

SIEAR NOISES INTHE DADK

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

8:00pm | St. Barnabas Church | Falmouth, MA

MONDAY, APRIL 24

7:30pm | Houghton Chapel, Wellesley College | Wellesley, MA

TUESDAY, APRIL 25

7:30pm | Old North Church | Marblehead, MA

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

7:30pm | Florence Gould Hall, French Institute Alliance Française | New York, NY

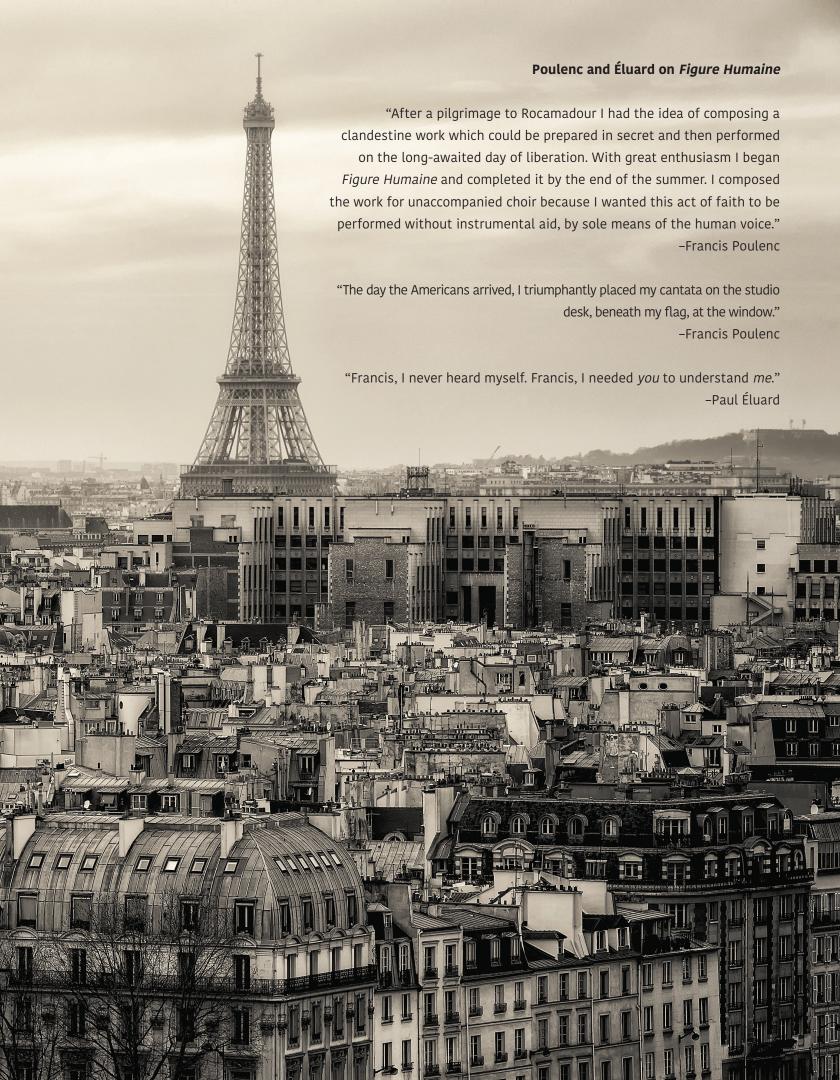
SATURDAY, APRIL 29

8:00pm | New York Avenue Presbyterian Church | Washington, DC

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CLEAR VOICES IN THE DARK

We kindly ask you to silence your cellular phones. Applause is appropriate at the horizontal indicators.

PRELUDE

When this Cruel War is over - Weeping, Sad and Lonely Arr. Guard

FIGURE HUMAINE

CIVIL WAR IMAGES

Francis Poulenc (1943)

1861-1865

I. De tous les printemps du monde...

Johnny has gone for a soldier Traditional, Arr. Jeffers

II. En chantant les servantes s'élancent...

Break it Gently to my Mother Griffith/Buckley, Ed. Guard

III. Aussi bas que le silence...

Johnny, I hardly knew ye Traditional, Arr. Parker

IV. Toi ma patiente...

Soldier's Memorial Day Perkins/Slade, Ed. Guard

V. Riant du ciel et des planètes...

Working for the dawn of peace Gordon/Kittredge, Arr. Ron Jeffers

VI. Le jour m'étonne et la nuit me fait peur...

Abide with me Monk/Lyte, Ed. Guard

VII. La menace sous le ciel rouge...

The Battle Hymn of the Republic Howe, Arr. Guard

VIII. LIBERTÉ

Presented in New York City in collaboration with:

fi: af french institute alliance française

French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New York. FIAF's mission is to create and offer New Yorkers innovative and unique programs in education and the arts that explore the evolving diversity and richness of French cultures. FIAF seeks to generate new ideas and promote cross cultural dialogue through partnerships and new platforms of expression.

ABOUT CLEAR VOICES IN THE DARK

I believe that great art is often the product of great difficulty and tribulation, in many cases for the artist him or herself. I also think art borne out of a time of *societal turmoil* can be even more profound, and can shed light today on what it was like to live and endure through tragedies of the past.

Figure Humaine is one of the ultimate artistic achievements from a time of turmoil. Composed by Francis Poulenc in 1943 in occupied France, it was composed in secret, inspired by the resistance poems of the surrealist poet Paul Éluard (poems that were distributed under plain cover during the occupation). It is one of the most profound pieces in the *a cappella* choral repertoire, if also one of the most difficult. Scored for double choir in six parts each, it is a vocal gauntlet which requires unmatched concentration and musicianship from every singer involved to mount a successful performance. Given that the piece was written at a time when victory was by no means assured, I believe that the difficulty of the work was intentional; to be worthy of the expressive task of communicating Éluard's wartime thoughts, I think Poulenc believed that a choir must possess outstanding commitment, dedication, and skill.

Because of its challenges, *Figure Humaine* is rarely performed. Soon after founding Skylark, I began to feel that this was a piece we simply had to share. But at only 20 minutes in length, I struggled to find the appropriate way to present it to allow people to truly engage with the work. While on a walk in 2014, I realized that we were approaching the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, as well as the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, occasions that presented a unique opportunity to share music of both time periods.

I set out on a journey to find the appropriate Civil War-era songs to pair with the Poulenc movements. *Figure Humaine* sets forth an intense emotional progression, cycling between despair and optimism against a backdrop of gathering madness. It was critical to find pieces that would make sense musically and textually in the context of Poulenc's work.

It was a fascinating journey. Through exploring my own musical heritage, I soon discovered that Alice Parker arranged *Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye* for the Robert Shaw Chorale in the late 1960s. Consultation with other Skylarks revealed several brilliant arrangements from Ron Jeffers, and a search through the Duke University Historical Sheet Music Archives uncovered several pieces that I never knew existed. The discovery that *Abide with me* (one of my favorite hymns) was written during 1861 was particularly poignant. Where no appropriate arrangement existed, I filled in myself with very simple editions. In all cases, the goal was to create as simple and honest an expression of the songs as possible. Against the foil of Poulenc's monumental achievement of the choral art, we aim to juxtapose the simple, the familiar, the universal.

Through sharing this program in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the premiere of *Figure Humaine* in Paris (in May, 1947), we hope to take you on an emotional and historical journey, a journey that we hope will illuminate the struggles of people who endured these two great wars, a journey that can shed light on nightmares of the past through the art that emerged from them, and most importantly, a journey that will affirm the incredible power of the human spirit to endure in times of tragedy.

-Matthew Guard, Artistic Director

We open tonight's concert with a single female voice, who will give life to one of the most popular songs of the Civil War in both the Union and the Confederacy. The simple, yet hauntingly melancholic melody perfectly captures one of the central themes of all wars: departure from a loved one with the fervent hope to one day see him or her again.

Figure Humaine's opening movement introduces the deep conflict between the reality of the present and hope for the future that plays out through the entire piece. Each stanza of Éluard's poem alternates between two poles of grim reality and glimmers of hope, and Poulenc's antiphonal setting elegantly uses alternation between the two choirs to dramatize this internal struggle. The movement ends with a dissonant and unconventional cadence back into the opening key of B minor, on the text "sure to ruin their masters." This may represent Poulenc's hope that France would overcome its occupation, but with the knowledge that the painful struggle would never fully banish the destruction already underway.

Many songs popular during the Civil War had origins elsewhere. Our next piece is believed to have originated as an Irish folk song in the early 18th century. It soon migrated to the United States, and was paired with these words by John Allison during the American Revolutionary War. Johnny has gone for a soldier became popular again during the Civil War, as a timeless expression of the universal feelings of loss and anxiety when loved ones leave home. Many of you may be familiar with the melody because of Jacqueline Schwab's haunting piano improvisation featured in the Ken Burns documentary The Civil War.

When this Cruel War is over - Weeping, Sad and Lonely

Dearest Love, do you remember, when we last did meet, How you told me that you loved me, kneeling at my feet? Oh! How proud you stood before me, in your suit of blue, When you vow'd to me and country, ever to be true.

CHORUS: Weeping, sad and lonely, hopes and fears how vain! When this cruel war is over, praying that we meet again.

When the summer breeze is sighing, mournfully along, Or when autumn leaves are falling, sadly breathes the song. Oft in dreams I see thee lying on the battle plain, Lonely, wounded, even dying, calling but in vain.

CHORUS

If amid the din of battle, nobly you should fall, Far away from those who love you, none to hear you call -Who would whisper words of comfort, who would soothe your pain? Ah! The many cruel fancies, ever in my brain.

CHORUS

But our Country called you, Darling, angels cheer your way; While our nation's sons are fighting, we can only pray. With our hopes in God and Liberty, let all nations see How we loved the starry banner, emblem of the free.

CHORUS

I. De tous les printemps du monde...

De tous les printemps du monde, Celui-ci est le plus laid Entre toutes mes façons d'être La confiante est la meilleure

Of all the springtimes of the world Never was there one so vile I may have many ways of being but the best is the most trusting

L'herbe soulève la neige Comme la pierre d'un tombeau Moi je dors dans la tempête Et je m'éveille les yeux clairs

See how the grass lifts the snow As if it were a graveyard stone I myself sleep in the tempest And I awake with undimmed eyes

Le lent le petit temps s'achève Où toute rue devait passer Par mes plus intimes retraites Pour que je rencontre quelqu'un

Slow moving time comes to an end Where all streets had to pass traversing all my most secret places So that I could meet someone

Je n'entends pas parler les monstres Je ne vois que les beaux visages Les bons visages sûrs d'eux-mêmes

I do not hear the monsters talking Je les connais ils ont tout dit I know them well, all that they say But I see only lovely faces Good faces full of trust

Sûrs de ruiner bientôt leurs maîtres Sure to ruin their masters

Johnny has gone for a soldier

There I sat on Butternut Hill, who could blame me, cry my fill, And every tear would turn a mill, Johnny has gone for a soldier. Me, oh my I loved him so, broke my heart to see him go, and only time will heal my woe, O Johnny has gone for a soldier. O I will sell my flax, I'll sell my wheel, buy my love a sword of steel, so it in battle he may wield, Johnny has gone for a soldier.

II. En chantant les servantes s'élancent...

En chantant les servantes s'élancent Pour rafraîchir la place où l'on tuait Petites filles en poudre vite agenouillées Leurs mains aux soupiraux de la fraîcheur Sont bleues comme une expérience Un grand matin joyeux

Singing, the maidens rush forward to tidy up the place where blood has flowed, and little girls in their powder, kneeling, their hands held out towards fresher air are colored like a new sensation Of some great joyous day

Faites face à leurs mains les morts Faites face à leurs yeux liquides C'est la toilette des éphémères La dernière toilette de la vie Les pierres descendent disparaissent Dans l'eau vaste essentielle

Face their hands, o ye dead, And their eyes that are liquefying This is the toilet of mayflies, The final toilet of this mortal life Down go the stones sinking, disappearing in the primal waters

La dernière toilette des heures A peine un souvenir ému Aux puits taris de la vertu Aux longues absences encombrantes Et l'on s'abandonne à la chair très tendre Aux prestiges de la faiblesse.

For the ultimate toilet of time
No poignant memory remains
At those dry wells devoid of virtue
At long absences which we find awkward
Surrendering to the flesh so soft and tender
To the spell of human weakness.

Break it gently to my mother

See! ere the sun sinks behind those hills, Ere darkness the earth doth cover, You will lay me low, in the cold, damp ground, Break it gently to my mother!

I see her sweet sad face on me now, And a smile doth o'er it hover;

Oh God! I would spare the tears that will flow;

Break it gently to my mother.

Good bye, my mother ever dear; sister, you loved your brother; Comrades, I take a last farewell; Break it gently to my mother.

Oh, say that in battle I've nobly died, For Right and our Country's honor; Like the reaper's grain fell the leaden rain, Yet God saved our starry banner! My sister, playmate of boyhood's years, Will lament her fallen brother; She must try to soothe our parent's woe; Break it gently to my mother.

Good bye, my mother ever dear; sister, you loved your brother; Comrades, I take a last farewell; Break it gently to my mother.

III. Aussi bas que le silence...

Aussi bas que le silence D'un mort planté dans la terre Rien que ténèbres en tête Aussi monotone et sourd Que l'automne dans la mare Couverte de honte mate Le poison veuf de sa fleur Et de ses bêtes dorées Crache sa nuit sur les hommes. Hushed and still in silence wrapt Like a corpse that lies in the earth Head full of darkness and shadows As deaf and monotonous As autumn in the pond Covered with dull shame Poison bereft of its flower And of its golden monsters Spits out its night over all men.

an explicit horror film that unapologetically reveals the realities of combat through the eyes of young women attempting to clean up the battlefield. Poulenc's frantic tempo begins the movement in chaotic fashion, and his angular Phrygian melodies suddenly modulate by half step, creating the unsettling feeling that the ground is shifting beneath our feet. Soon, the ground does move, as the poem shifts to images of the apocalypse, potentially a commentary on how war pulls all involved into the depravity of violence. Of particular note is the vivid sonic imagery as the walls crumble and the stones sink into the waters: one can almost see the ripples in the primordial ocean as the altos slowly finish their phrase. After the chaos, the movement ends with a pessimistic commentary on the nature of humanity in times of bloodshed. When the full choir stunningly resolves into E major on the text "surrendering...to the spell of human weakness," it feels like an artificial high: an unstable moment of seeming relief or escape that cannot

In this movement, Poulenc thrusts us into

The historic sheet music of our next piece, composed in 1863, bears the following inscription:

This ballad was suggested by the following incident. On the battle-field of Gettysburg, among many wounded soldiers was a young man the only son of an aged mother. Hearing the surgeon tell his companions that he could not survive the ensuing night, he placed his hand upon his forehead, talking continually of his mother and sister, and said to his comrades assembled around him, "Break it gently to my mother."

overcome the true calamities at hand.

Poulenc's third movement paints a dim picture of a country that has been laid low by an occupation. He begins the piece in E-flat minor, a dismal and disoriented key in the context of the overall work. Two long opening phrases illustrate cold images of inactivity and desolation. Notably, Poulenc never allows all voices in either choir to sing together, perhaps an illustration of the absence of loved ones who might be away or lost in battle. One can almost see the burned out buildings of a village razed by combat, with survivors quietly huddled around a flickering hearth. Shortly before the end, the movement suddenly becomes active, with a chilling harmonization of Éluard's words that personify the occupation as "poison" itself.

personify the occupation as "poison" itself. Poulenc's setting of the final two words, which translate to "all humanity," are particularly poignant. He places the upper voices of the first choir at the extreme top of their range, and provides a glimmer of a major sonority in E-flat, before resolving to a weak unison. In a piece where the key of E major ultimately represents redemption for humanity, a high and weak cadence in E-flat illustrates the image of an occupied people who are only a shadow of their true selves.

While many American Civil War songs repurposed music from elsewhere, in some cases the situation worked in reverse. Johnny I hardly knew ye, published in London in 1867, is a re-purposing of the American Civil War Song When Johnny Came Marching Home (1863). While the original American version was decidedly pro-war, this version from only a few years later takes a definite anti-war stance, transporting the melody and the central story line to Ireland. This evening we perform an arrangement by Alice Parker that was first recorded by the Robert Shaw Chorale in 1969 during another time of powerful anti-war sentiment.

By this point in *Figure Humaine*, it is clear that the first choir often plays the role of the optimistic protagonist, in stark contrast to the second choir's harsh reality. This movement continues that trend, featuring the first choir in the bright, optimistic key of A Major. However, Poulenc's harmonization morphs into jarring dissonance each time the disturbing final line of the text is repeated "Prepare for vengeance, a bed where I will be born." Perhaps the bed represents a deathbed of a people who can only be born into freedom through the ultimate sacrifice. It is likely that this movement had a deeper, personal meaning to Poulenc. Harmonically, this movement bears a striking resemblance to *Une Barque sur l'Ocean*, a piece composed in 1905 by Maurice Ravel and premiered by pianist Ricardo Viñes. Viñes was Poulenc's music teacher, mentor, and became a father-like figure to him after Poulenc's parents died. Poulenc later wrote: "I owe him everything ... In reality it is to Viñes that I owe my fledgling efforts in music and everything I know about the piano." Viñes passed away in April, 1943, just three months before Poulenc composed Figure Humaine. It seems likely that when he composed the optimistic harmonic repetitions of *Toi ma patiente* (which includes the word "parent"), Poulenc was imagining his spiritual and musical mentor playing the rich harmonies of Ravel.

The first Memorial Day holiday in the United States was declared in 1868, three years after the end of the Civil War. Originally called Decoration Day, General John Logan's order declared "The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country." Our next piece was written for the occasion in 1870, and was performed at remembrances on the third Memorial Day.

Johnny, I hardly knew ye

While goin' the road to sweet Athy, hurroo, hurroo While goin' the road to sweet Athy a stick in me hand and a drop in me eye a doleful damsel I heard cry, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

CHORUS

With your drums and guns and drums, hurroo, hurroo The enemy nearly slew ye Oh my darling dear, Ye look so queer Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

Where are the eyes that looked so mild, hurroo, hurroo Where are the eyes that looked so mild When my poor heart you first beguiled Why did ye skedaddle from me and the child Oh Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

CHORUS

Where are your legs that used to run, hurroo, hurroo Where are your legs that used to run When you went to carry a gun Indeed your dancing days are done Oh Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

CHORUS

I'm happy for to see ye home, hurroo, hurroo All from the island of Ceylon So low in the flesh, so high in the bone Oh Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

CHORUS

IV. Toi ma patiente...

Gorge haut suspendue

Toi ma patiente You, my patient one, ma patience ma parente *my patience*, *my quardian* Throat held high, orque de la nuit lente organ of the calm night Révérence cachant Reverence cloaking tous les ciels dans sa grâce all of heaven in its grace Prépare à la vengeance Prepare, for vengeance, un lit d'où je naîtrai. a bed where I may be born

Soldier's Memorial Day

When flow'ry Summer is at hand, And Spring has gemm'd the earth with bloom, We hither bring, with loving hand, Bright flow'rs to deck our soldier's tomb.

With snowy hawthorn, clusters white, Fair violets of heav'nly blue, And early roses, fresh and bright, We wreathe the red, and white, and blue.

CHORUS:

Gentle birds above are sweetly singing O'er the graves of heroes brave and true; While the sweetest flow'rs we are bringing, Wreath'd in garlands of red, white and blue.

But purer than the fairest flowers, We strew above the honored dead, The tender changeless love of ours, That decks the soldier's lowly bed.

CHORUS

V. Riant du ciel et des planètes...

L'abîme est seul à verdoyer Hell alone flourishes

Riant du ciel et des planètes Laughing at the sky and planets La bouche imbibée de confiance Mouths dripping with arrogance Les sages Veulent des fils The wise men wish for sons Et des fils de leurs fils And for sons for their sons Jusqu'à périr d'usure Until they die in vain Le temps ne pèse que les fous The march of time burdens not only the foolish Et les sages sont ridicules. And the wise men are made foolish.

Working for the Dawn of Peace

Two brothers on their way, One wore blue and one wore gray. One wore blue and one wore gray, as they marched along their way, the fife and drum began to play, all on a beautiful mornin'. One was gentle, one was kind, One came home, one stayed behind. One wore blue and one wore gray, as they marched along their way, the fife and drum began to play, all on a beautiful mornin'.

Mournin', mournin'... Many are the hearts that are weary tonight, waitin' for the war to cease, many are the hopes, the hopes once high and bright that sleep with those at peace. Waitin' tonight, workin' tonight, workin' that the war might cease! O many are the hearts that are working for the right, Waitin' for the dawn of peace.

VI. Le jour m'étonne et la nuit me fait peur...

Sur une piste où la mort On a path where death

Le jour m'étonne The day shocks me et la nuit me fait peur and the night terrifies me L'été me hante Summer haunts me et l'hiver me poursuit and winter pursues me Un animal sur la neige a posé An animal has imprinted its paws Ses pattes sur le sable ou dans la boue In the snow, in the sand or in the mud Ses pattes venues de plus loin Its pawprints have come further que mes pas than my own steps A les empreintes de la vie. Bears the imprint of life.

Abide with me

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide. When other helpers fail and comforts flee. Help of the helpless, O abide with me. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day: Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away; Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me. I need Thy presence every passing hour. What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power? Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me. I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless: Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness. Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory? I triumph still, if Thou abide with me. Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Poulenc's next movement plunges us into the chaos of battle. He pits the two choirs in virtual combat for the entire movement, desperately firing the same biting text at each other at breakneck speed. The two choirs switch textual roles for the final repeat, illustrating Éluard's allusion to implicit guilt on any side of a conflict. Most significantly, the choirs never sing at the same time except on the crucial last line of text. This short, jarring movement leaves one feeling disturbed, tense, and unsatisfied - a masterful musical expression of Éluard's statement on the futility of violence.

Our next piece, set for men's voices alone, combines two civil war songs from different eras. Two Brothers, a well-known ballad that tells the tragic story of a family divided between North and South, was written in 1951 by American songwriter Irving Gordon. Ron Jeffers poignantly juxtaposes this 20th century piece with Tenting on the Old Camp Ground, written in 1863 by Walter Kittridge. After the retrospective Two Brothers, Tenting on the Old Camp Ground perfectly captures the weariness and hope that must have been so common on late nights in a camp of exhausted soldiers.

This movement features the second choir alone, playing their role as the more pessimistic voice. Set in the somber key of A minor (in contrast to the first choir's solo movement in A major), Éluard's text speaks of being pursued by an invisible animal (a wolf, in the original poem's title). Poulenc's setting is simple and lyrical, but somehow also unrelenting and bleak. For much of the movement, Poulenc only has a few voices sing together, which gives the feeling that our singers are wandering alone in the woods, being pursued by a monster in the shadows. When all the voices do join together for the final repetition of "winter pursues me," Poulenc notes "Surtout sans ralentir" ("above all without slowing down"), a brilliant musical gesture that expresses the inescapable fear of the text.

The text for Abide with me was written by Scottish Anglican Henry Francis Lyte in 1847. It was not until 1861 that British composer William Henry Monk paired Lyte's words with his own hymn tune, *Eventide*. The hymn migrated across the Atlantic, becoming a hymn of particular poignancy for Americans enduring the Civil War.

After the introspective fear of the sixth movement, Figure Humaine's penultimate movement opens in outwardly terrifying fashion as Éluard's predatory wolf transforms into an even more horrifying vision, and Poulenc's music undergoes a similarly horrible metamorphosis.

As an agitated fugue cycles through a bizarre spiral of downward fifths and tritones, it feels as if the choir is being pulled into the underworld. Soon after, hell itself seems to be rising to earth, as the choir slowly ascends through a wild series of minor chords. Eventually the tempest slows, and seems to reach an unsatisfying end on the grim text "Decay held the heart."

At this point in *Figure Humaine*, a glimmer of true hope begins to emerge for the first time. In a haunting passage, altos from both choirs sing a duet that transforms the original fuque subject into something less terrifying.

The second choir, typically the bearer of bleak news, then offers the phrase "beneath the dismal hunger, the cavern closed up." On this text, Poulenc ends his downward cycle, bringing the second choir into a single chord that rises through several inversions. You can almost hear the cave close and see the horrifying dragon disappear.

For the final passage of the movement, Poulenc brings all twelve voices together for an extended period, ending with a call for solidarity and determination. As Éluard's text turns outwardly hopeful, Poulenc's music captures the spirit of a people joining together to overcome their fears in the face of oppression.

The tune we now associate with *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* and its "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah" refrain had its origins in a traditional American camp meeting song *Say, Brothers, Will You Meet Us.* By May 1861, the tune had been appropriated for the song *John Brown's Body*, a favorite of Union soldiers during their marches.

That fall, prominent abolitionist Julia Ward Howe attended a public review of soldiers in Washington. After hearing the brigades sing the tune that day, one of Howe's friends suggested that she write new lyrics for the song. Years later, Howe described her night at the Willard Hotel on November 18, 1861:

I went to bed that night as usual, and slept, according to my wont, quite soundly. I awoke in the gray of the morning twilight; and as I lay waiting for the dawn, the long lines of the desired poem began to twine themselves in my mind. Having thought out all the stanzas,

my mind. Having thought out all the stanzas, I said to myself, 'I must get up and write these verses down, lest I fall asleep again and forget them.' So, with a sudden effort, I sprang out of bed, and found in the dimness an old stump of a pen which I remembered to have used the day before. I scrawled the verses almost without looking at the paper.

VII. La menace sous le ciel rouge...

La menace sous le ciel rouge Venait d'en bas des mâchoires Des écailles des anneaux D'une chaîne glissante et lourde La vie était distribuée Largement pour que la mort Prît au sérieux le tribut Qu'on lui payait sans compter La mort était le dieu d'amour Et les vainqueurs dans un baiser S'évanouissaient sur leurs victimes La pourriture avait du cœur Et pourtant sous le ciel rouge Sous les appétits de sang Sous la famine lugubre La caverne se ferma La terre utile effaça Les tombes creusées d'avance Les enfants n'eurent plus peur Des profondeurs maternelles Et la bêtise et la démence Et la bassesse firent place A des hommes frères des hommes Ne luttant plus contre la vie A des hommes indestructibles.

The menace under the red sky Came from under the laws The scales and links Of a slippery and heavy chain Life was dispersed Widely so that death Could gravely take the dues Which were paid without a thought Death was the God of love And the victors with a kiss Swoon over their victims Decay held the heart And yet under the red sky Beneath the lust for blood Beneath the dismal hunger The cavern closed up The useful earth covered over The graves dug in advance The children no longer fearing The maternal depths And stupidity, dementia And vulgarity gave way To humanity and brotherhood No longer set against life But to an indestructible human race.

The Battle Hymn of the Republic

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword: His truth is marching on.

CHORUS:

Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps, They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps; I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:

His day is marching on.

CHORUS

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat: Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! Be jubilant, my feet! Our God is marching on.

CHORUS

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me. As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free, While God is marching on.

CHORUS

VIII. LIBERTÉ

Sur mes cahiers d'écolier On my school books Sur mon pupitre et les arbres Sur le sable sur la neige J'écris ton nom

On my desk and on the trees On the sand and in the snow I write your name

Sur toutes les pages lues Sur toutes les pages blanches Pierre sang papier ou cendre J'écris ton nom

On every page that is read On all blank pages Stone blood paper or ashes I write your name

Sur les images dorées Sur les armes des guerriers Sur la couronne des rois J'écris ton nom

On gilded pictures On the weapons of warriors On the crown of kings I write your name

Sur la jungle et le désert Sur les nids sur les genêts Sur l'écho de mon enfance J'écris ton nom

Over the jungle and the desert On the nests on the brooms On the echo of my infancy I write your name

Sur les merveilles des nuits Sur le pain blanc des journées Sur les saisons fiancées J'écris ton nom

On the wonders of the night On the daily bread On the conjoined seasons I write your name

Sur tous mes chiffons d'azur Sur l'étang soleil moisi Sur le lac lune vivante J'écris ton nom

On all my blue scarves On the pond grown moldy in the sun On the lake alive in the moonlight I write your name

Sur les champs sur l'horizon Sur les ailes des oiseaux Et sur le moulin des ombres J'écris ton nom

On fields on the horizon On the wings of birds And on the mill of shadows I write your name

Sur chaque bouffée d'aurore Sur la mer sur les bateaux Sur la montagne démente J'écris ton nom

On each rising dawn On the sea on the boats On the wild mountain I write your name

Sur la mousse des nuages Sur les sueurs de l'orage Sur la pluie épaisse et fade J'écris ton nom

On the foamy clouds In the sweat-filled storm On the rain heavy and relentless I write your name

Sur les formes scintillantes Sur les cloches des couleurs Sur la vérité physique J'écris ton nom

On shimmering figures On bells of many colours On undeniable truth I write your name

Sur les sentiers éveillés Sur les routes déployées Sur les places qui débordent J'écris ton nom

On the living pathways On the roads stretched out On the bustling places I write your name

Sur la lampe qui s'allume Sur la lampe qui s'éteint Sur mes maisons réunies J'écris ton nom

On the lamp which is ignited On the lamp which is extinguished My reunited households I write your name

Sur le fruit coupé en deux Du miroir et de ma chambre Sur mon lit coquille vide J'écris ton nom

On the fruit cut in two The mirror and my bedroom On my bed an empty shell I write your name

Poulenc's final movement is the only one in his manuscript that bears a true title, emblazoned in all capital letters in the score (the rest of the movements simply quote the opening of the respective poem as a shorthand title). This is fitting, as this poem (dropped into occupied France via airlift) was the inspiration for the piece, and is the ultimate destination of the work as a whole.

Éluard's spectacular 21 stanza poem is a cry for freedom, expressed through an inexhaustible list of things and ideas that would be meaningless without it. As Éluard bounces from item to item, from concrete to abstract, from the trivial to the sublime, Poulenc's constantly morphing harmonic language masterfully conveys the text. Poulenc incredibly cycles through some form of every key, major and minor, with the notable exception of E-flat minor (the key of "occupation" throughout the work).

After being at odds for much of the work, the two choirs work together brilliantly in this movement, seemingly part of a single mind that flits from idea to idea, always pausing to write the name of "Liberty" on everything. As the two choirs approach the thrilling end of the piece, their exhortations amplify each other, culminating in a shocking and embattled cry that stretches the human voice to the extremes of its range.

The Clocktower of Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne

Poulenc composed Figure
Humaine in an apartment in the
village of Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne
in the summer of 1943. In a
letter to a friend that August, he
described the view from his room,
which looked directly out on the
bell tower in the center of the
village. He wrote:

"While beholding this [tower], so strong and so very French, I composed the music of LIBERTÉ."

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Sur mon chien gourmand et tendre Sur ses oreilles dressées Sur sa patte maladroite J'écris ton nom On my dog greedy and loving On his alert ears On his clumsy paw I write your name

Sur le tremplin de ma porte Sur les objets familiers Sur le flot du feu béni J'écris ton nom On the springboard of my door On the familiar objects On the stream of the sacred flame I write your name

Sur toute chair accordée Sur le front de mes amis Sur chaque main qui se tend J'écris ton nom On all united flesh
On the faces of my friends
On each hand held out
I write your name

Sur la vitre des surprises Sur les lèvres attentives Bien au-dessus du silence J'écris ton nom On the window of surprises On the attentive lips Well above silence I write your name

Sur mes refuges détruits Sur mes phares écroulés Sur les murs de mon ennui J'écris ton nom On my destroyed safehouses On my collapsed beacons On the walls of my boredom I write your name

Sur l'absence sans désir Sur la solitude nue Sur les marches de la mort J'écris ton nom On absence without desire On naked solitude On the death marches I write your name

Sur la santé revenue Sur le risque disparu Sur l'espoir sans souvenirs J'écris ton nom On health restored On risk disappeared On hope without memory I write your name

Et par le pouvoir d'un mot Je recommence ma vie Je suis né pour te connaître Pour te nommer

And through the power of one word I recommence my life I was born to know you To give a name to you

Liberté.

Liberty.

ABOUT SKYLARK

Skylark is a premier ensemble of world-class vocal soloists, chamber musicians, and music educators with a passion for small ensemble performance. Formed in 2011 by Artistic Director Matthew Guard, Skylark's music has been described as "sublimely beautiful." The voices of Skylark "can sway you softly into calm and then all but throw you across the room with sheer harmonic force." Skylark strives to set the standard for innovative, engaging, well-researched, and dramatically presented programs that re-define the choral experience for audiences and singers alike. A not-for-profit entity, Skylark performs educational outreach programs with high school and college students across the United States during its concert tours.

SKYLARK ARTISTS

SOPRANO Sarah Moyer Fiona Gillespie Jackson Jessica Petrus

ALTO Carrie Cheron Douglas Dodson Carolyn Guard Clare McNamara

TENOR George Case John Cox Cory Klose Alexander Nishibun

BASS Glenn Billingsley Christopher Jackson Samuel Kreidenweis Peter Walker









Baritone **GLENN BILLINGSLEY**'s performance of *Messiah* under Johannes Somary was described by the New York Times as "smooth and fluent." Glenn has performed with the Santa Fe and New York City Opera National companies, the Waverly Consort and New York's Musica Sacra. A founding member of Blue Heron, he sings with Boston's Handel + Haydn Society and at the Church of the Advent in Boston.

Tenor **GEORGE CASE** is the Director of Choral Activities at The Boston Conservatory where he directs the choral ensembles and the graduate choral conducting program. He is also the music director for the Newburyport Choral Society. George is an award-winning educator of young musicians who frequently leads clinics and workshops for high school and college singers, as well as professional development sessions for teachers around the country. As a soloist and professional chorister, George has performed with major ensembles across North America and Europe, including Boston's Handel + Haydn Society, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, and Spire Chamber Ensemble. George is an avid tennis player.

Praised for having "the voice of an angel," mezzo-soprano and contemporary vocalist **CARRIE CHERON** defies the definition of genre. She has performed as a soloist with and as an ensemble member of such groups as the Boston Baroque, the Handel + Haydn Society, the American Classical Orchestra, Arcadia Players, Yale Choral Artists, and Atlanta's New Trinity Baroque, among others, and is a champion of contemporary classical composition. Carrie is also a nationally recognized, award-winning, performing singer/songwriter and has shared the stage with such acclaimed artists as Sweet Honey In The Rock, The Barra MacNeils, David Jacobs-Strain, Anais Mitchell, and Edie Carey. She is on the voice faculty at Berklee College of Music. Carrie is a huge fan of ranunculus flowers. www.carriecheron.com.

Conductor, musicologist, and tenor **JOHN K. COX** was recently appointed Visiting Assistant Professor at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, where he leads the Reed Chorus and Collegium Musicum. Cox is a highly-regarded specialist in the performance of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music, and spent the past several years locating and editing neglected repertories of Italian sacred music from the Baroque period. John is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy and Oberlin Conservatory. He holds advanced degrees in Choral Conducting and Music History from the University of Oregon and a Doctoral of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting and Literature from the University of Illinois at Champaign, Urbana.

Hailed as a "vivid countertenor" (Wall Street Journal) with a voice that is "unusually sparkling" (Kansas City Star), **DOUG DODSON** is making his mark on opera and concert stages throughout the country. Notable recent engagements include: alto soloist in the American premieres of Melani's *Lauda anima mea* and Perti's *Magnificat* at Union College; Ignis in the world premiere of Per Bloland's opera *Pedr Solis* with Guerilla Opera; and Ottone in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, as part of the prestigious Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. Mr. Dodson has a degree in Anthropology as well as Music and is a native of South Dakota.

Mezzo-soprano **CAROLYN GUARD** is a life-long Episcopal church musician, having begun her studies with the Royal School of Church Music at age 6. After attending the Eton Choral courses in the UK, Carolyn was a founding member of the Choral Fellow program in the Memorial Church at Harvard University. Carolyn has performed as a special guest artist with the Boston Camerata, and as a soloist at Durham Cathedral and St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Carolyn's decidedly nonmusical degrees are from Harvard University and Emory's Goizueta Business School. She lives in Atlanta with her husband, son, and golden retriever.

FIONA GILLESPIE JACKSON, soprano, sings as a professional chorister and soloist with ensembles across the nation. She recently made her debut abroad in the title role of Lully's *Armide* in the UK, and as a soloist on Lycoming College Music Department's tour to Shanghai and Beijing. She serves on the faculty of Lycoming College as an instructor of voice and Opera Director, and as a co-founder and manager of the Lycoming Baroque Choir and Orchestra. In addition to her musical activities, Fiona loves to make collages, read, and talk (not at the same time).



Skylark Artistic Director **MATTHEW GUARD** is quickly earning a reputation as one of the most innovative and thoughtful programmers in American choral music. Praised for his "catalyzing leadership" (Q2/WQXR) and "musically creative and intellectually rich" programming (Opera Obsession), Matthew is passionate about communicating something unique in each concert and recording. He scours the world of available repertoire for each program, exhaustively researches each piece, and crafts concerts and printed programs that captivate audiences with their hidden connections and seamless artistry. In addition to his day-today leadership of Skylark and role as a conductor in concerts, Matthew is also an active arranger and editor of scores, as he rarely finds programming ideas that will truly sing without at least one piece specifically arranged or composed for the program.

Skylark relies on the generosity and financial support of our community to keep our important mission alive. Skylark is a registered 501(3)(c) non-profit corporation, and gifts to Skylark are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Visit **skylarkensemble.org** to support Skylark today!

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CHRISTOPHER JACKSON, bass, serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Lycoming College, where he also conducts the Lycoming Baroque Choir and Orchestra. He sings regularly with some of the nation's leading professional vocal ensembles, and is in demand as a guest conductor for Honor Choir Festivals throughout the Northeast. He is the Director of Educational Outreach for Skylark. For fun, Christopher loves to read philosophy, drink whiskey, and play video games.

CORY KLOSE, tenor, is gaining recognition as a sought-after performer of both choral and solo repertoire. Cory appears on the rosters of many professional ensembles including Boston's GRAMMY® Award-winning Handel + Haydn Society, GRAMMY® Award-nominated True Concord Voices and Orchestra, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Bach Collegium San Diego, Kinnara Ensemble, The Crossing, Spire Chamber Ensemble, Apollo Master Chorale, and The Thirteen. Recent solo performance highlights include J.S. Bach's Magnificat with Music in the Mountains in Colorado, Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147 with St. John's Bach Project in Albuquerque, and Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir, BWV 29 with Orchestra of the Hills in Washington, DC. www.coryklose.com

SAMUEL KREIDENWEIS is an active soloist and ensemble singer throughout the US and abroad. In 2015 he recorded the Rachmaninoff: "All-Night Vigil" with the Phoenix Chorale and Kansas City Chorale under Charles Bruffy, which won the GRAMMY® Award for Best Choral Performance in 2016. Internationally Sam has toured with the Dublin, Ireland based group Anúna with whom he has toured Ireland, the U.K., Belgium, the Netherlands, China, and Japan. Recently Sam joined Conspirare for the world-premiere performance and recording of Considering Matthew Shepard, which was written and conducted by Craig Hella Johnson. Sam enjoys baking with his sourdough starter named Precious.

Praised for her "lushly evocative mezzo" and "attentive and precise" musicianship, **CLARE McNAMARA** is a Boston-based soloist and chamber musician specializing in early and new music. Ensemble affiliations include Lorelei Ensemble, Cut Circle, Handel+Haydn Society, Vox Humana, and Apollo Master Chorale. 2016 marked her debuts with The Boston Camerata and Tapestry. International festival credits include Laus Polyphoniae (Antwerp, Belgium) and Tage Alter Musik Regensburg (Germany). Recordings of Clare's voice also accompany the modern dance troupe Pilobolus. Almost an engineer, her very first job was at NASA. Clare holds an A.B. Music from Princeton University and an M.M. Early Music Performance from Longy School of Music of Bard College.







MOZART REQUIEM

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Join our performances featuring the elegant and highly-acclaimed edition and completion by Mozart scholar Robert Levin with guest soloists Sierra Marcy, Julia Cavallaro, Michael Barrett, Harris Ipock, and chamber orchestra.

Also on the program is Mozart's otherworldly Ave Verum Corpus. Rounding out our performances are two motets by Schütz from his 1648 Geistliche Chormusik.

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TE DEUM Finale

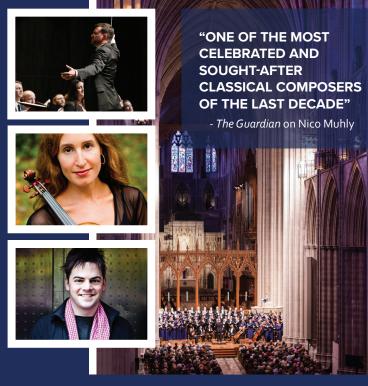
SUNDAY, MAY 21, 4:00 PM WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral Choral Society closes their 75th anniversary season with a program of passionate, sweeping works.



Vaughan Williams, The Lark Ascending Vaughan Williams, Five Mystical Songs Nico Muhly, Looking Up (world premiere) Dvořák, Te Deum

Patrick Dupré Quigley, quest conductor Nurit Bar-Josef, violin Michael Nyby, baritone • Colleen Daly, soprano





Described as an "obviously gifted singer" (South Florida Classical Review), soprano **SARAH MOYER** is an active chamber artist appearing nationally with Seraphic Fire, Vox Humana TX, True Concord, the Berwick Chorus at the Oregon Bach Festival, and Santa Fe Desert Chorale. As a soloist, her recent repertoire includes Foss' *The Prairie* with Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Mozart's Coronation Mass, and Bach's Wedding Cantata; she also "beautifully executed" (Miami Herald) the world-premiere of The Hope of Loving, by Jake Runestad with Seraphic Fire. She has sung with the Rolling Stones, and can touch her tongue to her elbow.

ALEXANDER NISHIBUN is gaining recognition for his vibrant sound, musical versatility, and engaging presence. A frequent oratorio soloist, Alexander's recent and upcoming performances include Handel's Messiah and Dixit Dominus, Buxtehude's Membra Jesu Nostri, Haydn's The Creation, Bach's Mass in B minor and Magnificat, Mozart's Requiem and Davide Penitente. Across the U.S., he performs with Vox Humana, Kinnara Ensemble, Les Canards Chantants, the GRAMMY® Award-winning Handel & Haydn Society, the Blue Heron Renaissance Choir, and the Boston Cecilia. A regular studio artist, he will record works with the Blue Heron Renaissance Choir as well as Kinnara Ensemble this season. Outside of music, Alexander is a proud uncle, amateur grill enthusiast, and gamer.

With a "velvety suaveness" (New York Times) and her "brilliant, agile soprano" (San Diego Story), **JESSICA PETRUS** delivers intimate performances of early and new chamber music. In 2015, Jessica made her Spoleto USA début in Bach's St. Matthew Passion with a "crystal clear soprano" (Post and Courier). This past season included solo appearances with Three Notch'd Road, Scrag Mountain Music, True Concord, Cantata Profana, Staunton Music Festival, and with Princeton University's Glee Club. Jessica can be heard on Mexican rock legend, Mana's, latest album, "Cama Incendiada," which received a Latin Grammy in 2015 for "Best Pop/Rock Album."

Described as a "rich-voiced" and "vivid" singer (New York Times) and an "impressive" and "exciting" piper (clevelandclassical.com) **PETER WALKER** enjoys a varied and exciting career as a singer of early, classical and folk music, and as a piper in music ranging from the Middle Ages to the present. Highlights of the coming season will include appearances with the Handel + Haydn Society, Three Notch'd Road, Texas Early Music Project, Staunton Music Festival, the Choir of St. Luke in the Fields, and Stamford Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his musical pursuits, he is a licensed pilot, and flies vintage aircraft.

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BRING SKYLARK HOME

"...gorgeous, evocative,
and other-worldly..."
-MAGGIE STAPLETON, SECOND INVERSION



Skylark's second commercial album, *Crossing Over*, was released in March 2016. Produced in collaboration with the GRAMMY® Award-winning team from Sono Luminus, *Crossing Over* debuted at #4 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Chart, reached #5 on the iTunes Classical Chart, and was the #1 New Release on Amazon Classical. Music from the album has been featured on leading radio programs and podcasts locally (WABE), nationally (WQXR, WNYC), and internationally (Canadian Public Broadcasting). Each album includes an audio CD as well as a Blu-Ray audio disc that offers the music in a stunning 9.1 surround recording. Copies are available today after the concert, and also on iTunes and Amazon.com.

