

AMERICAN VOICES

John Alexander Singers
John Alexander, conductor

Lauridsen • Dello Joio • Whitacre
Warland • Muehleisen
Gregorio • Rickelton • Orfe



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AMERICAN VOICES

John Alexander Singers ◉ John Alexander, conductor

Barry Perkins, trumpet ◉ David Clemensen, piano

DALE WARLAND: Always Singing

MORTEN LAURIDSEN: Chanson Éloignée • O Love Be Fed With Apples While You May

JOSEPH GREGORIO: *Love, thricewise:*
Liquor and lacquer • An amethyst
remembrance • Kinsfolk

MICHAEL RICKELTON: Pentecost

JOHN MUEHLEISEN: *Snow (The King's Trumpeter) • When All Is Done • Two River Nocturnes: Prairie Waters By Night • River Moons*

NORMAN DELLO JOIO: The Bluebird Song of the Open Road

ERIC WHITACRE: Little Birds o Water Night

JOHN ORFE: Fire

Total time: 77:11

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AMERICAN VOICES

On the Beauty of Song:

DALE WARLAND:

1. Always Singing (2:42)

MORTEN LAURIDSEN:

2. Chanson Éloignée (5:20)
Aram Barsamian, baritone

On Love and Loss:

MORTEN LAURIDSEN:

3. O Love, Be Fed With Apples
While You May † (2:10)

JOSEPH GREGORIO:

- Love, thrice* §
4. Liquor and lacquer (1:28)
5. An amethyst remembrance (2:24)
6. Kinsfolk (1:50)

MICHAEL RICKELTON:

7. Pentecost § (6:12)

JOHN MUEHLEISEN:

8. Snow (The King's Trumpeter) * (5:02)
9. When All Is Done * (9:28)

§ World Premiere Recordings

On Nature:

NORMAN DELLO JOIO:

10. The Bluebird † (4:41)

JOHN MUEHLEISEN:

- Two River Nocturnes*
11. Prairie Waters by Night (5:44)
12. River Moons (7:00)

ERIC WHITACRE:

13. Little Birds † (3:26)
14. Water Night (4:31)

On the Adventure of Life:

JOHN ORFE:

15. Fire! * § (5:28)
Carver Cossey, bass; Maria Cristina
Navarro, soprano

NORMAN DELLO JOIO:

16. Song of the Open Road * † (8:40)

Total time: 77:11

John Alexander Singers
John Alexander, conductor
Barry Perkins, trumpet *
David Clemensen, piano †

— On the Beauty of Song —

Always Singing

Dale Warland (b. 1932)

Singing, I have had singing,
such a lot of singing,
and this was my pleasure too.
The boys all sang in the fields, and at
night we all sang.
The chapels were full of singing.
It was singing all the time.
I have had pleasure. I have had singing.

Text by Fred Mitchell, paraphrased by the
composer

The text of *Always Singing* is a paraphrase (by the composer) of a quote found in Ronald Blythe's 1969 bestseller *Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village*. The book consists of interviews with the townspeople of a village in East Suffolk, 90 miles north of London, including an 85-year-old retired farmer named Fred Mitchell. As a poverty-stricken horseman, his life was very difficult, even to the point of being forced to choose between feeding or clothing his children. He said, "There was nothing in my childhood, only work. I never had plea-

sure. But I have forgotten one thing—the singing. So I lie; I have had pleasure. I have had singing." The piece is also reflective of the composer's early life; growing up on a farm in Iowa, Warland identifies with singing as part of daily life, in school, church (listen for *O God Our Help in Ages Past*, the chime of the chapel bells in Akenfield), and as a family. This composition is a reminder of the importance of building community through singing together.

— Dale Warland

Always Singing is published by Graphite Publishing. www.graphitepublishing.com

Chanson Éloignée

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

*Ce soir mon coeur fait chanter
des anges qui se souviennent...
Une voix, presque mienne,
par trop de silence tentée,*

*monte et se décide
à ne plus revenir;
tendre et intrépide,
à quoi va-t-elle s'unir?
Ô chant éloigné, suprême lyre,
qui ne se donne qu'à celui qui ardemment*

*et sans repos supporte et endure
de son effort le long et doux martyr,
Ô chant qui naît le dernier pour conclure
l'enfance non terminée, le coeur d'antan.*

*Où je ne voulais que chanter,
il m'a été accordé
l'honneur de la vie...*

Tonight my heart makes
angels sing, remembering...
A voice, nearly mine,
enticed by too much silence,

risers and decides
never to return;
tender and brave,
with what will it unite?

O distant song, lyre supreme,
giving itself only to one who fervently
and without rest bears and endures
the long sweet martyrdom of your endeavor,
O song born last to complete
the unended childhood, yesterday's heart.

When all I wanted was to sing,
I was granted
the honor of living.

Text by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926);
translation by Diana Rand Fairclough

When Maestro Alexander and his magnificent Pacific Chorale, who have championed my work over the years, asked if I would compose a short a cappella piece celebrating music for the inaugural concert in the new Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, I once again turned to the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke. While known principally for his German poems, including the astonishing *Duino Elegies* and the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, Rilke also composed over 400 French poems, most written in the Swiss village of Muzot during the last two years of his life, from 1924–1926. I previously chose five of these poems for my choral cycle, *Les Chansons des Roses*, and also included his poem, *Sa Nuit d'Été*, as the first of my recent Nocturnes. Rilke's stunningly beautiful texts for *Chanson Éloignée* will resonate deeply with all singers everywhere—the yearning of a heart for song and for love, and what it means to be given the gift of singing.

— Morten Lauridsen

Chanson Éloignée is published by Peermusic Classical. www.peermusicclassical.com.

— On Love and Loss —

O Love, Be Fed with Apples While You May

Morten Lauridsen

O Love, be fed with apples while you may,
And feel the sun and go in royal array,
A smiling innocent on the heavenly
causeway,

Though in what listening horror for the
cry
That soars in outer blackness dismally,
The dumb blind beast, the paranoiac fury:

Be warm, enjoy the season, lift your
head,
Exquisite in the pulse of tainted blood,
That shivering glory not to be despised.

Take your delight in momentariness,
Walk between dark and dark—a shining
space
With the grave's narrowness, though not
its peace.

Text by Robert Graves (1895–1985)

“O Love Be Fed With Apples While You May” is a movement from the original ver-

sion of my *Mid-Winter Songs on Poems by Robert Graves*, commissioned by the University of Southern California to celebrate its centennial in 1980. Maestro Alexander, the Pacific Chorale and Pacific Symphony Orchestra brilliantly performed the full cycle at Segerstrom Hall some years ago. Requiring a very skilled pianist, this exuberant, jazz-tinged and highly canonic setting of “O Love” has been recorded by the San Francisco Symphony Chorus under the baton of Vance George.

— Morten Lauridsen

O Love, Be Fed With Apples While You May is published by Opus Music Publishers. www.opusmusicpublishers.com.

Love, thrice wise

Joseph Gregorio (b. 1979)

Winner, Pacific Chorale's Young Composers Competition (2010)

I. Liquor and lacquer

If I were only dafter
I might be making hymns
To the liquor of your laughter
And the lacquer of your limbs.

But you turn across the table
A telescope of eyes,
And it lights a Russian sable
Running circles in the skies...

Till I go running after,
Obeying all your whims —
For the liquor of your laughter
And the lacquer of your limbs.

Text by Witter Bynner (1881–1968)

II. An amethyst remembrance

I held a jewel in my fingers
And went to sleep.
The day was warm, and winds were prosy;
I said: “‘T will keep.”

I woke and chid my honest fingers, —
The gem was gone;
And now an amethyst remembrance
Is all I own.

Text by Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

III. Kinsfolk

Hey, rose, just born
Twin to a thorn;

Was't so with you, O Love and Scorn?

Sweet eyes that smiled,
Now wet and wild:
O Eye and Tear — mother and child.

Well: Love and Pain
Be kinsfolk twain;
Yet would, Oh would I could love again.

Text by Sidney Lanier (1842–1881)

Love, thrice illuminates three moods of a lover. The first movement, “Liquor and lacquer,” sets Witter Bynner’s “Opus 6” and musically depicts infatuation through flighty changes of meter and sudden shifts of mode. The second, entitled “An amethyst remembrance” and based on a poem by Emily Dickinson, is regretful, slowly building to an anguished climax and wistfully fading away. Finally, “Kinsfolk” takes Sidney Lanier’s “A Song of Love” as its text. It is both a lighthearted reflection on the paradoxical and complementary relationship between love and pain, and a pining for love. The first two stanzas of “Kinsfolk” pit the tenors and basses, who deliver the first stanza’s melody, against the sopranos and altos, who answer in the second stanza with the same melody in a key a tritone

away from that of the first. The third stanza is a fugato on the same melody, culminating in a fervid fortissimo.

— Joseph Gregorio

Love, thrice is published by the National Collegiate Choral Organization, www.ncco-usa.org

Pentecost

Michael Rickelton (b. 1983)

Co-winner, Pacific Chorale's Young Composers Competition (2012)

Neither the sorrows of afternoon, waiting
in the silent house,
Nor the night no sleep relieves, when
memory
Repeats its prosecution.

Nor the morning's ache for dream's
illusion, nor any prayers
Improvised to an unknowable god
Can extinguish the flame.

We are not as we were. Death has been
our pentecost,
And our innocence consumed by these
implacable
Tongues of fire.

Comfort me with stones. Quench my
thirst with sand.

I offer you this scarred and guilty hand
Until others mix our ashes.

Text by Dana Gioia (b. 1950)

Gioia's work has become a great source of personal inspiration. His texts are often engaging accounts of the human experience, expressing universal and complex emotions expertly captured in verse. Gioia's "Pentecost," written after the death of his young son, is a gripping reflection on tragedy and loss. Supremely painful and heartrending, this poem is filled with powerful imagery and pointed text. As in many of his works, the sound of Gioia's word choice and phrasing lends itself to a musical pairing.

— Michael Rickelton

Snow (The King's Trumpeter)

John Muehleisen (b. 1955)

Thaw every breast, melt every eye with
woe,
Here's dissolution by the hand of death!

To dirt, to water, turned the fairest *Snow*.
O! The king's *trumpeter* has lost his
breath.

Anonymous English epitaph

Snow (The King's Trumpeter) was written as a musical memorial for Roy Cummings (a University of Washington Professor of Trumpet and Jazz Studies), whose untimely death in January 2000 shocked the Seattle musical community and left a great void in many lives, particularly those of his family and students.

The individual referred to as "Snow" in the text is most likely Valentine Snow, the 18th-century English trumpeter who succeeded three generations of the Shore family in the post of Sergeant Trumpeter (the lead Royal Trumpeter in the English court). The solo trumpet parts in many of Handel's later orchestral works and operas were written specifically for Snow.

The central features of this setting are the two prominent trumpet soliloquies, which represent the beloved court trumpeter referred to in the text. The first soliloquy appears shortly after the opening, and represents Snow in his prime; the

second passage appears in reaction to the phrase, "the king's *trumpeter* has lost his breath." This passage is a transformation and a kind of musical "dissolution" of the opening soliloquy and represents Snow in his last hours of life. After a final farewell by the choir, the trumpeter poignantly breathes his last breath.

— John Muehleisen

Snow (The King's Trumpeter) is published by Colla Voce Music, LLC. www.collavoce.com.

When All Is Done

John Muehleisen

When all is done, and my last word is
said,

And ye who loved me murmur, "He is
dead,"

Let no one weep, for fear that I should
know,

And sorrow too that ye should sorrow
so.

When all is done and in the oozing clay,
Ye lay this cast-off hull of mine away,
Pray not for me, for, after long despair,
The quiet of the grave will be a prayer.

For I have suffered loss and grievous
pain,
The hurts of hatred and the world's
disdain,
And wounds so deep that love, well-tried
and pure,
Had not the pow'r to ease them or to cure.

When all is done, say not my day is o'er,
And that thro' night I seek a dimmer shore:
Say rather that my morn has just begun,—
I greet the dawn and not a setting sun,
When all is done.

Text by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906)

When All Is Done was commissioned by the University of Wyoming at the invitation of Nicole Lamartine, Director of Choral Activities, for a choral work commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the death of Matthew Shepard in one of the most notorious hate crimes in modern U.S. history. The work was premiered at the 13th Annual Shepard Symposium on Social Justice at University of Wyoming, with Matthew's mother, Judy, in attendance. As Nicole and I discussed what kind of a work to create for this occasion, and as I searched through dozens of texts, I ran across the powerful poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–

1906), known to many as “the virtual father of black American poetry.” The son of former slaves, Dunbar was keenly aware of the social cost and personal pain of oppression and hatred.

On my initial reading of the poem, I heard the voice of the poet paint a graphic picture of the price of hatred and of the emptiness of loss and the grave. Yet ultimately this darkness leads to the light of redemption and hope. As I reread Dunbar's poem, I had a remarkably moving experience: Dunbar's voice, reaching out across more than a century—became Matthew's voice, speaking to all those who mourned for him. As I continued to read, their voices merged together, joining with the voices of all victims of hatred and oppression, crying out for justice, warning us of the stinging cost of hatred, yet selflessly and compassionately redirecting us all from despair and emptiness to the hope of a new morning in which we can all greet not the “setting sun” of the present day or past atrocities, but “the dawn” of a new age, that great Dream of Dr. King, in which love rightly transcends hatred and oppression “when all is done.”

— John Muehleisen

When All Is Done is published by the composer,
www.johnmuehleisen.com

— On Nature —

The Bluebird

Norman Dello Joio (1913–2008)

Bluebird who flies thru the wood,
Singing a song so strange and wild,
Teach me your wisdom, teach me to
 know all that you know.
How shall I tell my love my love?
Oh, bluebird who sings of my love.

Young man so plaintive, so sad,
Now will I teach you how to love.
Shall you not take her into your arms?
Then must you whisper of your love,
Young man so sad, so sad.

Oh, my sweet maid so fair,
Hear while I tell of my true love.
Within your garden grows a tree,
Now I would taste of its fruit,
My sweet maid so fair, so fair.

Young man so plaintive, so sad,
I will not give you the fruit of my tree.
Bring me the sun, the sun and the moon,
One in each hand,
Then you may taste the fruit of my tree.

Bluebird who flies through the wood,
Did you not see him?
Did you not see the lad, the plaintive lad
 so sad?
He went to pluck the sun and the moon,
One in each hand.

But this was something no one could do.
Well did she know,
Full well she knew he'd never do,
 bluebird.

Text by Joseph Machlis (1906–1998)

The late American composer and educator Norman Dello Joio enjoyed a fulfilling career in both academia and the concert hall. His style reflects the multiplicity of his interests, and often includes ingredients from a variety of musical styles and historical periods. "The Bluebird" (1950) sets playful, lovesick poetry by Joseph Machlis. In it, a young man pines for an unattainable woman, and enlists the advice of a wise bluebird. Following the bluebird's goading, the young man approaches the maiden with a suggestive request. The maiden responds by presenting an impossible quest. Should the young man return with the sun and moon in his hands, she promises to suc-

cumb. Both the maiden and the bluebird laugh at the boy in his folly to attain her wishes. Dello Joio's score is appropriately melancholic, with arching, surprising melodies supported by impressionistic piano accompaniment. As "The Bluebird" unfolds, listen for characteristic bird calls in both hands of the keyboard.

— Robert Istad

The Bluebird is published by Carl Fischer, Inc.
www.carlfischer.com.

Two River Nocturnes

John Muehleisen

I. Prairie Waters by Night

Chatter of birds two by two raises a night
song joining a litany of running
water—sheer waters showing the
russet of old stones remembering
many rains.

And the long willows drowse on the
shoulders of the running water,
and sleep from much music; joined
songs of day-end, feathery throats
and stony waters,
in a choir chanting new psalms.

It is too much for the long willows
when low laughter of a red moon
comes down; and the willows
drowse and sleep on the shoulders
of the running water.

II. River Moons

The double moon, one on the high back-
drop of the west, one on the curve
of the river face,

The sky moon of fire and the river moon
of water, I am taking these home in
a basket, hung on an elbow, such a
teeny weeny elbow, in my head.

I saw them last night, a cradle moon,
two horns of a moon, such an early
hopeful moon, such a child's moon
for all young hearts to make a
picture of.

The river—I remember this like a
picture—the river was the upper
twist of a written question mark.

I know now it takes many many years
to write a river, a twist of water
asking a question.

And white stars moved when the moon
moved, and one red star kept burn-
ing, and the Big Dipper was almost
overhead.

Text by Carl Sandburg (1878–1967)

Prairie Waters by Night was commissioned in 2003, when I was serving as composer-in-residence for the Dale Warland Singers, as one of four pieces in a suite of works by four different composers unified by the theme, *A River Journey*. As I was searching for a text for the commission, I focused on works about rivers and water by poets from the Midwest and soon stumbled upon my copy of *The Complete Poems of Carl Sandburg*, which I had owned for many years, but in which I had never found inspiration until this opportunity arose. As I read Sandburg's beautiful poem, I was struck by the peaceful, pastoral, nocturnal quality of the text and by the beauty of the colorful language Sandburg uses to describe various images of nature. I was particularly drawn to the musical metaphors throughout the poem: the "chatter of birds," "a night song," "songs of day-end," and "the long willows" that "sleep from much music." In the climax of the poem, Sandburg unites these elements of nature "in a choir chanting new psalms." The text was so well suited for the occasion and for a choral work; it was a clear choice.

River Moons was commissioned in 2005 by Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester, MN, and was premiered in May 2006. When CAE Artistic Director Michael Culloton approached me about this commission, I immediately returned to the poetry of Carl Sandburg. I had been considering writing a companion piece for my setting of *Prairie Waters by Night* that would constitute a pair of River Nocturnes based around the theme of water, and this commission provided that opportunity. Because the two poems share several similar poetic images, I created a number of musical connections between the two works, which are evident in various musical passages. As with *Prairie Waters by Night*, I was struck by the beauty of Sandburg's language. In *River Moons*, he takes a simple image of the moon reflected in the water of a river and turns it into a vivid memory from youth, full of the nostalgia, mystery, and wonder that youthful memories invoke so powerfully. So much poetry and literature of the twentieth century has focused primarily on the dark side of humanity, while the expression of beauty has frequently been relegated to a distant back seat, to an "old fashioned" and, for many, irrelevant world. What a joy it has

been to rediscover Sandburg's poetry, with its expression of the natural world in images of peace, beauty, and awe; poetry that uplifts, refreshes, and renews in the spirit of another of America's greatest writers on nature: Henry David Thoreau.

The work is dedicated to my father, Gene Muehleisen, "who taught me to appreciate the sacramental beauty of nature."

— John Muehleisen

Prairie Waters by Night and *River Moons* are published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Inc. www.sbmp.com.

Little Birds

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

*La luz no parpadea,
el tiempo se vacia de minutos
se ha detenido un pajarito en el aire.*

*Se dispeña la luz,
despiertan las columnas
y, sin moverse, bailan.*

*La hora es transparente:
vemos, si es invisible el pajarito,
el color de su canto.*

Light unblinking,
time empty of minutes,
a bird stopped short in air.

Light flung down,
the pillars awake
and, without moving, dance.

The time is transparent:
even if the bird is invisible,
let us see the color of his song.

Text by Octavio Paz (1914–1998);
translation by Muriel Rukeyser

Ms. Kimberly Barclay-Drusedum and I were students together at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. We sang in all the choirs together, which basically meant that we spent 99% of all our time together. She is a blast to be around, has a gorgeous soprano voice, plays piano like a manic, and as soon as she graduated she was snatched up by the school district and given a brand-new high school. It came as no surprise that she built a world-class choral program in just a few short years.

Ms. Broccoli (as I love to call her) commissioned me from her own pocket to write a

piece for her women's chorus, so I found a beautiful Octavio Paz poem and set it in its original Spanish. The work is an homage to Gabriel Fauré, with its running piano part and fluid sensual melodies, and this version (SATB) was commissioned by Dr. Bruce Mayhall (again from his own pocket) for the Delaware Junior All-State Choir.

Little Birds is dedicated to my crazy friend and fantastic conductor, Ms. Kimberly Barclay-Drusedum.

— Eric Whitacre

Little Birds is published by Walton Music Corporation. www.waltonmusic.com.

Water Night

Eric Whitacre

Night with the eyes of a horse that
trembles in the night,
night with eyes of water in the field asleep
is in your eyes, a horse that trembles,
is in your eyes of secret water.
Eyes of shadow-water,
eyes of well-water,
eyes of dream-water.
Silence and solitude,
two little animals moon-led,

drink in your eyes,
drink in those waters.

If you open your eyes,
night opens, doors of musk,
the secret kingdom of the water opens
flowing from the center of night.

And if you close your eyes,
a river fills you from within,
flows forward, darkens you:
night brings its wetness to beaches in
your soul.

Text by Octavio Paz;
translation by Muriel Rukeyser

The poetry of Octavio Paz is a composer's dream. The music seems to set itself (without the usual struggle that invariably accompanies this task) and the process feels more like cleaning the oils from an ancient canvas to reveal the hidden music than composing. *Water Night* was no exception, and the tight harmonies and patient unfolding seemed to pour from the poetry from the first reading, singing its magic even after the English translation. *Water Night* is simply the natural musical expression of this beautiful poem, and is

dedicated with my greatest sincerity to my
friend and confidant Dr. Bruce Mayhall.

— Eric Whitacre

Water Night is published by Walton Music Corporation. www.waltonmusic.com.

— On the Adventure of Life —

Fire!

John Orfe (b. 1976)

**Co-winner, Pacific Chorale's Young
Composers Competition (2012)**

Fire,
Fire, Lord!
Fire gonna burn ma soul!

I ain't been good,
I ain't been clean—
I been stinkin' low-down, mean.
Fire,
Fire, Lord!
Fire gonna burn my soul!

Tell me, brother,
Do you believe
If you wanta go to heaben
Got to moan an' grieve?
Fire,

Fire, Lord!
Fire gonna burn ma soul!

I been [cheatin'] stealin',
Been tellin' lies,
Had more women
Than Pharaoh had wives.

Fire,
Fire, Lord!
Fire gonna burn ma soul!
I means Fire, Lord!
Fire gonna burn ma soul!

Text by Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Langston Hughes' poem, written in vernacular idioms, leapt off the page for me. Inspired by the Last Judgment in the Book of Revelation, where every thought, word, and deed will be given its ultimate reward, "Fire!" deals with themes of justice, mercy, guilt, hope, fairness, and accountability. Since the poem is structured as a Spiritual, I took the opportunity to set it as such and in so doing pay tribute to the rich traditions of African-American choral singing.

— John Orfe

Song of the Open Road

Norman Dello Joio

Hello! Hello! Whoever you are,
Come, travel with me, whoever you are.
We will sail pathless and wild seas,
We will go where waves dash and winds
blow.

Come on! Come on! Wherever you are,
Look around! You will find what never
tires.

Come on! Come on, and join hands,
Know what it is as you pass to be loved
by strangers.

Take to the open road, healthy and free,
Take the long path leading wherever I
choose,
I travel the wide world before me,
The earth expanding, the music sounding.

Hello! Hello! Whoever you are, wherever
you are,
Come on! Come on! Whoever you are,
Join hands and travel with me.

I ordain myself loosed from imaginary
limits.
From this hour I shall live as my own
master,
Searching and listening,
Breaking the bonds that would hold me.

Sing a song of the open road,
for here is space and here a great deed
has room.

Sing a song of the highway I travel,
for here is the test of a wisdom that is of
the soul.

Take warning of those who would hold you,
The mocking and bat-eyed men.
Take your love on the road with you,
Take your love on the road,
Gather the minds of men out of their
brains, gather love out of men's hearts,
The universe is a path that is endless,
the universe itself is a road.

Come forth, my call is the call of battle.
Going with me you must go well armed.
Come forth, come forth and travel with
me.

I give you my hand. I give you my love.
I give you myself. Will you give me
yourself?

Will you travel with me?
The road is before us, I give you my
hand.

Shall we stick to each other as long as
we live?

Hello! Whoever you are, wherever you
are,

Come on and travel with me. Hello!

Text adapted from Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

“Song of the Open Road,” which Dello Joio called a “choral proclamation,” was commissioned in 1952 by the Crane Department of Music at SUNY Potsdam. While Walt Whitman’s work of the same name was his inspiration, the full poem was impossible to set as an eight-minute choral work, comprising as it does more text than the libretto to Bach’s two-hour-long *St. John Passion*. Dello Joio edited Whitman’s poem mercilessly, slashing nearly ninety percent of the original. The brief snippets he retained he reworked into a new, concentrated poem glued together with material he himself added—among which are the several references to song, singing, and music. He nonetheless preserved Whitman’s message: There is nothing in life more satisfying, salutary, and enlightening than making friends and wandering the world with them in the freedom of God’s open air.

The composition is in three sections, the first a piano-accompanied exhortation and exultation. The solo trumpet then introduces and accompanies the more introspective middle section. The mood changes

as a martial prologue for trumpet and piano initiates the closing section, in which the chorus’s opening call for travelers to join in fellowship is renewed triumphantly.

— Gordon Paine

Song of the Open Road is published by Carl Fischer, Inc. www.carlfischer.com

John Alexander

Artistic Director of Pacific Chorale since 1972, John Alexander is one of America’s most respected choral conductors. His inspired leadership both on the podium and as an advocate for the advancement of the choral art has garnered national and international admiration and acclaim.

Alexander’s long and distinguished career has encompassed conducting hundreds of choral and orchestral performances nationally and in 27 countries around the globe. He has conducted his singers with orchestras throughout Europe, Asia, the former Soviet Union and South America; and, closer to home, with Pacific Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, Musica Angelica and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Equally versatile whether on the podium or behind the scenes, Alexander has prepared choruses for many of the world's most outstanding orchestral conductors, including Zubin Mehta, Pierre Boulez, Seiji Ozawa, Michael Tilson Thomas, Leonard Slatkin, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Gustavo Dudamel, Lukas Foss, Max Rudolf, Carl St.Clair, Gerard Schwarz, Marin Alsop, John Mauceri, John Williams, and Keith Lockhart.

A proponent of contemporary American music, Alexander is noted for the strong representation of American works and composers in his programming. He has conducted many premieres of works by composers such as Jake Heggie, Morten Lauridsen, Eric Whitacre, Frank Ticheli, and James Hopkins.

Alexander is nationally recognized for his leadership in the musical and organizational development of the performing arts. He is a board member and former president of Chorus America, the service organization for choruses in North America. Alexander also has served on artistic review panels for national, state-wide and local arts organizations, including the National Endowment for the



Arts, the California Arts Council, and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

Alexander retired in spring 2006 from his position as Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Fullerton, hav-

ing been awarded the honor of Professor Emeritus. From 1970 to 1996, he held the position of Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Northridge. Alexander continues his involvement in the pre-professional training of choral conductors. He is in demand as a teacher, clinician, and adjudicator in festivals, seminars and workshops across the United States. In 2003, Chorus America honored him with the establishment of the "John Alexander Conducting Faculty Chair" for their national conducting workshops.

Alexander is a composer of many works and serves as the editor of the John Alexander Choral Series with Hinshaw Music, as well as the John Alexander Singers Choral Series with Pavane Publishing. His numerous tributes and awards include the Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art from Chorus America (2008); The Distinguished Faculty Member award from California State University, Fullerton (2006); the Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award (2003), presented in honor of his lifetime achievement as an artistic visionary in the development of the arts in Orange County; the Out-

standing Individual Artist Award (2000) from Arts Orange County; the Gershwin Award (1990), presented by the county of Los Angeles in recognition of his cultural leadership in that city; and the Outstanding Professor Award (1976) from California State University, Northridge.

John Alexander Singers

The John Alexander Singers, Pacific Chorale's professional chamber choir, is a 24-voice ensemble of outstanding choral musicians from throughout Southern California. While most of these singers also serve as part of the paid core to Pacific Chorale's 140-voice ensemble, their work with the John Alexander Singers focuses on specialized repertoire appropriate for a professional chamber chorus.

The Pacific Chorale regularly presents the John Alexander Singers in concert venues throughout Southern California. The Singers have collaborated extensively with Musica Angelica, Southern California's premier period instrument orchestra. Other notable collaborations include performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic on their new music "Green Umbrella" series, and performances with

the Kronos Quartet, Mark Morris Dance Company, The Royal Ballet of Covent Garden, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and Pacific Symphony.

The John Alexander Singers' first recording, *Sweet Harmony*, contained music by Lili Boulanger, Benjamin Britten, Cecil Effinger and Frank Ticheli, and featured the world premiere recordings of John Alexander's compositions "Sweet Harmony" and "In Praise of Music," as well as James Hopkins's cycle *The Rossetti Songs*, commissioned by Pacific Chorale. The Singers' second CD, *Shenandoah: Songs of the American Spirit*, which focuses on American folk song, is available on the Gothic label. The group can be heard alongside Pacific Chorale in Delos' 2013 recording *Frank Ticheli: The Shore and Other Choral Works*.

The John Alexander Singers have appeared as a featured chorus at conferences of the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America's national conference in Los Angeles, and the Association of California Symphony Orchestras' annual conference in Costa Mesa in August 2007. They have served

as the resident chorus for the California State University Summer Arts Festivals at Humboldt State University and CSU Long Beach. They also served as resident professional choir for the California Conducting Symposium, co-sponsored by Chorus America and CSU Fullerton.

Barry Perkins

Barry Perkins has been the Principal Trumpet of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra since 2004. He began playing the trumpet at the age of five under the instruction of his father, William Perkins. Barry received his formal education at The New England Conservatory of Music and soon after his stay in Boston, won his first orchestra position with the Mexico City Philharmonic in 1990.

Throughout his career, Barry has performed with many great orchestras, famous classical and jazz artists as well as esteemed conductors. He has performed on the world's most prestigious concert stages including those of Munich, Frankfurt, London, Paris, Lucerne, Hannover, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Essen, and Vienna, as well as those of the United States.

In addition to his live orchestra career, Barry is an active studio musician in the Hollywood studios. He has participated on the film scores of John Williams, James Newton Howard, James Horner, Alexandre Desplat, John Debney, Hans Zimmer, Christophe Beck, Bear McCreary, Danny Elfman, Thomas Wander, Harold Closer, Ramin Djawadi, Marco Beltrami, Alan Silvestri, Rupert Gregson-Williams, Henry Jackman and Joel Mcneely.

Barry is a member of the music faculty at California State University Fullerton and founder of the Barry Perkins Trumpet Academy, which has reached hundreds of young musicians throughout Southern California.

David Clemensen

David Clemensen is active as a pianist, teacher, church musician and composer. A native Californian, he holds degrees from Chapman University, CSU Fullerton, and USC. He has been the principal accompanist for Pacific Chorale and the John Alexander Singers since 2002. He has worked with many conductors, including William Hall, Robert Istad, Michael Lancaster, Richard Raub, Eliza

Rubenstein, the late Howard Swan, James Vail, Perla Warren and Loren Wiebe. He is in demand throughout Southern California as a collaborator and coach. Dr. Clemensen has taught at Biola University and Orange Coast College, and maintains a private studio as an accompanist and teacher. He served for four years as coach and pianist for the Intimate Opera of Pasadena's Summer Vocal Workshop. Often called upon to lead music for events of the C. S. Lewis Foundation, in 2002 he directed the Service of Dedication for the Study Center at Lewis' home, the Kilns, at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, England. A lifelong church musician, he currently serves as accompanist for Irvine United Church of Christ. His compositions have been performed by many choirs throughout the U.S. In 1995 he won the American Orff-Schulwerk competition for his William Blake setting, *The Tyger and the Lamb*.



Choral Performers:

SOPRANO

Kellee King
Maria Cristina Navarro
Sandy Rosales
Katharin Rundus
Sarah Thompson
Lorraine Joy Welling

ALTO

Maya Guerrero
Laura Harrison
I-Chin Lee
Kathleen Preston
Jane Shim
Yilin Hsu Wentlandt

TENOR

Daniel C. Babcock, *Roger W. Johnson*
Memorial Chair
Joseph Cruz
Jason Francisco
Nicholas Preston
John St. Marie
Gregorio Taniguchi

BASS

Aram Barsamian
Carver Cossey
Gordon LaCross
Ricardo V. McKillips, Jr.
Emmanuel Miranda
Thomas Ringland

Executive Producer: Carol Rosenberger
Producer: Richard Messenger
Associate Producers: Brian Sullivan & Ryan McSweeney
Recording Engineer: Ted Ancona
Editing, Mixing & Mastering: Matthew Snyder
Project Administrator: Dana Ramos
Booklet Editor: Lindsay Koob
Art Design & Layout: Lonnie Kunkel
Photo Credits: Stan Sholik

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