

NACUSAsf Presents

Not All Who Wander Are Lost

Eleven new choral works from contemporary composers

Featuring Serenade, associated with Masterworks Chorale
Dr. Bryan Baker, Director

8:00 p.m. Saturday, June 10, 2023
Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento Street, San Francisco

Adrienne Albert *Daffodils*

John Beeman *Butterfly*

I'lana Cotton *“Hope” is the Thing with Feathers*

Sheli Nan *Requiem for the Ancestors—Día de los Muertos*

Nancie Kester *All My Trials*

— *Intermission* —

Greg Bartholomew *Be Near Me*

John Bilotta *See Me, Tell Me What You See*

L Peter Deutsch *N'fashot Tzadikim (The Spirits of the Just)*

Monica Chew *Enveloping*

Mary Fineman *Nobody Said*

Brian Feld *Let the Light Shine on Me*

Award-winning composer **Adrienne Albert** (ASCAP) has had her chamber, choral, vocal, orchestral and wind band works performed throughout the U.S. and across the globe. Her music is widely known for its “melodic and lyrical beauty” and “whimsy and playfulness”. Having previously worked as a singer with composers such as Stravinsky, Bernstein, Glass, and Schuller to name a few, Albert began composing her own music in the 1990s. Her music has been supported by noteworthy arts organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts, ACF, Meet TheComposer/Rockefeller Foundation, Subito Awards, MPE Foundation, ACME, and yearly ASCAP awards. She has been composer-in-residence and a visiting composer at numerous colleges and universities in NY, California, Alaska, and Colorado. A graduate of UCLA, Albert studied composition with Stephen Mosko, and orchestration with Albert Harris. Her music is widely recorded, published by Kenter Canyon Music (ASCAP) and can be found on her website: www.adriennealbert.com.

Daffodils

Composed for my dear friend and mentor, Gregg Smith, in honor of his undying love and dedication to choral music, particularly American choral works, and for his commitment to “new” and undiscovered treasures of the 20th and 21st centuries and beyond. Thank you, Gregg, for all you have taught me over the years! And for this opportunity to compose a new work for you for the beginning of Spring, 2013.

— *Adrienne Albert (01.30.2013)*

Daffodils

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed--and gazed--but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

— *William Wordsworth*

John Beeman is a composer living in the San Francisco Bay Area. He studied with Peter Fricker and William Bergsma at the University of Washington where he received his Master's degree. Mr. Beeman is the composer of three operas, symphonic and chamber works and numerous choral compositions. Works have been performed by the Santa Rosa Symphony, Boston Metro Opera, the Ives Quartet, Paul Dresher, and the Oregon Repertory Singers. He has received awards through Meet the Composer, the American Composers Forum and ASCAP. Currently he is working on an opera about Ishi, the last Native American of his tribe to come out of the wilderness.

Butterfly is a setting of a poem by Carla Brooke, my wife and frequent collaborator. Carla writes about her poem:

As a poet and artist I am attentive to inspirational moments in nature as well as the creative process itself. I felt inspired to describe the signs of early spring along the coast while marveling at the beauty of monarch wings, a metamorphosis both inside and out.

In this musical work for choir, I attempted to capture the lightness and beauty of the butterfly as it flies from blossom to blossom.

O butterfly,
how did you know
what to do with your wings
when they first appeared?

From what was once a dark chrysalis,
a fluid world that filled you from inside,
to that moment when transparency splits open!

I watched you stretch and wave your jeweled wings
and I knew I could no longer pretend,
no longer hide,
as you flew above
my open eyes.

— *Carla Brooke*

Composer **Plana Cotton** has created works for a broad range of genres, from solo piano to small chamber groups to large choral and instrumental ensembles. She holds a Master of Arts degree in composition from UCLA. A California resident for many years, she was active in multi-art collaborations and performance. Since moving to southern Oregon in 2003, she has written over 35 works for Rogue Valley ensembles, including four commissions for the Siskiyou Singers. The Rogue Valley Symphony commissioned *Cantus*, a large-scale work for orchestra, in honor of its 50th anniversary season, which premiered in October, 2017. She was active in NACUSAsf for over 10 years, and helped form NACUSA chapter in southern Oregon in 2006. You may visit her website at <http://www.notimemusic.com>.

“Hope” is the Thing with Feathers

This work was commissioned by the Siskiyou Singers, in Ashland OR, in honor of Music Director Mark Reppert’s 10th anniversary season.

“Hope” is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops - at all

And sweetest in the Gale is heard
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm

I’ve heard it in the chilliest land
And on the strangest Sea
Yet never in Extremity,
It asked a crumb of Me.

— *Emily Dickinson, c. 1861*

Sheli Nan composes music that defies boundaries. She is a composer, pianist, harpsichordist, percussionist and author. Her Baroque and Classical training, coupled with her Latin and African training, and having lived in many different countries, has produced a unique sound; a 21st century harmony. Her music is performed locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Her music has been performed in many universities and performance halls around the United States, including New York City, Texas, Florida, Washington State, South Dakota etc. She composes harpsichord and piano music, piano trios, string quartets and quintets, chamber music, guitar duos and solos, brass and sax quartets and quintets, orchestral music, choral music, operas, oratorios and requiems. She has over 100 pieces in the ASCAP library that have been published by PRB Productions, Screaming Mary Music, and Tech-Clazz Publishing Co. Twelve of her CDs can be listened to on Spotify, Roon, etc. For more information www.shelinan.com

Requiem for the Ancestors—Día de los Muertos

As we have grown older the world around us has grown smaller. We know our neighbor's cultures both globally and locally. Many of us have lived in different countries as have our children and grandchildren. We are from all of these worlds—our blended Human Family. This beautiful direction is the direction we are all globally moving toward. In honor of our human journey I offer this blend in Spanish and English, of our experience of death. Requiem for the Ancestors—Día de los Muertos is a universal moment we all have experienced. Those around us have died as we eventually will as well. El Día de los Muertos is a meaningful holiday that makes room for our sadness and makes time for art, and laughter and memory. For mi familia y mis amigas y amigos and for all the many many people we have all lost; Life is a blessing.

[Note: The two verses run concurrently.]

1. Mother. Father. What about my baby? Leaking breasts and emptiness.
What about my brother? Best of friends and now he's gone.
I will bring them bread.
Ver los abuelos to see your dear grandpas.
We're bringing Pan de Muerto now.
Tengo un idea. Let' make an altar.
Decorate with sugar skeletons and flores.
Flores amarillos.
I'll put photos flowers and bread.
We will honor our dead. Pan.. Bread.. Life..
2. Pan Pan. Let's get our bread now.
Pan Pan. Bread for the dead ones.
She will bring you bread.
Mama oh Mama oh Mama oh Mama oh Mama oh Mama
Oh where are we going? Where are our grandpas?
Pan de Muerto now.
Honoring our ancestors first of November.
Yellow flowers for grandpas. Yellow flowers for brothers.
We'll put photos flowers and bread.
We will honor our dead. Pan.. Bread.. Life..

— *Sheli Nan*

Nancie Kester is a recently retired faculty member of the Music Department at Diablo Valley College. She currently teaches piano, theory and composition in her independent Berkeley studio. Ms. Kester received a BA in music composition and piano from California State University, East Bay. Ms. Kester has composed and arranged numerous works for chorus, piano and instrumental ensembles and won prizes in the 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2022 MTAC Composer's Today competitions. She is published in the Colla Voce International Choral Series. Ms. Kester completed an MME, Kodaly Emphasis from Holy Names College and received a Gerbode Foundation grant for training local musicians to become music teachers in the Kodaly approach. Ms. Kester is a co-author and partner in Calicanto Associates, publisher of books, CDs, choral arrangements, and musical plays featuring songs with historical relevance. In this endeavor, Nancie has given workshops and performances throughout the United States.

All My Trials

The beautiful American folk lullaby, "All My Trials," is pre-Civil War and comes from the Anglo Southern Gospel tradition. It was later transported to the Bahamas thereby acquiring its gentle calypso qualities. The song has been recorded by many different artists, including Joan Baez, Pete Seeger and Harry Belafonte. Nancie Kester was inspired to create a choral setting of "All My Trials" for SATB, piano, flute, soft rattle and bongos. The song tells the story of a mother on her death bed, telling her children, "no matter how bleak the situation seems, the struggle will soon be over."

Text: "All My Trials," traditional American folk song, author unknown

Greg Bartholomew

The music of award-winning American composer Greg Bartholomew is frequently performed throughout North America, Europe and Australia. Born in 1957 in St Paul, Minnesota, Bartholomew was awarded the Cheryl A. Spector Prize twice (in 2012 for the First Suite from Razumov and in 2013 for Summer Suite), the Silver Platter Repertoire Award (for The Tree), and First Place in the 2006 Orpheus Music Composition Competition (for Beneath the Apple Tree). A two-time Finalist for the American Prize in Choral Composition, he was the 2012/2013 Composer in Residence for the Cascadian Chorale. For more information visit www.gregbartholomew.com.

Be Near Me

The text for *Be Near Me* is Canto 50 from the poem *In Memoriam A.H.H.* by the British Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson (1809 -1892). Published in 1850, the poem is an extended requiem for the poet's beloved friend Arthur Henry Hallam, who died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1833, age 22. It is

considered one of the greatest poems of the 19th Century and was reported to be a great favorite of Queen Victoria.

Canto 50

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is racked with pangs that conquer trust;
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

— *Alfred Tennyson*

John G. Bilotta was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, but has spent most his life in the San Francisco Bay Area where he studied composition with Frederick Saunders. His works have been performed by soloists and ensembles around the world including Rarescale, Earplay, the Talea Ensemble, the Washington Square Contemporary Music Society, Chamber Mix, North/South Consonance, Musica Nova, the Avenue Winds, the Presidio Ensemble, the Boston String Quartet, the San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra, the Kiev Philharmonic, the Oakland Civic Orchestra, San Francisco Cabaret Opera, Bluegrass Opera, Boston Metro Opera, the Thompson Street Opera, New Fangled Opera, Floating Opera and VocalWorks. He serves on the Board of Directors for Goat Hall Productions and on the Executive Committee of the Society of Composers, Inc. He is currently president of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of NACUSA.

Rosetta's Stone is an opera combining the artistic expression of scientific concepts with the drama of a professor's decline into Alzheimer's and the impact on his closest student, Rosetta. The opera was a collaborative Norwegian/American project conceived by Oded Ben-Horin. The primary characters are a music professor and Rosetta, one of his students, in addition to a six-voice chorus functioning as the increasingly fragmented internal voices of the professor's mind. The selection presented today comes from the final scene. Much time has passed in the story and Rosetta returns to visit her old professor only to find him in the later stages of the disease, unable to recognize her. She struggles to reach him with the help of music he had taught her as a student but their connection is brief, fading away in a matter of seconds. Singing out on the professor's

behalf, the chorus struggles in its turn but fails to reach Rosetta in the choral aria, "See Me, Tell Me What You See."

Where once what seemed to matter was a sense that time,
as it fades away,
remembers every corner,
remembering a day when everything clear and bright...
But days grown shorter come knocking at the door.

See me, tell me what you see
Move me, find a space to be
Hear me, notice you hear me
Feel me, nerves of hearts and minds
Reach me, bridge across divide
Lead me, find another side to hide
When you're feeling, chemistry's only
"Feel me, nerves of hearts and mind"
Stars of skies, of sights of sound
Memories of a distant...
Meanings of an instant...
Wishes born of nerves of hearts and
minds...
...heart and mind.

Hear it! See it!
One conscious thought, a heart in the
making.
Forget today, and you're going
somewhere,
where time allows for every hidden day,
discovered, searched and asking,
"Is this me?"

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L Peter Deutsch lives in Sonoma County, California. An experienced singer, he performs with Circa 1600. His compositions range in idiom from Renaissance to post-tonal, using a large harmonic palette centered around modal scales: he enjoys creating "new wine in old bottles," using older forms as containers for modern material. His work to date includes four choral commissions; releases through PARMA Recordings include music for chorus, string quartet, woodwind and brass quintets, and piano trio, featuring work with Trio Casals. PARMA's release MOTO FINALE, which includes Deutsch's string trio work "Winter 2005", won a silver medal in the classical category of the Global Music Awards in 2022.

N'fashot Tzadikim (The Spirits of the Just)

The words are adapted from an old Jewish text, Wisdom of Solomon, originally in Greek. William Byrd's setting of the better-known Latin version, "Iustorum Animae," has been one of my favorite short motets for many years; I chose Hebrew as the language for mine because of my own Jewish heritage. And I felt it gave the text even greater power by framing it as a question and answer, rather than starting with the original declaration that the spirits are "in the hand of G-d."

Where are the spirits of the just?
Plague shall not draw near them.
In the eyes of fools they have died,
But they are in peace.

— translation of old Hebrew writing by composer

Monica Chew (she/her) is an Oakland pianist and composer. In 2017 she released her first solo album, *Tender and Strange*, featuring works by Bartók, Janáček, Messiaen, Takemitsu, and Scriabin. A "gifted player with an affinity for deeply sensitive expression" (Whole Note), she has been featured on radio stations worldwide. She started composing in 2017 and couldn't be happier about it. Prior to 2015, she worked nearly a decade as a principal software engineer on security and privacy at Mozilla and Google. She lives in Oakland with her husband, an 1899 Steinway B, a clavichord, and a disused violin.

Enveloping

I used fragments from three envelope poems, below.

In this short Life
That only lasts an Hour
How much, how little
is within our power

Accept my timid happiness
No Joy be in vain

But adds to some bright, sweet
dwelling

One note from one bird
Is better than than a million words
A scabbard holds but one sword

— Text freely transcribed by the composer from images of manuscripts owned by Amherst College at the Emily Dickinson electronic archive in accordance with Creative Commons license agreement at <https://www.edickinson.org/terms>.

Mary Fineman is an Oakland-based award winning singer/songwriter, composer, pianist, and teacher. Originally from Baltimore, she trained as a classical pianist in Montreal for ten years, taught at Concordia University, and studied jazz at McGill. She accompanied instrumentalists, singers, and dancers. Her music trajectory changed radically in 2003 after visiting an “energy healer.” She suddenly started hearing her own music and began composing works ranging from art song to pop to neoclassical chamber works. Performances include the Paramount Theater, Piedmont Piano Company, Chapel of the Chimes, Center for New Music, The Marsh Berkeley, and airplay on radio KDFC. Her work has been featured on WomenofSubstance Radio, Internet Archive, and by e4tt.org Call for Scores: Solo Piano. She received first place prize in music from the Biennial Competition of NLAPW.org. She’s most proud of a song cycle written for the Oakland Symphony, under the baton of the late Michael Morgan. www.maryfineman.com.

Nobody Said

I hear music at nighttime. Sometimes it’s a melody, sometimes words with music. It prevents me from sleeping until I deal with it. In this case I heard a simple descending bass line. Of course I had my trusty recorder nearby and captured the persistent music. I named it the Ray Charles piece for years... imagining someone like him performing it. I almost shelved the piece because something reminded me of a Carole King song and I dreaded being imitative. But the song wanted to be born. I performed “Nobody Said” only a couple times in the last twelve years. This is my first piece for choir.

I went to bed last night, I couldn’t settle down.
My thoughts were racing round and round she goes
That lady luck’s a cheat.
She’ll stand you up, then knock you off your feet.

When I awoke today it was the same old stuff.
Anticipating that the day would be a little rough
and tumble fray,
I went to chase the sun and all my thoughts away.

Nobody said the road ‘be straight or smooth or
easy.
Nobody said they’d turn around and give you the
key to the city....

‘Cause if your love has not been growing,
If your love is in messy disarray,
If your love is not overflowing,

I think you’re gonna watch it fade away.

I had no compassion, just my own reaction,
Only pain that mattered was my own.
Only pain...

I used to think that life was like a photograph.
Now that is such a laugh!
A man commands. You fix your face on cue.
You walk away like that was really you.

And every teacher said, “ You better settle down.
And don’t you clown around.
I told you once, you know I told you twice.
You better listen you are on thin ice.”

Nobody said, nobody said the road would be real
straight or smooth or easy.

Nobody said they'd turn around, and hand you a crown,
And give you the key to the city, you sitting there looking so pretty

I said if your love has not been growing,
If your love is standing still,
If your love is not overflowing
I think you better start it now,
I believe you better start it now,

Yes I'm sure you better start it now....
Or you never, never, never will.
So I decided I would leave my bed of nails, and all my failing,
Embraced a journey that would keep my Hope alive and Love prevailing.

Nobody said.
Nobody said.
Nobody, nobody, nobody
Everybody's singin'

Ba-da da-da da-da da-da da da-da-da. . . .

Nobody said.
Nobody said.
Nobody, nobody, nobody,
Everybody's singin'

And I think you'll start that Love right now.

— *Mary Fineman*

Brian Field began his musical endeavors at age eight with the study of piano, and began his first serious compositional efforts at sixteen, earning his undergraduate degree in music and English literature from Connecticut College, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa. At Connecticut, he studied composition with Noel Zahler, piano with the Polish pedagogue Zosia Jacynowicz, organ with John Anthony, and harpsichord/figured-bass realization with Linda Skernick. Devoting himself to composition, Mr. Field continued his musical studies at the Juilliard School in New York City where he was awarded his Master of Music degree. At Juilliard he was a student of Milton Babbitt. From Juilliard, Mr. Field attended Columbia University, earning his Doctorate. At Columbia, he was a President's Fellow and studied composition with George Edwards and Mario Davidovsky. Mr. Field's musical works include music for television and stage; solo acoustic, chamber, ballet, choral, electroacoustic and orchestral works.

Let the Light Shine on Me

I wrote the text and music for "Let the Light Shine on Me" as a hopeful response to the increasing levels of divisiveness, fear and anxiety in the world. If only we were able to fully appreciate the good intentions, the love and commonalities.

Though the world may have troubles,

And salvation hard to see,

I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.
Let the light, let the light,
Let the light shine on me;
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.

I lived in sorrow and in darkness
And my faith, oh, it had flown;
The joys of life they were so fleeting;
My soul was searching for a home.
I was searching, I was seeking;
I was blind as I could be;
I had a longing for belonging,
No solution could I see.

Though the world may have troubles,
And salvation hard to see,
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.
Let the light, let the light,
Let the light shine on me;
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.

Every face I saw was empty
As from place to place I roamed;
People cold with isolation,
Hearts as hardened as a stone.
I was offered no assurance
And safe harbor did I need;
I heard the cries of desperation,
A world so filled with hate and greed.

But the clouds are now parting
And the answer sets me free:
I'll keep my heart wide open
Let the light shine on me.

Show the world, yea, change the world
For the better, day by day;
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Together build a better way.

Though the world may have troubles
And salvation hard to see,
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.

Shine on me, shine on me,
Let compassion change the world;
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.
Shine on me, shine on me,
Let compassion rule the world;
I'll keep my heart wide open,
Let the light shine on me.

— *Brian Field*