

CHORAL Geometrics



June 12, 2010, 8 p.m.
June 13, 2010, 3 p.m.

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Music Recital Hall**

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Director

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Ariose occasionally has openings for skilled choral singers. Contact Michael McGushin at director@ariosesingers.org if you are interested in auditioning.

Upcoming Local Concerts

Midsummer Mozart Festival

July 15-18 and July 22-25, San Jose

Artistic Director George Cleve has announced the 2010 program for the 36th Anniversary Season of the Midsummer Mozart Festival, a San Francisco Bay Area icon and North America's only all-Mozart festival. The Festival is proud to welcome 14-year-old piano sensation Audrey Vardanega and violin soloist Robin Hansen in Program I, and beloved pianist Seymour Lipkin and basso Jeremy Galyon in Program II.

<http://www.midsummermozart.org/>

Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music

August 1-15, Santa Cruz

During the first two weeks of August each year, audiences are joined by both preeminent and emerging composers, an orchestra of dedicated professional musicians led by famed conductor Marin Alsop, and renowned guest artists from across the globe to give voice to works which are rarely more than a year or two old, and sometimes still wet on the page.

<http://www.cabrillomusic.org/>

Program

Six Madrigals

William Hawley (b. 1950)

Vita de la mia vita
Ore, fermate il volo
Io v'amo sol perchè voi siete bella
Siepe, che gli orti vaghi
Dolcissimi colori
Io son la Primavera

Spherical Madrigals

Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997)

Love is a circle

Soloists: Skye Wilson, Dan Landry, Jeffrey Young, Kathleen Caton, Susana Wessling, Rebecca Stuhlberg

When again all these rare perfections meet
All-circling point
His body was an orb
On a round ball
Nor doe I doubt
See how the Earth

Intermission

By the Breathing Leaf

John Seales (b. 1970)

(An Imaginary Credo of the Tree People)

Blood flows as sap flows
Three Thousand
Let Us Sound

The Hour-Glass

Irving Fine (1914-1962)

O know to end as to begin

Soloists: Jaeleen Bennis, Kathleen Caton, Rebecca Stuhlberg, Susana Wessling, Steven Guire Knight, John Seales

Have you seen the white lily grow
O do not wanton with those eyes

Soloists: Skye Wilson, Susana Wessling, Rebecca Stuhlberg

Against Jealousy

Soloists: Jaeleen Bennis, Skye Wilson, Rebecca Stuhlberg, Jas Cluff, John Seales

Lament

The Hour-Glass

There Will Be Rest

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Six Madrigals

William Hawley (b. 1950)

I. Vita de la mia vita

Vita de la mia vita,
Tu mi somigli pallidetta oliva
O rosa scolorita;
Nè di beltà sei priva,
Ma in ogni aspetto tu mi sei gradita,
O lusinghiera o schiva;
E se mi segui o fuggi,
Soavemente mi consumi e struggi.

Life of my life,
you are to me like a pallid olive
or a fading rose;
nor are you deprived of beauty,
but in every way you please me,
whether you flatter or shun;
and whether you follow me or flee,
softly you consume and melt me.

II. Ore, fermate il volo

Ore, fermate il volo
Nel lucido oriente,
Mentre s'en vola il ciel rapidamente;
E, carolando in torno
A l'alba matutina
Ch'esce da la marina,
L'umana vita ritardate e'l giorno.
E voi, Aure veloci,
Portate i miei sospiri
Là dove Laura spira
E riportate a me sue chiare voci,
Sì che l'ascolti io solo,
Sol voi presenti e'l signor nostro Amore,
Aure soavi ed Ore.

Hours, cease your flight
In the lucid East,
As the heavens fly quickly past;
And, dancing about
The morning light
Rising from the sea,
Slow the life of man and slow the day.
And you, swift Breezes,
Carry my sighs
There, where Laura breathes
And bring back to me her clear words,
That I alone may hear them,
With only you and our lord Love present,
Soft Breezes and Hours.

III. Io v'amo sol perchè voi siete bella

Io v'amo sol perchè voi siete bella,
E perchè vuol mia stella,
Non ch'io spero da voi, dolce mio bene,
Altro che pene.

I love you only because you are beautiful,
And because my star wills it,
Not that I would hope, from you, my sweet,
For anything but pain.

E se talor de gli occhi miei mostrate,
Aver qualche pietate,
Io non spero da voi del pianger tanto
Altro che pianto.

And even if sometimes for my eyes you show
Some pity,
I do not hope, from you, out of such weeping
For anything but tears.

Nè, perchè udite i miei sospiri ardenti
Che per voi spargo a i vienti,
Altro spera da voi questo mio core
Se non dolore.

Nor, because you hear my ardent sighs
That for you I scatter to the winds,
Does this heart of mine hope, from you,
For anything but sorrow.

Lasciate pur ch'io v'ami e ch'io vi miri
E che per voi sospiri,
Chè pene, pianto e doglia è sol mercede
De la mia fede.

Yet, allow me to love you and to see you
And to sigh for you,
Though pain, tears, and sorrow are the only reward
For my fidelity.

IV. Siepe, che gli orti vaghi

Siepe, che gli orti vaghi,
E me da me dividi,
Sì bella rosa in te giammai non vidi
Com'è la donna mia
Bella, amorosa e pia;
E mentr'io stendo sovra te la mano
La mi stringe pian piano.

O hedge, which the lovely orchards
And me from myself divide,
I've never seen so beautiful a rose in you
As my lady is—
Beautiful, loving, and holy;
And while I extend over you my hand
She presses it, soft, softly.

V. Dolcissimi colori

Dolcissimi colori,
Voi vi mutate, ed io
Muto aspetto con voi, ma non desio.
Sempre vorrei mirarvi, e se fiorire
Un bel purpureo veggio,
E quel vago candor sempre io vagheggio;
E perchè vari segno al mio pensiero,
È costante l'arciere.

Sweetest colors,
You change yourselves, and I
Change with you, but I do not wish it.
Of such a beautiful crimson,
And for such whiteness
I shall ever yearn;
And although changing according to my thought,
The bowman is always the same.

VI. Io son la Primavera

Io son la Primavera,
Che lieta, o vaghe donne, a voi ritorno
Col mio bel manto adorno
Per vestir la campagne d'erbe e fiori
E svegliarvi nel cor novelli amori.

I am Spring
who gladly, lovely women, returns to you
with my beautiful, embellished mantle
to dress the countryside in greenery and flowers
and to arouse in your hearts new loves.

A me Zeffiro spira,
A me ride la terra e'l ciel sereno;
Volan di seno in seno
Gli Amoretti vezzosi a mille mille,
Chi armato di stral, di chi faville.

For me Zephir sighs,
for me the earth laughs, as do the serene heavens;
from breast to breast fly
the charming Amoretti by the thousands,
armed with arrows and with torches.

E voi ancor gioite,
Godete al mio venir tra risi e canti;
Amate i vostri amanti
Or che'l bel viso amato april v'infiora;
Primavera per voi non torna ognora.

And you, again delighted,
take pleasure in my coming amidst the laughing and song;
love your lovers
now, while April adorns lovely faces with flowers;
Spring for you will not return forever.

—Torquato Tasso (1544-1595)

English translations by William Hawley

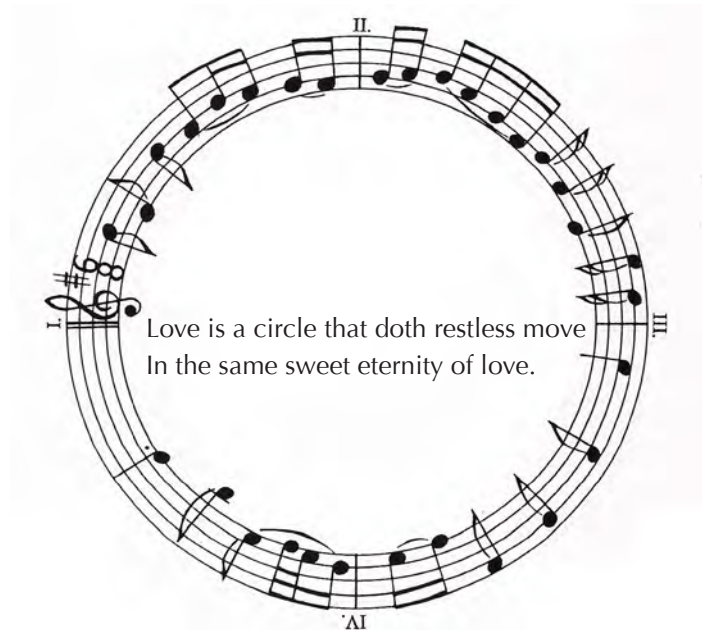
Notes:

A New York native, William Hawley was born 1950 and is currently an active composer. Although he studied at Ithaca college and Cal Arts under avant-gardists Morton Subotnick, Harold Budd, James Tenney, Earle Brown, and Morton Feldman, Hawley takes a more traditional stance toward musical composition, aiming more to uplift and enlighten the human spirit than to challenge the boundaries of compositional technique. As a choral composer, Hawley often chooses to set centuries-old texts to music, and seeks to integrate older musical styles with aspects of modernism.

The six madrigals of William Hawley we present tonight are on texts by Torquato Tasso (1544-1595) a widely read poet of his day and a favorite of renaissance madrigalists like Gesualdo and Monteverdi. Hawley's musical setting retains the character of renaissance madrigals while subtly introducing more modern elements.

**Spherical Madrigals
Round.**

Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997)



–Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

I.

When again all these rare perfections meet,
Composed in the circle of thy face,
As in their place,
So as to make up of all one perfect sweet,
Who is not then so ravish'd with delight,
Ev'n of thy sight?

–Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1582/3-1648)
“To A Lady who did Sing Excellently”

II.

All-circling point. All cent'ring sphere.
The world's one, round, Eternal year.

–Richard Crashaw (1613-1650)
“In the Glorious Epiphany of Our Lord God”

III.

His body was an orb, his sublime soul
Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole:
Whose reg'lar motions better to our view,
Then Archimedes' sphere, the heavens did shew.

–John Dryden (1631-1700)
“Upon the Death of the Lord Hastings”

IV.

On a round ball
A workeman that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afrique, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, All,
So doth each teare,
Which thee doth weare,
A globe, yea world by that impression grow,
Till thy teares mixt with mine doe overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so.

–John Donne (1572-1631)
“A Valediction: of weeping”

V.

Nor doe I doubt
But when the world first out of Chaos sprang
So smil'd the Dayes, and so the tenor ran
Of their felicity. A spring was there,
An everlasting spring; the jolly yeare
Led round in his great circle,...

–Richard Crashaw
“Out of Virgil: In the praise of Spring”

VI.

See how the arched Earth does here
Rise in a perfect Hemisphere!
The stiffest Compass could not strike
A line more circular and like;
Nor softest Pensel draw a Brow
So equal as this Hill does bow.
It seems as for a Model laid,
And that the World by it was made.

–Andrew Marvell (1621-1678)
“Upon the Hill and Grove at Bill-borow”

Notes:

As a composition teacher at the University of Michigan, Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997) taught many preeminent composers, including George Crumb, Roger Reynolds, and Robert Ashley. He spoke of a compositional principle called “complementarity,” a concept that he borrowed from the scientific thinking of Niels Bohr, of balancing opposing forces in music, often avant-garde and traditional approaches.

The Spherical Madrigals (1947) are settings of 17th century English poems, each having the shape of a circle or sphere as the central image or metaphor. The poems reflect an era when discoveries from the birth of modern science fed the poetic imagination.

Intermission

By the Breathing Leaf *(An Imaginary Credo of the Tree People)*

John Seales (b. 1970)
program notes follow text

I. Blood flows as sap flows

We believe the Breathing Leaf,
we are trees.

Blood flows as sap flows
in branching vessels.
(twigs branches fingers toes roots)

At loose on the surface
we wither and thirst
forgetting our roots in Earth.

II. Three Thousand

The purpose
of our eyes ears mind
is to see hear think for ourselves.

We are not worth more.
You are not worth less.
Three thousand of us
unjustly slain,
no more no less than
three thousand of you cut to stumps.
We are not worth more.
You are not worth less.

III. Let Us Sound

If we be branches
of the first life on Earth,
let us sound.

If we be drumbeats
on the skin of now,
let us sound.

By the Breathing Leaf,
let us sound.

–Michael Whitfield

Michael Whitfield on the text:

It was on my first (and last) trip to that annual mass gathering and unrestricted orgy of bacchanalia, the Rainbow Gathering. The deep connection with the earth that I craved, that I wanted to renew in the company of like-minded thousands was frustrated by the pervasive superficiality of the “alternative” social get-together. People were literally falling all over themselves to see who could make the most drastic disturbance to their immediate environment – trampling, digging, building enormous fires, breaking off parts of the forest for the facades of a makeshift city. Disgusted, I took off on a solo hike to Warren Peak, el. 9000 ft. As I walked, I imagined a people who would actually be capable of connecting with the forest in a mass gathering.

The tree people of my imagination would actually be human, but would see themselves as a special kind of tree, the blood flowing in their veins just a variant of sap in a tree. Having no front or back, trees would be unable to place their perceptions or their well-being ahead or behind that of others. They would see the entirety of life on earth as one immense tree. All animals and plants on earth emerged from the bodies of their parents; so over time, there is a physical link between each of us and our forebears that extends to the very beginning of life. Individual life forms are “sub-trees,” branches whose form mirrors that of the tree of life itself. We are trees with peculiar roots, allowing us to wander the surface of the earth. As a result, connection with the earth has become problematic, even dysfunctional – a genuine connection is now a matter of conscious effort.

Seales’ setting of my words reminds me of a colony of trees through time: growing, obeying the imperative to grow toward the light, dying, bending and straightening in the wind.

John Seales on the music:

The harmonic language of this piece employs extended chromatic mediant progressions. To illustrate, an ordinary mediant progression is between two chords in the same key whose roots are a third apart. For example:

A chromatic mediant alters the second chord so that it isn’t in the same key:

Chromatic mediants figure prominently in the soundtrack to the movie version of *The Lord of the Rings*, to take just one example out of many possible.

I extend the notion further, with non-triadic chords following each other in chromatic-mediator-like progressions:



I played with texture (thickness or thinness of simultaneous voices) to depict vegetation, which at times is lush; at others bare.

My approach to musical time was inspired by a Franz Liszt's description of Chopin's technique of rubato (expressive speeding up and slowing down of tempo.) "Look at those trees!" he said, "the wind plays in their leaves, stirs up life among them, but the tree remains the same."



The Hour-Glass

Irving Fine (1914-1962)

poems by Ben Jonson (1572–1637)

- I. O know to end as to begin
O know to end as to begin:
A minute's loss in love is sin.
You do our rites much wrong,
In seeking to prolong
These outward pleasures:
The night hath other treasures
Than these, though long conceal'd,
Ere day to be reveal'd.
Then, know to end, as to begin;
A minute's loss in love is sin.

—*from The Masque of Hymen (1606), adapted*
Soloists: Jaeleen Bennis, Kathleen Caton, Rebecca Stuhlberg,
Susana Wessling, Steven Guire Knight, John Seales

- II. Have you seen the white lily grow
Have you seen the white lily grow,
 Before rude hands have touch'd it?
Have you seen the fall of the snow,
 Before the soil hath smutch'd it?
Have you felt the wool of the beaver,
 Or swan's down ever?
Have you tasted the bag of the bee?
O so fair! O so soft! O so sweet is she!

—*"See the Chariot at Hand" third stanza, adapted*

- III. O do not wanton with those eyes
O do not wanton with those Eyes,
Lest I be sick with seeing;
Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
Lest Shame destroy their being.
O, be not angry with those fires;
For then their Threats will kill me:
Nor look too kind on my desires,
For then my Hopes will spill me.
O, do not steep them in thy Tears;
For so will Sorrow slay me
Nor spread them as distract with fears;
Mine own enough betray me.

—*"A Song"*
Soloists: Skye Wilson, Susana Wessling, Rebecca Stuhlberg

IV. Against Jealousy

Wretched and foolish Jealousy,
How cam'st thou thus to enter me?
 I ne'er was of thy kind:
 Nor have I yet the narrow mind
 To vent that poor desire,
That others should not warm them at my fire:
 I wish the sun should shine
On all men's fruit, and flowers, as well as mine.

But under the disguise of love,
Thou say'st, thou only cam'st to prove
 What my affections were.
 Think'st thou that love is help'd by fear?
 Go, get thee quickly forth,
Love's sickness, and his noted want of worth.
 Seek doubting men to please;
I ne'er will owe my health to a disease.

*Soloists: Jaeleen Bennis, Skye Wilson,
Rebecca Stuhlbarg, Jas Cluff, John Seales*

V. Lament

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears;
Yet, slower yet; O faintly, gentle springs;
List to the heavy part the music bears;
Woe weeps out her division when she sings.
Droop herbs and flowers;
Fall grief in showers,
Our beauties are not ours;
O, I could still,
Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
Drop, drop, drop, drop,
Since nature's pride is now a withered daffodil.

—"Echo's Lament for Narcissus" from Cynthia's Revels Act 1, Scene 2

VI. The Hour-Glass

Do but consider this small dust
 Here running in the glass,
 By atoms moved;
 Could you believe that this
 The body ever was
 Of one that loved?
And in his mistress' flame, playing like a fly,
 Burned into cinders by her eye?
Yes; and in death, as life, unblessed,
 To have't expressed,
Even ashes of lovers find no rest.

Notes:

Known through his association with Aaron Copland, Irving Fine was one of six composers in mid-twentieth century Boston known as the Boston school, along with Arthur Berger, Harold Shapero, Lukas Foss, Leonard Bernstein, and Aaron Copland. A gifted pianist and a phenomenal sight-reader, he was taught by Walter Piston and Nadia Boulanger. Fine taught music theory at Harvard for eleven years, after which he founded the music department at

Brandeis. A notable conductor of the new music of the time, he performed premieres by Stravinsky, Foss, and others. Though no longer a household name, in the mid-century New York Times his was a name that needed no introduction in articles on new music. At the age of 47, still in the prime of his career, Irving Fine died of a heart attack.

His song-cycle *The Hour-Glass* (1949) is a setting of six poems selected from the works of 17th century playwright, poet, and masque-wright Ben Jonson. In their sequence, they describe an arc from flirtation to love, through intimacy and jealousy, and on to loss. In the final song, the act of watching particles fall in an hour-glass invites a reflection on the evanescence of life.

"Even ashes of lovers find no rest."

There Will Be Rest

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
Over the roof-tops crowned with snow,
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,
The music of stillness holy and slow.

I will make this world of my devising,
Out of a dream in my lonely mind,
I shall find the crystal of peace,—above me
Stars I shall find.

—Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Notes:

Frank Ticheli is a composer of works for orchestra, concert band, and chorus. He received his masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Michigan, and has been Professor of Composition at Southern California's Thornton School of Music since 1991. Sara Teasdale was an American lyrical poet.



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