the composer's father.

Kyrie from Mass No. 6

György Orbán

György Orbán was born in Romania of Hungarian parents in 1947. A resident of Hungary since 1979, Orbán has worked as an editor for Editio Musica Budapest in addition to teaching at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. His compositional output is large and oriented towards the choral idiom. His smaller choral compositions are rooted in Hungarian secular music when he was restricted from composing sacred music during the Communist regime. Since the fall of Communism in the former Soviet Union and the independence of Hungary in the late 1980s, his sacred catalog has grown substantially. He takes a particular interest in setting the Mass as evidenced by his 13 settings of the text.

While Orbán sets the traditional Latin Mass text, he acknowledges that he is not bound by stylistic traditions, preferring to inject "national color" with a reference to secular music into each movement. His harmonies and melodies are equally non-traditional and distinctive. Three of his thirteen masses (Nos. 6, 9 and 12) were composed for female voices, the first two accompanied by piano and the last by string quintet.

The Kyrie from Mass No. 6 incorporates strong, angular melodic lines, often in unison and octaves, rhythmic elements and non-traditional harmonies, including modal melodies.

Dies Irae

Z. Randall Stroepe

Dr. Z. Randall Stroepe is an American composer and conductor whose more than 190 works are sung by choral groups worldwide. As a conductor, he regularly appears at Carnegie Hall, Chicago Orchestra Hall and the Kennedy Center, in addition to notable venues around the world. His work as a composer has been informed by his experience leading choirs. He has held academic positions at several universities and in 2004, was the recipient of the distinguished Brock Commission from the American Choral Directors Association.

His *Dies Irae* isolates a portion of the traditional text, juxtaposing driving, accentuated rhythms with towers of full sonorities. The piano accompaniment provides an agitating undercurrent in the opening and closing sections.

Sanctus/Agnus Dei

David P. Rossow

David P. Rossow is a composer, educator, pianist and music minister. He serves on the faculty of Florida Atlantic University (FAU) where he teaches courses and accompanies various ensembles. Rossow holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in jazz piano performance from FAU. His compositions span several genres and include art song, choral and jazz works and music for the church. Primarily composing for voice, he strives to create the perfect marriage of text and music, speaking to the listener on a deep, emotional level. As a jazz pianist, Rossow's compositional sound is infused with jazz harmonies through the use of distinctive modal melodies in combination with rich textures.

This *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* are derived from his *Mass for Women*, a five-movement Mass composed for women's choir, four-hands piano and percussion.

Lux Aeterna

Ēriks Ešenvalds

Ēriks Ešenvalds is one of the most sought-after composers working today, with a busy commission schedule and performances heard on every continent. Born and educated in Latvia, his compositions appear on recordings by prestigious choirs all over the world, including Trinity College Choir Cambridge, the Latvian Radio Choir, VOCES8, and The Crossing, among many others.

Lux Aeterna was commissioned by the International Baltic Sea Choir Competition in 2017.

Pie Jesu

Maurice Duruflé

This exquisite movement from the composer's Requiem, Op. 9 employs a portion of the liturgical Dies Irae text, inviting a calm, meditative effect. Like Fauré, Duruflé omits the remaining portions of the Dies Irae text, instead positioning the Pie Jesu in the center of the Requiem Mass.

Scored for mezzo-soprano, cello and organ or orchestra, it remains one of the masterworks of the solo repertoire.

In Paradisum

Gabriel Fauré

The seventh and final movement of Fauré's Requiem, Op. 48 sets a text from the burial mass ("*in paradisum deducant angeli*") (May angels lead you to paradise). Sopranos sing the rising expressive melodies, supported by continuous, shimmering broken triads in the accompaniment, eventually enriched with chords by the other voices.

This treble arrangement by Desmond Ratcliffe is published by Novello.

Solace

Sean Ivory

Sean Ivory is a vocal music instructor at Forest Hills Central High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He also directs the Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Chorus and serves as the principal conductor of the Calvin Oratorio Society and the Campus Choir at Calvin College. As a prolific composer, Ivory's compositions are published by MusicSpoke and Walton Music. His collaborative works with Paul Caldwell are published by Earthsongs, Alliance Music, Hal Leonard and GIA Music.

Solace was commissioned by the 2018 Michigan Choral Commission Consortium.

Fire Flowers

Don Macdonald

Don Macdonald (born 1966) is an award-winning composer of film and concert music with an eclectic musical background as a performer, producer, educator, and conductor. Don's composition credits include music for theatre and dance, published choral works, and forays into everything from rock and jazz to world and folk music. A multiple Canadian Film Awards nominee and 3-time Leo Award winner, he has over fifty film music credits and has worked with many of the major studios including 20th Century Fox and Lions Gate Films. Macdonald's choral works have been performed and recorded by many fine ensembles all over the world including Rajaton (Finland), the Vancouver Chamber Choir (Canada), and the Luther College Nordic Choir (USA).

Fire Flowers is taken from the composer's six-movement suite entitled of the same name, commissioned by the University of Western Ontario Women's Choir.

Crossing the Bar

Gwyneth Walker

This musical setting of a poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson was created in memory of the composer's mother. The poem focuses on the image of a boat putting out to sea, as a metaphor for the final voyage of our lives. The musical interpretation frames the poem with introductory and closing piano passages which may be heard as the spirit initially descending from heaven (to impart the message of the song to us) and then re-ascending, in peace. Within the body of the song, each of the four verses receives a distinct setting, especially in the piano accompaniment. The concluding lines of the poem, "I hope to see my Pilot face to face..." are transformed in the final choral statement into "For I can see my Pilot face to face..."