

Fall 2006 Concert

. Please join us for our fall concert, which will feature a tour of Renaissance Europe, the sacred and the profane.

Sunday, November 12, 4:00 pm Brooklyn (location TBD)
Saturday, November 18, 8:00 pm Manhattan, St. Luke in the Fields

Please visit our website www.cerddorion.net for additional information.

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CERDDORION

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Kristina Boerger
Artistic Director

PRESENTS

L'Invitation au Voyage



Sunday, May 7, 2006 - 4:00 p.m.
The Oratory Church of St. Boniface
190 Duffield Street
Brooklyn, New York

Saturday, May 13, 2006 - 8:00 p.m.
Church of St. Luke in the Fields
487 Hudson Street
Manhattan, New York

CERDDORION

SOPRANOS	ALTOS	TENORS	BASSES
Franny Geller	Judith Cobb	Tim Hutfilz	Phillip Cheah
Bonny Hart	Susan Glass	A. Lamar Kauffman	Soyoung Choi
Amy Litt	Linnea Johnson	Michael Klitsch	Peter Cobb
Wendy Reitmeier	Cathy Markoff	Steve Parkey	Elliot Z. Levine
Michellanne Rothrock	Myrna Nachman	Eddie Rubeiz	Dale Rejtmar
Ellen Schorr	Kristina Vaskys	Chris Ryan	Tom Samiljan
Rebecca Stanton	Gretta Wren	Marty Silverberg	
		Mark Stedman	

CERDDORION IS A MIXED chamber choir dedicated to outstanding performances of the best choral music. Now in its eleventh season, it has become one of the most admired ensembles in the thriving New York choral music scene. As befits its name (*cerddorion* is Welsh for “musicians”), the ensemble aspires to musicianship in its fullest sense, using the human voice to explore and fulfill the expressive potential of the art. Audiences have come to know Cerddorion for its interpretive depth as well as its technical excellence, in repertoire that spans the chamber choral literature, from Medieval polyphony to new compositions. Past programs have focused on Josquin; Monteverdi; early American hymns and spirituals; double-choir works by Bach and Schütz; Brahms, Schubert, and Rheinberger; Delius, Elgar, and other post-Romantics; Hindemith and his contemporaries; and living composers including Robert Dennis, Lisa Bielawa, Elliot Z. Levine, David Lang, Tom Shake, and Giles Swayne.

Since its founding in 1995 by Susanne Peck, Cerddorion has attracted significant recognition and numerous invitations to collaborate with other prestigious artists. In 1998 and 1999, the group served as the resident teaching ensemble for the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Kent, Connecticut. Cerddorion performed Bach’s *Cantata 140* and Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* with the acclaimed early music ensemble Concert Royal. In 2001, Cerddorion lent its “ethereal sounds” (*Dance Insider*, 10/10/01) to *The War Council*, part of a site-inspired work produced by Dancing in the Streets in Brooklyn, in collaboration with the Christopher Caines Dance Company, the first of several projects with the choreographer.

2005–2006

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Program

Please reserve your applause until the end of each set.*****

THREE PRAYERS

Ned Rorem

Creator Spirit, Who Dost Lightly Hover
Father, Guide and Lead Me
Creator Spirit, Please...

Prayer of St. Francis

Phillip Cheab - Conductor

Patrick Castillo

Adieu
up into the silence
Comment
The Lake Isle of Innisfree

Julie Dolphin

SHAKESPEARE SONGS

Matthew Harris

BOOK I

1. Hark, Hark! the Lark
2. Full Fathom Five
3. Who is Silvia?

from *Cymbeline*
from *The Tempest*
from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*

BOOK V

1. I Shall No More to Sea
2. Come, Thou Monarch of the Vine
3. O Heart
4. When That I Was and a Little Tiny Boy
*Franny Geller, Susan Glass, Mark Stedman,
and Phillip Cheab -- solo quartet*
Tim Hutfilz and Cathy Markoff -- doo-wop soloists

MADRIGALS OF NOSTRADAMUS

Martha Sullivan

Lettres Trouvées de la Royne
Les Deux Licornes
Les Oz des Piedz
La Grande Royne

MORNING GROUP 1

Robert Dennis

A Description of the Morning
Ya Cantan los Gallos
*Rebecca Stanton, Myrna Nachman,
and Eddie Rubeiz - soloists*
Morning

L'Invitation au Voyage

John Corigliano

*Bonny Hart, Ellen Schorr, Susan Glass,
Kristina Vaksys, Mark Steadman, Lamar Kaufman,
Tim Hutfilz, Eddie Rubeiz, and Phillip Cheab - soloists*

Kristina Boerger

KRISTINA BOERGER received her formative musical training from pianist Annie Sherter and holds a doctorate in choral conducting and literature from the University of Illinois. Having served on the faculties of Lake Forest College and the Millikin University School of Music, she lectures in music history at Barnard College and teaches choral conducting at the Manhattan School of Music. In recent projects as a guest conductor, she has appeared at the invitation of the University of Illinois Chamber Singers, the Kalamazoo Bach Festival, the Syracuse Schola Cantorum, the Christopher Caines Dance Company, and New York's AMUSE.

As Founding Director (1990-1999) of AMASONG: Champaign-Urbana's Premiere Lesbian/Feminist Chorus, Dr. Boerger directed and produced two award-winning recordings, appeared in several national venues, and toured the Czech Republic. Her work with this ensemble is the subject of the documentary film *The AMASONG Chorus: Singing Out*, which has toured festivals worldwide and enjoys repeated broadcast on PBS.

As a singer in a variety of styles, Dr. Boerger has appeared on stage with the Vox Vocal Ensemble, Alarm Will Sound, The King's Noyse, and Urban Bush Women, also recording for Bobby McFerrin, Pan Morigan, Rocky Maffit, and Early Music New York. She tours and records regularly with the early music ensemble Pomerium and with the Western Wind *a cappella* sextet.

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

L'INVITATION AU VOYAGE

My child, my sister, dream
How sweet all things would seem
Were we in that kind land to live together
And there love slow and long,
There love and die among
Those scenes that image you, that sumptuous weather.

Drowned suns, that glimmer there
Through cloud-disheveled air
Move me with such a mystery as appears
Within those other skies
Of your treacherous eyes
When I behold them shining through their tears.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure
Richness, quietness, and pleasure.

Furniture that wears the lustre of the years,
Softly would glow within our glowing chamber
Flowers of rarest bloom proffering their perfume
Mixed with the vague fragrances of amber;

Gold ceilings would there be,
Mirrors deep as the sea,
The walls all in Eastern splendor hung,
Nothing but should address
The soul's loneliness,
Speaking her sweet and secret native tongue.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure
Richness, quietness, and pleasure.

See, sheltered from the swells
There in the still canals
Those drowsy ships that dream of sailing forth;
It is to satisfy
Your least desire, they ply
Hither through all the waters of the earth.

The sun at close of day,
Clothes the fields of hay,
Then the canals, at last the town entire
In hyacinth and gold
Slowly the land is rolled
Sleepward under a sea of gentle fire.

There, there is nothing else but grace and measure
Richness, quietness, and pleasure.

Program Notes

Tonight we invite you on a journey of music by living New York composers. Some, whom we have never met, are recognized internationally by the concertgoing public; others are our friends and community members, working hard at rising careers or quietly passing their music among colleagues to see what might happen. The youngest composer featured tonight may not be as old (he's not telling) as the oldest piece on our program, and the newest composition comes from a veteran. What unites these pieces across their contrasting texts and unique harmonic palettes is their composers' recognition of the expressive power of ensemble singing. In fact, Julie Dolphin was a member of Cerddorion in its early years. My own work as a singer has brought me onstage with Dolphin as well as with Patrick Castillo and Martha Sullivan. As a member of Western Wind, I have become a fan and a friend of Matthew Harris and Robert Dennis and have loved introducing their music to Cerddorion. If you have been attending our concerts for some time, you have heard us perform several pieces by Dennis: two cycles – *The Man in the Moon* and *The Golden Peacock* – and, most recently, a Psalm setting with obbligato violin. Because of our wonderful experiences with his music, we offered him our commission for 2005/2006, and tonight you will hear the premiere of the work he has made for us.

In the case of the titans – Ned Rorem and John Corigliano – I have selected biographical information and comments on their pieces to share with you. But the other composers, who are our friends and colleagues and neighbors, were invited to submit what they wanted you to read about their lives and their compositions.

For artists, it is both a blessing and a challenge to live here in New York City, perhaps the most vital cultural stew on the globe. We are here to engage ourselves with others' exploding creativity – to ride the subways jammed up against and taking part in this infinite parade of humanity's accents, colors, ideas, sufferings, and triumphs. Tonight, all of us are here to experience what seven artists, our neighbors in this stew, have needed to contribute to it. Bon voyage!

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Ned Rorem won the Pulitzer Prize in 1976 and is considered one of America's foremost composers of song. He was born in 1923 in Richmond, Indiana, and raised in Chicago. His Quaker family was actively committed to social justice, with his mother working for pacifist causes and his father co-founding Blue Cross. Rorem studied piano as a young person, going on to formal study at Northwestern, American University, Curtis, and Juilliard. He also worked privately with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood and with Virgil Thomson in New York. In 1948 he traveled to Morocco and then took up seven years' residence in Paris, where he garnered international recognition. It was in Paris that he began to write the series of diaries for which he is also acclaimed. Since returning to the United States in 1957, he has maintained dual residences in New York City and on Nantucket. Rorem has composed operas, symphonies, concertos, cantatas, chamber music, works for a cappella chorus, and over four hundred songs.

The *Three Prayers* that open our concert were composed as unaccompanied interludes for *Little Prayers*, a fifteen-movement work for chorus, soloists, and orchestra published in 1973. The texts are by poet and social critic Paul Goodman (1911-1972), a sexual revolutionary and anarchist best known as the cofounder of the Gestalt Institute and as author of the 1960 publication *Growing Up Absurd*. The first prayer addresses the Divine in the erotic language of the mystical poets but remarks on the Spirit's absence. Rorem makes of this poem an angry demand, denying it harmonic resolution. The second prayer begs for release from the straight-and-narrow path, surely the errant one. Here the vocal lines begin in lock-step with one another in a dissonant scale, eventually separating and finally settling, as if accidentally, into a luscious chord of repose. In the final prayer, the poet's plea is for blessings upon all of fellow humanity. Rorem communicates the poem's compassion in lush, diatonic chords; we hear in the end that Rorem, if not Goodman, is uncertain about how well we – for all our best efforts – will ultimately fare.

2. Ya Cantan los Gallos

Ya cantan los gallos,
Buen amor, y vete,
Cata que amaneçe,
-Que cantan los gallos,
yo, cómo me iría,
pues tengo en mis braços
la que yo más quería?
Antes moriría
Que de aquí me fuese,
Aunque amanaçiese.

--- *Inígo Lopez de Mendoza*

3. Morning

To find the Western path
Right through the Gates of Wrath
I urge my way.
Sweet Mercy leads me on
With soft repentant moan
I see the break of day

The war of sword and spears
Melted by dewy tears
Exhales on high
The Sun is freed from fears
And with soft grateful tears
Ascends the sky

--- *William Blake*

The roosters are already singing. My beloved, you must leave.
Try to wake up!
“Let the roosters sing. As for me, how can I leave,
When I have in my arms the one I desired most?
I would die before leaving this place,
Even were I awake.”

MORNING GROUP 1

1. A Description of the Morning

Now hardly here and there a hackney-coach
Appearing, showed the ruddy morn’s approach.
Now Betty from her master’s bed has flown,
And softly stole to discompose her own.
The slipshod prentice from his master’s door
Had pared the dirt, and sprinkled round the floor.
Now Moll had whirled her mop with dext’rous airs,
Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.
The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
The kennel-edge, where wheels had worn the place.
The small-coal man was heard with cadence deep,
Till drowned in shriller notes of chimney-sweep.
Duns at his lordship’s gate began to meet,
And Brickdust Moll had screamed through half the street.
The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees.
The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands,
And schoolboys lag with satchels in their hands.

--- *Jonathan Swift*

Patrick Castillo's musical output ranges from conventionally scored chamber and choral works to percussion trios and double bass duets. His music integrates the influence of such composers as Stravinsky and Messiaen with elements of medieval chant and American jazz. He has also composed and recorded a wide oeuvre of songs for voice and guitar, which have been performed in both concert hall and coffee house. Castillo is a co-founder of the Pharos Music Project (www.pharosmusicproject.org), a collective of composers and performers dedicated to the presentation of new vocal and chamber music. Highlights of the 2005-06 season include premiere performances of Castillo's chamber works by Anti-Social Music, the Society for New Music, and the Pharos Music Project, as well as the premiere of "A Piece of Coffee," commissioned by the Manhattan Choral Ensemble, and *Two Songs for Christmas Eve* by the Canticum Novum Singers, the first commission awarded in that ensemble's 33-year history. Castillo is based in New York City, where he frequently performs with a number of professional and amateur vocal ensembles.

During my final semester at Vassar College, I had taken to loitering in the college's beautiful chapel, which offered a profoundly satisfying quiet in the late afternoons. One Sunday afternoon, I happened on a non-denominational prayer/meditation service (ostensibly, though it more closely resembled in aesthetic—said with sincere affection—a salon run by hippies and beatniks). I began joining the group regularly, and at one service, rediscovered the text of the *Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi*, which had been a musical banality of my upbringing in the Catholic church (I trust some readers/listeners who share my upbringing will know well what I mean), but which now—divorced from the staid singsong setting in which I had originally learned it, and set anew only to a refreshing silence—assumed new resonance. To the music: another recent discovery had been the ravishing sounds of Bulgarian choral music. I've delinquently still not taken it upon myself to learn the meanings or contexts of any of the songs from *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares*, but on their own, those sonorities sounded to me like a plaintive yet serene yearning for peace. I've always happily heard *Prayer of St. Francis* as a snapshot of a serendipitous intersection of time and space in my life as a composer: had I missed either the meditating beatniks or *Le Mystère*, the work might not be. (It is also, incidentally, my first piece for choir without instruments.) Starting with the harmonies of *Le Mystère* in my ears, I composed *St. Francis* entirely on a whim; contrary to sound compositional process, I began with a musical idea in the first measure and simply proceeded across the staff lines until I came to the 'Amen.' A much flawed choral work sharing the first measure, final measure, and title of this piece, received its premiere in April 2001, by the Vassar College Madrigal Singers. After significant revision, the work was heard again two years ago by a small group of parishioners at St. Michael's Episcopal Church on the Upper West Side. I'll end by expressing my appreciation to Kristina Boerger and the fine musicians of Cerddorion—coupled with my longstanding admiration for the outstanding service they continue to provide to New York's musical community—for giving *Prayer of St. Francis*, in its mature incarnation, its concert premiere.

--- Patrick Castillo

Julie Dolphin has been performing and composing in various idioms, as well as teaching for many years. She holds a degree in Theory and Composition from Hunter College and an advanced degree in Ethnomusicology from Columbia University. Her unique style makes use of her knowledge of classical Western forms and world musics, as well as the rhythms of both jazz and Bartók. Ms. Dolphin's choral settings of texts by Federico García Lorca, Teresa de Avila, e.e. cummings, Dorothy Parker, Robert Frost, W.S. Merwin, Walt Whitman, and others have been performed in public venues all around the tri-state area. Her commissioned works have received world premieres at Carnegie Hall and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, and are featured on *From Sorrow Free* and *Hoping It Might Be So*, CDs recorded by Charis Chamber Voices, directed by Susanne Peck. Ms. Dolphin has been commissioned by the New York City Gay Men's Chorus, Angelica Women's Voices, The Church of Saint Teresa de Avila, The South Windsor (Connecticut) Chorus, and for private wedding ceremonies. Her composition, *Millennium*, for piano and clarinet, was used by the Westchester County Department of Parks in its Year 2000 celebration. She recently completed a commission commemorating the events of September 11; the work featured tenor Jon Humphrey. She is currently working on a commission by the Foundation for Universal Sacred Music for chorus, strings, oboe, and vibraphone, to be premiered at Merkin Concert Hall in October 2006.

In addition to composing, Ms. Dolphin, a soprano, performs with a wide variety of ensembles, including The Waverly Consort, Voices of Ascension, Musica Sacra, The New York Virtuoso Singers, Pro Arte Singers, Music in a Sacred Space, Vox Vocal Ensemble, Early Music New York, and The San Francisco Symphony under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. She has performed with the Mark Morris Dance Group at BAM and with the New York City Ballet at Lincoln Center. She recently returned from a European tour with Musica Viva, directed by Walter Klauss.

These songs heard tonight share an implied longing for circumstances other than those in which we find ourselves. With the exception of "Comment," this longing is expressed as an unattainable goal: holding on to love, not going forth into a future that doesn't include us, journeying to a tranquil solitude amidst the quotidian hustle-and-bustle. Through Dorothy Parker's gimlet eye, of course, we achieve in self-delusion what eludes us in reality.

--- Julie Dolphin

MADRIGALS OF NOSTRADAMUS

Lettres Trouvées de la Royne

Lettres trouvées de la royne les coffres,
Point de subscript sans aucun nom d'auteur
Par la police seront cachez les offres,
Qu'on ne sçaura qui sera l'amateur.

Les Deux Licornes

Lorsqu'on verra les deux licornes,
L'une baissant, l'autre abaissant,
Monde au milieu, plier aux bornes
S'enfuyra le nepeu riant.

Les Oz des Piedz

Les oz des piedz & des mains enserrés,
Par bruit maison longtemps inhabitée:
Seront par songes concauant deterrés,
Maison salubre & sans bruyt habitée.

La Grande Royne

La grande royne quand se verra vaincue,
Fera excés de masculin courage:
Sur cheval, fleuve passera toute nue,
Suite par fer: á foi sera outrage.

--- Michel de Nostradame

Letters Found in the Queen's Cabinet

Letters found in the queen's cabinet,
No signature, without any name of the author.
By the police the offers will be hidden,
So that nobody will know who the beneficiary is.

The Two Unicorns

As soon as one sees the two unicorns,
The one reverencing, the other also reverencing,
World in the middle, to bend to the boundaries,
The nephew will run away laughing.

The Bones of the Feet

The bones of the feet and the hands locked away,
Because of the noise, the house long uninhabited:
They will be unearthed through digging in dreams,
House healthy and inhabited without noise.

The Great Queen

The great Queen, when she sees herself conquered,
Will be excessive in masculine courage:
Upon a horse, totally nude, she will pass over the river,
Pursued by the sword: to her faith she will be an outrage.

SHAKESPEARE SONGS

BOOK I

1. Hark, Hark! The Lark (from *Cymbeline*)

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
O lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

2. Full Fathom Five (from *The Tempest*)

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that does fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong,
Hark! Now I hear them – Ding-dong, bell.

3. Who is Silvia (from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*)

Who is Silvia? what is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.
Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness,
And, being help'd, inhabits there.
Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

BOOK V

1. I Shall No More to Sea (from *The Tempest*)

I shall no more to sea, to sea,
Here shall I die ashore.

2. Come, Thou Monarch of the Vine (from *Antony and Cleopatra*)

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne!
In thy fats our cares be drown'd,
With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd:
Cup us, till the world go round,
Cup us, till the world go round!

3. O Heart (from *Troilus and Cressida*)

O heart, O heart, heavy heart,
Why sigh'st thou without breaking?
Because thou canst not ease thy smart
By friendship nor by speaking.

4. When That I Was and a Little Tiny Boy (from *Twelfth Night*)

When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut the gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas! to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

Matthew Harris has had orchestral works performed by The Minnesota, Houston, Florida, Jacksonville, Chattanooga, Spokane, and Modesto symphony orchestras; chamber works by the Lark Quartet, New York New Music Ensemble, and League-ISCAM; and vocal works by Cheryl Studer and Faith Esham. The New York City Opera presented scenes from Matthew Harris's opera *Tess* on their American Composers Showcase series. *Three Arias from Tess* was premiered by The Lake George Opera Festival and *Three Choruses from Tess* was premiered at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Harris's highly popular choral works have been commissioned or premiered by leading choruses such as the Dale Warland Singers, Phoenix Bach Choir, Los Angeles Chamber Singers, Western Wind, and Cantori New York, and sung by countless school and community choirs across America. His *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, a cantata for chorus and orchestra commissioned by Harmonium, is performed throughout the United States and the UK. G. Schirmer and C. F. Peters publish his music, and Chandos, Albany, Cedille, and CRI Records represent him on disc. The National Endowment for the Arts twice awarded him a Composer Fellowship; other fellowships have come from the New York Foundation for the Arts, Tanglewood, the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and Meet The Composer. Composition awards he has won include those from the Chautauqua Chamber Singers, George Enescu Foundation, Society for New Music, National Association of Composers, Musicians' Accord, Taubman Institute, ASCAP, and BMI. Mr. Harris studied at The Juilliard School, New England Conservatory, and Harvard University. He has taught at Fordham University and Kingsborough College (CUNY) and currently lives in New York City.

Shakespeare Songs are my musical settings of the lyrics to songs in Shakespeare's plays. The cycle comprises eighteen songs, divided into five books which were written between 1989 and 2001.

I wrote "Hark, Hark! the Lark" for my wife's a cappella group as something to sing at our wedding. Later, I added two more songs, still having in mind the small, informal group of friends whose repertoire comprised both pop and classical. When I got to "Who is Silvia?" I decided to write this duality into the music itself.

The bard's texts seemed to encourage such behavior. After all, the songs in Shakespeare's plays were in the popular style of the day, sung by actors, not classical singers. Shakespeare's lyrics are consequently a lot simpler than his poetry and are sprinkled with fun-to-sing nonsense words ("hey nonny, nonny"), just like pop lyrics.

Book V, which will be my last, opens with the melancholy prelude "I Shall No More to Sea," followed by the woozy "Come Thou Monarch of the Vine" (Whose final line, "Cup us, till the world go round," becomes carousel music). I recap the doo-wop style from Book I with "O Heart," and end with a folk-like setting of "When That I was and a Little Tiny Boy." The extended coda builds to sixteen parts as it repeats various bits of the poem.

--- Matthew Harris

Martha Sullivan's music has been praised as "vibrant" and "a singer's favorite." She has been commissioned by such leading voices in American choral music as the Dale Warland Singers and the Gregg Smith Singers (with whom she has been a resident composer for several years), as well as by the Esoterics (Seattle), Bella Voce (Reno), Chicago A Cappella, and Vocativ (Switzerland). Her work has been championed by Stephen Tharp, the international organ recitalist, and recorded by Chicago A Cappella as well as by mezzo-soprano Virginia Dupuy. Ms. Sullivan is a co-founder of the Pharos Music Project, a composers' collective for new chamber and vocal music. She has received several Meet the Composer grants for her work with Gregg Smith, and she won the Dale Warland Singers' Choral Ventures competition in its final year. Regarding tonight's performance, Martha writes that she "is delighted to hear Cerddorion sing her music, because she has long been a fan of the group and its commitment to varied vocal repertoire and gorgeous singing."

The *Madrigals of Nostradamus* pieces were written for the Gregg Smith Singers. They ended up being premiered on a program that was mostly madrigals, although I had not known what the other works on the concert were going to be when I decided to set these texts.

Nostradamus, or Michel de Nostredame (1503-1566), was a physician as well as an astrologer. He wrote many prophecies over the course of about ten years, published as *Les Propheties* in 1555, all in short quatrain form, rhymed and cryptic, to deflect criticism. After reading Nostradamus's texts, I chose a few that could refer only to events that have already occurred, mostly concerning the intrigues of European royalty of bygone centuries. There is also one about how to exorcise a haunted house. I hope that by limiting the texts to subjects remote from most people's daily lives, I have avoided offending the superstitious.

Because these pieces are madrigals, they are a combination of imitative gestures and homophonic sections. In the second song ("Les Deux Licornes"), the text speaks of unicorns bowing to one another, so a lot of the material mirrors itself in inverted form, usually simultaneously, and at the exact, not simply the diatonic, interval, just as unicorns supporting a coat of arms (Nostradamus's presumed reference) are mirror images of each other. The fourth piece in the set is not strictly imitative; it's more of an homage to Ravel's "Trois Beaux Oiseaux du Paradis" and was written to show off a particular soprano voice.

--- Martha Sullivan

Adieu

Yes, it's hard to think I stood there
Yes, it's hard to think I stood there waiting,
waiting, waiting for a hand to wave
so long, go on
The sign that parts our lives.

Then a blackbird sang, sang a last farewell
in a lifting, pierce-filled shrill
and I freed my soul from the noiseless roar
my heart had failed to quell.

Oh Blackbird, in your daring flight,
soar high, sing well, sing true.

When the moss has grown upon the stone
I'll return, my love, for you.

--- *Seamus de Brun*

up into the silence

up into the silence the green
silence with a white earth in it

you will(kiss me)go

out into the morning the young
morning with a warm world in it

(kiss me)you will go

on into the sunlight the fine
sunlight with a firm day in it

you will go(kiss me

down into your memory and
a memory and memory

i)kiss me,(will go)

--- *e.e. cummings*

Comment

Oh, life is a glorious cycle of song,
A medley of extemporanea;
And love is a thing that can never go wrong;
And I am Marie of Roumania.

--- *Dorothy Parker*

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattle made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

--- *William Butler Yeats*

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I may not seek so much to be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

--- *Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi*

Robert Dennis's commissions and performances include pieces composed for the Denver Project, the New York City Opera, Cantori New York, Cerddorion, the Jubal Trio, the American Brass Quintet, Calliope, the New York Women's Chorus, the Baird Trio, and the Lincoln Center Institute. His music for orchestra has been performed by the Cleveland, Chicago, and Louisville Symphony orchestras. Mr. Dennis has also composed extensively for theater and film, including scores for productions at (among others) the Arena Stage, the Guthrie Theater, and Circle in the Square. His most recent theater music was a score for a production of Brecht's *The Good Person of Setzuan*, performed by the Juilliard Drama Division. Three of his eight scores composed for Pilobolus were performed on the PBS series *Dance in America*. *Man in the Moon*, a CD of Mr. Dennis's works composed for the Western Wind vocal ensemble, has recently been recorded and released by the group.

I've always been a “morning person,” so it's natural that I would eventually get around to setting a group of poems that deal with the subject in varied ways. “A Description of the Morning” (Jonathan Swift) is a satirical picture of London at dawn – with assorted odd characters, and bits of folk-inspired music. “Ya cantan los gallos” (Íñigo López de Mendoza) is a setting of a 15th-century Spanish love poem; morning's arrival is not always welcome. “Morning” (William Blake) is an expression of hope for the promise of a new day.

--- Robert Dennis

John Corigliano was born in New York City to musical parents; his mother was a fine pianist, and his father was concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic. Having studied composition at Columbia University and the Manhattan School of Music, he is a former student of Otto Luening, Vittorio Giannini, and Paul Creston. His first notable success was his sonata for violin and piano of 1964, for which he won the chamber music prize at the Spoleto Festival. In the late 1980s, while composer-in-residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, he wrote his first symphony, a response to the AIDS crisis, which captured the 1991 Grawemeyer Award for Best New Orchestral Composition; the Chicago Symphony's recording of the work captured two Grammy awards and brought the composer to the attention of the concertgoing public. Corigliano's second symphony won the Pulitzer Prize in 2001. His violin concerto, which is also the film score for the movie *The Red Violin*, won the Oscar in 2000; this work was premiered and recorded by Joshua Bell, who, touring it internationally, performed it this season at Avery Fisher Hall with the New York Philharmonic. Corigliano's internationally successful opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* sold out two engagements at The Metropolitan Opera (1991 and 1994).

Corigliano's complete opus comprises other symphonic works (including piano, flute, and oboe concertos), various works for chamber ensemble or instrumental solo, art songs, and a small collection of pieces for chorus. The most notable of these is *Fern Hill*, a setting of poetry by Dylan Thomas for chorus and chamber orchestra. Listeners familiar with this beguiling work will recognize similar harmonic textures in *L'Invitation au Voyage*, a setting of Baudelaire (1821-1867) in English translation. This poem was famously set for soprano and orchestra in the late 19th century by Henri Duparc as the first of his *Six mélodies avec orchestre*. Duparc's shimmering textures and sudden warm swells of harmonic consonance are deliciously alluring, as befits the longing and sensuality of Baudelaire's poem. Corigliano provides the very same satisfaction, manipulating a handful of motivic ideas that repeatedly spin out toward destinations of lush repose. To sing this piece well is to experience the pleasure told in the poem.

Texts & Translations

THREE PRAYERS

1. Creator Spirit, Who Dost Lightly Hover

Creator Spirit, who dost lightly hover whence I know not,
And why to me I never questioned, come.
Do visit thy lover after Thy long absence.
I turn over awaking in the morning:
Thou art not there to my touch nor is a substitute there,
But nothing, nothing at all to talk to
and make love when I awake.

2. Father, Guide And Lead Me

Father, guide and lead me stray
for I stumble forward straight my way undeviating,
I do not notice the pleasant bypaths
that make us this world surprising
Nor the precipice that sinks before.
O give me ground for next a step
to stagger walking in my sleep.

3. Creator Spirit, Please...

Creator spirit, please let your soft lamp
The soul of our poor land illumine
and its amber comfort us.
I am familiar with your grace
when you call me to look out the window
And quiet with its stars is heaven
and men are doing what they can.

--- Paul Goodman