

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS
Boyer College of Music and Dance

Temple University Concert Choir
Temple Concert Choir Alumni
Paul Rardin, conductor
Kim Barroso, pianist

essence/light

Saturday, April 5, 2025 • 7:30PM
Lew Klein Hall, Temple Performing Arts Center
1837 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122



Program Notes

Three Dunbar Hymns

Adolphus Hailstork
(b. 1941)

Paul Laurence Dunbar was born June 27, 1872 in Dayton, Ohio. He died there on February 9, 1906. Dunbar was the first African-American poet to garner national critical acclaim. He penned a large body of dialect poems, standard English poems, essays, novels, and short stories, before he died at age 33. His work often addressed the difficulties encountered by members of his race and the efforts of African-Americans to achieve equality in America. He was praised both by the prominent literary critics of his time and by his literary contemporaries.

These three compositions are settings of poems that Dunbar titled "Hymn." *When Storms Arise* is the centerpiece of my cantata *Crispus Attucks*, honoring the African-American who is widely recognized as the first person to give his life in the American fight for independence. *Lead Gently, Lord* begins the "church service" part of my operatic song-cycle *Paul Laurence Dunbar: Common Ground*. *Little Lamb* rounds out this set which is dedicated to Nina Scott and her Renaissance High School Choir of Detroit, Michigan.

Program Notes by Adolphus Hailstork, Courtesy Theodore Presser Music

When Storms Arise

When storms arise
And dark'ning skies
 About me threat'ning lower,
To thee, O Lord, I raise mine eyes,
To thee my tortured spirit flies
 For solace in that hour.
The mighty arm
Will let no harm
 Come near me nor befall me;
Thy voice shall quiet my alarm,
When life's great battle waxeth warm—
 No foeman shall appall me.
Upon thy breast
Secure I rest,
 From sorrow and vexation;
No more by sinful cares oppressed,
But in thy presence ever blest,
 O God of my salvation.

Lead Gently, Lord

Lead gently, Lord, and slow,
For oh, my steps are weak,
And ever as I go,
Some soothing sentence speak;

That I may turn my face
Through doubt's obscurity
Toward thine abiding-place,
E'en tho' I cannot see.

For lo, the way is dark;
Through mist and cloud I grope,
Save for that fitful spark,
The little flame of hope.

Lead gently, Lord, and slow,
For fear that I may fall;
I know not where to go
Unless I hear thy call.

My fainting soul doth yearn
For thy green hills afar;
So let thy mercy burn~
My greater, guiding star!

Little Lamb

O li'l' lamb out in de col',
De Mastah call you to de fol',
O li'l' lamb!
He hyeah you bleatin' on de hill;
Come hyeah an' keep yo' mou'nin' still,
O li'l' lamb!

De Mastah sen' de Shepud fo'f;
He wandah souf, he wandah no'f,
O li'l' lamb!
He wandah eas', he wandah wes';
De win' a-wrenchin' at his breas',
O li'l' lamb!

Oh, tell de Shepud whaih you hide;
He want you walkin' by his side,
 O li'l' lamb!
He know you weak, he know you so';
But come, don' stay away no mo',
 O li'l' lamb!

An' af'ah while de lamb he hyeah
De Shepud's voice a-callin' cleah—
 Sweet li'l' lamb!
He answah f'om de brambles thick,
"O Shepud, I's a-comin' quick"—
 O li'l' lamb!

Veni, sancte spiritus (Come, Holy Spirit)

Zanaida Robles

Zanaida Robles is an accomplished conductor, composer, and scholar who teaches at the acclaimed Harvard-Westlake School in suburban Los Angeles. In a Zoom call with Concert Choir during the pandemic, she described *Veni sancte spiritus* as a creative recycling of a love song she had composed several years before, now re-set to this standard Latin text at the encouragement and under the tutelage of famed USC composer Morten Lauridsen. With Sting's *Love is Stronger than Justice* as musical inspiration, *Veni* is that rare piece that can make an odd meter (5/4) sound lilting and playful. Three primary melodies form the various sections of the piece, leading to climactic, close-harmony arrivals at the phrase "rays of light."

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
et emitte caelitus
lucis tuae radium.

Come, Holy Spirit,
send forth the heavenly
radiance of your light.

Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium.

Come, father of the poor,
come, giver of gifts,
come, light of the heart.

Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.

Greatest comforter,
sweet guest of the soul,
sweet consolation.

In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.

In labour, rest,
in heat, temperance,
in tears, solace.

O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima
tuorum fidelium.

O most blessed light,
fill the inmost heart
of your faithful.

Sine tuo numine,
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.

Without your spirit,
there is nothing in man,
nothing that is not harmful.

Reincarnations (1940)

Samuel Barber
(1910-1981)

Generally considered to be one of the foremost American composers of the 20th century, Samuel Barber wrote music that evoked the 19th century spirit of lyricism and longing. He composed in all of the major classical genres, and gained his greatest fame through the *Adagio for Strings*, an arrangement for string orchestra of the second movement of his String Quartet, Op. 11 that crossed over into popular culture as part of the soundtrack to the film *Platoon*.

The title *Reincarnations* refers to adaptations, by the 20th century poet James Stephens, of 19th century poems by Anthony Raftery, a famous Irish bard. The piece's poems evoke the memory of three people: a beautiful woman, a brave labor leader, and a young lover. The title character in *Mary Hines* was surely a woman of incomparable beauty; Stephens describes her as "above the women of the race of Eve/As the sun is above the moon," and Barber's music darts, dashes and swoons with every appearance of the word "she." *Anthony O'Daly* was a leader of a chapter of The Whiteboys, an organization devoted to protecting poor laborers from taxation and other intrusions by local governments; Barber uses his first name as a one-note dirge that anchors the whole piece (first in the bass, then in the upper voices) marked for its falling, lamenting melody that evokes the barrenness of a world without him. *The Coolin* is a variant of the Irish word meaning "fair-haired one"; Barber paints a scene of innocent tenderness (listen to how the music initially skips along in 12/8 time), turned intimate, then passionate, then doubting, then comforting again, all through extraordinary use of harmony.

Mary Hynes

She is the sky of the sun,
She is the dart
 Of love,
She is the love of my heart,
She is a rune,
 She is above
The women of the race of Eve
As the sun is above the moon.

Lovely and airy the view from the hill
 That looks down Ballylea;
But no good sight is good until
 By great good luck you see
The Blossom of the Branches walking towards you
 Airily.

Anthony O'Daly

Since your limbs were laid out
 The stars do not shine,
The fish leap not out
In the waves.
 On our meadows the dew
Does not fall in the morn,
 For O'Daly is dead:
 Not a flower can be born,
Not a word can be said,
 Not a tree have a leaf;
Anthony, after you There is nothing to do,
 There is nothing but grief.

The Coolin

Come with me, under my coat,
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat,
Or wine if it be thy will;
And we will talk until
Talk is a trouble, too,

Out on the side of the hill,
And nothing is left to do,
But an eye to look into an eye
And a hand in a hand to slip,
And a sigh to answer a sigh,
And a lip to find out a lip:
What if the night be black
And the air on the mountain chill,
Where the goat lies down in her track
And all but the fern is still!
Stay with me, under my coat,
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat
Out on the side of the hill

Hinei ma tov/Shā'alu sh'lom y'rushalayim

Gerald Cohen
(b. 1960)

Gerald Cohen is an American composer and cantor. He received his music degrees from Yale and Columbia, and is cantor at Shaarei Tikvah in Scarsdale, NY. He has received commissions from numerous choirs including the New York Virtuoso Singers and Zamir Chorale of Boston.

Composed in honor of the 3,000th anniversary of the founding of Jerusalem, *Hinei ma tov/Shā'alu sh'lom y'rushalayim* is set to brief excerpts from Psalms 122 and 133. The piece, a solemn hymn for solo voice and unaccompanied chorus, finds the lower voices of the chorus providing organ-like accompaniment to an extended melody, heard first in the solo voice followed by the soprano section. This melody sometimes feels out of place, offering dissonances that seek to be reconciled with the more stable harmonies in the lower voices; only at the very end of the piece does this tension resolve, underscoring the final line of text "...when comrades dwell in harmony."

Shaalū sh'lom y'rushalayim,
Yishlayū ohavayich.
Y'hi shalom b'cheileich,
Shalva b'arm'notayich.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
May those who love you prosper.
May there be peace within your walls,
Serenity within your homes.

Psalm 133:1

Hinei ma tov, uma naim,
Shevet achim gam yachad.

How good it is, and how pleasant,
When comrades dwell in harmony.

Psalm 122:6-7

This Love Between Us

Reena Esmail
(b. 1983)

This Love Between Us is a piece about unity. Its seven movements juxtapose the words of seven major religious traditions of India (Buddhism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Islam), and specifically how each of these traditions approaches the topic of unity, of brotherhood, of being kind to one another. The texts come either straight from canonical religious writings or from poets who write through the lens of their religion. Each text is itself a union: it is set simultaneously in English and in its original language (with the exception of the Christian text, where the Malayalam is a translation), so you can hear the beauty of the original and grasp its meaning through translation. Each movement also contains a unique combination of Indian and Western classical styles, running the continuum from the Christian movement, which is rooted firmly in a baroque style, to the Zoroastrian movement, which is a Hindustani vilambit bandish. Each of the other movements live somewhere in between these two musical cultures in their techniques, styles and forms. But even more than uniting musical practices, this piece unites people from two different musical traditions: a sitar and tabla join the choir and baroque orchestra. Each of the musicians is asked to keep one hand firmly rooted in their own tradition and training, while reaching the other hand outward to greet another musical culture.

This piece is also a union for me. The time I spent studying at both Yale and Juilliard have been the foundation of my career as a Western composer. And my Fulbright year, studying Hindustani music in India opened my ears and mind to the world of Hindustani classical music. One day in late 2015, after months of pleading with embassies, government officials and agencies, I finally lost the battle for the visa I needed to return to India, simply because my grandfather had moved his family to Pakistan in the 1950s. I have never been more heartbroken in my life. The pain of being from two places is that, wherever you are, you always miss the other place. And somehow, as if in answer to my despair, the very next day I received the email asking me to write this piece – the one you will hear today. If it is impossible to be in both places at once, or at all, I have strived every day since then to create this hybrid, united world in my music.

I wrote *This Love Between Us* through some of the darkest times in our country and in our world. But my mind always returns to the last line of this piece, the words of Rumi, which are repeated like a mantra over affirming phrases from each religion, as they wash over one another: "Concentrate on the Essence. Concentrate on the Light."

Program Note by Reena Esmail

I.

All beings tremble before violence
sabbē tāntāsī dāndāsā

All fear death
sabbē bhāyyantī māchūnō

All love life
sabbē sām jīvītām pīyām

See yourself in others.
Then whom can you hurt?
What harm can you do?
For he who seeks happiness (*su-khā*)
By hurting those who seek happiness
Will never find happiness
For your brother and your sister, they are like you
They, too, long to be happy

Never harm them.
dāndēnā nā hīmsatī

And when you leave this life
Then you will find happiness too
- from the Dhammapada (Buddhist text)
(Danda Vagga - 10:129-132)
(English and Pali)

II.

How can we call someone evil, when all are the creation of One?
māndā kīs nō akhīyāī jān sabbhnā sāhīb ēk
- from the Guru Granth Sahib (p.1238)
(English and Gurumukhi)

III.

Owe no man anything but to love one another.

anyōnyēm snēhīkyūgā

For he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.

For,

Thou shalt not kill

kūllā chēyyīārūthə

Thou Shalt not steal

mōshtīkērūthə

Thou Shalt not bear false witness

kəllə sāchyəm pāṛāyadādā

Thou shalt not covet

mōhikkērūthə

And if there be any other commandment, it is comprised in this word:

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

nīnnēpolē nīntē āyyālkārənēyūm snēhīkēnəm

The love of our neighbor hath no evil. Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law.

The night is passed and the day is at hand.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.

jēātīs

— Romans 13:8-13 (Bible)

(English and Malayalam)

IV.

All humankind would know its own lineage and stock;

hamāg mardōm paywand ud tōhmag ī xwēš dānist hē;

never would a brother be abandoned in love by his brother nor a sister by her sister.

haguriz brād ōy ī brād ud xwāh ōy ī xwāh az dōstīh bē nē hišt hē.

- from the Pahlavi Rivayat (8a8)

(English and Pahlavi)

V.

This love between us was born from the first humans;

mōhī tōhī ādī ant bənāī

It cannot be eradicated

əb kāsē ləgən dūrāī

as the river finds its way into the ocean

jāsē sārītā sīndh sāmāī

what is inside me flows into you.

həməṛā mən lāgā

[For the] one who sees all beings in the Self

and the Self in all beings,

[he] harbors no hatred;

To the seer,
 all things become the Self.
 What delusion, what sorrow can there be
 for him (the one!) who beholds such oneness?
 Are you searching for me?
mōkō kəhī ḍhūṇḍhē bəndē
 I am in the next seat
 My shoulder rests against yours.
mē tō tērē pās hē
 The [Lord] is inside you, and also inside me;
sāhēb hām mē sāhēb tūm mē
 [just as] the bloom is hidden in the seed.
jāsē prānā bīj mē
 - Isa Upanishad (verses 6-7) and selections from Kabir
 (English and Hindi)

VI.
 If the mind is sinful,
 blamable,
 intent on works,
 acting on impulses,
 producing cutting and splitting,
 quarrels, faults and pains,
 if it injures living beings,
 if it kills creatures,
 then one should not employ such a mind in action.
təhəpəgārəm mənəm nō pədhārījā gəmənāē.

If the speech is sinful,
 blamable,
 intent on works,
 acting on impulses,
 producing cutting and splitting,
 quarrels, faults and pains,
 if it injures living beings,
 if it kills creatures,
 then one should not utter that sinful speech.
təhəpəgārəm vāīm nō ūccārījā.
jē yē mənē pāvāē
sāvājē
səkirīyē
ənhəyəkəē
chəyəkəē

bhayaḥkare
ahḡarānī
pāṭisī
pārīyāvī
bhūḍvaghā
tahapagārām mānām nō padhārījā gāmānā.
- from the Acharanga Sutra (Jain text)
(Part 3: Lecture 15)
(English and Adha Maghadi)

VII.

The lamps may be different, but the Light is the same
All religions, all this singing, one song.
I have bestowed on each one a unique mode of worship, I have given every one a unique form of expression.
I look not at the tongue and speech, I look at the spirit and the inward feeling.
Religions are many, God is one.
The lamps are different, but the Light is the same: it comes from Beyond.
Concentrate on the essence,
Concentrate on the Light.
Om shāntī shāntī shāntī
Sādhū Sādhū
Wāhēgūrū
Āmīn
Āmēn
Wāj Bāj
Concentrate on the Light.
- Rumi (along with affirming phrases in other religions)

If I can help somebody

Alma Bazel Androzso
(1912-2001)
arr. Nathan Carter

Alma Bazel Androzso was born in Tennessee and raised in Philadelphia. Despite having no formal music training, she published numerous songs and hymns with Boosey & Hawkes and Martin & Morris Music Inc. First recorded in 1946, *If I Can Help Somebody* has since been recorded by numerous distinguished artists, including Billy Eckstine, Doris Day, and Mahalia Jackson. This choral arrangement is by Nathan Carter, who led the Morgan State University choirs to worldwide renown over a decades-long career. His fondness for organ accompaniment is heard here in the introduction and first verse; the choir's humming evokes the warmth of the organ whose presence at his concerts was ubiquitous.

Program Note by Paul Rardin

If I can help somebody as I pass along
If I can cheer somebody with a word or a song
If I can show somebody he is travelling wrong
Then my living shall not be in vain

Then my living shall not be in vain
Then my living shall not be in vain
If I can help somebody as I pass along
Then my living shall not be in vain

If I can do my duty as a Christian ought
If I can bring back beauty to a world up wrought
If I can spread love's message that the Master taught
Then my living shall not be in vain

Then my living shall not be in vain
Then my living shall not be in vain
If I can help somebody as I pass along
Then my living shall not be in vain

Till We Meet Again

Kirk Franklin
(b. 1970)

Kirk Franklin is the “Reigning King of Urban Gospel” (Variety), and his 20 Grammy Awards have secured his place as one of the most successful contemporary gospel artists in history. His interest in popular, R&B, and hip-hop music infused his gospel compositions, many of which featured highly produced, electronic sounds. His debut album *Kirk Franklin & The Family* was released in 1993, and would become one of the best selling gospel albums of all time. *Till We Meet Again* is the closing number on this album, a slow and beautiful musical benediction whose power is in its repetition and simplicity.

Program Note by Paul Rardin

May his peace be with you till we meet again
May his peace be with you till we meet again
Till we reach that distant shore
And we'll shed a tear no more
May he give you strength to endure till we meet again
Till we meet again

May his peace be with you till we meet again
May his peace be with you till we meet again

When we reach that promised land
And we're walking hand in hand
May he give you strength to stand till we meet again
Till we meet again

May his love be with you till we meet again
May his love be with you till we meet again
Till we walk those streets of gold
Where we'll never grow old
I'll find rest for my soul till we meet again
Till we meet again

May his peace be with you till we meet again
May his peace be with you till we meet again
Till we reach that distant shore
And we'll shed a tear no more
May he give you strength to endure till we meet again
Till we meet again.