

# QERDDORION

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VOCAL ENSEMBLE

*James John*  
*Artistic Director*

PRESENTS

## *A Birthday Garland*



Sunday, November 7, 2010, 4 P.M.  
Oratory Church of St. Boniface  
190 Duffield Street  
Brooklyn, New York

Sunday, November 14, 2010, 3 P.M.  
St. Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church  
87th Street and West End Avenue  
New York, New York

# CERDDORION

## SOPRANOS

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For further information about Cerddorion,  
please visit our website: [www.cerddorion.net](http://www.cerddorion.net).

## *Support Cerddorion*

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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Cerddorion NYC, Inc.  
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The members of Cerddorion are grateful to Doug Keilitz and the Church of Saint Ignatius of Antioch for providing rehearsal and performance space for this season.

## *The Program*

<i>Exultate Justi</i>	Lodovico Viadana (c1560–1627)
<i>Alma Redemptoris Mater</i>	Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1410–1497)
<i>Fremuit Spiritu Jesus</i>	Jacob Clemens non Papa (c. 1510–c. 1556)
Selections from <i>Gloria Patri</i> <i>Surrexit Christus</i> <i>Oremus</i>	Urmaz Sisask (b. 1960)
Selections from <i>Tre Rime di Tasso</i> <i>Amor l'ali m'impenna</i> <i>Fuggi, fuggi, dolor</i>	William Hawley (b. 1950)

### ❖❖❖ *Intermission* ❖❖❖

<i>Five Rounds on Famous Words</i> <i>Health</i> <i>Beauty</i> <i>Thrift</i> <i>Haste</i> <i>Caution</i>	William Schuman (1910–1992)
<i>Three Choruses from e.e. cummings</i> <i>dominic has</i> <i>dim / l(a</i> <i>maggie and milly and molly and may</i>	Peter Schickele (b. 1935)

*Dorma Ador*

Heather Cooper, mezzo-soprano

Aaron Jay Kernis

(b. 1960)

*Reincarnations*

*Mary Hynes*

*Anthony O Daly*

*The Coolin*

Samuel Barber

(1910–1981)

*After tonight's performance, please come downstairs to meet and greet your favorite Cerddorion members at our festive reception! All are invited.*

**Cerddorion is holding an open audition for all voice parts:  
Tuesday, November 23**

St. Ignatius of Antioch (87th St. & West End Ave., Manhattan)

Audition times are available from 6:30-9:30 PM.

Auditions will consist of vocalizing, sight-singing, and performing a solo piece of your choice. If you are interested, e-mail us at [auditions@cerddorion.net](mailto:auditions@cerddorion.net).

Our second and third concert programs are entitled *Toward Eternity* (featuring Howells's *Requiem* and music by Josquin, Schütz, Vaughan Williams, and others) and *With Harp and Voice* (featuring the world premiere of a newly commissioned work).

Rehearsals are Tuesday evenings from 7 to 10 PM at St. Ignatius. Cerddorion is a non-paid, member-run group that depends on the commitment and active participation of each singer. For more information, visit [www.cerddorion.net](http://www.cerddorion.net).

# CERDDORION

NOW IN ITS SIXTEENTH SEASON, CERDDORION is one of New York's most highly regarded volunteer choral ensembles. A chamber group of twenty-eight mixed voices, Cerddorion was founded in 1995 by Susanne Peck and was directed by Kristina Boerger from 2000 through 2009. James John became Cerddorion's artistic director in 2010. The group is known for its eclectic repertoire, encompassing music from the Renaissance to the contemporary. 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.

In 2006, Cerddorion presented at the Eastern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association the works they had commissioned from three New York composers for their tenth anniversary season. September 2007 marked the release on the Tzadik label of *A Handful of World*, Cerddorion's first commercial recording. 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.

## *James John*

James John is Associate Professor and Director of Choral Activities at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College-CUNY, where he conducts the Queens College Choir, Vocal Ensemble and Choral Society, teaches choral conducting, and serves as advisor to the graduate program in vocal performance.

Under Dr. John's leadership, the choral program at the Aaron Copland School of Music has become recognized as one of the finest collegiate choral programs in the region. Past performances have included an award-winning production of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Requiems by Mozart, Verdi, and Brahms, "A Night at the Opera" with Queens College alumna Erika Sunnegardh of the Metropolitan Opera, Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, and world premieres of works by Sidney Boquiren, Leo Kraft, Meg Collins Stoop, and others. His choirs have performed in many of New York's prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Vocal Ensemble recently released its first CD, featuring premiere recordings of partsongs by Scottish composer Hamish MacCunn, and the

Queens College Choir was selected to perform at the 2010 New York State School of Music Association convention in Rochester, NY.

Dr. John's guest conducting appearances include Avery Fisher Hall's annual Messiah Sing-In, a concert of American choral music with the Virginia Chorale (Virginia's only professional choral ensemble), chorus master for the Queens Symphony, regional honor choirs throughout New York State, and a forthcoming recording with jazz trumpeter Michael Mossman. He has given presentations at both divisional and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, and is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States.

Dr. John has also served as Guest Lecturer in conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and presented seminars on American choral music in Basel and Stockholm. His dissertation on Brahms's Nänie, Op. 82, won the Julius Herford Prize from the American Choral Directors Association and will be published soon in revised form as a book by The Edwin Mellen Press. His articles have appeared in Choral Journal, The American Choral Review, and the American Choral Foundation's Research Memorandum Series. He has served as Project Chair for Research and Scholarship for ACDA's Eastern Division and is currently a member of ACDA's National Research and Publications Committee, as well as a member of the Editorial Board for The American Choral Review. Dr. John received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music. Prior to his current position at the Aaron Copland School of Music, he served as Director of Choral Activities at Tufts University in Boston, Director of Choral Activities at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY, and as Dartmouth College's first Conducting Fellow. He received his Master of Arts in Conducting from the Aaron Copland School of Music.

## Program Notes

Birthdays are occasions for celebration. It is common to honor composers who are celebrating significant anniversaries with performances of their works, though rare to include several on the same program. The idea for *A Birthday Garland* originated when I realized that a number of important choral composers had noteworthy anniversaries in 2010. Weaving a program from this theme was a delightful process, yielding interesting juxtapositions, varied contrasts, and surprising influences. Gradually, I came to think of the entire collection as an array of gifts passed down over time or transmitted to us through wide distances by these remarkable musicians. And what better way to celebrate a birthday than with presents—from composer to performer, and performer to audience.

The first three composers on our program are also the oldest: Viadana, Ockeghem and Clemens non Papa. Though their exact years of birth are uncertain, they are celebrating (to the best of our knowledge) their 450th, 600th and 500th birthdays in 2010. Historians would now group all three together as belonging to the “Renaissance/Early Baroque,” but such rubrics reveal little regarding detail over long spans of time. In fact, the gap between oldest (Ockeghem) and youngest (Viadana) is nearly as great as that separating Beethoven from the 21st century—and the stylistic differences are no less striking.

**Lodovico Viadana** (c. 1560–1627): *Exultate Justi*

Text from Psalm 33:1–3

Lodovico Viadana takes his name from the small town near Mantua where he was born. As a member of the Franciscan religious order, he spent his life holding various church positions in northern Italy, and wrote primarily sacred music. *Exultate Justi* comes from his most famous collection of pieces, *Cento concerti ecclesiastici* (One Hundred Sacred Concertos), published in 1602. Scholars often cite this as the first collection of sacred music to employ *basso continuo* (i.e. the use of instruments such as harpsichord and viola da gamba to support the harmonic framework), showing Viadana to be among the cutting-edge composers of his day. The majority of pieces in this collection require instrumental accompaniment, but *Exultate Justi* is an exception and can be performed just as easily *a cappella*, as we will be singing it this afternoon. Viadana’s lovely setting, which begins and ends in dance-like triple meter, captures the joy inherent in this celebratory Psalm text.

Exultate, justi, in Domino;  
rectos decet collaudatio.  
Confitemini Domino in cithara;  
in psalterio decem chordarum  
psallite illi.  
Cantate ei canticum novum;  
bene psallite ei in vociferatione.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous;  
for it is fitting for the just to praise him.  
Praise the Lord with harp;  
with the lute, the instrument with ten strings,  
sing praises to him.  
Sing to the Lord a new song;  
Praise him well and shout for joy.

### **Johannes Ockeghem** (c. 1410–1497): *Alma Redemptoris Mater*

Born in the town of Saint-Ghislain in modern day Belgium, Johannes Ockeghem was one of the most renowned musicians of his day. Famous not only as a composer, but also as a singer with a beautiful bass voice, he served as chaplain, composer and chapel master for three French kings throughout his long career. In contrast to Viadana, who paid close attention to vertical harmonies when constructing a piece, Ockeghem gave primary importance to each individual vocal line. This can be heard in Ockeghem's exceptionally florid melodies, which in *Alma Redemptoris Mater* are based on the well-known Marion antiphon of the same name, paraphrased in the alto voice. Ockeghem was widely esteemed for his contrapuntal skill, and it is remarkable how effortlessly his long melodic lines seem to fit together. One of only ten surviving motets, *Alma Redemptoris Mater* is unique because of its high pitch, perfectly suitable for modern choirs but an anomaly within the composer's output, which typically features very low vocal ranges.

Alma Redemptoris Mater,  
quae pervia caeli porta manes,  
et stella maris,  
succurre cadenti surgere qui curat populo;  
Tu quae genuisti, natura mirante,  
tuum sanctum Genitorem:  
Virgo prius ac posterius,  
Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave,  
peccatorum miserere.

Loving Mother of the Redeemer,  
who remains the accessible Gateway of Heaven,  
and Star of the Sea,  
Give aid to a falling people that strives to rise;  
O Thou who begot thy holy Creator,  
while all Nature marveled,  
Virgin before and after,  
receiving that "Ave" from the mouth of Gabriel,  
have mercy on sinners.

### **Jacob Clemens non Papa** (c. 1510–c. 1556): *Fremuit Spiritu Jesus*

Some scholars think that Franco-Flemish composer Jacob Clement received the nickname "non Papa" to distinguish him from Pope Clemens VII, who died in 1534; others speculate that it may



have been added to his name partly in jest. Whatever the case, this unique sobriquet undeniably attests to the esteem given him by his contemporaries. An exceptionally prolific composer (with over 15 Mass settings and more than 230 motets), non Papa's densely compact style is based on a technique called "pervasive imitation," in which overlapping melodic ideas correspond to each new line of text. Though only one generation removed from Ockeghem, the sound and structure of non Papa's music is strikingly different. The motet *Fremuit Spiritu Jesus* recounts the miracle of Lazarus being raised from the dead. Non Papa employs a pre-composed melody (or *cantus firmus*) consisting of long, sustained notes to set the words "Lazarus, come forth!" As the piece unfolds, the *cantus firmus* (stated eleven times throughout the piece) becomes an increasingly important feature of the imitative framework, moving from background to foreground in a wonderful interplay of text and music that mirror's the drama of Lazarus' mythic resurrection.

Fremuit spiritu Jesus et turbavit seipsum,  
et dixit Judaeis: "Ubi posuistis Lazarum?"  
Dicunt ei: "Domine, veni et vide."  
Et lacrimatus est Jesus.

Jesus shuddered in his spirit and he was moved,  
and he said to the Jews: "Where have you placed  
Lazarus?"  
They said to him: "Lord, come and see."  
And Jesus wept.

Videns Dominus flentes sorores Lazari  
ad monumentum,  
lacrimatus est coram Judaeis,  
et clamabat: "Lazare, veni foras."

The Lord, seeing the sisters of Lazarus  
at the tomb,  
wept in front of the Jews,  
and he cried out: "Lazarus, come forth!"

**Urmas Sisask** (b. 1960): Selections from *Gloria Patri* ("*Surrexit Christus*" and "*Oremus*")

Early music and Gregorian chant are two of many influences that combine in the work of Urmas Sisask, who celebrates his fiftieth birthday this year. An Estonian composer and younger contemporary of Arvo Pärt, his style in broad terms can be grouped within the genre sometimes referred to as "spiritual minimalism." Completed in 1988, *Gloria Patri* is a cycle of twenty-four hymns for mixed choir that can be excerpted or arranged in any order, lasting almost an hour-and-a-half in performance. Each hymn is based on the same five-note scale (C#-D-F#-G#-A), designed by Sisask after studying the theory of astrologically governed sounds, to correspond to the trajectories of the planets in the solar system. These notes also correlate exactly to the Japanese pentatonic scale, or Kumayoshi mode; a fact that the composer discovered only later on, to his amazement. "Surrexit Christus" is the short, exuberant Easter hymn that opens the

collection. “Oremus,” a textless piece that utilizes only humming and vowel sounds, appears second-to-last. Its wordless outpouring was undoubtedly inspired by the title, meaning literally, “let us pray.” In this light, the composition’s otherworldly ebb and flow of sound can be interpreted as a pure manifestation of prayer.

### **Surrexit Christus**

Surrexit Christus hodie,  
Alleluia!

### **Christ Is Risen**

Christ is risen today,  
Alleluia!

### **Oremus**

### **Let Us Pray**

**William Hawley** (b. 1950): Selections from *Tre Rime di Tasso*  
Texts by Torquato Tasso

This year marks William Hawley’s sixtieth birthday. Hawley grew up in Bronxville, New York, and attended both the Ithaca College School of Music and the California Institute of the Arts. He is a prolific composer with more than one hundred choral works to his credit. *Tre Rime di Tasso* was commissioned in 2000 by the professional choral ensemble Chanticleer. Of these lovely pieces, Hawley writes: “In composing these settings of Tasso’s *rime*, or short lyric poems (Tasso was an Italian poet, 1544-1595), I have freely allowed the sixteenth-century manner to inform my current writing. This great lyric poetry requires a close ear and a swift response in order to reveal its full beauty. I have sought to illuminate, by means of my own musical response, Tasso’s unique and inspiring way of embodying an emotion, as well as his reasoned reaction to it in the same passage or line of verse. These poems reflect Tasso’s experience of the extremes of emotion involved in earthly love and its relation to the human mind and spirit.”

### **Amor l'ali m'impenna**

Amor l'ali m'impenna,  
amor dolce, amor caro, amor felice,  
tal che non spero più né più mi lice.  
Passo monti e procelle,  
passo il cielo e le stelle.  
Del piacer quest'è il regno:  
ah, mia fortuna non se l'abbia a sdegno!  
Questo, questo m'accora,  
ch'altri cadeo del paradiso ancora.

### **Fuggi, fuggi, dolor**

Fuggi, fuggi, dolor, da questo petto  
or che vi torna la gioiosa speme;  
or che promette al cor pace e diletto,  
tutti fuggite omai, tormenti e pene.  
Già vicino è'l mio sole: oh cieli amici!  
Già s'apressa il mio bene: oh di felici!  
Né, potendo tornar senza partita,  
mi piace che parti la cara vita.

### **Love, whose wings take up my pen**

Love, whose wings take up my pen,  
Precious love, sweet love, exultant love,  
that for which I no longer hope, nor am allowed to  
hope.  
I traverse mountains and storms,  
I pass through the heavens and the stars,  
This is the realm of pleasure:  
ah, that my happiness were not the beginning of scorn!  
This, this is what grieves me,  
that one should thus be made to fall again from  
Paradise.

### **Flee, flee, sorrow**

Flee, flee, sorrow, from this breast  
and let joyous hope return;  
give promise of peace and delight to my heart,  
begone forever, all torment and pain.  
Already my light is near: oh friendly heavens!  
Already my goodness unfolds: oh day of bliss!  
Not being able to return without having departed,  
I should be pleased to have left this dear life.

### **William Schuman (1910–1992): *Five Rounds on Famous Words***

William Schuman's career path was anything but straightforward. Born in Manhattan, he played violin and banjo as a young boy, and formed his own dance band as a teenager—but later said that baseball was the greatest passion of his formative years. Though he performed and wrote a great deal of popular music (including over forty songs with his neighbor, the lyricist Frank Loesser, who was just starting out at the time), he enrolled at NYU to pursue a business degree. After his first experience hearing the New York Philharmonic under Arturo Toscanini, however, Schuman was transformed, and he decided to withdraw to study composition. He subsequently finished a B.S. in Music Education at Columbia Teachers College, and in 1943 received the first Pulitzer Prize ever given for music. Schuman taught for ten years at Sarah Lawrence College, and went on not only to become the President of the Juilliard School of Music and Lincoln

Center, but also to earn a place among the most important American composers of the 20th century. During his centennial year it is only fitting that we include one of his works on our program, especially since choral music forms an important part of his oeuvre.

*Five Rounds on Famous Words*, begun in 1956 and revised in 1969, consists of a series of well known aphorisms grouped together by subject matter and fashioned into delightfully clever three- and four-part canons. It is one of three quasi-humorous *a cappella* works written by Schuman throughout the course of his career. The others are *Mail Order Madrigals* (to texts freely adapted from the 1897 Sears Roebuck Catalogue), and *Esses* (Short Suite for Singers on Words Beginning with S). Each of these compositions strikes just the right balance between humor and seriousness, simplicity and complexity, popular and art music, leaving the listener both entertained as well as uplifted with an ineffable sense that something ordinary has been transformed into something artful and poetic.

### **Health**

Early to bed and early to rise,  
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

### **Beauty**

All that glitters isn't gold,  
Never judge a book by its cover;  
Handsome is as handsome does,  
A thing of beauty is a joy forever.

### **Thrift**

He that goes a-borrowing, goes a-sorrowing,  
A penny saved is a penny earned;  
But don't be penny wise and dollar foolish,  
Remember that time is money.  
Save! Save! Save!

### **Haste**

Make haste slowly.  
Haste makes waste.  
And if you marry in haste  
then you'll repent at leisure.

## Caution

Look before you leap!  
A stitch in time saves nine,  
And an ounce of prevention is  
worth a pound of cure.

**Peter Schickele** (b. 1935): *Three Choruses from e.e. cummings*  
Texts by e.e. cummings

Best known to audiences as the musical humorist P.D.Q. Bach, Peter Schickele (who is turning seventy-five this year) has written over one hundred original works. His “serious” compositions are less well known than his satirical pieces, but his inventiveness as a composer is nearly unsurpassed. *Three Choruses from e.e. cummings* were written only a few years after the poet’s death in 1962, and first published in 1967. Each chorus is quirky and unique, capturing the humor, sincerity and playfulness of cummings’ poetry.

In “dominic has,” Schickele’s asymmetrical phrases and jagged rhythms depict the “ZOOM DOOM” energy of little dominic depaola as he plays with (and his mother mends) the doll he rescued from an ash barrel. “dim / l(a)” is the conflation of two of cummings’s haiku-like poems into one chorus (hence the especially unusual title). An empty park, six english sparrows, autumn, the rain, a leaf falls, loneliness: the poignancy of these solitary, yet connected images is mirrored in Schickele’s pointillistic setting, which divides a single melody into small fragments passed between multiple voice parts. “maggie and milly and molly and may” is a charming poem about the adventures of three girls playing at the beach. From the opening divisi in the soprano part (a beautiful depiction of the girls calling to one another), to artful yet awkward hemiolas (suggesting the jerky movements of a crab), to the lilting and playful six-eight meter of the whole piece, Schickele’s setting embodies the essence of cummings’ poem with splendid accuracy and amusement.

## dominic has

dominic has

a doll wired  
to the radiator of his  
ZOOM DOOM

icecoalwood truck a  
wistful little  
clown  
whom somebody buried

upsidedown in an ashbarrel so

of course dominic  
took him  
home

& mrs dominic washed his sweet

dirty  
face & mended  
his bright torn trousers(quite

as if he were really her &

she  
but)& so  
that  
's how dominic has a doll  
& every now & then my  
wonderful  
friend dominic depaola

gives me a most tremendous hug

knowing  
i feel  
that

we & worlds

are  
less alive  
than dolls &

dream

**dim / l(a**

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**maggie and milly and molly and may**

maggie and milly and molly and may  
went down to the beach(to play one day)

and maggie discovered a shell that sang  
so sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles,and

milly befriended a stranded star  
whose rays five languid fingers were;

and molly was chased by a horrible thing  
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles:and

may came home with a smooth round stone  
as small as a world and as large as alone.

For whatever we lose(like a you or a me)  
it's always ourselves we find in the sea

**Aaron Jay Kernis** (b. 1960): *Dorma Ador*

Born in Philadelphia, Aaron Jay Kernis studied at the Manhattan School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory and the Yale School of Music, where he is currently a member of the composition faculty. In 1998 his second string quartet, *musica instrumentalis*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, making him one of the youngest composers ever to receive this honor. He has written nearly twenty choral works, including *Stein Times Seven* for chorus and piano (poetry by Gertrude Stein), a marvelous set of *a cappella* pieces entitled *Ecstatic Meditations* (poetry by medieval mystic Mechthild of Magdeburg), and the extended choral-orchestral works *Garden of Light* and *Symphony of Meditations*. *Dorma Ador* is a lullaby composed in 2000 for the Dale Warland Singers to celebrate the fiftieth birthday of Kernis' friend Larry Fuchsberg, making it all the more appropriate to include on our program since Kernis himself turns fifty this year. Kernis writes of this beautiful piece: "It was commissioned by Janika Vandervelde, composer (and partner of Larry), and as requested I based it on some Portuguese nonsense syllables and a lovely tune and harmonization that she created out of traditional Portuguese elements...I decided to use very strongly rooted and low harmonies to give a sense of calm and peacefulness."



Dorma, ador, adormeça.  
Boyo-yo balu.

Sleep, go to sleep.  
My sweet little boy.

**Samuel Barber** (1910–1981): *Reincarnations*

Texts by James Stephens

Our program concludes with music by Samuel Barber, one of America's preeminent 20th century composers, who, like William Schuman is celebrating his hundredth birthday in 2010. Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, Barber was certain from a young age that he would become a composer, and entered the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia when he was only fourteen years old. He was a multifaceted musician, triple majoring in composition, piano and voice. A singer himself (possessing a beautiful lyric baritone), his vocal and choral music is remarkably well written and exceptionally rewarding to sing.

Barber completed *Reincarnations* in 1940 at the end of a decade of great personal success and happiness. Though barely thirty, he had recently experienced a string of major triumphs that included receiving the Prix de Rome (for his *Cello Sonata* and *Music for a Scene from Shelley*), premiere of his *Essay for Orchestra* and *Adagio for Strings* by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra, and election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters as the youngest member ever. In 1938 Randall Thompson invited Barber to conduct the newly formed Curtis Madrigal Chorus, and over the next few years he wrote much of his choral music for this group. The title *Reincarnations* belongs to the volume of poetry by James Stephens (1882-1950) from which Barber selected the texts. Stephens based his poems on snippets of Gaelic verse, describing his creative process as follows: "Although these poems are all taken from the Irish of from one hundred to four hundred years ago, I do not put them forward as translations, for in many places, I have taken no more than a phrase from the original poem, and around this phrase I have, as it were, blown a bubble of verse. My effort in each case has been, not to produce the translation of an old poem but to give a new poem"—hence the significance of Stephens' title.

The first two poems selected by Barber, "Mary Hynes" and "Anthony O Daly" are based on the Irish of Raftery, a famous blind bard who died during the first half of the 19th century. Both are homages to real people and events. Mary Hynes was a woman of renowned beauty, the object of countless suitors, and Barber's setting of Stephens' poem is an exuberant love song. Anthony O Daly was a member of the Buachaillí Bána or "Whiteboys," a secret Irish organization that used subversive tactics to defend the land rights of tenant farmers. O Daly was a leader in the movement, framed by the authorities in an attempt to force him to reveal the names of his

compatriots. He refused, and after being hanged in public, became a symbolic hero for the resistance. A monument to him still stands on the hill of Seefin in County Galway. Barber's music, which is structured around an ostinato that repeats the name Anthony over and over, and includes outbursts evocative of keening (wailing in grief), captures the extreme despair and anger inherent in O Daly's loss. The third poem, "The Coolin" is based on an anonymous love song. The title has an interesting origin, again described by Stephens: "The word coolin or cooleen refers to a little, very special curl that used to grow exactly in the middle of the back of the neck of a girl. That term 'little curl' or 'cooleen' came to mean one's sweetheart, and practically ousted the word 'sweetheart.'" Quite different from the elation of "Mary Hynes" and the anguish of "Anthony O'Daly," Barber sets this third poem as a pastoral love song, bringing the set to a harmonious conclusion.

### **Mary Hynes**

She is the sky of the sun!  
She is the dart of love!  
She is the love of my heart!  
She is a rune!  
She is above the women of the race of Eve, as the sun is above the moon.  
Lovely and airy, the view from the hill  
That looks down Ballylea!  
But no good sight is good, until  
By great good luck you see  
The blossom of Branches  
Walking towards you, airily.

## **Anthony O Daly**

Since your limbs were laid out,  
The stars do not shine!  
The fish leap not out in the waves!  
On our meadows the dew  
does not fall in the morn,  
for O Daly is dead!  
Not a flow'r can be born!  
Not a word can be said!  
Not a tree have a leaf!  
For O Daly is dead!  
After you there is nothing to do.  
There is nothing but grief!

## **The Coolin**

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

*Program notes by  
James John  
November 2010*

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