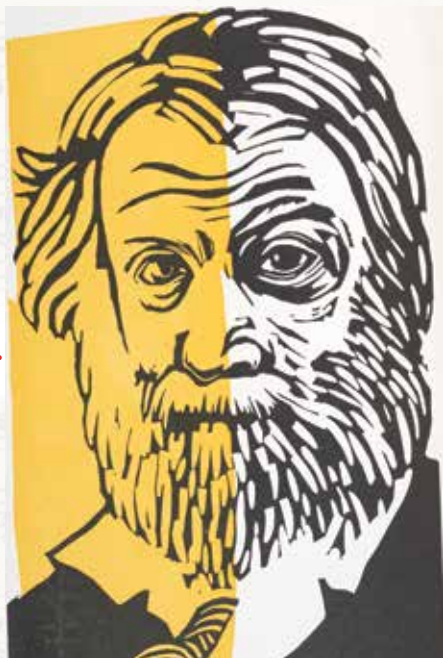


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Music

in the

Pavilion



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THE VARIED CAROLS I HEAR

PENN SINGS WHITMAN

Friday, November 8th, 2019

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The Varied Carols I Hear

Penn sings Whitman

Jamie Jordan, soprano
MaKayla McDonald, soprano
Steven Beck, piano

From Whitman Portrait (2014).....Jeremy Gill

“Fine, Clear, Dazzling Morning”

[Jamie Jordan]

The Face of Lily (2019).....Jay Reise

[Jamie Jordan]

Two Whitman Love Songs (2019).....James Primosch

I. Sometimes with One I Love

II. I Heard You

[Jamie Jordan]

Come My Tan-Faced Children (2019).....Melissa Dunphy

[MaKayla McDonald]

Apparition (1979).....George Crumb

Elegiac Songs and Vocalises for Soprano and Amplified Piano

I. The Night in Silence under Many a Star

Vocalise 1: Summer Sounds

II. When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd

III. Dark Mother Always Gliding Near with Soft Feet

Vocalise 2: Invocation

IV. Approach Strong Deliveress!

Vocalise 3: Death Carol (“Song of the Nightbird”)

V. Come Lovely and Soothing Death

VI. The Night in Silence under Many a Star

[Jamie Jordan]

The pre-concert talk will start at 6:15 PM. A pop-up exhibit on Whitman and Music will be on display in the Henry Charles Lea Library prior to and following the concert.



WHITMAN at 200

ART AND DEMOCRACY

This concert is being held in conjunction with WHITMAN AT 200: ART AND DEMOCRACY, a year-long program of exhibitions and events exploring Whitman's life and legacy on the occasion of his 200th birthday in 2019.

WWW.WHITMANAT200.ORG

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Lyrics

“Fine, Clear, Dazzling Morning”.....Jeremy Gill

No. 139 A Meadowlark March 16, 1878

Fine, clear, dazzling morning, the sun an hour high, the air just tart enough.

What a stamp in advance my whole day receives from the song of that meadowlark

perch'd on a fence stake- twenty rods distant!

Two or three liquid-simple notes... full of careless happiness and hope...

The Face of Lily.....Jay Reise

(Freely adapted from the poem “Faces”)

This is a blooming lily's face,

This is a full-grown lily's face,

She sings to the limber-hipp'd man near the garden
picket fence.

Come, come here! Come here! she blushinglly cries—Come nigh to me!

Stand at my side till I lean as high as I can upon you,

Fill me with albescent honey, bend down to me,

*Rub to me with your chafing beard, rub to my breast
and shoulders.*

Behold a woman!

The round warm face of the mother of many children!

Behold a woman!

Her face is clearer and more beautiful than the sky.

Old now she sits in an arm-chair,

Her ample gown is of cream-hued linen,

Her grand-sons raised the flax, and her grand-
daughters spun the flax.

The melodious character of the earth,

The mother of us all.

Behold!

Two Whitman Love Songs.....James Primosch

I. Sometimes with one I love I fill myself with rage for fear I effuse unreturn'd love,
But now I think there is no unreturn'd love, the pay is certain one way or another
(I loved a certain person ardently and my love was not return'd,
Yet out of that I have written these songs.)

II. I heard you, solemn-sweet pipes of the organ, as last Sunday morn I passed the church;
Winds of autumn!—as I walked the woods at dusk, I heard your
 long-stretched sighs, up above, so mournful;
I heard the perfect Italian tenor, singing at the opera—I heard the soprano in the midst of the quartette singing.
 —Heart of my love! you too I heard, murmuring low, through one of the wrists around my head;
 Heard the pulse of you, when all was still, ringing little bells last night under my ear.

Come, My Tan-Faced Children.....Melissa Dunphy

Adapted from “Pioneers! O Pioneers!”
First published in *Drum-Taps*, 1865

Come, my tan-faced children
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready;
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp edged axes?
 For we cannot tarry here,
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We, the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend.
 O resistless, restless race!
O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for all!
O I mourn and yet exult—I am rapt with love for all!

I. The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Vocalise 1: Summer Sounds

II. When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.
III. Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come
unfalteringly.

Vocalise 2: Invocation

IV. Approach strong deliveress!
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.

Vocalise 3: Death Carol ("Song of the Nightbird")

V. Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.
VI. The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee

Program Notes

Fine, Clear, Dazzling Morning

During the 2013–14 season I was a fellow of the American Opera Projects' Composers & the Voice workshops. All composer fellows were tasked with composing one piece for each of AOP's six resident singers. I decided to compose a set of six songs (preceded by a prelude) on texts by Walt Whitman that paints a self-portrait (using his own words) of perhaps our greatest American poet. *Fine, Clear, Dazzling Morning* is the second song in this set.

One aspect of Whitman's poetic persona that has always compelled me is his breadth of vision and all-inclusivity (he himself famously remarked: "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes.") I read the complete poetry and prose of Whitman to find six texts that most clearly revealed to me this great variety.

Fine, Clear, Dazzling Morning, for coloratura soprano, excerpts some lines from Whitman's *Specimen Days*, a kind of diary and his major prose work. It shows Whitman as a solitary lover of nature, following the flight and song of a meadowlark one spring morning.

Jeremy Gill

The Face of Lily

The Face of Lily was composed especially for this evening's concert celebrating Walt Whitman's 200th birthday and is dedicated to Jamie Jordan. The text is loosely based on the poem "Faces", contained in *Leaves of Grass* (1855, First Edition). The song lasts about seven minutes.

Since songs mostly often involve short, succinct poems, Whitman's lengthier works have often been excerpted for vocal settings. In *The Face of Lily* I have very freely adapted a small fragment from the poem. In the original, Whitman presents us with myriad facial images and extols them as a cumulative symbol for the glory of all humanity. He then moves from the list of faces to a homage praising woman, celebrating her for the flowering of humanity. In *The Face of Lily* I have utilized only this last visage in the poem, that of the lily, a face that Whitman transforms from a flower to a sensual girl, then a woman,

then a grandmother, and lastly to the “justified mother of men”. (I have changed this phrase to “The mother of us all.”)

The lily has been variously ascribed through history as a symbol of purity, sublime love, passion, fertility, procreation, glory, rebirth, the Madonna, and abundance—the lily is thus the flower of the Earth-mother.

Jay Reise

Two Whitman Songs

Two Whitman Love Songs was commissioned by Lyric Fest and premiered as part of a program of Whitman settings. Originally scored for tenor, this is the first performance of the soprano version.

Anger, disappointment, warm affection, and a sense that no love is ever truly lost are all expressed in these brief texts. The second song playfully employs quotations that reflect the musical images and references in the text.

James Primosch

Come, My Tan-Faced Children

Come, My Tan-Faced Children was commissioned by Lyric Fest for premiere at “Carol of Words - Walt Whitman in Song” (Suzanne DuPlantis & Laura Ward, Artistic Directors), and written for Raehann Bryce-Davis.

Though commissioned for Lyric Fest’s recognition of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Walt Whitman, it is not a blind celebration of that poet’s legacy. Intended for performance by a black singer, this song recontextualizes words from Whitman’s poem “Pioneers! O Pioneers!” in a way that the poet almost certainly never intended. Although Whitman campaigned against slavery, he held regressive racist views about African-Americans, and did not believe they should be given full citizenship rights. “Pioneers! O Pioneers!” was Whitman’s call to arms for white pioneers in the American West to fight in the Civil War, but by removing the title and the last line of each stanza, and placing the words in the mouth of a woman of color, the song carries an entirely different meaning, especially now during the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Melissa Dunphy

Apparition

Written in 1979 for Jan DeGaetani and Gilbert Kalish (and premiered by them on January 13, 1981, in New York City), *Apparition* is George

Crumb's first work for solo voice and piano, and his first setting in English (apart from a number of songs composed in his early years). The text of *Apparition* is extracted from Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," part of a set of poems grouped under the title *Memories of President Lincoln*. Whitman wrote "When Lilacs" during the weeks following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, April 14, 1865. Although Whitman's poem is specifically an elegy to Lincoln, Crumb has chosen most of his text from a section subtitled "Death Carol." This is a pause in the direct reference to Lincoln, and contains some of Whitman's most imaginative writing on the experience of death.

In *Apparition*, each song and vocalise form a piece of a larger vision, eventually coalescing as a tableau. The literary and musical materials focus on concise, highly contrasting metaphors for existence and death. Yet Crumb's cycle offers the listener reassurance. For just as in Whitman's verse, death is never depicted as an ending of life. Instead, it is circular, always a beginning or an enriched return to a universal life-force.

I. The Night in Silence under Many a Star

The piano opens the cycle with a pulsating evocation of Nature, accompanying the soprano who sings of symbols of eternity: "the night," symbolic of the physical universe; "The ocean shore," symbolic of motion and time; "the soul," representative of consciousness; and "the body turning to thee," illustrative of the cycle of life and death. With the presentation of this symbology a stage is set, upon which more personal visions of death will appear.

Vocalise 1: Summer Sounds

Vocalise 1 sharpens the focus from the vastness of the first song to a more specific time and location—further preparation for the more personal elegies which follow.

II. When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd

This brief, delicate song contains the only text not from the "Death Carol." Whitman's memory of the fragrance of blooming lilacs became his symbol for the time following Lincoln's assassination. Crumb's setting conjures an elusive scent—gently drifting, intermixing and separating... an expression of an ineffably sad memory.

III. Dark Mother Always Gliding Near with Soft Feet

This reverential elegy combines an intense personal plea with an instinctively religious hope for death as releases. Crumb's religiously allusive use of chant and imitative counterpoint further define this song as a prayer.

Vocalise 2: Invocation

Crumb has often balanced his quiet and ecstatic visions with representations of the evil aspects of nature. This vocalise is a harsh, primal invocation. It leads without pause into the fourth song.

IV. Approach Strong Deliveress!

Death as emancipation is one of the most ancient human desires. In Whitman's metaphor of death as feminine and life-resurrecting, the concept of a deliveress is forceful and redemptive. Crumb reflects this in a relentlessly driving march. Propelled by implacable energy, this song is joyous in its hope for and embracement of death.

Vocalise 3: Death Carol ("Song of the Nightbird")

The singer of Whitman's "Death Carol" was a solitary hermit thrush:

'the grey-brown bird I know receiv'd us
And he sang the carol of death...
From deep secluded recesses,
Came the carol of the bird.'

V. Come Lovely and Soothing Death

Constructed as the culminant song of the cycle, this intensely personal summoning and welcoming of death transforms and extends the musical imagery of the preceding songs and vocalizes into a final statement of the inevitability of death's arrival, "to all, to each."

VI. The Night in Silence under Many a Star

After death, the forces of Nature remain: physicality, motion, consciousness, and life. Recapitulating the opening of the cycle, with no textual changes and only minor musical adjustments, Crumb reaffirms Whitman's view of the circularity of life and death.

William Bland

Composers

Described as “vividly colored” (*The New York Times*), “replete with imaginative textures” (*The Dallas Morning News*), and “exhilarating” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*), **Jeremy Gill**’s music has earned him residencies and fellowships with the Bogliasco Foundation (2017), Copland House (2015), American Opera Projects (2013–14), and the MacDowell Colony (2013), and grants from New Music USA (2017, 2015) and Chamber Music America (2011). In 2017 Boston Modern Orchestra Project released a recording of his orchestral music, conducted by Gil Rose and featuring clarinetist Chris Grymes, oboist Erin Hannigan, pianist Ching-Yun Hu, and the Marsh Chapel Choir. He has worked extensively with the Grammy-winning Parker Quartet, who recorded his hour-long *Capriccio* for Innova Recordings in 2015. Recent and upcoming collaborators include conductors JoAnn Falletta, Stuart Malina, Gemma New, Steven Osgood, Gil Rose, and Jaap van Zweden.

Premieres of his music during the 2019–20 season include *...and Everywhere the Sea* for clarinet and piano to open the Kennedy Center’s REACH, *The Journey*, a theater piece for soprano, bass-baritone, choir, and Pierrot ensemble, on the Illuminate Rotherhithe migration festival in London, and *Concerto d’avorio*, a concerto for four-hands piano and orchestra, featuring pianists Orion Weiss and Anna Polonsky and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under conductor Gemma New.

Award-winning composer **Jay Reise** wrote both the music and libretto for his opera *Rasputin* which was commissioned by the late Beverly Sills and premiered by the New York City Opera in 1988. The work was described in *The Washington Times* as “a spellbinding, challenging and profoundly beautiful creation.” *Rasputin* was given its Russian premiere in 2008 by the Helikon Opera and has been in repertory since then. It has been performed by Helikon also in Estonia (Saaremaa Opera Festival) and Paris (Opéra de Massy). In November 2017, it was presented in Moscow as part of the commemoration marking the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Reise is currently working on an opera *The Capone Family* based on the career of the notorious gangster.

Reise's music has been performed extensively in the United States and abroad. His *Symphony II* was performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1983, and the Philharmonia Orchestra (London) commissioned and premiered *The Selfish Giant*, a tone poem based on the Oscar Wilde fairy tale, in 1997. Maria Bachmann and Orchestra 2001 premiered and recorded his violin concerto *The River Within* in 2008. Recent performances of Reise's chamber music have taken place in Cuba and on tour in the Middle East. In 2015 his ballet *The Gift to Urashima Taro* was premiered by Exit Dance at the Newburyport Festival.

Recordings include *The Devil in the Flesh and Other Pieces* with pianist Marc-André Hamelin; other recordings feature Gregory Fulkerson, Jerome Lowenthal, and the Cassatt Quartet. Reise's awards and fellowships include the National Endowment for the Arts; the Guggenheim, Fromm, and Rockefeller Foundations; and the U.S.-Japan Friendship Commission.

Jay Reise is Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his M.A. in composition from the University of Pennsylvania where he studied with George Crumb and Richard Wernick, harmony with George Rochberg, and Carnatic rhythm with Adrian L'Armand. His music is published by Merion Music/Theodore Presser Co.

When honoring him with its Goddard Lieberson Fellowship, the American Academy of Arts and Letters noted that "A rare economy of means and a strain of religious mysticism distinguish the music of **James Primosch**... through articulate, transparent textures, he creates a wide range of musical emotion."

Primosch's instrumental, vocal, and electronic works have been performed throughout the United States and in Europe by such ensembles as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Collage, the New York New Music Ensemble, and the Twenty-First Century Consort. Commissioned works by Primosch have been premiered by the Chicago Symphony, the Albany Symphony, Speculum Musicae, the Cantata Singers, and pianist Lambert Orkis. He recently completed commissions from the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Lyric Fest.

Among the honors he has received are a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Guggenheim Fellowship, three prizes from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Regional Artists Fellowship to the American Academy in Rome, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, the Stoeger Prize of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and a fellowship to the Tanglewood Music Center where he studied with John Harbison. In 1994 he served as composer-in-residence at the Marlboro Music Festival. Recordings of twenty-five compositions by Primosch have been released on CD. Since 1988 he has served on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania.

Born and raised in Australia, **Melissa Dunphy** immigrated to the United States in 2003, and has since become an award-winning and acclaimed composer specializing in vocal, political, and theatrical music. She first came to national attention when her large-scale choral work *The Gonzales Cantata* was featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's Magazine*, *National Review*, Comedy Central, and on MSNBC's *The Rachel Maddow Show* where host Rachel Maddow called it "the coolest thing you've ever seen on this show." *The Gonzales Cantata* was subsequently staged by the American Opera Theater and played a sold-out run in Baltimore, and has been performed by ensembles around the country.

Dunphy's first song cycle *Tesla's Pigeon* won first place in the 2012 National Association of Teachers of Singing Art Song Composition Award, and has been recognized with a Spirit of Tesla award by the Tesla Science Foundation, the American Prize, and inclusion in the Chicago Ensemble Discover America VIII. Her choral work *What Do You Think I Fought for at Omaha Beach?* won the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers composition Competition, and has been performed nationally by ensembles including Grammy award winning Chanticleer, Cantus, and the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, who recorded it for their album *American Declarations* (Regent Records).

Dunphy has served as composer-in-residence for the Immaculata Symphony Orchestra, Volti Choral Arts Lab and Choral Institute, and the St. Louis Chamber Chorus. In addition to her concert and choral music, she composes and designs sound frequently for Philadelphia area theaters such as People's Light, the Philadelphia Shakespeare Theater,

Azuka, Simpatico, Interact, and Gas and Electric Arts, and since 2014 has been music director and head of the music composition track of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Puppetry Conference. Dunphy has a Ph.D in music composition from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelor of Music from West Chester University. She currently teaches composition at Rutgers University.

George Crumb was born in Charleston, West Virginia, on October 24, 1929. His principal teacher in composition was Ross Lee Finney at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, the university from which he received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

Crumb has been the recipient of numerous honors, awards and commissions, including: the 1968 Pulitzer Prize; the 1971 International Rostrum of Composers (UNESCO) Award; Fromm, Guggenheim, Koussevitsky and Rockefeller Foundation Awards; and is a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1995 Mr Crumb became the 36th recipient of the MacDowell medal, an award named in honor of the American composer which is awarded annually to a composer, writer or visual artist who, in the judgment of his/her peers has made an outstanding contribution to the nation's culture. He is internationally recognized as a composer and has traveled abroad extensively for the State Department and other organizations to Asia, Australia, and Europe. His music has received numerous performances both in the U.S. and around the world and his orchestral works have been performed by all the major American orchestras.

Audience enthusiasm, critical acclaim and colleagues' praise have been extensive for Crumb's works. The attributes most frequently cited are: an extraordinarily sensitive ear producing highly refined timbral nuances, a very powerful evocative sense, and a sureness and concision in realizing his musical intentions. Courtesy of *Edition Peters'* website.

Performers

Pianist **Steven Beck** continues to gather acclaim for his performances and recordings. Recent career highlights include performances of Beethoven's variations and bagatelles at Bargemusic where he first performed the Beethoven sonata cycle.

An experienced performer of new music, Beck has worked with Elliott Carter, Pierre Boulez, Henri Dutilleux, Charles Wuorinen, George Crumb, George Perle, and Fred Lerdahl, and has performed with ensembles such as Speculum Musicae and the New York New Music Ensemble. He is a member of the Da Capo Chamber Players, the Knights, and the Talea Ensemble. He is also a member of Quattro Mani, a piano duo specializing in contemporary music. As an orchestral musician he has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Ballet Orchestra, Orpheus, the Mariinsky Orchestra, and many others.

Mr. Beck's discography includes Peter Lieberson's *Third Piano Concerto* (for Bridge Records) and a record of Elliott Carter's *Double Concerto* (on Albany Records). He is a Steinway artist.

Jamie Jordan has performed at the Brooklyn Museum for the Bang on a Can Marathon, Brooklyn Museum for the Brooklyn Philharmonic Chamber Music Series; Carnegie Hall with Daniel Druckman, Colin Currie and the Juilliard Percussion Ensemble; Detroit Institute of Arts with Amphion Percussion; Disney Hall with the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group; Big Ears Festival, Disney Hall, June in Buffalo, Lincoln Center Festival, Miller Theater and the Stone with Ensemble Signal; Abrons Arts Center with Experiments in Opera; MATA festival and Wesleyan University with Mantra Percussion; Merkin Hall with Mimesis Ensemble; Merkin Hall and Tenri Cultural Institute with New York New Music Ensemble; MATA Festival with Talea Ensemble; PASIC with the Bob Becker Ensemble; and Symphony Space with American Composers Orchestra.

She has curated programs at the American Academy in Rome, Cornell University, Eastman School of Music, University of Notre

Dame, Ohio University, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Fredonia, Music on the Edge (U Pittsburgh), FeNAM (Sacramento State), NYCEMF, Resonant Bodies Festival, and Unruly Music Festival (Milwaukee). Jamie Jordan has appeared with Alia Musica Pittsburgh, Emerald City Music, North Corner Chamber Orchestra, Pacific Harp Project, Southern Tier Symphony, and as a soloist at Ithaca College, Lawrence, Syracuse, Maryland, South Carolina, South Florida, and Wisconsin-Stevens Point Universities.

With a strong passion for studying and performing new music, **MaKayla McDonald** has premiered various contemporary works. This fall, MaKayla will sing on a recital entitled “Songs of Unity” with Calliope’s Call, an innovative arts song performance group based in New England, and will begin work with New Camerata Opera on their operatic film *Julie*.

This past summer, she participated in Dell’Arte Opera Ensemble’s Summer Festival: Voices from the Tower, where she sang the roles of Princess Ursula in the world premiere of *Princess Maleine* by Whitney George, and the title role in Pauline Viardot’s *Cendrillon*.

Additional roles include Peep-Bo in *The Mikado* with Bronx Opera; Harriet Tubman in the New York premiere of Thea Musgraves’s *The Story of Harriet Tubman* with Utopia Opera; Frasquita in scenes from *Carmen* with City Lyric Opera, and Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* with Old Capitol Opera.

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