

ELEMENTS

Saturday, October 26, 2019
7:30 PM – doors open 7:00 PM
Shaughnessy Heights United Church
1550 W 33rd Avenue (33rd Ave and Granville)



Please set cellular phones to silent or airplane mode so that tonight's performance may proceed without noise interruptions.

Thank you!

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather tonight is the traditional territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, specifically the shared territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Tsleil-Waututh, and xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) First Nations.

Meet Dr. Nicholle Andrews, Artistic Director



PHOENIX
CHAMBER CHOIR

Dr. Nicholle Andrews is the fourth accomplished musician to become the Artistic Director of Phoenix Chamber Choir. Originally from Newfoundland and Labrador, she is currently the Director of Choral Studies at University of Redlands in California where she is based.

Her areas of research include performance anxiety in musicians, pitch perception, and awareness of the body through conducting.

Conducting workshops with Nicholle



During her many trips to Vancouver, Nicholle is offering workshop opportunities for choral conductors and music teachers of all levels in the following areas:

- 1. Concert Preparation
- 2. Vocal Technique
- 3. Sight-reading

See our website for details! www.PhoenixChoir.com



Meet Ian Bannerman, Assistant Conductor

Ian Bannerman is a Phoenix alumni who has recently completed his Master of Music degree in choral conducting from University of Alberta. He joins Phoenix this season in the role of assistant conductor.

Ian is active as a singer in multiple ensembles, including Vancouver Chamber Choir, Pro Coro Canada, musica intima, Early Music Vancouver, and many more.





Meet the dynamic duo that is our Artistic Team!





Ian works with the singers in rehearsal on a weekly basis, gaining experience as a conductor.

Nicholle works with the group during retreats and the week of the concert.



Katie Rife, Percussion

Vancouver percussionist Katie Rife is a dynamic and active performer of classical and new music. Katie has performed in concerts presented by Music on Main, Vancouver New Music, Redshift Music Society, Driftwood Percussion, the NOW Society, and the Turning Point Ensemble, among others. She is the principal percussionist of the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra and also works with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the Kamloops Symphony.



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(... so we can find a faster mode of transportation)

ELEMENTS

AIR

WATER

Dawn – William Barnum

Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre

Nuit D'Été – Matthew Emery*

Wade in the Water – arr. Rob Dietz

Viento Norte – Carlos Guastavino

Saltwater Joys – arr. Stephen Eisenhauer*

Deep River – arr. Norman Luboff

FIRE

Flame – Ben Parry

EARTH

Stars – Ēriks Ešenvalds

Kasar Mie La Gaji – Alberto Grau

Prometheus – Kristopher Fulton*

Terre-Neuve – Marie-Claire Saindon*

---- Intermission ----

*Canadian Composer

Dawn – William Barnum (b. 1979)

There is no more appropriate way to start a concert about the world around us than with a sunrise. Written for Choral Arts Seattle, Minnesotan composer William Barnum sets a text written by the Choral Arts' own director, Robert Bode. *Dawn* unfolds with rich voicings that move together with the fluidity of the wind, favouring conjunct motion with few skips. Increasing rhythmic activity and the fragmentation of different lines- much as the rays of light that precede a sunrise- begin the inexorable pull towards sunrise. The fragmented ascending lines bring us to the sunrise on the words "rising in the tide of mornings," with the widest range and most active melodies. It resides quickly and is not a dramatic climax, instead, it "gives the glory of each dawn a sense not of just joy, but also of mystery and longing."





Dawn – William Barnum (b. 1979)

From the door's soft opening And the day's first sigh, Filling the room, I see before me A life of doors, One opening on another: Doors upon doors, And signs upon sighs, Rising in a tide of mornings, Rising, until that final sigh, And the last morning, And the last holy breath, Whispering "this..."





Nuit D'Été – Matthew Emery* (b. 1990)

Canadian composer Matthew Emery recreates a sweet summer night in Nuit D'Ete. The recurring text is attached to a recurring musical motif: each repetition of "Oh night, oh sweet summer night" (Ô nuit, ô douce nuit d'été) is accompanied by a slowly unfolding line grounded in a descending bass part. In this one fragment is the character of the piece, the descending bass adding uncertainty to the permanence of the sweet summer night. An abundance of unresolved suspensions further enhance the bittersweet atmosphere. Each statement is followed by arching melodies and gently ebbing rhythms that evoke the freedom and breeze of a sweet summer night.



Nuit D'Été – Matthew Emery* (b. 1990)

Ô nuit, ô douce nuit d'été, qui viens à nous Parmi les foins coupés et sous la lune rose, Tu dis aux amoureux de se mettre à genoux, Et sur leurs fronts brûlants, un souffle frais se pose!

Oh night, oh sweet summer night, that comes to us When the hay is cut; and, beneath the rosy moon, Tells the lovers to kneel, Anointing their burning brows with its cooling breath.

Ô nuit, ô douce nuit d'été, qui fais fleurir Les fleurs dans les gazons et les fleurs sur les branches, Tu dis aux amoureux des femmes de s'ouvrir, Et sous les blonds tilleuls errant des formes blanches!

> Oh night, oh sweet summer night, persuading The lawn and branches to blossom, Telling the tender hearts of ladies to open Beneath the fairness of limes, where pale shapes wander.





Nuit D'Été – Matthew Emery* (b. 1990)

Ô nuit, ô douce nuit d'été, sur les mers Alanguis le sanglot des houles convulses, Tu dis aux isolés de ne pas être amers, Et la paix de ton ciel descend dans leurs pensées.

Oh night, oh sweet summer night, that upon the seas
Calms the sobs of the furious swells,
You tell the lonely not to be bitter
And the peace of your sky will descend into their thoughts

Ô nuit, ô douce nuit d'été, qui parles bas, Tes pieds se font légers et ta voix endormante, Pour que les pauvres morts ne se réveillent pas, Eux qui ne peuvant plus aimer, ô nuit aimante! -- Paul Bourget

> Oh night, oh sweet summer night, speak softly With lightened feet and soothing voice So that the poor deceased, who can love no more, Will not be wakened, oh loving night!





Viento Norte – Carlos Gustavino (b. 1912-2000)

Composer Carlos Guastavino brilliantly evokes his native Argentina without directly quoting folk song material. Instead of being displayed, the spirit of Argentinian music it is shown and felt: multiple meters between the choir and piano imitate a local dance with its perpetual rhythm and ineffable nature. Traditional romantic harmonies make the piece further enjoyable and true to the character of folk songs, while the pace of the piece mimics the fast blowing dry wind lamented by the poet.

Carolyn Shiau, piano





Viento Norte – Carlos Gustavino (b. 1912-2000)

Desgarrado entre los montes sobre largos arenales va chillando el viento norte su grito en los quebrachales.

Ripping through the wooded hills over the dunes the northern wind screams its cry in the quebracho woods.

Un cordaje de tacuaras de espinillos y chilcales bordonean la agonía del fuego en la roja tarde.

A heavy string of bamboo, thorny bushes, and chicales, play the agony of the fire in the red afternoon.

Aire de fragua, viento fuego quemando leguas pasa febrero el viento brama fuego en su aliento tierra cuarteada hombre sediento.

Air like the forge, winds of fire burning miles and miles all through February The wind blows, fire in its breath cracked land, thirsy man.





Viento Norte – Carlos Gustavino (b. 1912-2000)

Ya está la terra quemada está herida mi esperanza viento norte, río bajo, reseca está la barranca.

Pobre mi tierra cansada no te alcanzan mis sudores para verte rebrotado milagro en pampa de flores.

-- Isaac Aizenberg

The earth is charred my hope is wounded, Northern wind, low is the river dry are its banks.

My poor tired land!
My sweat will not be enough
to see you grow again
with the miracle of flowering pampas.





Flame – Ben Parry (b. 1965)

British composer Ben Parry brilliantly captures the essence of fire in his setting of Garth Bradlsey's poem Flame. It begins unassumingly, with flickering melodies over drones in the upper and then lower voices, all accompanied by sparse harmonies. On the word warmth, voices in unison slide between microtones (smaller than the keys on a piano) to create the shimmer of a bed of coals that grows and grows. Unison splits to two voices, then three and eventually to a twelve part divisi near the world "multiplied", which grows to the transcendent "so to light the world." Even here the voices are separate and highly independent, united by unbounded joy and light.



ELEMENTS

Flame – Ben Parry (b. 1965)

"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, And the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreased by being shared."

-- Siddhārtha Gautama Buddha





Flame – Ben Parry (b. 1965)

A flame

Dispels the dark.

Its delicate light repels the shadows

A flame alone

Brings within its flicker

A welcoming warmth

A single flame

That shares its light

Is but strengthened by this splitting in two

And as each flame

Begets another

Its life and light is multiplied

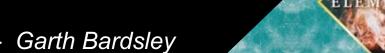
To become unending

Forever burning

A beacon that both beckons and guides

So to light the world





Stars – Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

Commissioned by Salt Lake Vocal Artists and Brady Allred, Ēriks Ešenvalds' Stars is a setting of Sara Teasdale's 1920 poem of the same name. The shimmering and ethereal tone of handbells played by singing bowl mallets recreates a variation of the omnipresent light from stars above. The main melodic ideas are simple ascending and descending, and the climbing lines draw our attention to "the dome of heaven" full of stars. Mostly unified voices amplify the vertical space with perpetually moving harmonies that mimic stars above.





Stars – Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

Alone in the night
On a dark hill
With pines around me
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars

Over my head

White and topaz

And misty red;

Myriads with beating Hearts of fire The aeons Cannot vex or tire;

Up the dome of heaven Like a great hill I watch them marching Stately and still.

And I know that I Am honored to be Witness Of so much majesty.

--- Sara Teasdale





Prometheus – Kristopher Fulton* (b. 1978)

Fulton's *Prometheus* was written for the Vancouver Cantata Singers and was inspired by the composer's "love of mythology (the 'old') and Hollywood film scores (the 'new')". The 'new' element is most readily apparent upon first listing: shortly into the piece, "la" and "ta" syllables are used to create driving rhythm that propels the piece, and the consonant heavy "Prometheus" has intrinsic rhythm further used to imbue the piece with the urgency of Prometheus fleeing the wrath of the gods. A brief middle section of full harmonies speaks to the awe of fire; and the piece "exudes and electric intensity" to the end.





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Prometheus – Kristopher Fulton* (b. 1978)

Prometheus steals the fire and runs!
Heart pounding he races through the Olympian halls,
Around marble pillars and across marble floors.
Laughing as he speeds past every Olympian,
A wonderous gift for mortals in his hands.

Prometheus stands on the cliffs of Olympus wondering how fast he can fall. How fast can he fall?

Prometheus leaps to the safety of the rolling mortal world below.

Prometheus leaps from Olympus falling faster than any shooting start with All the Heavens racing to stop him diving through cloud after cloud Prometheus stole the fire from the Gods and landed on Earth!

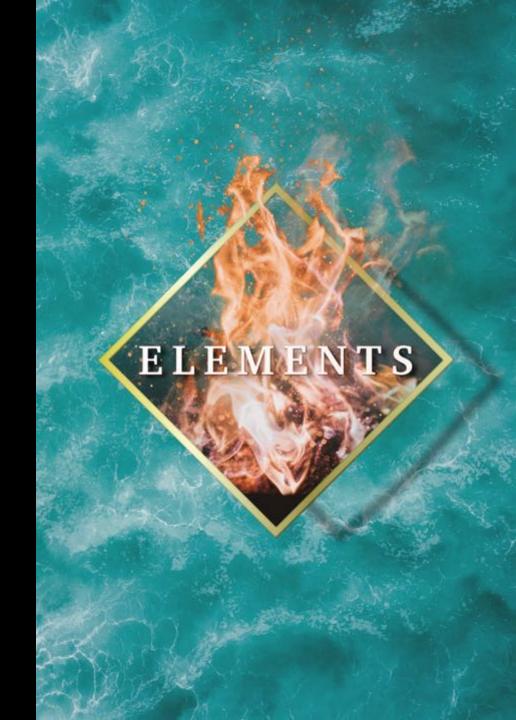
-- Kristopher Fulton





Intermission

PHOENIX CHAMBER CHOIR



Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Written for a Dr. Jocelyn Jensen and her ensemble, *Cloudburst* utilizes a variety of extended effects to recreate Whitacre's breathtaking encounter with a cloudburst (which occurs when massive amounts of water are dumped from the sky over a remarkably small area). The composer's now distinctive shimmering harmonies are perfectly suited for setting a poem centered on the regenerative effects of rain. The opening is unpredictable, swelling and shrinking in the space of a few bars; jumping from solos to full harmonies; and using chance procedures. A whispered "la Lluvia" (the rain) foreshadows the coming cloudburst, building dramatically and erupting even more powerfully with the aid of percussion and piano. It is passes quickly, and subdues to a mere rainstorm almost before we can process it.

Simon Chung - bass, Kira Fondse - soprano, Erica Northcott - speaker Carolyn Shiau - piano

Katie Rife, Martin Fisk, and Robin Reid - percussion





Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

La Iluvia...

Ojos de agua de sombra, ojos de agua de pozo, ojos de agua de sueño.

Soles azules, verdes remolinos, picos de luz que abren astros como granadas.

Dime, tierra quemada, no hay agua? hay sólo hay polvo, sólo pisadas de pies desnudos sobre la espina?

The rain...

Eyes of shadow-water, eyes of well-water, eyes of dream-water.

Blue suns, green whirlwinds, Birdbeaks of light pecking open pomegranate stars.

But tell me, burnt earth, is there no water?
Only blood, only dust, only naked footsteps on the thorns?





Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

La lluvia despierta...

Hay que dormir con los ojos abiertos, hay que soñar con les manos, soñemos sueños activos de rio, buscando su cauce, sueños de sol soñando sus mundos hay que sonar en voz alta, hay que cantar hasta que el canto eche raíces,tronco, ramas, pájaros, astros, hay que desenterrar la palabra Perdida, recordar lo que dicen la sangre y la marea, le tierra y el cuerpo, volver al punto de partida...

-- Octavio Paz

The rain awakens...

We must sleep with open eyes, we must dream with our hands, we must dream the dreams of a river seeking its course, of the sun dreaming in its worlds, we must dream aloud, we must sing till the song puts forth roots,

trunk, branches, birds, stars, we must find the lost word, and remember what the blood, the tides, the earth, and the body say, and return to the point of departure





Wade in the Water – arr. Rob Dietz (b. 1987)

Wade in the Water is a traditional African American spiritual. It is probable that Harriet Tubman used this, as many other spirituals, as a form of vital communication amongst escaping African American slaves in the underground railroad. Dietz's arrangement can be seen as supporting this use: the ambient noise of the opening section over unsettled chords and a solo voice recreate the uncertainty of escape. The following driving rhythms recreate the urgency of escape to the relative safety of the river.

Justin Yap, baritone





Wade in the Water – arr. Rob Dietz (b. 1987)

Wade in the water.
Wade in the water children.
Wade in the water.
God's gonna trouble the water.

Don't ya see that band all dressed in red God's gonna trouble the water.
Looks like the children that Moses led.
God's gonna trouble the water.

Don't ya see that band all dressed in white. Well it looks like the children of Israelites.

-- Traditional Spiritual





Saltwater Joys – arr. Stephen Eisenhauer* (b. 1974)

Canadian composer Stephen Eisenhauer sets two Newfoundland folk songs that are the heart of this arrangement: Salt Water Joys and I'se the B'y. Both are bound by the fluidity of the arrangement, with fragments of each song weaving in and around each other: listen closely under the melody for supporting rhythmic and harmonic lines that are frequently fragments of the folk songs. They are further united by the impossibly optimistic yet grounded character of the songs that so perfectly captures the character of the island.





Saltwater Joys – arr. Stephen Eisenhauer* (b. 1974)

Just to wake up in the morning, to the quiet of the cove And to hear Aunt Bessie talking to herself. And to hear poor Uncle John, mumbling wishes to old Nell It made me feel that everything was fine.

I was born down by the water, it's here I'm gonna stay I've searched for all the reasons why I should go away But I haven't got the thirst for all those modern day toys So I'll just take my chances with those saltwater joys.

Following the little brook as it trickles to the shore In the autumn when the trees are flaming red Kicking leaves that fall around me Watching sunsets paint the hills It's all I'll ever need to feel at home.





Saltwater Joys – arr. Stephen Eisenhauer* (b. 1974)

This island that we cling to has been handed down with pride By folks that fought to live here, taking hardships all in stride. So I'll compliment her beauty, hold on to my goodbyes And I'll stay and take my chances with those saltwater joys.

How can I leave those mornings with the sunrise on the cove And the gulls like flies surrounding Clayton's wharf? Platter's Island wrapped in rainbow in the evening after fog The ocean smells are perfume to my soul.

Some go to where the buildings reach to meet the clouds Where warm and gentle people turn to swarmin', faceless crowds. So I'll do without their riches, glamour and the noise And I'll stay and take my chances with those saltwater joys.



-- Wayne Chaulk



Deep River – arr. Norman Luboff (b. 1974)

Similarly to *Wade in the Water, Deep River* is an arrangement of a traditional spiritual. But unlike *Wade in the Water, Deep River* is much more harmonically oriented, with smooth voice leadings and rich harmonies being the primary emotive force instead of driving rhythms. Harmony is also used to heighten the meaning of the text: sudden leaps on the word "over" create a lifting feeling, and stillness on the word "peace" is subtly questioned by a descending bass line fitting for the longing tone of the lyrics. Where *Wade in the Water* is churning and unexpected in its striking texture shifts and active rhythms, *Deep River* is a slow moving but equally powerful force.

Wim Vermeulen, bass – Honourary Lifetime Member of Phoenix Alumni Singers of Phoenix Chamber Choir





Deep River – arr. Norman Luboff (b. 1974)

Deep River,
My home is over Jordan.
Deep River, Lord.
I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go, To the Gospel feast; That Promised Land, Where all is peace?

-- Traditional Spiritual





Kasar Mie La Gaji – Alberto Grau (b. 1937)

At first glance, the text of Kasar Mie La Gaji (the earth is tired) is straightforward: the words of the title are the only lyrics for the entire piece. But very different settings expose different meanings of this text chosen by Venezuelan composer Grau in an "international mobilization to save the earth". In the beginning, there is a tangible weight to the struggling ascending lines followed by falls that collectively accentuate the exhaustion of the earth. The rhythm of the middle section is syncopated and more active, much as the rhythms of Africa from where the text is drawn. Frustration at the exploitation of the tired earth drives this section until it overwhelms itself and collapses into a lament before struggling upward once more to a dramatic close.





Kasar Mie La Gaji – Alberto Grau (b. 1937)

Kasar mie la gaji

The earth is tired

-- African Sahel saying





Terre-Neuve – Marie-Claire Saindon* (b. 1984)

Terre-Neuve takes its title from the French name for Newfoundland, literally meaning "land-new". Saindon remarks that her piece is an attempt to create a work that captures the spirit of traditional music while bringing it into the present day. Similarly to *Viento Norte*, it invokes the character of folk songs without directly quoting them. Full harmonies and complex rhythms fueled by swells and stomps imitate the thunderous fracturing of glaciers off the shore, while tuneful melodies reside in the breaks between the waves. Combined with a frequently lilting meter that imitates the rocking of a boat, Saindon vividly reimagines the strength of the earth and the people who inhabit it amidst the waves and icebergs.





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Terre-Neuve – Marie-Claire Saindon* (b. 1984)

Terre
éclaboussée du cri d'un soleil
aux couleurs d'ocean
de roc
fauve la falaise se brise
craquements de glace
goût frais de neige qui fait trembler
la mémoire ensevelie
se mêle de vent
s'enroule au sel d'une joie
Neuve

-- Annick Perrot-Bishop

Land
splattered with shrieks of sun
with colours of ocean and rock
rust-red the cliff splits
crackling ice
a fresh taste of shivering snow
stirs a shrouded memory
mingles with the wind
spirals vibrant with the salt of a
joy
New found.







Join us for our traditional holiday concert!

Saturday, Dec 14th, 7:30pm Shaughnessy Heights United Church

Sunday, Dec 15th, 4pmWest Vancouver United Church
- Followed by reception

Tickets available at our front desk!

Thank you to all of the family, friends, and volunteers who are behind the scenes, helping us bring tonight's program to life!

Janet Nordstrand and Inman Elementary School for providing the handbells used for tonight's performance

Marla Mayson – joining us tonight as an alto singer

Front-of-house volunteers and coordinators

Members of the Board of Directors

Choir Administrator

Marketing and communications

Grant-writing

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Program notes

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A SEASON OF TREASURES



French Baroque Treasures

A dazzling Christmas concert with Baroque Chamber Orchestra

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west varicouver







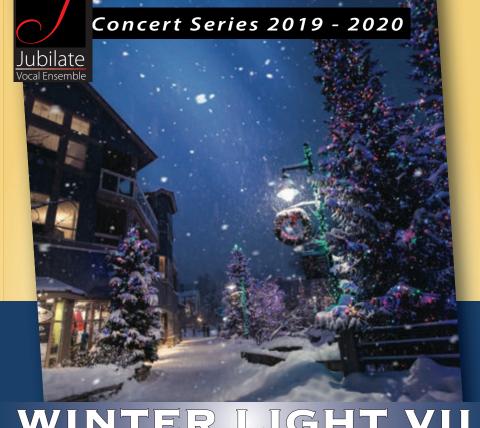












WINTER LIGHT VII

JVE's 7th ANNUAL TAKE ON WINTER Eldon McBride, Conductor Yihan Zhang, piano | Maria Moularas, harp

Sat. Nov. 30, 2019, 7:30 p.m. Vancouver Unitarian Church 949 49th Ave. W., Vancouver

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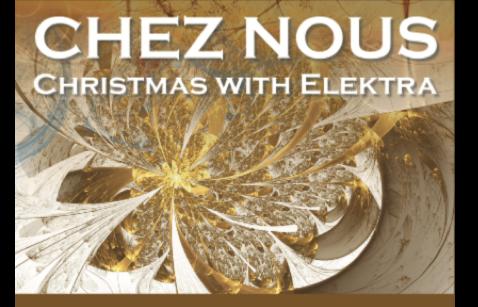
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