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For further information about Cerddorion's thirteenth season,
please visit our website: www.cerddorion.net.

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Ticket sales cover only a small portion of our ongoing musical and administrative expenses.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution,
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Don't miss Cerddorion's upcoming performances!

Spectacular Vernacular

Sunday, May 11, 2008, 4 P.M., at the Oratory Church of St. Boniface, 11 Willoughby St. (on the MetroTech Campus), Brooklyn

Sunday, May 18, 2008, 4 P.M., at the Church of St. Luke in the Fields, 487 Hudson Street, (south of Christopher Street), Manhattan.

Both programs: General admission: \$20. Students/seniors \$15. For information: 212-260-1498.

CERDDORION

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Kristina Boerger

Artistic Director

PRESENTS

The Place Just Right: A Concert of Sacred Music from the United States



Sunday, February 24, 2008 – 4:00 p.m.
First Unitarian Congregational Society
50 Monroe Place
Brooklyn Heights, New York

Saturday, March 1, 2008 – 8:00 p.m.
Church of St. Ignatius of Antioch
552 West End Ave.
Manhattan, New York

CERDDORION

NOW IN ITS THIRTEENTH SEASON, CERDDORION is one of New York's most highly regarded volunteer choral ensembles. A chamber group of twenty-eight mixed voices, it is known for its eclectic repertoire, encompassing music from the early Renaissance to the contemporary era. Audiences have come to appreciate the group's interpretive depth and technical excellence in many styles.

Besides presenting its own varied programs, Cerddorion is frequently invited to perform with other acclaimed artists. Past collaborations include: the North American premiere of Sir John Tavener's all-night vigil, *The Veil of the Temple*, performed at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall (with Dessoff Choral Consortium and choristers from London's Temple Church); several appearances with the Christopher Caines Dance Company; baroque opera performances with the early music instrumental ensemble Concert Royal; and serving as the resident teaching ensemble for the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Kent, Connecticut.

Cerddorion was selected to sing at the 2006 Eastern Divisional Convention of the American Choral Directors Association, where they presented the works they had commissioned of three New York composers for their tenth anniversary season.

This fall marked the release on the Tzadik label of *A Handful of World*, the first commercial recording featuring Cerddorion. The CD is dedicated to vocal works by New York composer Lisa Bielawa and includes Cerddorion's performance of Bielawa's "Lamentations for a City," which was commissioned and first performed by Cerddorion in 2004.

Kristina Boerger

An accomplished singer, conductor, and choral arranger, Kristina Boerger received her formative musical training from pianist Annie Sherter and holds the doctorate in Choral Conducting and Literature from the University of Illinois. She lectures in music history at Barnard College and teaches choral conducting at the Manhattan School of Music.

Her work in the 1990s as founding director of AMASONG: Champaign-Urbana's Premier Lesbian/Feminist Chorus, is the subject of the documentary film *The Amasong Chorus: Singing Out*, which after touring festivals in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia has enjoyed repeated broadcast on PBS. Her work as a guest conductor and choral clinician has brought her recently to the University of Illinois Chamber Singers and to The Chicago Children's Choir, as well as to repeat engagements with the Kalamazoo Bach Festival Society and the Syracuse Schola Cantorum.

As a singer in a variety of styles, she has appeared on stage and on disc with the King's Noyse, Rocky Maffit, the Tallis Scholars, Early Music New York, Vox Vocal Ensemble, Bobby McFerrin, Alarm Will Sound, and Urban Bush Women. She is a member of the acclaimed early music ensemble Pomerium and of the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble, a sextet renowned for its performing, recording, and music-education activities.

This is Dr. Boerger's eighth season as Artistic Director of Cerddorion.

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Our concerts would not be possible without a great deal of financial assistance. Cerddorion would like to thank the following, who, in addition to many of our members, have generously provided financial support for our activities.

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A Wreath

A wreathed garland of deserved praise, unto thee I give,
I give to thee, who knowest all my ways,
My crooked and winding ways, wherein I live.
Wherein I die, not live: for life is straight,
Straight as a line, and ever tends to thee,
To thee, who art more far above deceit,
Than deceit seems above simplicity.
Give me simplicity, that I may live,
So live and like, that I may know thy ways,
Know them and practise them: then shall I give
For this poor wreath, a crown of praise.

—George Herbert, from *The Temple* (1633)

Simple Gifts

‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free,
‘Tis the gift to come down where you ought to be
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
It will be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we will not be ashamed;
To turn, turn, it will be our delight,
‘Til by turning, we come round right.

‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free,
‘Tis the gift to come down where you ought to be.
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
It will be in the valley of love and delight.

Fund Raising Gala

You are cordially invited to attend Cerddorion’s annual fundraising gala at City Center, on Monday, March 24, at 6 pm. This year, we will go a little bit country: In addition to wine, hors d’oeuvres, a silent auction, and performances by Cerddorion, the gala will feature the bluegrass band **Blue Harvest** (www.blueharvestband.com), accompanied by country dance callers **Don and Dot Coy** (www.dotanddoncoy.com), who will instruct and lead a group in some stepping and stomping. Beginners are especially welcome! There will also be a special cameo appearance by **City Stompers** (www.clogdancenewyork.com).

Please join the fun and help defray our annual operating costs, as well as support commissioned works for the group. Ticket prices start at \$65. For more information about Cerddorion or to request an invitation to the gala, visit www.cerddorion.net or e-mail us at info@cerddorion.net

The Place Just Right

Five Shaker Melodies

Combined by K. Boerger

Early American Harmony

Honor to the Hills
Hamshire
Little Lamb

Jeremiah Ingalls

Daniel Read

Spiritual, arr. *Marshall Bartholomew*

From *Three Sacred Canticles*, Opus 115

Canticle 8, “Cantemus Domino” (The Song of Moses)
Chris Ryan, John Dennison, Kate Asbby, soloists

David Noon

At God’s Table

NYC Psalm 23

*Jude Cobb, Steve Parkey, Marty Silverberg,
Kristina Vaskys, soloists*

Eddie Rubeiz

Three Eucharistic Motets

I. Laetabatur justus in Domino

II. Ave verum corpus

III. O sacrum convivium

Doug Keilitz, organist

Gerald Near

From *Three Sacred Canticles*, Opus 115

Canticle 9, “Ecce Deus” (The First Song of Isaiah)

David Noon

◆◆◆ PAUSE ◆◆◆

The Refuge of the Poor

Ubi caritas
Tu pauperum refugium

Ann Stedman, soloist

Elliot Z. Levine

Jonathan David

From *Three Sacred Canticles*, Opus 115

Canticle 10, “Quaerite Dominum” (The Second Song of Isaiah)

David Noon

From Despair to Joy

Precious Lord
Africa

Thomas Dorsey

William Billings

The Poet’s Contemplations

The Oxen
My Life Is Hid in Him Who Is My Treasure
A Wreath

Ellen Schorr, Myrna Nachman, soloists

Chester L. Almes

Lawrence Siegel

William Trafska

Simple Gifts

Traditional Shaker Song,
Arr. *Yumiko Matsuoka*

Program Notes

Welcome to this place. Tonight you will hear sacred and devotional words set to music by tunesmiths and composers from different times and places in U.S. history. The program's stylistic variety signals the various contexts in which people are moved to sing together about their hope and belief, as well as the sheer multiplicity of cultures that constitute our national fabric. By no means an exhaustive or even balanced survey, tonight's concert is simply a collection of beloved music, music by people we love, and pieces of music that complement or illuminate one another.

We open with one of the most durable roots of vernacular song from the United States, the **Shaker hymn**. Under the leadership of "Mother Ann" (Lee), the first Shaker communities were founded in England in 1772 on principles of shared labor, gender parity, and racial equality and were transported to rural New York in 1774. The high point of worship was attained through ecstatic group singing and dancing, and the extant body of anonymous melodies crafted for use in worship fills several anthologies. We will present our selected songs—about love and music—in their original form, unadorned by harmonic arrangement, except for a transitional chord here and there for linking one song to the next.

Next we offer two examples of early-American Protestant hymnody created by composers—who were also craftsmen and merchants—from New England's Revolutionary period. For **Honor to the Hills**, *Jeremiah Ingalls* took an English folk tune, "Captain Kidd," retexted it with a poem by Elder Hibard, and harmonized it. The poem places us in our own countryside, drawing spiritual inspiration from the forests, hills, glades, and cornfields of 18th-century New England. As is characteristic of so much early-American hymnody, Ingalls's harmonies proceed from and lead back to stark chords of open octaves and fifths, omitting the third. (While we render our concert performance of this hymn in solemn tones, our own Eddie Rubeiz reports a family tradition of gathering at funerals and singing it with raucous abandon.) *Daniel Reade's Hamshire* takes the singer on an emotional journey from pondering the Good Friday death of "the heavenly lover" to the sudden Easter Sunday joys of his revival. Another step up in compositional sophistication, this anthem includes instrumental interludes (which we omit), meter shifts, and one wrenchingly dissonant cadence—worthy of the last great Anglican polyphonists—at the close of the phrase: "He shed a thousand drops for you."

We answer Reade's celebratory anthem with the ebullient joy of the Spiritual **Little Lamb**, as arranged by Marshall Bartholomew. The sudden popularity of the concert Spiritual was ignited in the 1870s during the fundraising tour of the Jubilee Singers from Fisk University and inspired a continuing and varied tradition of Spiritual arrangement, represented on the one hand by the minimally harmonized and somewhat extemporized approach of Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir and on the other by the virtuosically elaborated and precisely coordinated scores of Moses Hogan. Our arrangement treads a happy middle path. It is widely understood that slaves used the religious language of their Spiritual texts to comment on their profane conditions—and often on their plans for escaping those

Precious Lord

Precious Lord, take my hand. Lead me on, let me stand.
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light
Take my hand, Lord, and lead me home.

When my way grows drear, Precious Lord, linger near.
When my life is almost gone, at the river, Lord, I stand
Guide my feet and hold my hand,
Take my hand, Lord, and lead me home.

Africa

Now shall my inward joy arise and burst into a song:
Almighty Love inspires my heart and Pleasure tunes my tongue.

Why do we then indulge our fears, suspicions and complaints?
Is He a God, and shall His Grace grow weary of His saints?

The Oxen

Christmas Eve and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

I pictured the meek, mild, creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pens;
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling there.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve:
"Come, see the oxen kneel

"In the lowly barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know."
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

-- Thomas Hardy

My Life Is Hid in Him Who Is My Treasure

My words and thoughts do both express this notion,
That life hath with the sun a double motion.
The first is straight, and our diurnal friend,
The other hid, and doth obliquely bend.
One life is wrapt in flesh and tends to earth.
The other winds towards Him, whose happy birth
Taught me to live here so, that still one eye
Should aim and shoot at that which is on high:
Quitting with daily labour all my pleasure,
To gain at harvest an eternal treasure.
My life is hid in him who is my treasure.

—George Herbert (1633)

Ubi Caritas

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor,
Exsultemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.

Tu pauperum refugium

Tu pauperum refugium,
tu languorum remedium, spes exsulum.
Fortitudo laborantium,
via errantium, veritas et vita.
Et nunc Redemptor, Domine,
ad te solum confugio;
te verum Deum adoro,
in te spero, in te confido,
salus mea, Jesu Christe.
Adjuva me, ne unquam obdormiat
in morte anima mea.

Quaerite Dominum

Quaerite Dominum dum inveniri potest.
Invocate eum dum prope est.
Derelinquat impius viam suam
et vir iniquus cogitationes suas,
Et revertatur ad Dominum et miserebitur euis
Et ad Deum nostrum quoniam multus est ad
ignoscendum.
Non enim cogitationes meae cogitationes vestrae
Neque viae vestrae viae meae dicit Dominus.
Quia sicut exaltantur caeli a terra
Sic exaltate sunt viae meae a viis vestris
Et cogitationes meae a cogitationibus vestris.
Et quomodo descendit imber et nix de caelo et illuc
ultra non revertitur
Sed inebriat terram et infundit eam
et germinare eam facit
Et dat semen serenti et panem comedenti.
Sic erit verbum meum quod egredietur de ore meo.
Non revertitur ad me vacuum
Sed faciet quaecumque volui
Et prosperabitur in his ad quae misi illud.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper
Et in saecula saeculorum, Amen

Where charity and love are, there God is.
The love of Christ has gathered us into one flock.
Let us exult, and in Him be joyful.
Let us fear and let us love the living God.

Thou art the refuge of the poor,
Remedy for afflictions, hope of exiles,
Strength of those who labor,
Way for the wandering, truth and life.
And now, Redeemer, Lord,
In thee alone I take refuge;
thee, true God, I adore,
In thee I hope, in thee I confide,
My salvation, O Jesus Christ.
Help me, lest my soul ever sleep in death.

*Seek the Lord while he may be found.
Call upon him when he draws near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts,
And let them turn to the Lord and he will have
compassion on them,
And to our God, for he will richly pardon.
“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways my ways,” says the Lord.
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are my ways higher than your ways
And my thoughts than your thoughts.
For rain and snow fall from the heavens and return not
again
but water the earth, bringing forth life
and giving growth,
Seed for sowing and bread for eating,
So is my word that goes forth from my mouth.
It will not return to me empty,
But it will accomplish that which I have purposed
And prosper in that for which I sent it.”
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end, Amen.*

conditions. Here, the singers aspire to reach that “heavenly land” where they will be servants only of God. Meanwhile, they confer with one another in sassy verse about the hypocrisy, trickery, and ultimate vulnerability of the “devil,” with whom they were well acquainted.

Escape from slavery is the inspiration for the text of the first of *David Noon’s Three Sacred Canticles*, about which Noon writes:

For the last three decades, I have been a communicant at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. There I have, over the years, served as an acolyte, crucifer, vestryman, and composer-in-residence. In 1992, I decided to write three *a cappella* choruses in Latin based on canticles found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. I chose Canticle 8 (*The Song of Moses*), Canticle 9 (*The First Song of Isaiah*), and Canticle 10 (*The Second Song of Isaiah*).

Since my student days in the 1960s, I have been interested in music and life in the Middle Ages, especially the 14th century. That era of abiding faith and longing for a more perfect world, internal and external, has informed much of my music over the years. The simplicity, determination, and intensity of Medieval life and thought has marked me. The world of cloistered monks, the soft light of candles, the sweet smell of incense, and the melodies of Gregorian Chant gently reverberate in my *Three Sacred Canticles*. Each of the canticles ends with the same short setting of the *Gloria Patri*, both to musically unify the three pieces and to indicate the pervasive, underlying universality and permanence of the truth expressed by those words, a testament of abiding faith.

In **Canticle 8**, the Psalmist sings praises for God’s deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian captivity. These motets adopt several compositional features from the Middle Ages—for example, the use of only three voice parts (bass, tenor, and alto) when for centuries now the four-sectioned chorus has been taken for granted as the ideal. The voice parts in this Canticle are extremely horizontal in conception, mostly coinciding as layered, independent melodies rather than supplying tones to support another’s melody. Several phrases conclude in cadential structures that are lifted note-for-note from Medieval practice. The frequent open octaves and fifths (lacking the third) also common in Medieval music create a fortuitous correspondence between these pieces and our early-American hymnody.

Continuing with Psalm settings, we have the honor of presenting the premiere of a piece composed for us by Cerddorion member *Eddie Rubeix*. Of his **Psalm 23**, he says:

I wrote the piece last summer, ten years after moving to New York, perhaps as a sort of acknowledgment that I do belong here. I’ve come to associate Psalm 23 with the city, though there certainly are more pastoral places. One reason is that living here has allowed me to discover how wonderful a park can be: No one here takes for granted the simple pleasure of lying on the grass, by the water. But the psalm mentions darkness and enemies too, and the middle section is the prayer of someone in immediate need. The piece also expresses my hope that our city, and the country it belongs to, will continue to be a welcoming place.

What he doesn’t say is that this piece—in its placidity, grace, and sheer loveliness—sounds just like Eddie as we know him.

Gerald Near's **Three Eucharistic Motets** are harmonizations of Gregorian chant melodies. In *Laetabitur justus in Domino*, organ figurations provide a shimmering harmonic environment into which the choir enters on the chant alone. In subsequent iterations of the text, the choir enriches the harmony until the material for both singers and organist trails off like a kind of heavenly vapor. *Ave verum corpus* is for choir alone and features a well-known plainchant that weaves its way among all voice parts. In *O sacrum convivium*, the organ takes a turn at weaving melodies while the chorus sustains against it.

David Noon's **Canticle 9**, a song of praise, opens with hushed 16th-note cantillations that sound like inner tremblings of happiness. These figures recur throughout the piece, introducing little ripples in what is otherwise the most vertically conceived motet of the three.

With **Ubi caritas**, we revisit the catalogue of *Elliot Z. Levine*, who has composed for, sung with, shlepped and hung stage lamps for, and aided in the fundraising efforts of our chorus. Of his piece, Elliot comments:

I wrote *Ubi Caritas* in 1993 as a gift piece for the singing family of Cathy Aks and Stan and Miriam Kushel. I picked this wonderful text for its directness and almost universal appeal. Of course it's humbling walking in the shadow of the great Duruflé setting, but if such issues scared me off, I'd never write anything. The original version was for SAB, and then I revoiced it for Cascabel, a wonderful trio of singers, whose members were Marion Beckenstein, Katie Geisinger and Alexandra Montano.

As a close colleague and friend of Elliot, I recognize a surpassing generosity as one of the strongest and most consistent expressions of his personality. The piece speaks clearly for him—and for itself—and makes a fitting prelude for our next selection.

Tu pauperum refugium—"Thou art the refuge of the poor"—by *Jonathan David* received its premiere last year by the composer/conductor collective C4. David says:

The active acknowledgment of something or someone other than ourselves is at the heart of love, as it is of prayer. In the first third of my piece, the word *Tu* is repeated in all voices over several pages ("You, you, you"), achieving to some extent the substance of a mantra (or, looked at from a different angle, the Swingle Singers via Tallis, perhaps). The men open a central section on a tune based on the piece's opening re-do-mi motif, before accompanying a solo soprano, whose notes are derived from a longer compound melody also from the opening section. The texture of the opening soon returns with the men's and women's roles reversed. Ultimately, following this rather strange text, the warm expressiveness that started the piece has become more troubled and introspective by the end, where we end on the word *morte* (death).

David Noon's **Canticle 10** begins as if it were a Gregorian chant, as the Psalmist speaks about God. At the point when God is quoted within the Psalm, harmony enters the piece: The basses sing prolonged notes, while the tenors and altos weave agile countermelodies in a texture recalling the sustained-note organum of Leonin and Perotin (ca. 1200). Toward the end of the Psalm, the basses join the activity of the upper lines, enriching the harmony and representing, according to the composer, the Psalmist's attainment of a state of union with the spirit of God.

NYC Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He lets me lie down in green pastures
He leads me to water in places of repose
He guides me in right paths as befits His name.
Though I walk through a valley of deepest darkness,
I fear no harm, for You are with me;
Your rod and staff they comfort me.
You spread a table for me in full view of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Only goodness and steadfast love shall follow me
All the days of my life,
And I shall live in the house of the Lord for many long years

Three Eucharistic Motets

Laetabitur justus in Domino
Et sperabit in eo.
Alleluja

Ave verum corpus
Natum de Maria Virgine.
Vere passum immolatum in cruce pro homine
Cujus latus perforatum unda fluxit aqua et sanguine
Esto nobis praegustatum mortis in examine.
O Jesu dulcis, O Jesu pie, O Jesu filii Mariae.

O sacrum convivium
In quo Christus sumitur,
Recolitur memoria passionis eius,
Mens impletur gratia,
Et futurae gloriae,
Nobis pignus datur. Alleluja.

Ecce Deus

Ecce Deus salvator meus.
Fiducia liter agam et non timebo
Quia fortitudo mea et laus mea Dominus Deus
Et factus est mihi in salutem.
Haurietis aquas in gaudio de fontibus salvatoris

Et dicitis in illa die:
Confitemini Domino et invocate nomen eius.
Notas facite in populis adinventiones eius.
Mementote quoniam excelsum est nomen eius.
Cantate Domino quoniam magnifice fecit
adnunciate hoc in universa terra.
Exulta et lauda habitatio Sion
quia magnus in medio tui Sanctus Israel.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper
Et in saecula saeculorum, Amen

*The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord
And hope in Him
Alleluja*

*Hail, true body
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Truly suffered, sacrificed on the cross for humankind,
Whose pierced side flowed with water and blood,
Be for us a foretaste in the trial of death.
O sweet Jesus, O dutiful Jesus, O Jesus, son of Mary.*

*O sacred banquet
In which Christ is received,
The memory of his passion is renewed,
Our souls are filled with grace,
And for a future in glory
A pledge is given to us. Alleluja.*

*Surely it is God who saves me.
I will trust in him and not be afraid,
For the Lord God is my stronghold and my sure defense,
And he will be my savior.
You shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of
salvation.*

*And on that day, you shall say:
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.
Make his deeds known among the peoples.
See that they remember that his name is exalted.
Sing praise to the Lord, for he has done marvelous things,
And make this known in all the world.
Cry aloud in praise, inhabitants of Zion,
For the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of
Israel.*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end, Amen.*

Little Lamb

Little lamb, little lamb, little innocent lamb (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

Hypocrite! Tell you what he do (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

He'll talk about me, and he'll talk about you (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

Little lamb, little lamb, little innocent lamb (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

Devil, he's got a slippery shoe (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

If you don't mind, he gonna slip it on you (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

'Cause there ain't no dying over there, in that heavenly land, there'll be joy!

Just take one brick from Satan's wall, (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

Satan's wall gonna tumble an' fall (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

Little lamb, little lamb, little innocent lamb (I'm a-gonna serve God till I die)

'Cause there ain't no dying over there, in that heavenly land, there'll be joy!

Cantemus Domino

Cantemus Domino gloriose enim magnificatus est. *Let us sing to the Lord, for he is lofty and uplifted.*

Equum et ascensorum deiecit in mare. *The horse and its rider has he hurled into the sea.*

Fortitudo mea et laus mea Dominus *The Lord is my strength and my refuge*

et factus est mihi in salutem. *and he has become my savior.*

Iste Deus meus et glorificabo eum *This is my God and I shall glorify him,*

Deus patris et exaltabo eum. *the god of my people, and exalt him.*

Dominus quasi vir pugnator *The Lord is a mighty warrior;*

omnipotens nomen eius. *all-powerful is his name.*

Currus Pharaonis et exercitum eius proiecit in mare. *Pharaoh's chariots and his army has he cast into the sea.*

Electi principes eius submersi sunt in mare Rubro. *The first of his princes have been drowned in the Red Sea.*

Abyssi operuerunt eos *The fathomless deep has overwhelmed them;*

descenderunt in profundum quasi lapis. *they have sunk to the depths like stone.*

Dextera tua Domine magnifice in fortitudine. *Your right hand, O Lord, is glorious in might.*

Dextera tua Domine percussit inimicum. *Your hand, O Lord, has overthrown the enemy.*

Quis similes tui in fortibus Domine? *Who can be compared with you in strength, O Lord?*

Quis similis tui magnificus in sanctitate *Who is like you, glorious in holiness,*

terribilis atque laudabilis et faciens mirabilia? *awesome in renown and worker of wonders?*

Extendisti manum tuam *You stretched forth your hand,*

et devoravit eos terra. *and the earth swallowed them up.*

Dux fuisti in misericordia populo quem redemisti *In mercy you led the people you redeemed*

et portasti eum in fortitudine tua *and brought them in safety*

ad habitaculum sanctum tuam. *to your holy dwelling.*

Introduces eos *You will bring them in*

et plantabis in monte hereditatis tuae *and plant them on the mount of your possession,*

firmissimo habitaculo quod operatu es Domine *the resting place you have made for yourself, O Lord,*

sanctuarium Domine quod firmaverunt manus tuae. *the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hand has established.*

Dominus regnabit in aeternum et ultra. *The Lord shall reign forever and ever.*

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto *Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy*

sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper *Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,*

et in saecula saeculorum, Amen. *world without end, Amen.*

After Spirituals, gospel music represents the next great contribution of Black America to national styles of ensemble singing. While the Spirituals grew up among rural laborers in the South, gospel was developed in the 1920s among workers who had traveled in the Great Migration to the urban industrial centers of the North. Although they had left slavery and Jim Crow behind, these Americans still encountered grinding labor and the struggles of second-class citizenship. Deriving support from their church communities, they developed songs calling upon and praising Divine assistance for the endurance of hardship. The earliest gospel songs were for a *cappella* quartet, but textures soon expanded, harmonies became more complex, and the instrumentation of contemporary popular music was added for accompaniment. *Thomas Dorsey*, the “father of gospel,” wrote **Precious Lord** in response to an extremely personal grief after his baby son died in the struggle to be born, taking his mother with him. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his trusted companions sang this song together on the night before his assassination, and Mahalia Jackson sang it at his funeral, as he had requested.

To redeem our sorrow after “Precious Lord,” we launch into a joyful early-American favorite, *William Billings’s* shape-note hymn, **Africa**. Also called “fa-sol-la,” the shape-note method was printed using note heads of four different shapes; the given shape of a note identified it in relation to those around it as either *la*, *sol*, *fa*, or *mi*. This system was designed to help the singers understand where the half-steps (always represented as the distance between *mi* and *fa*) were. It is a common practice in the singing of shape-note music to learn a hymn by singing it first on its syllables rather than on its text. We adopt this practice into the middle of our performance, while opening and closing with the song’s rousing text. Music in this style is thoroughly diatonic (using only the seven different pitches of a basic scale), fleetingly dissonant at times, and heavy on chords of octaves and fifths.

The Oxen was composed by *Chester L. Alwes*, my graduate-school conducting mentor, choral-literature professor, and academic and dissertation advisor. He wrote the piece earlier this year for the 25th anniversary of a local high school’s December madrigal-dinner program. When Cerddorion began to study “The Oxen,” we, too, were in the season to which its poem refers. Amidst all of the statements of faith on tonight’s program, this text stands alone as a statement of skepticism—a signal of a willingness to believe, if only that were possible. Thomas Hardy wrote the poem during World War I when half the youth of Europe were kneeling not at mangers or in churches but in trenches. Alwes’s harmonies seem to emphasize the innocence now lost rather than the tragedy of that loss. He says:

For only the second time in my history as a composer, the process of composition proceeded at an extremely fast pace, the initial draft of the work being completed in two days. I was most gratified that the students at Mahomet Seymour High School not only liked the piece as much as I did but also performed it with such sensitivity. I related to them my own experience as a middle-school singer of having a “real composer” (Nelson Keyes, Ford Foundation Composer in Residence in Louisville) write music for our choir, music that others regarded as “contemporary” but that we simply thought of as our own. I hope that, in some way, these current students will “own” this piece much as I did those compositions written for my choir so many years ago. As for the music itself, I would say that it is basically a text-driven composition, utilizing traditional types of melody, rhythm, and harmony to illuminate the emotional content of the words.

Texts

Lawrence Siegel's My Life Is Hid in Him features the surprising choice to set George Herbert's esoteric poetry in a musical language strongly inspired by vernacular styles. The melodic theme keeps to the mixolydian mode—ubiquitous in Appalachian tunes and their English-ballad forbears—and is harmonized diatonically. Most of the polyphonic imitation is simply in strict canon (round) at the unison/octave. And several structurally important chords are (you guessed it) open octaves and fifths. A recurring tenor melody employs a twangy, flatted third. I would sum up the piece with the subtitle: “A Mystic Poet Visits the Barn Dance.”

We follow “My Life Is Hid” with another Herbert setting, **A Wreath**, by *William Trafka*. Written to honor the 60th birthday of Richard L. Bayles, a parish leader and vestry warden at St. Bartholomew's Church, the work was commissioned by his wife, Sarah K. Bayles. The text is taken from “The Temple” (1663), George Herbert's great poetic achievement. The delicate *lauda, laude* (“praise with praise”) figures form a seamless “garland” enveloping the main theme, first sung by the basses. The ever-rising harmonic third relationships create a sense of elevation and striving for things eternal. Trafka says:

The intent here is to underscore the inner joy received through devoted service.

There is a line in the poem that exemplifies the experience I have had as a singer in this piece: “For life is straight and ever tends to Thee.” By this, I mean that although the texture and the harmonic language of the piece are very rich, the singer never feels lost; rather, the integrity of the compositional structure moves the singer (and, we hope, the listener) as if inevitably through an emotional and physical journey whose end feels predestined and familiar. This is to say that it brings us “to the place just right.”

And that is where we close, as we began: with the inspiration of Shaker song, arranged by another friend and colleague. **Simple Gifts**, by *Yumiko Matsuoka*, radiates the sense of joy with which I know her to perform whenever she sings with others. This arrangement, which she made for her *a cappella* quintet Vox One, is recorded on their fifth album, *Pure Imagination*. Matsuoka writes:

This Shaker song is transformed into an ode to the open skies of Africa. Combining a Swahili phrase for “dance and sing” and vowels not commonly used in choral singing, a bed of background lines are laid to carry the melody in 9/8. Its uplifting message comes through strongly as joyous rhythm and harmony are interwoven in all parts.

This is the third work by Matsuoka that Cerddorion has performed, but it will not be the last. In March our sopranos and altos will have the honor of recording her “Skye Boat Song” for a CD of her compositions and arrangements, in exchange for a new piece that she will make for Cerddorion.

—Kristina Boerger

Cerddorion would like to express our thanks to Nedra Olds Neal for her coaching on the Bartholomew and Dorsey pieces.

Five Shaker Melodies

More love, more love, the heavens are blessing,
The angels are calling, O Zion, more love!
If ye love not each other in daily communion,
How can ye love God, whom ye have not seen?
If ye love one another, then God dwelleth in you,
And ye are made strong to live by the word.
More love, more love, the heavens are blessing,
The angels are calling, O Zion, more love!

Now in love and union let us move along together,
In this sweet communion to love and bless each other.

Shout, shout, shout and sing! Shout to make the heavens ring!
Shout and praise the God above while angels clothe us with his love.

Let music sound and echo 'round, tune up, ye pleasant harpers!
Mount Zion's songs truly belong to mother's sons and daughters.
Her lovely hand doth lead the band while forward we're advancing.
Along the way the virgins play with music and with dancing.

Here's love by the handful. Here's love by the ball.
Here's love for the elders and love for you all.
This love it flows freely from this little store
To all Mother's children the wilderness o'er.

Honor to the Hills

Through all this world below, God we see all around.
Search hills and valleys through: there He's found.
In growing fields of corn, the lily and the thorn,
The pleasant and forlorn, all declare, “God is there.”
In meadows dressed in green, there He's seen.

Then let my station be here in life where I see
The sacred Trinity. All agree:
In all the works He's made, the forest and the glade,
Nor let me be afraid, though I dwell in the hill
Where nature's works declare, “God is there.”

—Elder Hibard

Hamshire: For Good Friday

He dies! The heav'nly lover dies! The tidings strike a doleful sound on my poor heartstrings:
Deep he lies in the cold caverns of the ground!

Come, saints, and drop a tear or two for him who groan'd beneath your load;
He shed a thousand drops for you, a thousand drops of richer blood!

Here's love and grief beyond degree: the God of glory dies for men!

But, lo, what sudden joys I see! Jesus, the dead, revives again.

—Isaac Watts

The Composers

Lawrence Siegel is a composer, theater artist, performer, and scholar. As Founding Artistic Director of Tricinium, Limited, and The Verbatim Project, he has facilitated participatory and interdisciplinary projects in the creation of original music-theater works in a variety of educational and community contexts. Siegel spent the 1980s earning the doctorate in Music Theory and Composition from Brandeis, frequenting Boston's New Music scene, and enjoying one Tanglewood and three MacDowell Colony composers' fellowships. Since relocating to southwestern New Hampshire, he has received three New Works Grants and an Artist Fellowship in Composition from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts, two Meet the Composer Awards and a New Forms Award from the New England Foundation for the Arts, and a McKnight Fellowship in composition. In 1990, he won a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a collaboration with Valeria Vasilevsky on *Village Store Verbatim*; this "folk opera" has gone into production four times and enjoyed national broadcast on public television. Siegel recently completed the score for a musical production of *Beowulf* at Andy's Summer Playhouse in Wilton, New Hampshire. He performs around the country with his traditional band Guys Can Talk and is Resident Composer with the Eugene O'Neill Puppetry Conference in Waterford, Connecticut.

William Trafka is Director of Music and Organist at Saint Bartholomew's Church. It was while on sabbatical in 1994 that he composed the piece represented here tonight ("A Wreath"), which has also been performed at the Library of Congress with the Washington Bach Consort and at the National Cathedral with the National Cathedral Choral Society and members of Anonymous Four.

Yumiko Matsuoka, originally from Tokyo, Japan, is an associate professor at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where she teaches ear training. She is founder of the Boston-based *a cappella* quintet Vox One, whose albums *Vox One* (1993), *Out There* (1995), *Chameleon* (1997), and *Pure Imagination* (2005) have won multiple awards from the Contemporary A Cappella Society of America (CASA). Her arrangements and compositions have garnered wide acclaim, and various ensembles have commissioned her, including m-pact, the 20th Century Consort, and Women Singing. In 2002, Yumiko was asked by the city of Matsuyama, Japan, to compose a song to commemorate the centennial of the death of Japan's premier poet, Masaoka Shiki. She has also composed the alma mater for a junior high school in Takayama, Japan, and her music can be heard in TV commercials in her native country. Yumiko is an active clinician, adjudicator, and choral director, working locally, nationally, and worldwide.

Jeremiah Ingalls (1764–1838) was born in Andover, Massachusetts, and spent most of his adult life in various cities in Vermont, working as a barrel-maker, a tavern-keeper, a singing master, a choir director, and a deacon in a Congregational church. In addition to performing as a singer, he played the bass viol.

Daniel Read (1757–1836) was a general-store keeper and a comb manufacturer, as well as the publisher of numerous tune books. In 1786, he founded this country's first musical periodical, *The American Musical Magazine*.

David Noon was born of Pennsylvania Dutch, Welsh, and American Indian heritage in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on July 23, 1946. As a youth, he studied woodwinds and piano, performing frequently in choirs, bands, orchestras, and chamber groups. His formal composition studies began at Pomona College and have been guided by Karl Kohn, Darius Milhaud, Charles Jones, Yehudi Wyner, Mario Davidovsky, and Włodzimierz Kotonski. With a master's in musicology from New York University, where he studied Medieval music with Gustave Reese, he earned Yale's M.M.A. and D.M.A. in composition. In 1972–1973, he was a Fulbright Fellow in composition at the Music Conservatory in Warsaw, Poland, subsequently teaching music theory and composition and supervising the advanced ear-training program at the Northwestern University School of Music. He has held the positions of composer-in-residence at the Wurlitzer Foundation in Taos, New Mexico, and Composer Artist-in-Residence at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine. His 214 chamber, orchestral, and choral works include 10 string quartets, two piano concertos, the opera *R.S.V.P.*, and many works featuring percussion. He has also written two books of poetry—*Postcards from Rethymno* and *Bitter Rain*—and three novels—*The Tin Box*, *Googie's*, and *My Name Was Saul*. Since 1981, he has been on the faculty of Manhattan School of Music, where he was Chair of the Music History Department (1981–2007), Chair of the Composition Department (1989–1998) and Dean of Academics (1998–2006). He has just this season returned from a year's visiting professorship in musicology and composition at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, China.

Eddie Rubeiz grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, where he studied piano and music theory and sang in a series of choirs. Aside from composing and singing in Cerddorion, he is a member of C4, a collective of choral conductors and composers, and has also started a one-person choir, the *Set of All Eddies*, with the help of his computer. By day, he helps write software at the Center for New Media Teaching and Learning at Columbia University.

Gerald Near, one of this country's foremost composers of church music, began his theory and composition studies with Leslie Bassett, his organ studies with Robert Glasgow, and his conducting studies with Elizabeth Green. As a University of Minnesota graduate student, he studied composition with Dominick Argento and conducting with Thomas Lancaster. In 1982, Near was one of the first recipients of a McKnight Foundation Fellowship. That year also saw the performance of two commissioned works for the American Guild of Organists (AGO) National Convention in Washington, DC. The following year he moved to Dallas, where he was appointed organist/choirmaster—and subsequently, Canon Precentor—of St. Matthew's Cathedral. His choral work *Resurrexi*, based on Gregorian chant motifs, was commissioned in 1989 and subsequently premiered and recorded by Gloria Dei Cantores. His organ concerto was premiered by Mary Preston at the 1998 AGO Convention in Denver. He is Director of Aureole Editions and presently resides in New Mexico.

Elliot Z. Levine has been the baritone for the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble since its inception in 1969. He has appeared as a soloist with such groups as Musica Sacra, the Rome Opera, La Fenice, the Mannes Camerata, Music at Ascension, the Ensemble for Early Music, the Folger Consort, and the Kalamazoo Bach Festival. He received his M.M. from the Manhattan School of Music and his B.A. from Queens College, having also studied music pedagogy at the Orff School in Salzburg, voice with Alfred Deller in France, composition with Robert Starer at Brooklyn College, and conducting with Robert Hickok. He has been awarded five Meet-the-Composer Grants. For over 25 years, he has been a conductor and coach at Western Wind Workshops at such institutions as Dartmouth and Smith Colleges, the University of Massachusetts, and conferences of the American Choral Directors Association. He has been composer-in-residence at the Church of St. Thomas More in NYC and in the schools of Delmar, NY. He is the cantorial soloist at Temple Emanuel in Great Neck. His latest large work, recently commissioned by The Glass Menagerie (whose director Susan Glass sings in Cerddorion's alto section) and premiered in 2007, is *Panim al Panim—the Death of Moses*. Other recent large works are *Requiem for the Living* for the Central City Chorus of NYC and *Un Prodigio les Canto* for Cerddorion. Levine is published by Shadow Press, Harold Flammer Inc., Transcontinental, E. Henry David, Plymouth, Colla Voce, and Willis Music Co. He is presently working on a piece for the ICU Glee Club in Tokyo.

Composer, conductor, and tenor **Jonathan David** is active in the worlds of music-theater, choral music, and art song. He is Composer-in-Residence for The Greenwich Village Singers and is a core member of the pioneering choral composer/conductor collective, C4. David received commissions in 2007 from the New York Treble Singers and the Thanksgiving Foundation of Dallas. In December, his music was performed by the Choral Society of the Hamptons, The Greenwich Village Singers, and the Westchester Oratorio Society, with upcoming performances by the Arizona State University Concert Chorale and the Grosse Pointe Children's Chorus. David's choral music has also been performed by the Princeton Singers, Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble, the Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus, the Americas Vocal Ensemble, baritone Daniel Neer, and the Orfeo Duo, among others. Music-theater works include *Bronx Express* (New York Fringe Festival, 2005), *Wild Wind* (NY Fringe, 1999), and *Islands of Light* (in progress). He continues work on a song cycle for sopranoist Phillip Cheah on texts by poet David Brendan Hopes. David studied with John Bavicchi and Don McDonnell at the Berklee College of Music and is published by Oxford University Press.

Thomas Dorsey (1899–1993) was born in Villa Rica, Georgia, to a father who was a minister and a mother who was a pianist. His formal music study began after the family had relocated to Chicago, where he eventually worked as an agent for Paramount Records and organized a band fronted by Ma Rainey. Becoming an accomplished jazz and blues artist, he wrote over 400 songs, including the raunchy blockbuster hit, "Tight Like That." Then personal tragedy turned his focus to religious songs, whose style he was the first to identify as "gospel." He went on to open Dorsey House of Music, the first black gospel publishing company. He also wrote for and performed extensively with Mahalia Jackson, founded his own gospel choir, and served as Founding President of the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses. He died in Chicago, where he is interred at Oak Woods Cemetery.

William Billings (1746–1800) was a tanner by trade (and therefore infamously smelly), a musical autodidact, and a friend of Samuel Adams and Paul Revere. His most singular contribution to life in Revolutionary New England was his mission to improve the musicianship of the average churchgoer. In addition to publishing several collections of original hymnody, he traveled the colonies teaching at the local "singing schools," where the public turned out to learn sightreading and harmonizing (as well as to socialize in one of the few places young people might go without a chaperone). Billings's hallmark style is recognized in a profusion of open fifths and octaves and in the placement of the melody in the tenor voice, two characteristics of the shape-note tradition to which he contributed several hymns. He explicitly declared his independence from the classical compositional practice that preceded him, as well as refusing any expectation that later composers should copy him.

Chester L. Alwes, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, earned his Bachelor's degree in music at Hanover College, his Master's in Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary, and his Doctorate in Choral Conducting and Literature at the University of Illinois. Teaching posts include the University of Rochester/Eastman School of Music, the University of Louisville, and the College of Wooster. Since 1982, he has been on the faculty of the University of Illinois School of Music, where he teaches graduate courses in choral literature, conducts the Concert Choir, the Oratorio Society, and Summer Chorus, and serves as academic and dissertation advisor to graduate students in choral music. His honors include the Julius Herford Dissertation Prize of the American Choral Directors Association, the Hanover College Distinguished Alumni Award, and the University of Illinois College Mentoring Award. As a scholar, Alwes has written numerous articles for *Choral Journal* on historical choral repertory and on performance practice. He currently awaits the publication by Oxford University Press of his textbook, *A History of Western Choral Music*. Alwes has composed over 100 choral compositions and several organ works and is published by Mark Foster Music, Hope Music, Oxford University Press, Augsburg-Fortress Press, and Roger Dean Music Co.