



A Ceremony of Britten: Carols, Hymns, and Lullabies

Friday, December 13, 2012 at 8pm
 Sunday, December 15, 2012 at 4pm
 Immanuel Lutheran Church
 Lexington Avenue at 88th Street

New Amsterdam Singers
Clara Longstreth, Music Director
Max Blum, Assistant Conductor
Nathaniel Granor, Chamber Chorus Assistant

A.M.D.G. (Ad majorem Dei gloriam) Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Prayer I
 Rosa Mystica
 Heaven-Haven
 O Deus, ego amo te

A Shepherd's Carol Benjamin Britten

Francesca Harris, soprano; Dell Kendall, alto;
 Robert Thorpe, tenor; Richard Bonsall, bass
 The Chamber Chorus

A Wealdon Trio (The Song of the Women) Benjamin Britten

Robin Beckhard, Katherine Leahy, sopranos; Ellen Stark, alto

A Ceremony of Carols Benjamin Britten

Procession
 Wolcum Yule!
 There is no Rose
 That Yongë Child Barbara Zucker-Pinchoff, alto
 Balubalow Katherine Leahy, soprano
 As Dew in Aprille
 This little Babe
 Interlude
 In Freezing Winter Night Laura Klein, soprano; Cindy Brome, alto
 Spring Carol Charlotte Levitt, soprano; Ellen Stark, alto
 Deo Gracias
 Recessional

Women's voices
 Fran Duffy, harp

Intermission

Psaume 121 Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

Ave Maria Franz Biebl (1906-2001)

Solo group: Richard Bonsall, Nathaniel Granor, Nate Mickelson
 Robert Thorpe, Scott Wilson, Mike Landy

I Wonder as I Wander Appalachian Carol, arranged by John Jacob Niles (1892-1980)

Andy James, tenor
 Men's voices

A Hymn to the Virgin

Benjamin Britten

Solo group: Elspeth Strang, Benardica Sculac-Stern,
Nina Reiniger, Mary Lou Russell, Jennifer Trahan,
Paul Parsekian, John Pinegar, Mike Landy, Tim DeWerff

Carols and Lullabies (Christmas in the Southwest)

Conrad Susa (1935-2013)

Oh, mi Belén

El Deseembre Congelat

Alegría

Richard Bonsall, Tim DeWerff, baritones

A la Nanita Nana

Las Posadas

Solo group: Nate Mickelson, Hsin Wang, Robert Marlowe, James Crowell

Campana sobre Campana

En Belén Tocan a Fuego

Robin Beckhard, soprano; Barbara Zucker-Pinchoff, alto;

Robert Thorpe, tenor

El Noi de la Mare

Solo group: Katherine Leahy, Ellen Stark, Scott Wilson, Bendix Anderson

Chiquirriquitin

El Rorro

Fran Duffy, harp; Stephen Benson, guitar;
William Trigg, marimba and vibraphone

Program Notes, Texts and Translations

Benjamin Britten, born on St. Cecilia's Day, November 22, 1913, was a supremely gifted musician, the foremost English composer of the twentieth century and one of a handful of important composers of the world. Conductor, composer, and pianist, as well as director of a renowned festival, his works for the human voice are an especially important part of his creative output. He started composing at a young age, and one piece we present today was written at age 16.

Since Britten's accomplishments are well known, I will not list them, but rather mention The New Amsterdam Singers' own history with his choral works. Not counting those on today's program, we have sung nine substantial Britten works, most of them a cappella, and several of these we have sung many times (*Rejoice in the Lord*, *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, *Sacred and Profane*). Today we sing five works by Britten, ranging from his most familiar, *A Ceremony of Carols*, to his most obscure, *A.M.D.G.*

A.M.D.G. (Ad majorem Dei gloriam)

Britten

We begin with *A.M.D.G.*, which stands for Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam, the motto of the Jesuits. The piece has an interesting history. Britten wrote it in 1939 when he and Peter Pears first arrived in the United States. It was intended for Pears and his "Round Table Singers," who planned to perform it in London. The war intervened. Pears could not return to England, and the seven part songs were not performed. Britten withdrew the work, and gave the opus number to another piece.

One reason the work was not performed for a long time is that the songs are difficult, and several are very difficult indeed. But in 1984 they received first a partial performance and then, months later, a full performance in London by the London Sinfonietta Chorus, who then recorded the piece.

Britten has written music to some of the greatest poets of our time, W.H. Auden, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Ford Madox Ford. Hopkins wrote the texts for *A.M.D.G.*, which are infused with very personal mysticism. He became a Jesuit priest at age 24, so it is not surprising that his poetry reflects his faith.

Today we sing four of the set of seven. *Prayer I* is a heart-on-the-sleeve, rhapsodic introduction to the set. *Rosa Mystica* is longer and more subdued. Britten sets up a "pedal" (a repeated note, in this case an A) in the tenors and basses; that mantra continues for five pages. Then the pedal is given to sopranos and altos, later to altos and tenors. Only after eight pages does Britten abandon the pedal for a new harmony in a series of (rhetorical) questions. Finally the pedal returns, and the piece ends with all voices on the repeated A.

Heaven-Haven is subtitled "A nun takes the veil." The poem is in the voice of a novice seeking tranquility. Britten sets the first verse for women's voices alone, and the second for men alone. *O Deus, ego amo te* takes the form of a passionate choral recitative. He marks it "Presto-senza misura"; the rhythm is totally free and seems as if improvised in response to the urgency of the words. The complex, shifting harmonies are anything but improvised!

Prayer I

*Jesu that dost in Mary dwell,
Be in thy servants' hearts as well,
In the spirit of thy holiness,
In the fullness of thy force and stress,
In the very ways that thy life goes,
And virtues that thy pattern shows,*

*In the sharing of thy mysteries;
And every power in us that is
Against thy power put under feet
In the Holy Ghost the Paraclete
To the glory of the Father.
Amen*

Please turn off all phones and other devices during the performance.

Rosa Mystica

"The Rose is a mystery" – where is it found?
Is it anything true? Does it grow upon ground?
It was made of earth's mould, but it went from men's eyes,
And its place is a secret and shut in the skies,
In the Gardens of God, in the daylight divine,
Find me a place by thee, Mother of mine.

But where was it formerly? Which is the spot
That was blest in it once, though now it is not?
It is Galilee's growth; it grew at God's will
And broke into bloom upon Nazareth hill.

In the Gardens of God, in the daylight divine,
I shall look on thy loveliness, Mother of mine.
In the Gardens of God, in the daylight divine,
I shall keep time with thee, Mother of mine.

Tell me the name now, tell me its name.
The heart guesses easily: is it the same?
Mary the Virgin, well the heart knows,
She is the Mystery, she is that Rose.

In the Gardens of God, in the daylight divine,
I shall come home to thee, Mother of mine.

Is Mary the rose then? Mary, the Tree?
But the Blossom, the Blossom there – who can it be?
Who can her Rose be? It could but be One:
Christ Jesus, our Lord – her God and her Son.

In the Gardens of God, in the daylight divine,
Show me thy Son, Mother, Mother of mine.

Does it smell sweet, too, in that holy place?
Sweet unto God and the sweetness is grace:
The breath of it bathes the great heaven above
In grace that is charity, grace that is love.

To thy breast, to thy glory divine
Draw me by charity, Mother of mine

Heaven-Haven

A nun takes the veil

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,

To fields where flies no sharp and sided
hail,

And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be

Where no storms come,

Where the green swell is in the havens
dumb,

And out of the swing of the sea.

O Deus, Ego Amo Te

O God, I love thee, I love thee –
Not out of hope of heaven for me

Nor fearing not to love and be
In the everlasting burning.

Thou, thou, my Jesus, after me

Didst reach thine arms out dying,

For my sake sufferedst nails, and lance,
Mocked and marred countenance,

Sorrows passing number,
Sweat and care and cumber,

Yea and death, and this for me,

And thou couldst see me sinning:

Then I, why should not I love thee,
Jesu, so much in love with me?
Not for heaven's sake; not to be
Out of hell by loving thee;
Not for any gains I see;

But just the way that thou didst me
I do love and I will love thee:
What must I love thee, Lord, for then?
For being my king and God.
Amen.

A Shepherd's Carol

Britten
A *Shepherd's Carol* is a short, secular piece from 1944 in which Britten starts with a lilting melody which becomes a refrain heard after each verse (for a total of five times). Auden's poem has four verses, one more nonsensical than the last, and Britten has four solo voices declaim the words in dramatic fashion. Auden had written the poem for a Christmas oratorio called *For The Time Being*, intended for a BBC radio program called *A Poet's Christmas*.

O lift your little pinkie, and touch the winter sky.
Love's all over the mountains where the beautiful go to die.

If Time were the wicked sheriff, in a horse opera,
I'd pay for riding lessons and take his gun away.

If I were a Valentino, and Fortune were a broad,
I'd hypnotise that iceberg till she kissed me of her own accord.

If I'd stacked up the velvet and my crooked rib were dead,
I'd be breeding white canaries and eating crackers in bed.

But my cuffs are soiled and fraying. The kitchen clock is slow,
and over the Blue Waters the grass grew long ago.

A Wealdon Trio (The Song of the Women)

Britten
A *Wealdon Trio (The Song of the Women)* is one Britten wrote in 1929 at age 16 for women's trio. This seldom performed work sets a poem by Ford Madox Ford, and is written in working-class dialect. It exhibits an awareness of the poverty behind the scenes in the affluent 1920s, and seems as relevant now as it was then.

When ye've got a child 'ats whist for want of food,
And a grate as grey's y'r 'air for want of wood,
And y'r man and you ain't nowise not much good;

Oh – It's hard work a-Christmassing, Carolling,
Singin' songs about "the Babe what's born."
When ye've 'eered the bailiff's 'and upon the latch,
And ye've feeled the rain a-trickling through the thatch,
An' y'r man can't git no stoness to break ner yit no sheep to watch –

Oh – We've got to come a-Christmassing, Carolling,
Singin' of the "Sheperds on that morn."
'E was a man as poor as us, very near,
'An 'E 'ad 'is trials and danger,
'An I think 'E'll think of us when 'E sees us singin' 'ere;
for 'is mother was poor, like us, poor dear,
'An she bore Him in a manger.

Oh – It's warm in the heavens, but it's cold upon the earth,
And we ain't no food at table nor no fire upon the hearth;
And it's bitter hard a-Christmassing, Carolling,
Singin' songs about our Saviour's birth;

*Singin' songs about the Babe what's born;
Singin' of the sheperds on that morn.*

A Ceremony of Carols

Britten

Of Britten's many choral works, his *Ceremony of Carols*, which sets medieval and Renaissance carol texts to original tunes, is probably his best loved work in this country. The 29-year-old Britten wrote it at sea, on his 1942 voyage home from a three-year stay in America. This piece marks Britten's return to England in many ways; after setting French, Italian, and American texts, he returned on this ocean voyage to English verse, setting both the English carol texts of this piece, and the poetry of his countryman W.H. Auden (the *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, which Britten also completed before landfall). More importantly, this Christmas piece marks a musical return to all that was associated with his childhood – bells, boy choirs, modal harmony, and plainsong from the English Church tradition.

Written for treble voices and harp, *A Ceremony of Carols* is a cycle of twelve movements containing great variety within a broadly unified formal scheme. The processional, recessional, and harp interlude are based on Gregorian chant. Both the joyful second movement and the ethereal third movement are based on bell-like ostinato figures for the harp. In "There is no Rose," the harp's constant repetition of C, F, C, F, changes only once, at the word "transeamus" ("we transcend").

The next three movements are on texts about Mary. An eerie solo recitative comparing Mary's song to that of the nightingale is followed by the cradle song itself, "Balulalow," for solo and chorus. The idea of rocking is intensified by alternating 6/8 and 3/4 rhythms and the major-minor tonalities. In "As dew in Aprile," rhapsodic choral passages frame a gentle middle section in which three voices dovetail to form a two-voice canon.

The first half of the cycle reaches a fiery conclusion with Robert Southwell's colorful poem, "This little Babe," in which the baby Jesus is imagined in battle against Satan; warlike verses are set to a driving rhythmic accompaniment. The martial subject is heard first in unison, then as a two-voice canon, and then as a three-voice canon, with the musical entrances piling up like increasing troops joining in wild pursuit.

The "Interlude" (marked *andante pastorale*), for harp alone, is based on the chant melody of the opening "Hodie," and is remarkable for its use of a pentatonic scale and a bell-like ostinato similar to the sound of the gamelan orchestras to which Britten had recently been introduced. With its gentle, improvisatory quality, the "Interlude" provides a total contrast to the fiery combativeness of the previous movement. "In Freezing Winter Night" combines ostinato patterns for harp and alto voices with a canon for sopranos. Harp tremolo and dissonance represent shivering cold; the shadowy beginning and end depict the homely details of Jesus' birth; a passionate middle section in a new key evokes the princely court imagined at the stable.

The "Spring Carol," a soprano duet in a lighter mood, provides an example of the many English carols written for other seasons. The fifteenth-century poem "Deo Gracias" ("Adam lay ibounden") is a delightful bit of medieval philosophy linking the events of the Old and New Testaments ("ne had the appil take ben, ne hadde never our lady a ben hevене quene"). The recessional "Hodie" ends the cycle in symmetrical fashion.

The translations are by Albert Hart and Ulla Dydo.

1. Procession

*Hodie Christus natus est:
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt angeli:
laetantur archangeli:
hodie exultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Alleluia!*

Today Christ is born,
today the Savior has appeared,
today on earth angels sing
and archangels rejoice;
today the just joyfully exclaim:
Glory to God on high,
Alleluia!

2. Wolcum Yole!

*Wolcum be thou hevене king,
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum born in one morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,
Wolcum seintes lefe and dere,
Wolcum Innocentes every one,
Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both in fere,
Wolcum be ye Stevене and Jon,
Wolcum be ye, good New Yere.
Wolcum Yole!*

*Candelmesse, Quene of bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse,
Wolcum be ye that are here,
Wolcum alle and make good cheer.
Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole!* – Anon. 14th century

hevене = heavenly; Thomas marter one = Thomas, first martyr; seintes = saints, lefe = lovable; Innocents = children massacred by Herod; fere = companion

3. There is no Rose

*There is no rose of such vertu
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia.*

*For in this rose conteined was
Heaven and earth in litel space.
Res miranda.*

*By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three.
Pares forma.*

*The aungels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gaudeamus.*

*Leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus.* – Anon. 14th century

Res miranda = miracle; pares forma = all of one substance; aungels sungen = angels sang; Gaudeamus = let us rejoice; Transeamus = let us cross over (transcend)

4a. That Yongë Child

*That yongë child when it gan weep
With song she lulled him asleep:
That was so sweet a melody
It passèd alle minstrelsy.*

*The nightingale sang also:
Her song is hoarse and nought thereto:
Who so attendeth to her song
And leaveth the first then doth he wrong.
– Anon. 14th century
gan weep = began to weep*

4b. Balulalow

*O my dere hert, young Jesu sweit,
Prepare thy credil in my spreit,
And I sall rock thee to my hert,
And never mair from thee depart.
But I sall praise thee evermoir
With sanges sweit unto thy gloir;*

*The knees of my hert sall I bow,
and sing that richt Balulalow!
– James, John, and Robert Wedderburns
sweit = sweet, mair = more, spreit = spirit, sanges = songs, gloir = glory,
richt = right and proper*

5. As Dew in Aprille
*I sing of a maiden
 That is makèles:
 King of all kings
 To her son she ches.
 He came al so stille
 There his moder was,
 As dew in Aprille
 That falleth on the grass.
 He came al so stille
 To his moder's bour,
 As dew in Aprille
 That falleth on the flour.*

6. This little Babe
*This little Babe so few days old
 Is come to rifle Satan's fold:
 All hell doth at his presence quake,
 though he himself for cold do shake;
 For in this weak unarmed wise
 The gates of hell he will surprise.
 With tears he fights and wins the field,
 His naked breast stands for a shield;
 His battering shot are babish cries,
 His arrows looks of weeping eyes,
 His martial ensigns Cold and Need,
 And feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.
 His camp is pitched in a stall,*

8. In Freezing Winter Night
*Behold a silly tender babe
 In freezing winter night,
 In homely manger trembling lies
 Alas, a piteous sight!
 The inns are full, no man will yield
 This little pilgrim bed.
 But forced he is with silly beasts
 In crib to shroud his head.
 This stable is a Prince's court,
 This crib his chair of State:*

9. Spring Carol
*Pleasure it is to hear iwis,
 The Birdès sing,
 The deer in the dale,
 The sheep in the vale,
 The corn springing.*

*He came al so stille
 There his moder lay,
 As dew in Aprille
 That falleth on the spray.
 Moder and mayden was
 never none but she:
 Well may such a lady
 Goddes moder be.* – Anon. c. 1400
 makeles = immaculate,
 matchless; ches = chose; there = where;
 moder = mother; bour = bower; flour =
 flower; Goddes = God's

*His bulwark but a broken wall;
 The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes;
 Of shepherd he his muster makes;
 And thus, as sure his foe to wound,
 The angels' trumps alarum sound.
 My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
 Stick to the tents that he hath pight.
 Within his crib is surest ward;
 This little Babe will be thy guard.
 If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy,
 Then flit not from this heavenly Boy.* – Robert Southwell
 pight = pitched; flit = flee

*The beasts are parcel of his pomp,
 The wooden dish his plate.
 The persons in that poor attire
 His royal liveries wear;
 The Prince himself is come from heav'n;
 This pomp is prized there.
 With joy approach, O Christian wight,
 Do homage to thy King,
 And highly praise his humble pomp
 wich he from Heav'n doth bring.* – Robert Southwell

*God's purvayance for sustenance,
 It is for man.
 Then we always to give him praise,
 And thank him than.* – William Cornish
 iwis = indeed

10. Deo Gracias
*Adam lay ibounden,
 bounden in a bond;
 Four thousand winter
 thought he not to long
 And all was for an appil,
 an appil that he tok,
 As clerkès finden
 written in their book.
 Ne had the appil takè ben,
 The appil takè ben,*

11. Recession
*Hodie Christus natus est:
 hodie Salvator apparuit:
 hodie in terra canunt angeli:
 laetantur archangeli:
 hodie exultant justi dicentes:
 Gloria in excelsis Deo,
 Alleluia!*

Psaume 121

A contemporary of Britten's, Darius Milhaud was a French composer who also traveled to the United States in 1940. In Paris Milhaud had been a member of the group of composers known as "Les Six." A prolific composer of nearly 450 works, he was influenced by jazz and often worked in the theater. During the period 1947-1971 he spent alternate years teaching at Mills College in California and at the Paris Conservatoire.

Milhaud's *Psaume 121* was written on commission from the Harvard Glee Club in 1921. He used a French translation of the psalm by his close associate, Paul Claudel, the diplomat/poet. There are some anomalies concerning the text: one bible lists the psalm as number 122. And the English and French versions use different tenses; this can be explained by the Hebrew language, which often does not distinguish between past and future.

Milhaud's lively setting is for men's voices, divided into 6 or more parts. The upward scales reflect the psalm text (a group of psalms were known as *Songs of Degrees* or *Songs of Ascents* in the Hebrew bible). Near the end there are six measures of murky, bi-tonal writing, which resolve to a sunny major chord by the end.

<i>Je me suis fondu de joie en ces choses qui m'ont été dites, Nous irons dans la maison du Seigneur Nos pieds se sont trop attardés en ces lieux que te précédent Jérusalem. Jérusalem qui est édiflée comme une ville dont la participation est en elle- même C'est là que sont montées les tribus en triomphe, les tribus du Seigneur ont monté</i>	I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,
--	--

*Ne haddè never our lady
 A ben hevenè quene.
 Blessèd be the time
 That appil takè was.
 Therefore we moun singen.
 Deo gracias!* – Anon. 15th century
 ibounden = tied up; a ben = had been;
 ne had = had not; moun singe = do well
 to sing; takè ben = been taken;
 Deo gracias! = Thanks be to God!

Today Christ is born,
 today the Savior has appeared,
 today on earth angels sing
 and archangels rejoice;
 today the just joyfully exclaim:
 Glory to God on high,
 Alleluia!

Milhaud

*Célébration qui est Israel
pour rendre témoignage au Seigneur.*

*Là ces trônes en une grande assise au
dessus de la demeure de David.
Que votre prière soit la paix qu'il y a
dans Jérusalem!*

*Et l'abondance à ceux que l'aiment!
Que la paix soit dans ta vertu
Et l'abondance dans la couronne de tes
tours.*

*A cause de tes frères et de tous ceux qui
m'approchent je parlais de toi,
pacifique.*

*A cause de la demeure du Seigneur
votre Dieu
J'ai cherché le bonheur en Toi.*

Unto the testimony of Israel

To give thanks unto the name of the
Lord.
For there are set thrones of judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And prosperity within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions'
sake,
I will now say, Peace be within thee.

Because of the house of the Lord our
God
I will seek thy good.

Ave Maria

In his seven-part *Ave Maria* for male chorus, the 20th-century German composer Franz Biebl uses double chorus texture. The motet alternates between the story of the annunciation and incarnation, sung by three soloists, and the Ave Maria, sung by the four-part chorus with descant provided by the soloists.

The first two solo verses describe the dialogue between Mary and the Archangel, and the chorus follows each with the first half of the Ave Maria, praising Mary. Following the last solo, which describes the incarnation, the texture broadens as the chorus and soloists conclude the Ave Maria, beseeching Mary to intercede with her son for the sins of the world (“Sancta Maria . . . ora pro nobis peccatoribus . . .”). The motet ends with a short Amen which intertwines the chorus and solo parts, signifying the synthesis of heaven and earth embodied in both the soloists’ incarnation story and the act of prayer, in which all parts join.

*Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ et
concepit de Spiritu sancto.*

The Angel of the Lord made his annun-
ciation to Mary, and she conceived by
the Holy Spirit.

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus
tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus et
benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.*

Hail, Mary, full of grace, Lord be with
you, blessed are you among women and
blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

*Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat
mihi secundum verbum tuum.*

Mary said: Behold the handmaiden of
the Lord, let it be unto me according to
your word.

*Et verbum caro factum est et habitavit in
nobis.*

And the word was made flesh and dwelt
among us.

*Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis
peccatoribus nunc et in hora mortis
nostræ. Amen.*

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us
sinners now and in the hour of our
death. Amen.

I Wonder as I Wander

Appalachian Carol, arr. Niles

The singer-composer John Jacob Niles was renowned for collecting folk music. His arrangement, for men’s voices, of *I Wonder as I Wander*, an Appalachian tune, is one of his best.

*I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die,
For poor on'ry people like you and like I...
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.*

*When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.*

*If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
He surely could have it, 'cause He was the King.*

A Hymn to the Virgin

Britten

We return to Britten with *Hymn to the Virgin*, a piece sung at his funeral. This work was written in 1930 when he was 17, and was revised in 1934. It is an antiphonal and “macaronic” piece in which the full chorus sings in English, answered by a smaller chorus in Latin, a common practice in medieval hymns.

Of one that is so fair and bright

Velut maris stella, As the star of the sea

Brighter than the day is light

Parens et puella: Mother and Virgin:

I cry to thee, thou see to me,

Lady, pray thy son for me

Tam pia So holy,

That I may come to thee,

Maria! Mary!

All this world was forlorn

Eva peccatrice, Through the sins of Eve,

Till our Lord was y-born

De te genetrice Out of thee, His mother.

With “Ave” it went away

darkest night, and comes the day
Salutis; of salvation;

The well springeth out of thee
Virtutis of virtue.

Lady, flow'r of everything,

Rosa sine spina, Rose without thorn,

thou bare Jesu, Heaven's King

Gratia divina: heavenly grace:

Of all thou bear'st the prize,

Lady, Queen of Paradise
Electa: Chosen:

Maid mild, mother

Es Effecta. art Perfect.

Carols and Lullabies (Christmas in the Southwest)

Susa

Conrad Susa is an American composer who has specialized in opera as well as scores for theater and film. He has received commissions from the San Francisco Opera and Minnesota Opera Company, among others. He is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

When Susa was asked to write a companion piece to Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, he felt he had been asked to "write a hit". He delayed for some years until a friend showed him a collection of traditional Spanish carols. He wrote:

"Excited, I juggled them around to form a narrative. I noted their many connections to Renaissance music along with their homey, artful simplicity. Finally, the overriding image of a Southwestern piñata party for the new baby led me to add guitar and marimba to Britten's harp..."

For *Carols and Lullabies* Susa has included two texts in Catalan and eight in Spanish. He has specified his preference for using North American Spanish pronunciation like Mexican or Puerto Rican, rather than classic European Spanish. The "narrative" takes us from Mary and Joseph's journey, to the poetic idea of spring in winter, to lullabies, scenes at the manger, bells ringing in honor of the birth, fires lit in celebration, gifts, and more lullabies.

I. ¡Oh mi Belén! (Vizcaya, Spain)

¡Oh mi Belén!

Llegó tu hora bien amada.

La luz que irradias sin cesar

Es como un faro que nos guía

En nuestra ruta, noche y día.

¡Oh mi Belén!

Oh, my Bethlehem!

Your well-beloved hour has arrived!

The light you shine unceasingly

Is like a beacon that guides us

On our way, night and day.

Oh my Bethlehem!

II. El Desembre Congelat (Catalonia)

El desembre congelat, confús es retira.

Abril de flors coronat, tot el món admira.

Quan en un jardí d'amor neix una divina flor;

D'una rosa bella, fecunda y poncella.

El primer Pare causà la nit tenebrosa.

Que a tot el món ofuscà la vista penosa;

Mes en una mitja nit, brilla el sol que n'és eixit.

D'una bella aurora

Que el cel enamora.

El més de maig ha florit, sense ser encara.

Un lliri blanc y polit, de fragancia rara.

Que per tot el món se sent, de Llevant fins a Ponent.

Tota sa dulçura

I olor, amb ventura.

In frozen December, confusion itself retreats

It is like April, crowned with flowers, admired by all,

When, in a garden of love, a divine flower is born

Of a beautiful, fruitful, budding rose.

The first Father caused the dark night.

Which for everyone obscures painful sight.

But one midnight, the sun shines without ceasing

From a beautiful dawn

With which the heavens fall in love.

The month of May has flowered, without it being May.

A lily white and gentle, of rare fragrance

Which everyone senses, from East to West,

All its sweetness

And bouquet, with great good fortune.

III. Alegría (Puerto Rico)

Hacia Belén se encaminan

Maria con su amante esposo,

Llevando en su compañía

Un Dios todo poderoso.

¡Alegría, alegría, alegría,

¡Alegría, alegría, y placer!

Que la Virgen va de paso

Con su esposo hacia Belén.

En cuanto Belén llegaron,

Posada al punto pidieron,

Nadie los quiso hospedar,

Porque tan pobres les vieron.

¡Alegría, alegría, alegría,

¡Alegría, alegría, y placer!

Que la Virgen va de paso

Con su esposo hacia Belén.

Los pajarillos del bosque

Al ver pasar los esposos

Les cantaban melodías

Con sus trinos armoniosos.

¡Alegría, alegría, alegría,

¡Alegría, alegría, y placer!

Que la Virgen va de paso

Con su esposo hacia Belén.

IV. A la Nanita Nana (Spain)

Mi Jesús tiene sueño, bendito sea.

Fuentecilla que corres clara y sonora,

Ruiseñor que en la selva, cantando

lloras,

Callad mientras la cuna se balancea.

Towards Bethlehem

Mary and her loving husband set off

Bringing along an all-powerful God.

Joy, joy, joy,

Joy, joy and pleasure!

That the Virgin goes

With her husband towards Bethlehem.

Just as soon as they arrived in Bethlehem

They asked around for lodgings

But no one wanted to put them up

Because they looked so poor.

Joy, joy, joy,

Joy, joy and pleasure!

That the Virgin goes

With her husband towards Bethlehem.

On seeing them pass by,

The little birds of the forest

Were singing them melodies

With their harmonious trills.

Joy, joy, joy,

Joy, joy and pleasure!

That the Virgin goes

With her husband towards Bethlehem.

V. Las Posadas (Spain)

¿Quieres que te quite, mi bien, de las

pajas?

¿Quieres que te adoren todos los

pastores?

A rrrru, niño chiquito, ya está

arrulladito el niño.

Mi querido Padre, mi Dios y señor,

Que sufriste alegre del frío su rigor

A rrrru, niño chiquito, ya está

arrulladito el niño.

My Jesus is tired, blessed may he be.

Little fountain, you run clear and

resonant

Nightingale, in the forest, singing, you

weep

Hush while the cradle is rocked.

V. The Lodgings

Shall I take you from the straw, my

treasure?

Shall all the shepherds come adore you?

Coo coo, little child, the child has fallen

asleep.

My dear Father, my God and Lord,

who gladly suffered the harshness of the cold.

Coo coo, little child, the child has fallen

to sleep.

VI. Campana sobre Campana (Andalusia, Spain)
¡Campana sobre campana,
Y sobre campana una!
Asómate a la ventana,
Y verse al Niño en la cuna.

Belén, campanas de Belén
Que los ángeles tocan
¿Qué nueva me traéis?

Recogido tu rebaño,
¿Adónde vas pastorcito?
Voy a llevar al portal
Requesón, manteca y vino.

Si aún las estrellas alumbran,
¿Pastor, dónde quieres ir?
Voy al portal por si el Niño
Con Él me deja dormir.

VII. En Belén Tocan a Fuego (Castilla, Spain)

En Belén tocan a fuego
 Del portal salen las llamas.
 Porque dicen que ha nacido El Redentor
 de las almas.

Brincan y bailan los peces en el río,
 Brincan y bailan de ver a Dios nacido.

En un portal de Belén
 Nació un clavel encarnado
 Que por redimir el mundo se ha vuelto
 lirio morado.

La Virgen lava pañales
 Y los tiende en el romero.
 Los pajarillos cantaban y el agua se iba
 riendo.

VIII. El Noi de la Mare (Catalonia)

¿Qué li darem a n'el Noi de la Mare?
¿Qué li darem que li sápig bon?
Li darem panses en un balances,
Li darem figues en un paneró.

¿Qué li darem a n'el Noi de la Mare?
¿Qué li darem a l'hermos Infantó?

Bell after bell
 After bell!
 Come to the window,
 And you'll see the Child in His cradle.

Bethlehem, bells of Bethlehem
 Which the angels play
 What news do you bring me?
 Now that your flock is gathered,
 Where are you going, little shepherd?
 I'll carry to the manger
 Farmers' cheese, butter and wine.

If the stars still shine
 Where do you want to go, shepherd?
 I go to the manger in case the Child
 Lets me sleep beside Him

In Bethlehem they light a fire
 The flames leave the manger.
 Because they say that the Redeemer of
 Souls is born.

The fish in the river are leaping and
 dancing
 They leap and they dance to see God
 born.

In a manger in Bethlehem
 A carnation incarnate was born
 Who to redeem the world has become a
 lily stained with purple.

The Virgin washes swaddling clothes
 And hangs them on the rosemary bush.
 The little birds were singing and the
 water ran laughing.

What shall we give to the Mother's
 Child?
 What shall we give that will delight
 him?
 We'll give him raisins in baskets
 We'll give him figs in a hamper.

What shall we give to the Mother's
 Child?
 What shall we give to the beautiful

Panses i figues i nuez i olives,
Panses i figues i mel i mató.

Tam patantam que les figues son verdes,
Tam patantam, que ja madurarán.
Si no maduren el día de Pasqua,
Madurarán en el día de Ram.

IX. Chiquirriquitín (Andalusia, Spain)

¡Chiquirriquitín!
Metidito entre pajas:
¡Ay del chiquirriquitín!
Queridito del alma.

Por debajo del arco del portaliño
Se descubre a María, José y el Niño.

¡Chiquirriquitín!
Metidito entre pajas:
¡Ay del chiquirriquitín!
Queridito del alma.

Entre el buey y la mula Dios ha nacido,
Y en un pobre pesebre le han recogido.

X. El Rorro (Mexico)

A la rurre, niño chiquito.
Duermase ya, mi Jesucito.
Del elefante hasta el mosquito
Guarden silencio, no le hagan ruido.
Noche venturoso, noche de alegría.
Bendita la dulce, divina María.

Coros celestiales, con su dulce acento,
Canten la ventura de este nacimiento.

infant?
 Raisins and figs and walnuts and olives
 Raisins and figs and honey and farmers'
 cheese.
 Even if the figs are green
 Even so, they'll ripen.
 If they don't ripen on Palm Sunday
 They'll ripen on Easter.

Little baby boy!
 Placed in the straw,
 oh the little baby boy!
 Tiny beloved of the soul.
 Under the arch of the little manger
 Mary, Joseph and the Child are revealed.

Little baby boy!
 Placed in the straw,
 oh the little baby boy!
 Tiny beloved of the soul.

Between an ox and a mule God has been
 born
 And they've placed him in a lowly
 manger.

A la rurre, little baby boy.
Sleep now, my little Jesus.
From the elephant to the mosquito
Stay silent, don't disturb Him.
Fortunate night, night of joy.
Blessed be the sweet, divine Mary.

Heavenly choirs, with your sweet
 accent,
 Sing of the good fortune of this birth!

Upcoming NAS Concerts

Calamity and Consolation: From Darkness to Light
 A timeless requiem and a new classic from Finland
 Friday, March 7, 2014 at 8 p.m., Sunday, March 9, 2014 at 4 p.m.
 The Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 East 88th Street

Full Fathom Five: Shakespeare in Song
 Composers from many lands in love with the bard
 Thursday, May 22, 2014 at 8 p.m.
 Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church
 552 West End Avenue at 87th Street

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NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS is incorporated as a nonprofit charitable organization under the laws of the State of New York. Contributions are tax-deductible. Dues and ticket sales meet only half of our annual expenses. Donations of any size are gratefully accepted and should be mailed to New Amsterdam Singers, Inc., Box 373, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025. A copy of our latest annual report is available upon written request.

NAS Restricted Endowment Fund

At the conclusion of our thirtieth-anniversary capital campaign, NAS established a restricted endowment fund to help provide a steady source of income and stability in future years. Thanks to the generosity of more than a hundred donors, we achieved a sizable beginning principal balance. Additional gifts by check, stock transfer, or bequest are most welcome.

NAS Online

Visit our home page, www.nasingers.org, for the latest chorus news. The site includes a 35th anniversary compilation of the many commissions and premieres that New Amsterdam Singers has been proud to present. (Click on "repertoire.") For a selective chronology, click on "history." You can even hear us sing when you click on "listen."

For updates on our concerts, tours, and benefits, photo galleries of chorus events, alumni news, and a look back at highlights of the past 45 years, "like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

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About the Artists

The NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS, now in its forty-sixth year, is known for the breadth and variety of its repertoire. Specializing in a cappella and double chorus works, the chorus sings music ranging from the 16th century through contemporary pieces, including many it has commissioned. Recent world premieres include compositions by Jacob Avshalomov, Behzad Ranjbaran, Alla Borzova, Alexander Dmitriev, Charles Fussell, Katherine Hoover, Paul Alan Levi and Ronald Perera. New York City premieres include works by Adolphus Hailstork, Matthew Harris, Kirke Mechem and Daniel Pinkham, and more than twenty others.

NAS has performed with the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein, at Alice Tully Hall as a guest of Clarion Concerts, and with the American-Russian Youth Orchestra under Leon Botstein at Tanglewood and Carnegie Hall. In 1999, NAS appeared with Anonymous Four and the Concordia Orchestra in Richard Einhorn's *Voices of Light* at Avery Fisher Hall, under Marin Alsop. In 2006 NAS performed *Voices of Light* at the Winter Garden of the World Financial Center, with Anonymous Four and the Ensemble Sospeso under David Hattner, for broadcast on WNYC's "New Sounds."

NAS appears internationally under Ms. Longstreth's direction. The chorus has sung at the Irakleion Festival in Greece; the Granada Festival in Spain; the International Choral Festival at Miedzyzdroje, Poland; the Festival of the Algarve in Portugal; Les Chorégies d'Orange in France; and the Llangollen International

Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. More recently the chorus appeared in Turkey, Scandinavia, Croatia, Spain, Russia and the Baltics, and Argentina and Uruguay. In 2010 NAS was pleased to receive permission from the State and Treasury Departments to tour Cuba on a cultural visa. In 2013 NAS performed in South Africa.

CLARA LONGSTRETH has conducted New Amsterdam Singers since its formation in 1968. She has served on the faculty of Rutgers University, where she conducted the Voorhees Choir of Douglas College. A student of conductor G. Wallace Woodworth at Harvard University, Ms. Longstreth trained for her master's degree at the Juilliard School under Richard Westenburg. Further study included work with Amy Kaiser and Semyon Bychkov at the Mannes College of Music, and with Helmuth Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival.

In 1997, Ms. Longstreth guest-conducted the Limón Dance Company in performance with NAS and the Riverside Choir. In 2000 she conducted NAS and the Mannes College Orchestra in the folk opera *Down in the Valley* during Symphony Space's "Wall to Wall Kurt Weill" program. In 2005 she conducted the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony in a joint performance with NAS of Paul Alan Levi's *Mark Twain Suite*. She is a frequent guest conductor at the annual Messiah Sing-In at Avery Fisher Hall and at the summer sings of the West Village Chorale, the New York Choral Society and other choruses. In February 2006 Ms. Longstreth presented a lecture-demonstration on "Adventures in Programming" at the Eastern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. In 2007 she was engaged to serve as consultant on contemporary music to Hunter High School under a new program funded by the New York State Music Fund. In 2009 she received an Alumnae Recognition Award from Radcliffe College for her founding and longtime direction of New Amsterdam Singers.

Ms. Longstreth has served as adjudicator of choral festivals, conducted the Riverdale Country School choral groups for many years, and conducted the Juilliard Chorus and Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall. Of Ms. Longstreth's programs, Allan Kozinn wrote in the *New York Times*: "When a director takes up the challenge of building a cohesive program around a broad theme, we are reminded that programming can be an art."

MAX BLUM received his Master's degree in Choral Conducting at the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Masaaki Suzuki, Marguerite Brooks, and Jeffrey Douma. In 2011 he taught and directed a Chinese middle school choir in Xiuning, China, and led performances at cathedrals and concert halls across Europe, including an Evensong at the Berliner Dom, as the Assistant Conductor of the Yale Glee Club. He is Adjunct Professor of Choral Music at Quinnipiac University.

PEN YING FANG studied with Paul Hoffmann and Barbara Gonzalez-Palmer, earning a BM and MM in Piano, at Rutgers University. Ms. Fang has accompanied many prominent artists in master classes, including Keith Underwood, Evelyn Glennie, Brian Macintosh, and Christopher Arneson. In 2007 she played at the Florence Voice Seminar in Florence, Italy. Currently she serves as a staff accompanist at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and teaches piano students in the central New Jersey area.

Percussionist WILLIAM TRIGG has appeared many times with NAS over the years. He has premiered solo works by Babbitt, Bouchard, Dlugoszewski, Kupferman, & Shapely, and was solo marimbist in the New York City Ballet's premiere production of Michael Torke's "Echo." He is a member of the Brooklyn Philharmonic and

the Car Music Project, and was a founding member of the Manhattan Marimba Quartet and the PULSE Percussion Ensemble. He has performed and recorded with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Steve Reich & Musicians, the Philip Glass Ensemble, the San Francisco Symphony, the Group for Contemporary Music, New York Virtuosi, American Composers Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and numerous others. He has premiered over 100 solo, chamber, and orchestral works. He is on the faculty of The College of New Jersey.

Guitarist STEPHEN BENSON is comfortable in a variety of musical settings from jazz and classical music to rock, blues, rhythm and blues, Broadway, bluegrass and klezmer music. He has performed and or recorded with people as diverse as Phoebe Snow, John Sebastian, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Natalie Cole, Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey, the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Lukes and the American Symphony Orchestra. He has been a regular performer at the Grand Canyon Music Festival and has performed at the Carnival of Venice. He currently performs on Broadway in the orchestra pits of *The Lion King*, *Chicago* and *Annie*. He is on the jazz faculty at Montclair State University.

FRAN DUFFY is Principal Harp of the Wheeling and Allentown Symphony Orchestras and the Hudson Valley Philharmonic. She has performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony, the Albany Symphony and the Hartford Symphony under conductors including Keith Lockhart, Kurt Masur, Charles Dutoit, and Lorin Maazel. She is an active free-lancer in the NY Metropolitan area, playing Broadway shows such as Mel Brooks' *The Producers*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Fantasticks* and the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular. Ms. Duffy has toured the USA with the River City Brass Band in addition to performing with the Charleston Symphony and in the New York City area as a bass trombonist. She has been on the faculty of the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina.

NAS CDs

NAS released its 40th Anniversary 2-CD set, a compilation of best-loved live performances. The double album includes almost 2½ hours of music and sells for just \$20. The collection includes 24 selections, dating from our Merkin Concert Hall debut in May 1983. Composers represented include J. S. Bach, Schein, Schütz, Haydn, Schubert, Dvořák, Brahms, Byrd, Copland, Joplin, Poulenc, Frank Martin, Britten, Paul Alan Levi, Matthew Harris, Ronald Perera and Irving Fine.

NAS also has available our second commercial compact disc, *Island of Hope*, featuring 20th-century American choral music. It includes works by Leonard Bernstein, Ricky Ian Gordon, Paul Alan Levi, Ronald Perera and Randall Thompson. Our first CD, *American Journey*, released in 1993, also focuses on American composers, among them Samuel Barber, Matthew Harris, Charles Ives and Halsey Stevens. Both appear on the Albany Records label. Both of these CDs are available for \$15 each at our concerts.

NAS CDs can also be obtained by mail from New Amsterdam Singers, P.O. Box 373, New York, NY 10025. Please add \$3 for shipping and handling on mail orders. Tapes and CDs of selected NAS performances are also available.

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