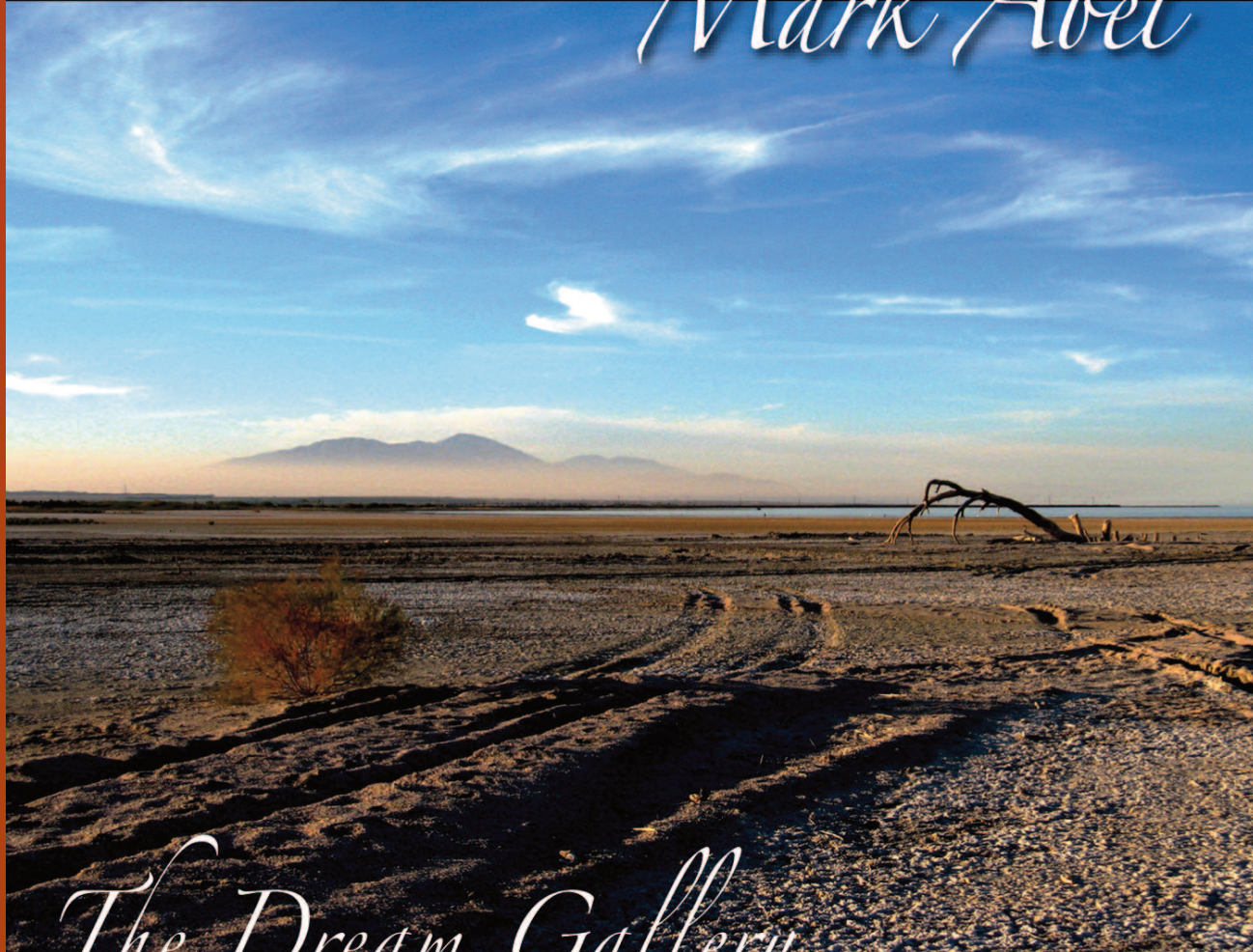


*Mark Abel*



*The Dream Gallery*  
SEVEN CALIFORNIA PORTRAITS



# Mark Abel

# The Dream Gallery

## SEVEN CALIFORNIA PORTRAITS

1. HELEN (Los Angeles) 11:27  
MARY JAEB, soprano
2. TODD (Taft) 10:18  
DAVID MARSHMAN, baritone
3. NAOMI (Berkeley) 7:55  
JANELLE DeSTEFANO, mezzo soprano
4. CAROL (San Diego) 8:23  
DELANEY GIBSON, mezzo soprano
5. LONNIE (Richmond) 10:16  
CARVER COSSEY, bass
6. LUZ (Soledad) 9:22  
MARTHA JANE WEAVER, contralto
7. ADAM (Arcata) 11:43  
TOM ZOHAR, tenor

SHARON LAVERY conducting the  
LA BREA SINFONIETTA

### *At Horizon's Edge* By Lindsay Koob

Paul McCartney's tried it; Elvis Costello, too. So have Sting, Peter Gabriel, and (from the other side of the musical tracks) even Leonard Bernstein. But a maverick California composer named Mark Abel has created what may be the most elegant and persuasive attempt yet to marry classical and rock. So get ready for a unique and powerful listening experience.

*The Dream Gallery* is an evocative, hard-hitting cycle of songs for soloists and chamber orchestra that explores the inner lives, struggles, illusions and home turf of seven archetypal Californians. The cycle pierces straight to the heart of the human condition, while laying bare the flaws, foibles and sins of the society we all share, Californians or not. With this work, Abel reveals a style – decades in the making – in which the core content of classical and rock has been so thoroughly crossbred as to constitute a new strain of American art song. ...

*... continued inside*



TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 69:23

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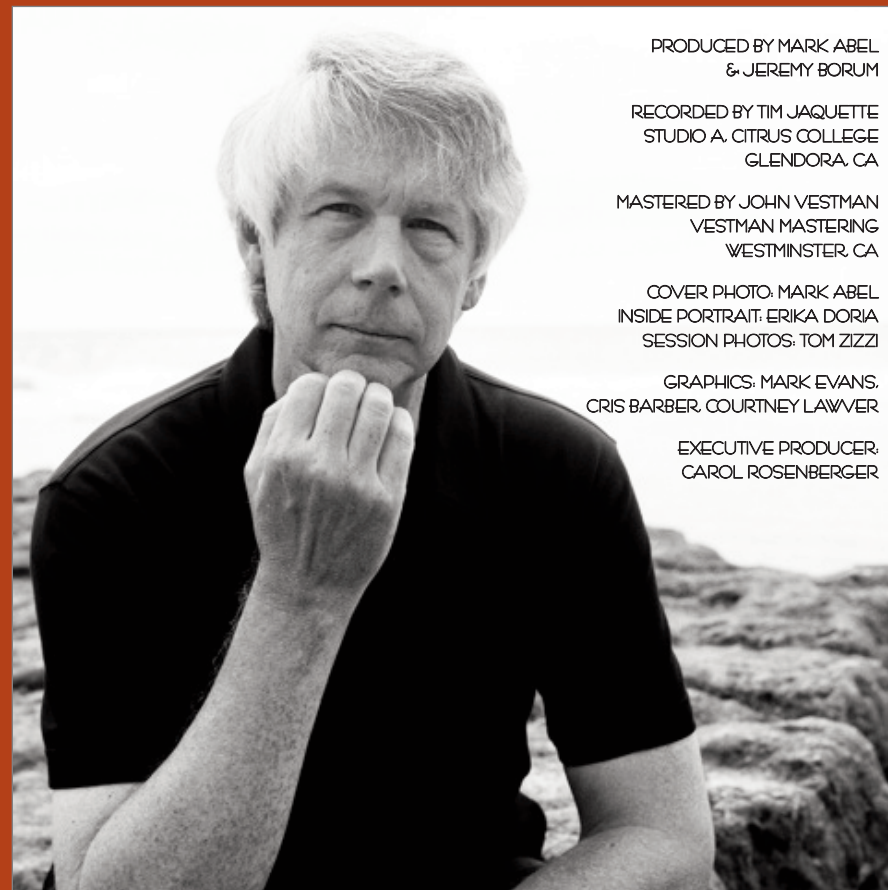
MARK ABEL  
THE DREAM GALLERY  
Seven California Portraits

1. HELEN (Los Angeles) 11:27
2. TODD (Taft, Kern County) 10:18
3. NAOMI (Berkeley) 7:55
4. CAROL (San Diego) 8:23
5. LONNIE (Richmond) 10:16
6. LUZ (Soledad, Monterey County) 9:22
7. ADAM (Arcata, Humboldt County) 11:43

Soloists:

MARY JAEB, DAVID MARSHMAN,  
JANELLE D'STEFANO,  
DELANEY GIBSON, CARVER COSSEY,  
MARTHA JANE WEAVER, TOM ZOHAR

SHARON LAVERY conducting the  
LA BREA SINFONIETTA



PRODUCED BY MARK ABEL  
& JEREMY BORUM

RECORDED BY TIM JAQUETTE  
STUDIO A, CITRUS COLLEGE  
GLEN DORA, CA

MASTERED BY JOHN VESTMAN  
VESTMAN MASTERING  
WESTMINSTER, CA

COVER PHOTO: MARK ABEL  
INSIDE PORTRAIT: ERIKA DORIA  
SESSION PHOTOS: TOM ZIZZI

GRAPHICS: MARK EVANS,  
CRIS BARBER, COURTNEY LAWVER

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:  
CAROL ROSENBERGER

## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

### Mark Abel: *The Dream Gallery*

#### *At Horizon's Edge*

By Lindsay Koob

... continued from back cover —

The heart of any good song is its lyrics – and Abel's own language is a revelation. It reads like great literature: stopping you dead in your mental tracks as you pause to ponder some potent point or striking philosophical observation about how we fit into (or sell out to) our varied social milieus. No theme or subject matter is off limits. Abel forces us, whether we want to or not, to confront often unsettling, even offensive issues: like predatory competition, yuppie ladder-climbing, greed-driven social divisions, immigrant struggles, dysfunctional relationships, self-delusion, loneliness, racism, environmental pollution, boomer backlash, etc. While Abel spins his stories in distinctly Californian contexts, isn't that great state essentially a microcosm of our broader American society?

Abel's musical settings flow naturally and spontaneously, mirroring his lyrics closely. He amplifies the startling insights or deep emotions of his words with equally shattering or emotive music. There's little or no thematic or strophic repetition, as is often the case with rock. The sophistication of the music far exceeds that of anything you'll hear at a rock concert – to the point that it's likely to appeal to any classical aficionado with an open mind (and ears). After all, classical characteristics abound: brain-teasing complexity, literature-grade lyrics, a wide variety of tone colors (not all of them pretty), and impressionistic episodes.

Yet the music stretches conventional definitions of “classical,” having been crafted in such a way as to resonate stylistically in the ears of those who, in our pop-dominated musical culture, have gotten next-to-no classical exposure. It's a sure-fire ear-opener for jaded but sensitive rock fans who yearn for something beyond that idiom's limited horizons. As with any form of crossover music with classical characteristics, it seems an ideal bridge to more purely “highbrow” forms. And, don't forget, bridges are usually two-way streets.

Abel's excellent soloists comprise a cross-section of Southern California musical life. They traverse vocal territory that ranges from full vibrato through straight tone all the way to *sprechstimme*. Their most striking collective quality is their commitment – both vocally and emotionally – to capturing and conveying both the elusive subtleties and

the in-your-face messages of this material with total honesty. They act their roles in song supremely well.

Backing them up with equal commitment and skill is conductor Sharon Lavery, a rising figure on the Los Angeles scene who is resident conductor at USC's Thornton School of Music and cover conductor for the Pacific Symphony. She leads a crack orchestra of Hollywood session players whimsically dubbed the La Brea Sinfonietta.

The net result is an impeccably performed song cycle that engages not only the ear, but also the intellect and the conscience. One comes away from this music with the same sort of edified and reflective afterglow that a great piece of theater imparts. Abel not only shines a brutally honest spotlight on social issues, but is a keen observer of human nature – and how it both ennobles and degrades society. He's also blessed with an uncanny knack for expressing his observations in fresh fusions of words and music that fit his day and age.

Could his work be the harbinger of a new and different “California classical” movement? Time will tell. Meanwhile, there's plenty of social and psychological territory left for Abel to explore – and you can bet that he will.



Sharon Lavery and Mark Abel



### ***The Golden State Seven*** — Notes by the composer

**HELEN** – Los Angeles is the setting of this quiet tragedy of a “perfect” life gone off the rails. The once-confident young woman who trusted in the prescribed path to happiness — work, marriage and money — is left grasping at straws in lonely exile after unease and disillusion finally gave way to betrayal. Yet, her time is not quite over; after years of isolation and reflection, “Helen” muses, “Maybe tomorrow I will finally turn the page.”

**TODD** – One of California’s bleakest places is the oil country of western Kern County, whose largest city is Taft, population 9,327. “Todd” is a poetic response to this largely devastated area far off the tourism map; its lonely qualities and sense of frozen, decayed time make it a very special destination. The piece’s weathered protagonist is well aware of what has been lost here, but his affection for his hometown endures.

**NAOMI** – Berkeley, America’s epicenter of leftist exceptionalism, comes in for a skewering that could only be delivered plausibly by a onetime resident intimately familiar with its contradictions. Inhabitants of a parallel universe at a distant remove from the rest of the country, the “hill people” speak the rhetoric of political correctness while casting a cool and elitist eye on their less-refined neighbors.



**CAROL** – San Diego’s upscale northern suburbs are in some ways a last refuge for the norms of the 1950s — surf-happy dads and stay-at-home moms. They are also infected with a fierce strain of materialism, anti-intellectualism and intolerance of lifestyles that fall outside the narrow local template. “Carol” — truly a soccer mom from hell — embodies all of this with an aggressive edge.

**LONNIE** – Richmond is a predominantly minority industrial city that has for decades been the subject of racial scapegoating and negative stereotyping by other residents of the San Francisco Bay Area. “Lonnie” has been a witness to this history and his story underscores both its unfairness and the high cost paid by residents of the urban core neighborhoods.

**LUZ** – Mexican immigrants have been invaluable in building California, but many to this day remain hostage to America’s chaotic — some say inhuman — border policies. The Salinas Valley, home to the farming town of Soledad, has seen conflict and exploitation — but also acceptance and assimilation, as told by “Luz,” a voice of the older generation in rural Monterey County.

**ADAM** – This portrait of a young man at a life crossroads is set in the North Coast college town of Arcata. “Adam” is both a celebration of youth — with its kinetic energy, idealism and sometimes woolly thinking — and an acknowledgment of the hitherto unimaginable: California might no longer be able to accommodate the aspirations of its young people.



## VOCAL TEXTS

### HELEN (Los Angeles)

MARY JAEB  
soprano



Autumn morning, Marina del Rey.  
Workmen sip their coffee,  
parked by the mouth of the Grand Canal.  
The painters and plasterers  
will be plying their trade  
as soon as their clients are decent.  
A young girl walks her dog.

And I, the pride of Fontana,  
so many years ago I came  
to the towers of downtown.  
Pretty, but oh so green, I needed a mentor.  
I found one in Ken.  
Smooth as Glenlivet, polite and kind,  
son of a banker back East,  
a prince of the board room.  
Charm to spare and wavy hair,  
he showed me the ropes, in more ways than one.  
— And we always had fun!  
Off to Vegas, with the top down,  
weekends in Baja Sur.  
The slopes at Mammoth,  
sparkling in the moonlight.  
Sunday brunches in Laguna,  
strolling along the sand.

I outmaneuvered the other girls  
and rose with the arc of his star.  
My marvelous man.  
And over time, the closeness grew.  
Sometimes I wondered what he saw in me.

I gave up my flat in Van Nuys.  
We married and bought in the Palisades,  
thanks to the money that his parents left.  
Boom times, our times ...

Soon a child was on the way.  
I quit my job since Ken was almost  
up to the top.  
My golden life seemed so secure,  
unfolding like the proudest bird of paradise.

The years rolled on.  
Some friends melted down  
into the white powder,  
others wrapped themselves in the flag.  
We stayed with what we knew  
— or should I say, I stayed.  
Held by the fear of it slipping away,  
my life narrowed down to a point.  
And I froze.

I couldn't see, but Ken was turning,  
turning away from me.  
More and more time at the office  
— or so he said.  
My focus was our son,  
a chip off the old block  
— sociable, bright and easy on the eyes.  
I hardly see him anymore.

Finally, my husband brought forth his creature.  
Much younger, so lithe and smart,  
a walking tribute to the plastic surgeon's art.  
His plan was perfection, a *fait accompli*.  
As I was reeling, the lawyer called to an-  
nounce Ken's terms.  
They were generous, I suppose.

It all happened so fast,  
no time to gauge the damage to my heart.  
That was twenty years ago;  
where have I been since then?

A new life, unscheduled.  
No map or guide for this blasted landscape.  
I have wandered in the wilderness,  
a trackless swamp of time,  
where songless birds are flying.  
Now I live in this place by the sea,  
manicured, windswept and lonely.  
Life on the Via Dolce has never been sweet.  
But maybe tomorrow I will finally turn the page.

### TODD (Taft)

DAVID MARSHMAN  
baritone



This town is dying.

Head west from the 5,  
through barren lands and tumbleweed,  
into the kingdom of the pumpjacks  
and abandoned houses.  
It is dry and the wind is raw.  
The Temblor Range broods in the distance;  
a vulture circles the roadkill on Highway 119.

Soon you enter this sad place,  
built on oil, hope and grit,  
named for a hefty ex-president.  
A downtown that once hummed is quiet now,  
so quiet that a single car passing  
is a major event.  
The shops are mostly empty,  
the sidewalks deserted.

Ghosts of commerce haunt these streets —  
the shuttered bank branch,  
the extinct car dealer,  
junk shops open two days a week,  
the drugstore whose shelves  
are covered with dust.  
Hell, we don't even have a hospital here.

Shadows of late afternoon fall on the taqueria,  
its neon flickering dimly as an insect  
comes to rest.

At night, mysterious lights twinkle  
from the Midway-Sunset.  
Stars fell on Alabama, the old song goes.  
But here they stay cold and high;  
West Kern is far from heaven.

My father was an oil worker, and so am I.  
My friends have left for Bakersfield,  
with its malls and subdivisions.  
They don't want to live in a place  
that time forgot.

This town is dying, but it's still home to me.  
If history appeals, come ride along.  
There is Elk Hills, part of a scandal  
tainting Harding.  
The Lakeview Gusher, 1910,  
America's biggest strike;  
just a small stone plaque now,  
surrounded by  
broken bottles, rusted pipes  
and rotting timber.

Countless billions have been siphoned  
from here,  
but what was left behind?  
You can drive right into the fields,  
just don't inhale.  
We have a witches' brew —  
poison gases, mists and pesticides.  
What the oil hasn't finished, the cotton will.  
A bitter wind blows through this land.

NAOMI  
(Berkeley)



JANELLE  
DeSTEFANO  
mezzo soprano

"Living well is the best revenge."  
A strange creed for flower children, perhaps.  
But it is our religion here in the other city  
by the bay,  
from whose hills you can look down  
on everyone.

Some call us smug.  
I say they are jealous of the things we have:  
The best food, abundant culture,  
a great university, commerce  
on the cutting edge.  
It's all here.  
Really, is there anywhere else  
lefties can live like kings?

We love the homeless down on Telegraph,  
somewhat less so on upper Solano.  
We love minorities, but Oakland and Richmond  
are best seen from the freeway.  
None of these people live on my street;  
they haven't the means.  
My heart bleeds, truly.  
Life's not fair, but it's not my fault.  
I wish the best for all, isn't that enough?

It will have to be. I'm not going anywhere.  
I came for school and never left.  
My friends all look like me —  
white and graying but still spunky.  
And smart! Our homes are worth a fortune.  
The Outlanders have nothing on us;  
we beat them at their own game.

(And there is more!)  
Not content to lobby or march,  
we like to make our own foreign policy  
— as befits a People's Republic.  
If only we could build a wall to keep out  
those who would pollute our purity.

So meet me at Shattuck and Vine.  
On *nouvelle* Cambodian we will dine,  
with world beat as our soundtrack.  
Exoticism is our buffer of choice  
— anything that keeps America at bay  
for a few blessed minutes.  
Then we'll climb, up, up and around,  
'til the grand panorama is spread before us.  
And as the fog creeps  
through the Golden Gate,  
we'll feel good about ourselves.

The festival parade is coming soon  
and again I must decide:  
How Berkeley can I be?

CAROL  
(San Diego)



DELANEY GIBSON  
mezzo soprano

My husband is a killer.  
Not the kind with an axe or a gun,  
but a piranha in the asphalt sea.  
Brad'll cut you off in the fast lane  
or the onramp,  
undermine you at the office or the dinner table  
— all with a smirk, anything to gain an edge.  
(Gotta have that edge!)  
That's how we do things here  
in the land of travertine entryways  
and granite countertops.

My kids are named Connor and Morgan,  
content for now with texting and videos  
as I drive them around  
in the big black Escalade.  
Soon they'll be trouble, hanging at the mall,  
shoplifting, smoking weed.  
We'll have to bring them up to speed:  
Acceptable social roles are few in these parts,  
and skateboard slacker isn't one.  
We'll push them into youth sports;  
it usually works.  
(Channel that aggression!)  
That's how we do things here  
in the land of surfing and vintage cars,  
and fat fish tacos.

Then there's me; not a lot to say.  
I don't work, thank God — or read either.  
Women's lib, what was that?  
Try keeping a 4,000-square-foot house clean!  
We still have sex; I promised Brad  
the whole nine yards.  
(Didn't I?)  
To stay in shape I jog, my ponytail  
bobbing from my golf cap.

Today the beauty shop,  
tomorrow the Botox doc,  
I take my pleasure in Frappuccinos  
and margaritas,  
"American Idol" and dining out.  
Am I missing something? I think not.  
That's how we do things here ...

Culture, you ask? Well, there's music —  
Hey, hey, hey! Rock and roll.  
We admit no other;  
our comfort zone is the prime directive.  
Same with films.  
Subtitles? No way.  
We never want to work that hard.

We love to knock L.A. (fear and loathing).  
Still we sit there passively  
munching our popcorn;  
Hollywood knows what's best for us.

Museums? Please! National parks? Boring.  
For vacations Vegas is king —  
no thought required,  
just feel the rush and hang onto your wallet.

Global warming? Not my problem.  
Dwindling water, ditto.  
Our yard is the lushest around —  
and gonna stay that way.  
So our last congressman  
was the biggest crook  
in D.C. history? So what!  
"America's Finest City" produces  
more trash per capita  
than any other in the world?  
Have someone else take care of it,  
and let the good times roll.

We're in La Costa for now,  
but soon we'll be moving up  
to Rancho Santa Fe.  
My money, my possessions,  
my status feed me;  
my man's the icing on the cake.  
The kids sleep tight,  
the spa is heating up just right.  
Brad? ... Brad!! Get over here and do me!

## LONNIE (Richmond)



**CARVER COSSEY**  
bass

Smell of chemicals hangs in the air  
above the Iron Triangle.  
Some things never change, and I've been  
here 70 years now.

Up from Shreveport came Mom and Pop.  
There were jobs in the shipyards —  
even for colored folks.  
(That's what they called us then.)  
Rough and tumble after the war;  
expecting a beautiful future,  
we got the Depression all over again.

People packed like sardines  
into flimsy shacks —  
black, white and poor —  
just like down South, old times there  
were not forgotten.  
And just like there, crackers ran this town,  
ran it down, right into the ground.  
And they kept on running it long after  
brothers started getting a piece  
of that City Hall action.  
(You know what I'm saying.)

We had a nice little shopping district,  
but the anger boiled over in the '60s.  
Some young fools and Panthers  
tore up MacDonald,  
the flames gutting doorways and dreams.  
But no Phoenix arose here;  
we just sank deeper into the mud.  
All the money went to Hilltop,

where they tried to build  
a New Richmond without us.  
When too many black faces showed,  
the developers fled to lily-white Pinole.  
And those millionaires out in the Point,  
well, they've never given a damn about us.

Many years ago Dr. King spoke  
of bootstraps and expectations.  
Well, there are still some here  
who have no boots.  
Just drive down Barrett far enough;  
you'll see 'em.  
We're no more than fodder  
for the Channel 2 News:  
Drive-bys, crack dealers, rapes and scandals.  
Richmond is the town everyone loves to hate  
— from the safety of their living room couch,  
mind you.  
But none of them has ever been here!  
Some things never change.

This is my wife, Doris. She's from Oklahoma,  
and we've been married 50 years.  
We raised two kids, and they did OK  
in spite of these bad schools.  
They live in Vallejo and Sacramento,  
and worry about us staying on.  
"Last one leaving Richmond,  
turn out the lights,"  
they laugh. And we do too.

But we're not leaving.  
Our friends are here, those still living.  
And the young people, they must learn  
that violence and drugs are not the way.  
Broken glass, broken lives, we've seen it all.  
Still, there is beauty here —  
parks, harbor and history.  
And plenty to be proud of — ballplayers,  
musicians, doctors and workers.

We're on our way to church.  
Starting to rain now.  
Well, nice talking to you.

## LUZ (Soledad)



**MARTHA JANE  
WEAVER**  
contralto

Far from Mexico, my husband rode  
in the back of a truck, aching for work.  
And they brought him here,  
to the valley of Salinas.  
Rich soil, good rains,  
he heard the earth sing.

The work was hard and dirty,  
and the pay pitiful, dollars a day.  
And in the evening, they slept on the ground.  
"Aim my road on your bow of hope,"  
the poet said.  
So soon I had to come;  
I was always his inspiration.  
Love overcomes struggle.  
We made our home in a place called Soledad.

Poor but determined,  
we clung to family and faith.  
Faith was a good thing to have then.  
On the ladder's bottom rung,  
where the saddest songs are sung.  
Prejudice and poverty, few rights or capital,  
the police were nasty, the landlords cruel.  
It took its toll on our people.

Some turned to drink, drugs and violence  
— like my brother, Umberto,  
buried in the cemetery in the hills.  
Not far from the blue Pacific  
and beautiful Monterey,  
But they didn't want us there,  
we with the rough hands,  
*Los Olvidados* — the invisible tillers  
of the fields, mowers of the lawns,  
at night confined to our barrios.

We had to fight to belong here.

Powers That Be intending to keep control.  
The growers thought they could crush us.  
We won respect by showing  
we would not back down  
from our dignity.  
Those were such bitter days.

As the generations passed,  
calm descended on our dusty little town.  
One day my daughter brought a book  
from school.  
It told a sad story, "Of Mice and Men."  
Finally I understood why this place  
is called Soledad.

Now all my children have flown;  
there's no work for them here.

Must the cycle roll along forever?  
Out to The Pinnacles I will ride,  
where sacred rocks were moved  
by God's hand  
millennia ago.

ADAM  
(Arcata)



TOM ZOHAR  
tenor

Welcome to your future. ...  
You Boomers made one helluva mess.  
"Old Guys Rule," the T-shirts say,  
but for not much longer.  
It's the turning of the tide; inexorable.

We're fed up. Enough of your bullshit!  
You communed with the cosmos  
but forgot about the planet.  
Now the piper must be paid (like all pipers),  
and we're stuck with a terrible tab.  
Thanks, Mom! And you too, Dad!  
We'll slave to keep Social Security afloat.  
Fat chance!  
Our kids will grow up in trailer parks,  
living a sci-fi nightmare.  
And the damndest thing of all:

It didn't have to be this way.  
I'm melting down over nothing;  
best to chill for awhile.

Drive past dear old Humboldt State —  
hillside haven for alternate realities,  
the North Coast's coolest girls.  
Memories of sweet surrender,  
nude beneath the redwoods,  
gently fading now. ...

Head for the java hut just off the square,  
step over the sidewalk scruffies  
who kissed off the material world.  
Now here's my man Zeke;  
we'll take our kayaks to Mad River Slough.  
Floating on God's creation,  
the seabirds wheeling high.  
So near and yet so far  
from the answers that we seek.  
We want to contribute!  
So many pathways, how can I be sure?  
Zeke laughs at my mistrust of the universe.

Gina is teaching kids  
in the slums of East Timor,  
Gary is gonna be helping a scientist to map  
the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.  
Phil is doing free web designs  
from a storefront in Harlem.  
Chuck, the most brilliant of all, went back  
to the family farm in Garberville  
— a one-crop town.  
(Cash crop, you might say.)  
Kimberly sold out and moved to Redmond;  
the graduation Lexus  
must have sealed the deal.

And that pretty much covers my crew.

What now?

Praise be to idleness, Zeke says.  
Born too many centuries too late  
to be a Roman patrician  
or a hunter-gatherer striding through  
the fields of ancient Eurasia.  
I love him like a brother,  
but I have a different destiny.

Clarity's elusive in this misty backwater;  
jobs are scarce, girlfriends scarcer.  
At long last, this may be the hour  
when I ponder the unthinkable.  
"California is an island drifting  
far from the continent,"  
Matthias McKinley, my favorite professor, said.  
"You'll never understand America  
'til you have seen it all."  
Soon I will leave the patchouli womb.

I don't know where I'm going,  
but it's probably far from here.  
Maybe they need me in Cleveland  
or in dying Detroit.  
I'll aid their transition  
to the post-industrial age.

I will remember all the fun we had,  
chasing utopias and rarely sad.  
Picture the setting sun  
over the Pacific's horizon,  
it will inspire eternally.

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

**Mark Abel** is a composer who has forged an original and provocative style that blends elements of classical, rock and jazz into a seamless whole he describes as “postmodern art song” or, on occasion, “alternative classical.” *The Dream Gallery* is his third CD, following *Journey Long*, *Journey Far* and *Songs of Life, Love and Death*.

Mark’s life suggests a tapestry woven with two primary and powerful strands: music and journalism. Son of the distinguished reporter and author Elie Abel, Mark grew up in America, Europe and Asia, receiving crucial exposure as a child to the fast-moving global political and cultural events of the 1950s and 1960s. This included an introduction to classical music, which remained his consuming artistic interest until his early teens — when it was supplanted for some time by modern jazz and later by rock, the medium through which he first developed his writing talents. He briefly attended Stanford University in the turbulent late ‘60s but found the atmosphere stifling and decided to strike out on his own at 20.

As a guitarist, bassist and songwriter on the New York rock scene in the 1970s and into the ‘80s, Mark played and recorded with such seminal figures as Tom Verlaine (Television), Michael Brown (the Left Banke), Danny Kalb (the Blues Project) and Harold Kelling, founder of the legendary Atlanta fusion group the Hampton Grease Band. He also led his own groups City Lights and Architecture; produced records for “new wave” pacesetters The Feelies and The Bongos; and mixed live sound for Television and the Talking Heads.

Mark’s interest in rock faded by the mid ‘80s, however, due to the harmonic and rhythmic restrictions imposed by the pop song format and frustration with the commercial music industry’s ever-narrowing scope. He relocated to California in 1983 and made a vocational shift into journalism, eventually becoming foreign editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, a post he held until 2004. During these years, Mark’s curiosity led him back to classical music and extensive investigations of the important 19th and 20th century composers.

His taste is broad; principal heroes include Ives, Szymanowski, Brahms, Duparc, Strauss, Debussy, Berg, Janacek, Lutoslawski, Takemitsu and Dutilleux. Several jazz figures have long been inspirational — among them John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Eric Dolphy, Paul Bley and Denny Zeitlin. Early influences also included the progressive rock of Frank Zappa, Henry Cow and Soft Machine, and unclassifiable originals like Terje Rypdal and Ralph Towner.

For his first CD, Mark composed song cycles based on poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke and Pablo Neruda. Since then, however, he has exclusively written his own lyrics, tackling such diverse subjects as contemporary terrorism, the passing of close friends, a nonpareil relationship catastrophe and — in *The Dream Gallery* — the psyches and social milieus of his fellow Californians.

**Sharon Lavery** has led performances in preeminent concert venues across the United States, including Carnegie Hall. Currently, she serves as resident conductor of the USC Thornton Symphony, Chamber Orchestra and Wind Ensemble at the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music. This position has allowed her to collaborate with such renowned figures as James Conlon, Michael Tilson Thomas, John Williams, Carl St. Clair and H. Robert Reynolds. She also teaches conducting at USC Thornton.

In addition, Sharon is music director of the Downey Symphony in Los Angeles County and holds the post of cover conductor for the Pacific Symphony in Orange County. She has led the La Jolla Symphony in concert, served as assistant conductor to the Pasadena Symphony and as cover conductor for the San Diego Symphony. Hailing from Ossining, NY, Sharon received a bachelor of music education degree from Michigan State University and Master of Music in clarinet performance from the New England Conservatory of Music. She also earned a Master of Music in orchestral conducting from USC Thornton, receiving the Leonard Bernstein Memorial Scholarship for two consecutive years.

**Mary Jaeb** began her career singing gospel and sacred music to audiences throughout the United States and Canada, later becoming an exponent of the Great American Songbook and performing in Japan and Korea as well as with big bands in this country. In the classical realm, Mary has appeared with the Central City Opera in Colorado, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Natchez Opera Festival in Mississippi, San Diego Young Artists Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Lyric Opera, Cabrillo Chamber Orchestra and La Jolla Chamber Orchestra. She has been a guest soloist with the La Jolla Symphony on several occasions, singing works of Debussy, Schumann and Mozart. Mary has an M.A. in vocal performance from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and was a Metropolitan Opera regional finalist. She lives in Vista, Ca., and teaches at Palomar College in San Marcos.

**David Marshman** earned a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He performs regularly with the San Diego Opera and Los Angeles Opera as a chorister and solo

artist, and with two San Diego-area ensembles, the Bach Collegium and Sacra Profana. Stage roles include ones in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Lohengrin*, *Idomeneo*, *Don Pasquale*, *Otello* and *Rigoletto*. David has made operatic, concert and recital appearances throughout America, including ones with the Cincinnati Opera, Lake George Opera Festival and Capital Artists Opera in Albany, NY. He has appeared as a soloist in major choral works, including Handel's *Messiah*, *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt*; Bach's *St. John Passion*, *Christmas Oratorio* and *Magnificat*; Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Requiem*; Fauré's *Requiem*, and performed the title role in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. David has also soloed with the Cabrillo Chamber Orchestra, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus, and Orchestra Nova San Diego.

**Janelle DeStefano** enjoys the entire gamut of classical singing, from opera and oratorio to recital and chamber music. Her operatic roles include Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*, Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and the title role in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Appearances with the La Jolla, Inland Valley and Grossmont symphonies, the Bach Collegium San Diego, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic have included such works as Bach's *Magnificat*, Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Mozart's *Ch'io mi scordi di te*, Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity*, Copland's *Eight Poems of Emily Dickinson* and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*. An interest in zarzuela and Spanish art song led to performances with the Jarvis Zarzuela Festival in Napa, Ca., and the International Festival of Interpretation of Spanish Song in Granada. Janelle holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Performance from USC Thornton. She is currently an associate professor of music at Santa Monica College.

**Delaney Gibson**, a native of Ventura, Ca., has been performing nonstop since the age of five. After earning a B.A. in music from Cal State Northridge, Delaney has built a budding career ranging from her own singing, playing, songwriting and recording activities to the backing of famed touring artists to appearances with classical ensembles. Described by the Ventura County Reporter as "an undiscovered brilliant vocalist" and by the Santa Barbara Independent as one who "boldly breaks the mold," Delaney has released two CDs of original material, *Hurricanes and Forget Me Nots* and *The Worst Kind of Way*, while garnering a string of awards on the indie circuit nationally for her singing, performing and songwriting. She was selected in 2011 for the IdeaJam emerging artists program sponsored by Intel Corp. and Katalyst Films, and has appeared on the Fox series *Boston Public* and MTV's *My Own*.

**Carver Cossey** has been performing, conducting and directing music for more than 35 years. A resident of Long Beach, he has toured the United States, Japan, Israel and Europe as a soloist and chorister with the Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers and the Roger Wagner Chorale. Carver is also associated with the Pacific Chorale as a soloist, chorus member and choreographer. He has performed and soloed with the Master Chorales of Los Angeles and Orange counties, Angels Chorale, Pacific Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hollywood Bowl Symphony, Los Angeles Opera and Opera Pacific, and also taken leading roles in musical theater. Carver has directed classical, Afro-American, folk and jazz programs and worked with choruses at colleges, universities and churches throughout the country. He is director of music ministries at Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church in Mission Viejo, Ca.

**Martha Jane Weaver**, originally from southeastern Pennsylvania, has sung a wide swath of music — from Bach to Verdi to Argento, and from Broadway, gospel and spirituals to Gilbert and Sullivan. In the realm of major dramatic oratorio and concert repertoire, her many guest appearances include ones with the San Diego, Nevada-Reno and Sacramento Opera companies; the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Los Angeles Bach Festival, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; the Nevada, Utah, San Diego, Hollywood Bowl and Pacific symphonies, William Hall Chorale, and other choral organizations. Martha Jane has performed frequently in prominent roles with Lyric Opera San Diego and the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus. She is also a soloist and section leader at St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church in La Jolla and a guest recitalist at San Diego area churches and concert venues.

**Tom Zohar** was born in Israel. He won acclaim as an actor and performer in San Diego and Los Angeles for eight years, in both plays and musicals, prior to a recent move to New York City. *The Dream Gallery* is his first recording. Tom's Southern California theater credits include: *Zhivago* at the La Jolla Playhouse; *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *This is Our Youth* and *Three Sisters* at New Village Arts; *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at La Mirada; *Twist, Yank! A New Musical*, *Torch Song Trilogy* and *Bunbury* at Diversionary; *The Light in the Piazza* at Lamb's Players; *The History Boys*, *The Little Foxes* and *Sweeney Todd* at Cygnet; and *Old Wicked Songs*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Amy's View* and *The Chosen* at North Coast Rep. He is a recipient of a Patté Award for Theatre Excellence.