

# TERRA NOSTRA

ORATORIO BY STACY GARROP

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## PART I: CREATION OF THE WORLD

- 1 In the Beginning (8:16)  
*soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, chorus*
- 2 God's World (3:56)  
*chorus*
- 3 On thine own child (2:28)  
*children*
- 4 Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth! (4:16)  
*baritone*
- 5 A Blade of Grass (2:06)  
*children, chorus*

## PART II: THE RISE OF HUMANITY

- 6 Locksley Hall (3:47)  
*tenor, chorus*
- 7 Railways 1846 (1:49)  
*men of the chorus*
- 8 A Song of Speed (2:00)  
*baritone, chorus*
- 9 High Flight (2:52)  
*chorus*
- 10 Binsey Poplars (4:13)  
*soprano, mezzo-soprano*
- 11 A Dirge (3:53)  
*soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, chorus*

**PART III:  
SEARCHING  
FOR BALANCE**

- 12** **Darkness** (3:57)  
*mezzo-soprano, women of the chorus*
- 13** **Earth Screaming** (4:32)  
*tenor, baritone*
- 14** **The World Is Too Much With Us** (2:54)  
*soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, chorus*
- 15** **The Want of Peace** (4:18)  
*chorus*
- 16** **A Child said, What is the grass?** (2:59)  
*soprano*
- 17** **There was a child went forth every day** (2:03)  
*children*
- 18** **A Blade of Grass/I bequeath myself** (5:20)  
*soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, children, chorus*

**Michelle Areyzaga** soprano  
**Leah Dexter** mezzo-soprano  
**Jesse Donner** tenor  
**David Govertsen** baritone  
**Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra**  
**Chorale & Alice Millar Chapel Choir**  
**Uniting Voices**  
**Stephen Alltop** conductor

# PROGRAM NOTE

BY STACY GARROP

## **TERRA NOSTRA**

focuses on the relationship between our planet and mankind, how this relationship has shifted over time, and how we can re-establish a harmonious balance. This concept is presented over the course of three parts.

## **PART I: CREATION OF THE WORLD**

celebrates the birth and beauty of our planet. The oratorio begins with creation myths from India, North America, and Egypt that are integrated into the opening lines of "Genesis" from the Old Testament. The music surges forth from these creation stories into "God's World" by Edna St. Vincent Millay, which describes the world in exuberant and vivid detail. Percy Bysshe Shelley's "On thine own child" praises Mother Earth for her role bringing forth all life, while Walt Whitman sings a love song to the planet in "Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth!" Part I ends with "A Blade of Grass," in which Whitman muses on how our planet has been spinning in the heavens for a very long time.

## **PART II: THE RISE OF HUMANITY**

examines the achievements of mankind, particularly since the dawn of the Industrial Age. Lord Alfred Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" sets an auspicious tone that mankind is on the verge of great discoveries. This is followed in short order by Charles Mackay's "Railways 1846," William Ernest Henley's "A Song of Speed," and John Gillespie Magee, Jr.'s "High Flight," each of which celebrates a new milestone in technological

achievement. In “Binsey Poplars,” Gerard Manley Hopkins takes note of the effect that these advances are having on the planet, with trees being brought down and landscapes forever changed. Percy Bysshe Shelley’s “A Dirge” concludes Part II with a warning that the planet is beginning to sound a grave alarm.

### PART III: SEARCHING FOR BALANCE

questions how we can create more awareness for our planet’s plight, re-establish a deeper connection to it, and find a balance for living within our planet’s resources. Three texts continue the Earth’s plea that ended the previous section: Lord Byron’s “Darkness” speaks of a natural disaster (a volcano) that has blotted out the sun from humanity and the panic that ensues; contemporary poet, Esther Iverem’s “Earth Screaming” gives voice to the modern issues of our changing climate; and William Wordsworth’s “The World Is Too Much With Us” warns us that we are almost out of time to change our course. Contemporary agrarian poet Wendell Berry’s “The Want of Peace” speaks to us at the climax of the oratorio, reminding us that we can find harmony with the planet if we choose to live more simply, and to

recall that we ourselves came from the earth. Two Walt Whitman texts — “A Child said, ‘What is the grass?’” and “There was a child went forth every day” — echo Berry’s thoughts, reminding us that we are of the earth, as is everything that we see on our planet. The oratorio concludes with a reprise of Whitman’s “A Blade of Grass” from Part I, this time interspersed with an additional Whitman text that sublimely states, “I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love...”



My hope in writing this oratorio is to invite listeners to consider how we interact with our planet, and what we can each do personally to keep the planet going for future generations. We are the only stewards Earth has; what can each of us do to leave her in better shape than we found her?



*Terra Nostra* was commissioned by the San Francisco Choral Society and the Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir. These groups premiered the piece under the baton of Maestro Robert Geary in November 2015.



## STACY GARROP

Dr. Stacy Garrop is an award-winning, nationally recognized freelance composer whose music is centered on dramatic and lyrical storytelling. Her catalog covers a wide range of genres, with works for orchestra, opera, oratorio, wind ensemble, choir, art song, and various sized chamber ensembles. She has received numerous awards and grants including an Arts and Letters Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Fromm Music Foundation Grant, Barlow Prize, and three Barlow Endowment commissions. Notable commissions include *Forging Steel* for the Pittsburgh Symphony, *Goddess Triptych* for the St. Louis Symphony, *The Battle for the Ballot* for the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, *Berko's Journey* for the Omaha Symphony, *Spectacle of Light* for Music of the Baroque, *The Transformation of Jane Doe* for Chicago Opera Theater, *In a House Besieged* for The Crossing,

*Give Me Hunger* for Chanticleer, *Glorious Mahalia* for the Kronos Quartet, *Rites for the Afterlife* for the Akropolis and Calefax Reed Quintets, and *My Dearest Ruth* for voice and piano, with text by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's husband.

Dr. Garrop was the inaugural Emerging Opera Composer for Chicago Opera Theater's Vanguard Program (2018–2020) and has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Champaign-Urbana Symphony (2016–2019) and Albany Symphony (2009–2010). Theodore Presser Company publishes her works. Her music is frequently recorded by Cedille Records with other works available on several additional labels.

An advocate for helping composers to build their careers, she often mentors emerging composers of all ages through her work with various music organizations and guest residencies at universities.

Dr. Garrop earned degrees in music composition at the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor (B.M.), University of Chicago (M.A.), and Indiana University–Bloomington (D.M.). She taught composition full-time at Roosevelt University for 16 years (2000–2016) before leaving to launch her freelance career.

**GARROP.COM**



## STEPHEN ALLTOP

Stephen Alltop is renowned for conducting both orchestral and choral ensembles and performing as a keyboard artist. As Music Director of the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, he has prepared collaborations with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival, Chicago Opera Theater, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Star Wars in Concert*, and *Louis the Child* at Lollapalooza. He also serves as Music Director of the Champaign-Urbana and Elmhurst Symphony Orchestras and was named 2022 Conductor of the Year by the Illinois Council of Orchestras. A specialist in oratorio and historical performance practice, Dr. Alltop serves on the conducting faculty at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music where he conducts the Alice Millar Chapel Choir and Baroque Music Ensemble.

Mr. Alltop has guest conducted numerous orchestras and choruses

across the United States, Italy, and South Korea, and made appearances with Chicago's Grant Park Orchestra. He has worked closely with leading composers of the day, including residency projects with John Corigliano, Eleanor Daley, Stacy Garrop, Stephen Paulus, and Eric Whitacre, and has conducted world premieres of works by John Luther Adams, Fabrizio Festa, Stacy Garrop, Stephen Paulus, Joseph Schwantner, and many others.

Mr. Alltop has appeared with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as both a harpsichord and organ soloist. He performs regularly with Chicago's Music of the Baroque, and has also appeared with the Joffrey Ballet, Minnesota Orchestra, and Melbourne, and Omaha Symphonies. An advocate for diversity in programming, he seeks to bring attention to under-represented composers in both the orchestral and choral realm. A passionate ambassador for music, Dr. Alltop lectures frequently for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Northwestern University Alumnae Continuing Education Series, and other organizations. Since 2014, he has given presentations on leadership for various programs at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management.

**STEPHENALLTOP.COM**



## MICHELLE AREYZAGA

Praised for her “radiant and all-encompassing soprano” (*Chicago Tribune*), Michelle Areyzaga performs a diverse range of orchestral, oratorio, opera, and chamber repertoire. As a “consummate vocal actress” (*Fanfare*), she is held in high regard throughout the United States and abroad for her “appealing, expressive soprano” (*New York Times*).

Michelle has sung leading roles for New York City Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Opera Birmingham, and other regional companies. Some of her favorite roles include Micaela (*Carmen*), Cio-Cio-San (*Madama Butterfly*), Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Musetta (*La bohème*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Cunegonde (*Candide*). Her staged portrayals have consistently garnered high praise such as “sensational” for her performances of Lauretta in Gianni

Schicchi (*Chicago Reader*) and “stunning” as Bubikopf in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (*Opera Magazine*, London).

Highly respected for her work as an avid chamber musician and recitalist, Michelle has been a repeat guest of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, New York Festival of Song, Avalon String Quartet, and Lincoln Trio. She has been a member of the Chicago Ensemble since the beginning of her career.

Renowned for her artistry with new music and contemporary composers, Ms. Areyzaga has been honored to perform and record multiple world-premieres for composers Gwyneth Walker, Lita Grier, Stacy Garrop, Fabio Luisi, and Gustavo Leone. Her most recent art song album, *Were I With Thee*, features contemporary American art songs, all with texts by women, including world-premiere recordings of works by Wayland Rogers and Gwyneth Walker. *Artsong Update* praised the album as “one of the finest art song CDs ever... a ground-breaking art song CD of twenty-first century sensibility.”

Ms. Areyzaga is artist faculty at Roosevelt University’s Chicago College of Performing Arts and Loyola University Chicago.

**MICHELLEAREYZAGA.COM**



## LEAH DEXTER

Leah Dexter has been praised as a performer of “commanding force, both vocally and dramatically” (*Chicago Classical Review*) and for her “opulent tone and characterization to match” (*Opera News*). A performing artist known for her diverse operatic roles, she has been seen as Carmen, Mrs. Herring in *Albert Herring*, Siegrune in *Die Walkure*, Annina in *La Traviata*, Mistress Paddington in *Quamino’s Map*, Bertha in *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, Annie in *Porgy & Bess*, Gloria in *Freedom Ride*, Nelda in *Taking Up Serpents*, Suzy/Lolette in *La Rondine*, Dimas’ Mother/Lupe in *Frida*, and Ib in *Becoming Santa Claus*, among other roles, and with companies including Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Detroit Opera, and Sarasota Opera.

Ms. Dexter has been alto soloist in works ranging from Baroque to contemporary,

including Handel’s *Messiah*, *King David*, *Let My People Go*, Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, *Hope: An Oratorio*, Jenkins’ *Stabat Mater* and *The Armed Man*, Mahler’s *Symphony No. 2*, *Elijah*, Rossini’s *Petite Messe Solennelle*, *The Ordering of Moses*, *A Child of Our Time*, and Beethoven’s 9th *Symphony*, with organizations including the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, Rackham Symphony Choir, University of Michigan Choral Union, Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, Apollo Chorus of Chicago, Chicago Sinfonietta, Cincinnati Pops, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Elgin Master Chorale, Northwestern University Symphony, Champaign-Urbana Symphony, and Concordia University, among others.

In addition to her operatic and oratorio work, Leah is also a prolific recitalist and has presented programs with Oakland University, Stanford University, University of Michigan, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, PianoForte Chicago, LYNX Project, and Glessner House of Chicago. Ms. Dexter received her Bachelor and Master degrees in music performance from the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor.

**LEAHDEXTER.COM**



## JESSE DONNER

A graduate of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, tenor Jesse Donner has distinguished himself on operatic and concert stages with his “vibrant” (*Chicago Classical Review*) and “fresh and juicy” (*Chicago Tribune*) voice. Donner has sung at the Metropolitan Opera in *Boris Godunov* and *Die Meistersinger*. Recent seasons have included a return to Union Avenue Opera in his role debut as Rodolfo (*La bohème*), a role debut as Danilo (*The Merry Widow*) with St. Petersburg Opera, and a return to DuPage Opera in that role. In prior seasons, Mr. Donner joined the Louisville Orchestra as a soloist in Mozart’s *Requiem* and Handel’s *Messiah*, Toledo Opera for its Fall Gala Concert, and the Chicago Philharmonic. He also made debuts with Union Avenue Opera as Ismaele (*Nabucco*), DuPage Opera as Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*), and sang Emperor Alteum (*Turandot*) with Cedar Rapids Opera.

As a resident artist at Lyric Opera of Chicago from 2014–2017, Mr. Donner was commended for his “polished” and “heroic” tenor (*Chicago Classical Review*). Donner won a Luminarts Fellowship and the Bel Canto Foundation grand prize in 2015, a special encouragement award from the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Regional Auditions, and first place in the 2012 Michigan Friends of Opera Competition. A native of Des Moines, IA, Mr. Donner completed graduate and post-graduate studies at the University of Michigan and received his Bachelor of Music degree from Iowa State University.



## DAVID GOVERTSEN

Chicago native David Govertsen has been active as a professional singer for nearly 20 years, portraying a wide variety of opera's low-voiced heroes, villains, and buffoons. Mr. Govertsen has appeared as a soloist with numerous local and regional opera companies, including Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, Tulsa Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and the Haymarket Opera Company. He is a member of the vocal chamber quartet Fourth Coast Ensemble, performing art song in Chicago and throughout the Midwest. As a concert soloist, Mr. Govertsen has performed with the Symphony Orchestras of Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Madison, and Santa Fe, and the Rochester Philharmonic, Grant Park Orchestra, and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, among many others. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2011 as the Herald in *Otello* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted

by Riccardo Muti. He is an alumnus of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Santa Fe Opera and Central City Opera apprentice programs and holds degrees from Northwestern University, Northern Illinois University, and the College of DuPage. Mr. Govertsen is currently on faculty at North Park University, Lewis University, and the College of DuPage.

**DAVIDGOVERTSEN.COM**



## UNITING VOICES

Uniting Voices (formerly known as Chicago Children's Choir) is a nonprofit organization that empowers and unites youth from diverse backgrounds to find their voice and celebrate their common humanity through the power of music.

Founded at the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement on the South side of Chicago, Uniting Voices has grown from one community-based choir into a vast network of school-based and after-school programs that serve thousands of youth from every zip code of Chicago and beyond.

Helmed by Emmy-winner and Grammy-nominee Josephine Lee, Uniting Voices has also established itself as a renowned artistic powerhouse in its own right, opening doors to life-changing performance experiences that inspire young people to develop leadership

and collaboration skills. In addition to musical productions (including original works *Sita Ram*, *Long Way Home*, and *Rainbow Beach*), Uniting Voices has worked with some of the world's most influential musicians and musical institutions, including Beyoncé, Bobby McFerrin, Karol G, the Eagles, Yo Yo Ma, Luciano Pavarotti, Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam, Chance the Rapper, Common, the Q Brothers, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Lyric Opera, Ravinia Festival, and others. Through more than 55 years of touring, Uniting Voices has performed for leaders around the world (former President Obama, former South African President Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama) and is celebrated for using music as a tool to transcend cultural barriers, forging meaningful bonds between young people across the nation and the globe.

With its vision of a harmonious world, Uniting Voices has impacted the lives of tens of thousands of diverse youth throughout its history. Since its founding in 1956, the organization has built programs that reflect the racial and economic diversity of Chicago. Eighty percent of the youth it serves are from low-to-moderate income households. High school seniors enrolled in its choir programs have a 100 percent graduation and college acceptance rate, and they go on to become global ambassadors who embody Uniting Voices' core values of education, expression, and excellence in a wide array of professional fields.

**UNITINGVOICESCHICAGO.ORG**

**Josephine Lee**

President and Artistic Director

**Chloe Combs**

**Lauren Cusick**

**Nicki Dowd**

**Hana Javed**

**Gretchen Matzke**

**Nina Mellits**

**Sydney Nelkin**

**Abigail Pazmino**

**Atlas Salomon**

**Annika Sevig**

**Sophia Smith**

**Katherine Talmers**

**Kaliyah Venson**

**Nadia Wieda**

## ALICE MILLAR CHAPEL CHOIR

For over 50 years, the Alice Millar Chapel Choir has been recognized as one of the finest university chapel choirs in the United States, and an integral part of Northwestern University's choral program. The choir is comprised of undergraduate and graduate students from the Bienen School of Music, the School of Communication, and many other fields of study at Northwestern University. Significant repertoire has included numerous masses by Mozart and Haydn, oratorios and cantatas by Bach and Handel, and performances of Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and the *Marian Vespers* of Chiara Margarita Cozzolani. The Chapel Choir has given the North American premieres of Vivaldi's *Dixit Dominus*, RV 807, and Giovanni Gabrieli's *Magnificat à 33*. The choir has worked with distinguished composers of our time, including John Luther Adams, John Corigliano, Stacy Garrop, and Eric Whitacre.

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ACADEMICS/ENSEMBLES/CHAPEL-CHOIR**

**Stephen Alltop**  
conductor

**Eric Budzynski**  
organist and music associate

**Andrew Ritchie**  
assistant conductor

**Zachary Shand**  
choir manager

**Liam Kantor**  
assistant choir manager

**Averi Muniz and Carly  
Passer**  
librarians

## NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CHORALE

The Northwestern University Chorale is a large mixed-voice ensemble devoted to performing a diverse repertoire. Comprised of graduate and undergraduate students, University Chorale often collaborates with the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra in masterworks and music of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The ensemble also serves occasionally as the chorus for Northwestern's opera productions. University Chorale has given the premiere performances of many works by living composers, including the world premiere of Christopher Cerrone's *The Last Message Received* (a co-commission with Yale University), the American premieres of David Lang's *i never* and *crowd out*, and the midwestern premieres of Kaija Saariaho's *Oltra Mar*, John Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls*, James MacMillan's *St. John Passion*, Thomas Adés' *America: a Prophecy*, and David T. Little's *Am I Born* and *Dress in Magic Amulets, Dark, from My Feet*.

Chorale Director A.J. Keller is Associate Director of Choral Organizations at Northwestern and the founder and artistic director of *Stare at the Sun*, a Chicago-based, 24-voice professional chamber choir specializing in the curation and commissioning of music by living composers. He is also an active opera chorus master, having prepared choruses for Chicago Opera Theater, including for its world premiere production of Justine Chen's *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing*. He also served as assistant chorus master for the world premiere of David Lang's *prisoner of the state* with the New York Philharmonic. He has served on the faculties of North Park University in Chicago and Beloit College in Wisconsin. An active choral singer himself, A.J. can be heard on multiple recordings by The Crossing.

**A.J. Keller**  
conductor

**Tim Lambert**  
graduate assistant conductor

**Charles Foster**  
collaborative keyboardist

## COMBINED CHOIRS

### Soprano

Bella Abbrescia, Annie Burgett, Antonia Carlsson, Sabrina Chen, Megan Fleischmann, Alison Hauser, Risha Hussain, Kelly Killorin, Priya Krishnaswamy, Sohyun Lee, Averi Muniz, Claire O'Shaughnessy, Catherine Pace, Carly Passer, Paula Perez-Glassner, Lucy Rubinstein, Leah Simon, Morgan Small, Calista Smith, McKenna Troy, Ashley Wang

### Mezzo-Soprano

Yasmeen Altaji, Alexa Bartschat, Allison Brook, Lila Brown, Yolanda Chen, Haley Fuller, Eugene Hwang, Aura Jablon, Glory Lyatuu, Emily Mulva, Kelsey Norton, Brennan Pringle, Sofia Ricciarini, Emma Rothfield, Ranna Shahbazi, Geetha Somayajula, Julianna Smith, Avery Winick, Julia Woodrin

### Tenor

CC Barfield, Dajuan Brooks, Rushil Byatnal, Douglas Culclasure, Bradyn Debysingh, Logan Fenimore, David Garcia Suarez, Sam Jenkins, Liam Kantor, Tim Lambert, Steven Lyu, Mark May, Ismael Perez, Jack Reeder, Will Tanski, IceT Thaewananarumitkul

### Bass

Oluwadamilola Akanni, KC Boatright, Ben Breitman, Graydon Connolly, Lifan Deng, Mark Dovgalyuk, Ikenna Eze, Declan Franey, Zach Forbes, Finn Hagerty, Logan Henke, Hunter Hoyle, Seoyong Lee, Connor Martin, Andrew Pulver, Anthony Reznikovskiy, Andrew Ritchie, Zachary Shand, V Steibaum, Otto Vogel

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ACADEMICS/ENSEMBLES/CHORALE**

# NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Bienen School of Music's premier orchestra, the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra (NUSO) performs major literature from the 18<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries. NUSO is conducted and administered by Donald Schleicher, Artist-in-Residence and Director of Orchestras. The ensemble has evolved into one of the nation's great collegiate orchestras and has placed many alumni in top symphonic and opera orchestras. Many current members are contenders already for positions in orchestras throughout the world. In Spring 2018, NUSO embarked on a three-city Asia tour, with performances in Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing), Shanghai Symphony Hall, and Hong Kong's Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium.

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ACADEMICS/ENSEMBLES/NUSO**

## **Violin I**

Kirsten Lee, concertmaster  
Karen Mendes, Karino Wada, Isabelle Chin, Devin Lai, Qining Wang

## **Violin II**

Lucy Jung\*, Suminne Hong, Mia Huang, Waverly Long, Stephanie Ma, Joelle Chen, Thomas Yang (guest musician)

## **Viola**

Michelle Guzman\*, Tristin Saito, Sanghoo Lee, Sean Dougherty

## **Cello**

Meredith Steele\*, Su Rin Cho, Jean Hatmaker (guest musician), Alexander Chen

## **Bass**

Omar Haffar\*, Sophie Denhard, Atulya Palacharla

## **Flute**

Vaynu Kadiyali

## **Oboe**

Stina Hawkinson

## **Clarinet**

Nathan Kock

\*principal

**Bassoon**

Brian Vogel

**Horn**

Rachel Côte

**Trumpet**

Thomas Hubel

**Trombone**

Kurt Eide

**Timpani**

John Dawson

**Percussion**

Daniel Gostein

**Harp**

Autumn Selover (guest musician)

**Piano**

Eric Budzynski

Special thanks to Toni-Marie Montgomery, Dean; René Machado, Associate Dean; Donald Nally, Director of Choral Organizations; Donald Schleicher, Guest Director of Orchestras; Ryan Fossier, Orchestral Administrative Assistant; Jerry Tietz, Director of Concert Management; and the entire Concert Office staff for their support and assistance with this project.

# CREDITS

## **Producer**

James Ginsburg

## **Session Engineers**

Bill Maylone, Eric Arunas

## **Mixing and Mastering**

Bill Maylone

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# TERRA NOSTRA

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LIBRETTO

A close-up photograph of several green grass blades. Several clear water droplets of varying sizes are clinging to the blades, some at the tips and others further up. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a field of grass.

## PART I: CREATION OF THE WORLD

### 1 In the Beginning

King James Bible; creation myths from  
India, North America, and Egypt

#### **CHORUS**

In the beginning, in the beginning  
The earth was without form, and void;  
God said, Let there be light: and there  
was light.  
God saw the light, that it was good.  
God divided the light from the darkness.  
God called the light Day, and the  
darkness he called Night.  
In the beginning, in the beginning

#### **SOPRANO SOLOIST**

This universe existed in the shape of  
Darkness.  
Then the divine Svayambhu appeared,  
dispelling the darkness.  
With a thought, he created the waters,  
and placed his seed in them.  
The seed became a golden egg, in that  
egg he was born as Brahmán,  
the progenitor of the world.

*Note: printed texts represent what is sung;  
words and lines from the original texts  
are sometimes omitted.*

### **CHORUS**

In the beginning, in the beginning

### **MEZZO-SOPRANO SOLOIST**

All the earth was flooded with water.  
Inkonmi sent animals to dive for dirt at  
the bottom of the sea.  
No animal was able to get any.  
At last he sent the Muskrat.  
It came up dead, but with dirt in its  
claws.  
Inkonmi took the dirt, and made the  
earth out of it.

### **CHORUS**

In the beginning, in the beginning

### **TENOR SOLOIST**

I am he who was formed as Khepri.  
When I had formed, only I existed.  
Everything was formed after me.  
Numerous are the forms that came  
from my mouth.

What I ejected was Shu,  
What I spat out was Tefnut.  
They separated from me,  
And my eye followed them through  
the ages.  
They brought me back my eye that  
had followed them. I wept.  
The origin of men was formed from my  
tears, which came from my eye.

### **CHORUS**

In the beginning, in the beginning  
God said  
God made  
God called  
God created  
In the beginning, in the beginning  
God created the earth.

## 2 God's World

Edna St. Vincent Millay

### **CHORUS**

O world, I cannot hold thee close  
enough!

Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!

Thy mists, that roll and rise!

Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache  
and sag

And all but cry with colour! That gaunt  
crag

To crush! To lift the lean of that black  
bluff!

World, World, I cannot get thee close  
enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,

But never knew I this;

Here such a passion is

As stretcheth me apart, — Lord, I do fear

Thou'st made the world too beautiful  
this year;

My soul is all but out of me, — let fall

No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

## 3 On thine own child

Percy Bysshe Shelley

### **CHILDREN**

Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth,

Thou from whose immortal bosom

Gods and men and beasts have birth,

Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,

Breathe thine influence most divine

On thine own child.

If with mists of evening dew

Thou dost nourish these young flowers

Till they grow in scent and hue

Fairest children of the Hours,

Breathe thine influence most divine

On thine own child.

#### 4 Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth!

Walt Whitman

##### **BARITONE SOLOIST**

Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth!  
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!  
Earth of departed sunsets — earth of the  
mountains misty-topt!  
Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon!  
Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide  
of the river!  
Earth of the limpid gray of clouds  
brighter and clearer for my sake!  
Far-swooping elbowed earth — rich  
apple-blossomed earth!  
Smile, for your lover comes.  
Prodigal, you have given me love —  
therefore I to you give love.  
O unspeakable passionate love!

#### 5 A Blade of Grass

Walt Whitman

##### **CHORUS AND CHILDREN**

A blade of grass is the journeywork  
of the stars.  
Long and long has the grass been  
growing,  
Long and long has the rain been falling,  
Long has the globe been rolling round.

PART II:  
THE RISE OF  
HUMANITY



## 6 Locksley Hall

Lord Alfred Tennyson

### **TENOR SOLOIST**

For I dipt into the future, far as human  
eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the  
wonder that would be;  
Saw the heavens fill with commerce,  
argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping  
down with costly bales;

### **CHORUS**

Forward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down  
the ringing grooves of change.

### **TENOR SOLOIST**

Mother-Age help me as when life begun:  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the  
lightnings, weigh the Sun.  
O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit  
hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all  
my fancy yet.

### **CHORUS**

Forward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down  
the ringing grooves of change.

## 7 Railways 1846

Charles Mackay

### **MEN OF THE CHORUS**

Blessings on Science, and her handmaid  
Steam!

They make Utopia only half a dream;  
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,  
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,  
That all as yet completed, or begun,  
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and  
far —

Yoke your full trains to Steam's triumphal  
car;

Link town to town; unite in iron bands  
The long-estranged and oft-embattled  
lands.

Peace, mild-eyed seraph — light divine,  
Shall send their messengers by every line.

## 8 A Song of Speed

William Ernest Henley

### **BARITONE SOLOIST AND THE CHORUS:**

In the Eye of the Lord,  
By the Will of the Lord,  
In the Hand of the Lord,  
Speed!

Hence the Mercedes!  
Look at her. Shapeless?  
Unhandsome? Unpaintable?  
Yes; but the strength of seventy-five  
horses  
Is contained in her pipes and her  
cylinders.

She can stop in a foot's length;  
She steers as it were  
With a hair you might pluck  
From your Mistress's nape;  
Thus the Mercedes  
This amazing Mercedes,  
Comes, O, she comes,  
With Speed —  
Speed — Speed!

## 9 High Flight

John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

### **CHORUS**

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of  
Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-  
silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the  
tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds, — and done a  
hundred things  
You have not dreamed of — wheeled  
and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and  
flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of  
air. . . .  
Up, up the long, delirious burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with  
easy grace  
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew —  
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face  
of God.

## 10 Binsey Poplars

Gerard Manley Hopkins

### **SOPRANO AND MEZZO-SOPRANO SOLOISTS**

My aspens dear, whose airy cages  
quelled,  
Quelled or quenched in leaves the  
leaping sun,  
All felled, felled, are all felled;  
Of a fresh and folded rank  
Not spared, not one  
That swam or sank  
On meadow and river and wind-  
wandering bank.

O if we but knew what we do  
When we delve or hew —  
Hack and rack the growing green!  
Even where we mean  
To mend her we end her,  
When we hew or delve:  
After-comers cannot guess the beauty  
been.  
Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve  
Strokes of havoc unselfe  
The sweet especial scene,  
Rural scene, a rural scene,  
Sweet especial rural scene.

## 11 A Dirge

Percy Bysshe Shelley

### ***ALL SOLOISTS AND CHORUS***

Rough wind, that moanest loud  
Grief too sad for song;  
Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
Knells all the night long;  
Sad storm whose tears are vain,  
Bare woods, whose branches strain,  
Deep caves and dreary main, —  
Wail, for the world's wrong!

PART III:  
SEARCHING  
FOR BALANCE

12 Darkness

Lord Byron

**MEZZO-SOPRANO SOLOIST AND  
THE WOMEN OF THE CHORUS**

I had a dream, which was not all a  
dream.

The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the  
stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,  
Rayless, and pathless, the icy earth  
Swung blind and blackening in the  
moonless air;

Morn came and went — and came, and  
brought no day,

And men forgot their passions in the dread  
Of this their desolation; and all hearts  
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:  
And they did live by watchfires — and the  
thrones,

The palaces of crowned kings —  
Were burnt for beacons; cities were  
consum'd,

And men were gather'd round  
To look once more into each other's face;  
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;  
Forests were set on fire — but hour by hour  
They fell and faded — and the crackling  
trunks

Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was  
black.

### 13 Earth Screaming

Esther Iverem

#### **TENOR AND BARITONE SOLOISTS**

This still mountain night is not still.  
It rings loud and shaking like maracas.  
Night bugs — locusts, cicadas — are  
screaming.

There has been no water here.  
Falls trickle pitifully down rocks.  
Even at night, on this cool, Pennsylvania  
mountain,  
it is too hot.

With the upper atmospheres disappearing,  
stars so close,  
the unknown so near, coming so direct,  
settling on my head to crush my body,  
my foolish species.

Night bugs sound electric  
clicking a morse code about omega.  
An ancient rain chant rises from the trees.

You must come here.  
Come out of the city's human hum,  
to really hear  
the earth screaming.

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### 14 The World Is Too Much With Us

William Wordsworth

#### **ALL SOLOISTS AND CHORUS**

The world is too much with us; late and  
soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers; —

Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
boon!

This Sea that bares her bosom to the  
moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all  
hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping  
flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not. Great God!

## 15 The Want of Peace

Wendell Berry

### CHORUS

All goes back to the earth,  
and so I do not desire  
pride of excess or power,  
but the contentments made  
by men who have had little:  
the fisherman's silence  
receiving the river's grace,  
the gardener's musing on rows.

I lack the peace of simple things.  
I am never wholly in place.  
I find no peace or grace.  
We sell the world to buy fire,  
our way lighted by burning men,  
and that has bent my mind  
and made me think of darkness  
and wish for the dumb life of roots.

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## 16 A Child said, What is the grass?

Walt Whitman

### SOPRANO SOLOIST

A child said, What is the grass? Fetching it  
to me with full hands;  
How could I answer the child? I do not  
know what it is, any more than he.  
I guess it must be the flag of my  
disposition, out of hopeful green  
stuff woven.  
Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the  
Lord.  
A scented gift and remembrance,  
designedly dropt,  
Bearing the owner's name in the corners,  
that we may see and say Whose?  
Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the  
produced babe of the vegetation.

## 17 There was a child went forth every day

Walt Whitman

### CHILDREN

There was a child went forth every day;  
And the first object he look'd upon, that  
object he became;  
The early lilacs, and grass, and white  
and red morning-glories,  
and white and red clover, and the song  
of the phoebe-bird,  
And the Third-month lambs, and the  
sow's pink-faint litter,  
and the mare's foal, and the cow's calf,  
. . . all became part of him.

Men and women crowding fast in the  
streets,  
The streets themselves, and the facades  
of houses, and goods in the windows,  
Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd  
wharves,  
The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-  
broken crests,  
The strata of clouds, the horizon's edge,  
These became part of that child who  
went forth every day,  
and who now goes, and will always go  
forth every day.

## 18 A Blade of Grass/I bequeath myself

Walt Whitman

### **CHORUS AND CHILDREN**

A blade of grass is the journeywork of the  
stars.

Long and long has the grass been growing,  
Long and long has the rain been falling,  
Long has the globe been rolling round.

### **ALL SOLOISTS**

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from  
the grass I love,

If you want me again look for me under  
your boot-soles.

You will hardly know who I am or what I  
mean,

But I shall be good health to you,  
And filter and fibre your blood.

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,  
Missing me one place search another,  
I stop somewhere waiting for you:



