

Amy Rosine, soprano

Faculty Recital
October 18, 2018

Program Notes

Laudamus te

Mass in C was composed in Vienna by Mozart in 1782-83. It is scored for two soprano soloists, tenor, bass, double chorus and orchestra. The work is unfinished, missing portions of the Credo and Agnus Dei. It is unclear why Mozart began this piece, and equally as puzzling why it was not finished. Some speculation is that he wanted to experiment with the Baroque style, after studying the works of Bach and Handel.

"Laudamus te" follows Mozart's operatic virtuosic style and this arrangement for soprano, trumpet and piano is by trumpet player, teacher and arranger David Cooper. It can be found in *Festive Arias for Soprano or Mezzo-Soprano and Trumpet*.

Laudamus te; benedicimus te
adoramus te; glorificamus te.

We praise Thee; we mess Thee;
We worship Thee; we glorify Thee

Ave maris stella

Felix Mendelssohn was a romantic German composer, pianist, organist and conductor. Like Mozart, he carefully studied the works of Bach and Handel (as well as Mozart), becoming a major proponent of the works of Bach.

The Marian Hymn *Ave maris stella* dates back to the 9th century and is used in the Catholic liturgy at Vespers and of feasts of the Virgin Mary. In the 18th century many musical settings of Marian texts were composed in southern Germany and Austria. The version by Felix Mendelssohn was conceived as a virtuosic concert work. It was premiered May 27, 1829 at the Marienkirche, Berlin, by Anna Milder-Hauptmann, to whom the work was dedicated. According to the reviewer of the Leipzig *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*: " 'Ave maris stella' revealed inventiveness, freshness of melody and skill of construction."

Ave, maris stella
Dei mater alma
atque semper virgo,
felix caeli porta.
Sumens illud "Ave"
Gabrielis ore,
funda nos in pace,
mutans Evae nomen.

Hail, star of the ocean,
God's own gracious. Mother,
Now and ever virgin,
Blessed gate of heaven.
Hearing that blest "Ave"
From God's holy angel
Pour on us atonement
Making even's name worthy.

Solve vincla reis
profer lumen caecis,
mala nostra pelle,
bona concta posce.

Break the chains of evil;
Give the blind their vision;
Drive away all evils
And bring us all goodness.

English: Jean Lunn

The poems for this work were taken from *Gitanjali* by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). Written in India around 1910, the poems came from a restless, almost sleepless period in the poet's life. Introduced to the west in 1912, they became widely recognized for their simple, captivating descriptions of nature and their yearning spiritual tone. The text is filled with natural images, and a wandering, restless mood.

A popular vocal setting of *Gitanjali* texts is by John Alan Carpenter and includes the familiar songs "When I Bring to You Colored Toys" and "The Sleep That Flits on Baby's Eyes."

Frank Ticheli is an American composer of orchestral, choral, chamber, and concert band works. He lives in Los Angeles, California, where he is a Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California. He was the Pacific Symphony's composer-in-residence from 1991 to 1998, composing numerous works for that orchestra. A number of his works are particularly notable, as they have become standards in concert band repertoire.

NIGHTFALL

The day is no more, the shadow is upon the earth. It is time that I
go to the stream to fill my pitcher.

The evening air is eager with the sad music of the water.

Ah, it calls me out into the dusk. In the lonely lane there is no passer-by,
the wind is up, the ripples are rampant in the river.

I know not if I shall come back home. I know not whom I shall chance to meet.
There at the fording in the little boat the unknown man plays upon his lute.

LIGHT

Light, my light, the world-filling light, the eye-kissing light, heart-sweetening light!

Ah, the light dances, my darling, at the centre of my life; the light strikes, my darling,
the chords of my love; the sky opens, the wind runs wild, laughter passes over the earth.

The butterflies spread their sails on the sea of light. Lilies and jasmines surge up on the
crest of the waves of light.

The light is shattered into gold on every cloud, my darling, and it scatters gems in profusion.

Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling, and gladness without measure. The heaven's river has drowned its
banks and the flood of joy is abroad.

DEPARTURE

I must launch out my boat. The languid hours pass by on the shore---Alas for me!

The spring has done its flowering and taken leave. And now with the burden of faded futile flowers I wait and
linger.

The waves have become clamorous, and upon the bank in the shady lane the yellow leaves flutter and fall.

What emptiness do you gaze upon! Do you not feel a thrill passing through the air with the notes of the far-away
song floating from the other shore?

Knoxville: Summer of 1915

Composed in 1947, the first performance was April 9, 1948, with Eleanor Steber, soprano, and the Boston Symphony conducted by Serge Koussevitzky.

The beginning of 1947 was a difficult time for Samuel Barber. He was happy to have returned to civilian life after his wartime service, but his father and aunt were both in failing health. That January, he encountered James Agee's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, a short essay which would eventually become the preamble to the author's Pulitzer Prize-winning *A Death in the Family*. This poignant look back at his childhood struck a chord with Barber, and when soprano Eleanor Steber commissioned a work from him in February, he immediately decided to set it to music. The piece came to him very quickly and was completed on April 4. The text resonated strongly with Steber, who commented, "That was exactly my childhood in Wheeling, West Virginia." Steber wrote in her memoir that "It was Sam's discerning eye and ear which enabled him to cut and lift bits of [Agee's] text faultlessly ... and set [them] to unforgettable music."

James Agee's essay is a dreamy, conversational, almost improvisatory piece of prose reflecting on summers spent with his family at their home in Tennessee. The author claimed that he wrote the stream-of-consciousness text in less than 90 minutes and made only minor revisions to it once it was complete. In the course of the essay, Agee shifts between viewing the world as an adult and seeing it through the eyes of his five-year-old self. He affectionately describes his parents and his artist uncle and musician aunt, both of whom were very close to him. While the text superficially yearns for the "golden years", it is suffused with an inescapable adult knowledge of the frailty of life.

As for Barber, he was struck by the uncanny similarity between his childhood and Agee's: both were five years old in 1915 and were raised by loving parents and an artistic aunt and uncle (for Barber, the composer Sidney Homer and contralto Louise Homer). The composer later wrote to his uncle, "It reminded me so much of summer evenings in West Chester, now very far away, and all of you are in it." Barber's Aunt Louise would pass away on May 6, 1947. His father, to whom the composer dedicated *Knoxville*, followed on August 12.

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 is an iconic work for soprano. It not only resonated with the original creators and singer, but profoundly affects every person who performs this masterful piece. Even though I did not grow up in the south, and over 100 years separates me from the setting of the text, I am easily transported back to my childhood in Iowa, and summertime camping with Girl Scouts and my family.

...It has become that time of evening when people sit on their porches, rocking gently and talking gently and watching the street and the standing up into their sphere of possession of the trees, of birds' hung havens, hangars. People go by; things go by. A horse, drawing a buggy, breaking his hollow iron music on the asphalt; a loud auto; a quiet auto; people in pairs, not in a hurry, scuffling, switching their weight of aestival body, talking casually, the taste hovering over them of vanilla, strawberry, pasteboard and starched milk, the image upon them of lovers and horsemen, squared with clowns in hueless amber.

A streetcar raising its iron moan; stopping, belling and starting; stertorous; rousing and raising again its iron increasing moan and swimming its gold windows and straw seats on past and past and past, the bleak spark crackling and cursing above it like a small malignant spirit set to dog its tracks; the iron whine rises on rising speed; still risen, faints; halts; the faint stinging bell; rises again, still fainter, fainting, lifting, lifts, faints foregone: forgotten. Now is the night one blue dew. Now is the night one blue dew, my father has drained, he has coiled the hose. Low on the length of lawns, a frailing of fire who breathes....

Parents on porches: rock and rock. From damp strings morning glories.....hang their ancient faces.The dry and exalted noise of the locusts from all the air at once.....enchants my eardrums.

On the rough wet grass of the back yard my father and mother have spread quilts. We all lie there, my mother, my father, my uncle, my aunt, and I too am lying there....They are not talking much, and the talk is quiet, of nothing in

particular, of nothing at all. The stars are wide and alive, they seem each like a smile of great sweetness, and they seem very near. All my people are larger bodies than mine,...with voices gentle and meaningless like the voices of sleeping birds. One is an artist, he is living at home. One is a musician, she is living at home. One is my mother who is good to me. One is my father who is good to me. By some chance, here they are, all on this earth; and who shall ever tell the sorrow of being on this earth, lying, on quilts, on the grass, in a summer evening, among the sounds of the night. May God bless my people, my uncle, my aunt, my mother, my good father, oh, remember them kindly in their time of trouble; and in the hour of their taking away.

After a little I am taken in and put to bed. Sleep, soft smiling, draws me unto her: and those receive me, who quietly treat me, as one familiar and well-beloved in that home: but will not, oh, will not, not now, not ever; but will not ever tell me who I am.

"Adelaide's Aria" from The Enchanted Pig

The Enchanted Pig is a chamber opera composed by English composer Johnathan Dove to a libretto by Alasdair Middleton. Written for 8 voices, each singer covers the chorus and 15 roles. The opera is scored for an eclectic ensemble of harp, accordion, trombone, cello, bass, piano and percussion. According to the composer's website:

"Love makes you happy. Love makes you cruel". It's the old story – King goes off to war, tell his daughters not to go into a locked room containing the Book of Fate, daughters don't listen and one of them ends up marrying a pig. Drawing on Romanian and Norwegian folk tales, this magical family show, which has its trotters in the worlds of opera and musical theatre, has delighted audiences in more than 150 performances in the UK and USA.

Bibliography

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www.johnathandove.com

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