



# SING ON!

## Program Notes

*"Music is in all growing things;  
And underneath the silky wings  
Of smallest insects there is stirred  
A pulse of air that must be heard.  
Earth's silence lives, and throbs, and sings."  
-George Parsons Lathrop*

Our opening trio of pieces celebrate our return to live music-making, suggesting the deep, spiritual interconnections between music and nature, music and our bodies, and music and our ancestors. Stephen Paulus's heraldic "Sing Creations Music On" joyfully looks to Nature as a source of sound. The voices are expansive, sensing music in our surroundings, as the piano breathlessly exudes excitement. In "Music of Life" composer B.E. Boykin sets a text by 19th century American poet George Parsons Lathrop, weaving a meditative mood around the imagery with piano ostinato and a chant-like melody for the voices that grows along with the text as the poet senses the vast and profound in a consideration of Nature's most miniscule. George G. Hernandez's arrangement of Visayan folk song "Rosas Pandan" evokes the rhythm of hearts beating with excitement as the buoyant lyric connects the song to ancestral traditions and the beauty of their surrounding mountainscape.

*Alma Redemptoris Mater,  
Quae pervia caeli Porta manes,  
Et stella maris, succurre cadenti  
Surgere qui curat, populo*

*Loving Mother of the Redeemer,  
Who remains the accessible Gateway of Heaven and star  
of the Sea, Give aid to a falling people  
That strives to rise*

Next, a pair of works by two 17th century Italian composers, Chiara Margarita Cozzolani and Isabella Leonarda. Both women came from wealthy families and studied music as children and took their vows as teenagers, becoming nuns and committing their lives to the convent: Cozzolani to the Convent of Santa Radegona in Milan, and Leonarda to the Ursuline convent in Novara. Leonarda's "Ave Regina Caelorum" and Cozzolani's "Alma Redemptoris Mater" were written for their nuns to sing during Compline, a service of prayers at the end of the day - music written by women in praise of their woman of devotion, the Virgin Mary. They would perform this music from behind an iron grate or wall so the congregation could not see them, thus preserving the modesty expected from them. Though the nuns of these convents were concealed from public eye, their musical abilities were well known and a source of local pride.

# Program Notes

*There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass*  
-Alfred Lord Tennyson

Again we turn to further explore the relationship of the human senses to the intertwining of music and nature. Jon Bailey's musical setting of "There is Sweet Music" by Alfred Lord Tennyson alternates unison vocal melodies with rich vocal harmony, an exploration of the multiple forms of expression possible in a musical community. "Nigra Sum", by renowned 20th century cellist Pablo Casals, is a beautiful meditation on the passing of a difficult season and the promise of renewal to come.

*Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.*  
-Maya Angelou

For "I Rise: Women in Song" composer Reena Esmail worked with the writings of four American women: Eleanor Roosevelt, Maya Angelou, Arlene Geller, and Emily Dickinson. Collectively, the poems tell a story of women's survival, hope, and joy, and Esmail shapes a musical journey along the depths and crests of women's experience. As she writes: "Some of the movements are sweet, subtle, and nostalgic. Others are fiery and bold. Some coalesce into their shape as they move along and others unravel towards their ends. Each movement is a reflection on a single facet of the multifaceted experience of being a woman in this world."

*I want a house with a crowded table,  
And a place by the fire for ev'ryone.  
Let us take on the world while we're young and able,  
And bring us back together when the day is done.*  
-Natalie Hemby, Lori McKenna and Brandi Carlisle

Now we sing to the power of music as an expression of community - and our collective power to heal each other. "Crowded Table" (recently recorded by country music ensemble The Highwomen) offers imagery of communal strength and belonging - that with some effort, together we can create a place of comfort and rest. Moses Hogan's arrangement of the African-American Spiritual "Music Down in My Soul" is a celebration of our ability to sing together - with those that we love.

– Holley Replogle-Wong



Holley Replogle-Wong is a teacher, scholar, and musician. She teaches courses on film music, popular music, American musical theater, and western music history in the Department of Musicology at UCLA, and is the Program Director of the UCLA Center for Musical Humanities. She sings with various Los Angeles-based vocal ensembles, and for the occasional film soundtrack.

# SING ON!

November 6, 2021

First Congregational Church of Los Angeles

Lisa Edwards, pianist

Sing Creations Music On.....Stephen Paulus

Music of Life.....B.E. Boykin

Rosas Pandan.....Arr. George G. Hernandez

*Laura Pluth, soloist*  
*Stephen Pfeifer, string bass*

Ave Regina Caelorum.....Isabella Leonarda

*Desiree Balfour, Merced Stratton, soloists*  
*Leah Metzler, cello*

Alma Redemptoris Mater.....Chiara Margarita Cozzolani

*Lesili Beard, Alice Dryden, Bethany Encina, Lori Marie Rios, soloists*  
*Leah Metzler, cello*

*Ensemble: Kate Burns, Lesili Beard, Alice Dryden, Bethany Encina, Mika Jain, Laura Pluth, Missy Nieto, Laurel Roberts-Meese, Desiree Balfour, Sonia Ohan, Lori Marie Rios, Ashley Sheagley, Sammy Sohn, Merced Stratton*

There is Sweet Music.....Jon Bailey

Nigra Sum.....Pablo Casals

I Rise: Women in Song.....Reena Esmail

I. The Beauty of Their Dreams

II. Phenomenal Woman

*Casey Burgess, soloist*

III. River Song

IV. Love is Anterior to Life

*Michele Mulidor, soloist*

V. Still I Rise

*Orchid Quartet: Lisa Dondlinger, Elizabeth Bacher, violin;*  
*Bryan Gonzalez, viola; Leah Metzler, cello*

*Stephen Pfeifer, string bass*  
*Eileen Holt, flute*

Crowded Table.....Arr. Andrea Ramsey

*Eileen Dorn, soloist*  
*Lisa Dondlinger, violin*

Music Down in My Soul.....Arr. Moses Hogan

# Text and Translations

## **Sing Creations Music On**

Text by John Clare

Sing creations music on  
Nature's glee is in every mood and tone  
Eternity

Nature's universal tongue singeth here  
Songs I've heard and felt and seen everywhere  
Songs like the grass are evergreen everywhere  
The giver said live and be, and they have been forever.

## **Music of Life**

Text by George Parsons Lathrop

Music is in all growing things; and underneath the silky wings  
Of smallest insects there is stirred a pulse of air that must be heard.  
Earth's silence lives, and throbs, and sings.

If poet from the vibrant strings of his poor heart a measure flings,  
Laugh not, that he no trumpet blows:  
It may be that heaven hears and knows his language of low listenings.  
Music is in all living things.

## **Rosas Pandan**

Here is Rosas Pandan, just arrived from the mountains to be with all of you and to celebrate the festivity. This song is my livelihood - an inheritance from my parents. A most ancient song - the pride of our mountains.

Tigiding, tigiding, tigiding, Wow - what a song. It's beautiful to dance to, like the coolness of the morning dew.

Tigadong, tigadong, tigadong, Look at Dodong (name of a young man). He's looking at the young lady and drooling...

## **Ave Regina Caelorum**

Hail, O Queen of Heaven. Hail, O Lady of Angels  
Hail! Thou root, hail! Thou gate from whom unto the world a light has arisen.

Rejoice, O glorious Virgin, lovely beyond all others,  
Farewell, most beautiful maiden, and pray for us to Christ.

## **Alma Redemptoris Mater**

Loving Mother of the Redeemer, who remains the accessible gateway of heaven and star of the sea, give aid to a falling people that strives to rise;

O Thou who begot thy holy Creator, while all nature marveled, Virgin before and after, receiving that "Ave" from the mouth of Gabriel, have mercy on sinners.

# Text and Translations

## There is Sweet Music

Text by Alfred Lord Tennyson

There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.

## Nigra Sum

I am black but comely, O daughters of Jerusalem, therefore have I pleased the Lord, and he hath brought me into his chamber, and hath said unto me:  
Arise my love, my fair one, and come away,  
For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone,  
The flowers have appeared in our land, the time of pruning is come. Alleluia.

## I Rise: Women in Song

### I. The Beauty of Their Dreams

Text by Eleanor Roosevelt

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.  
The purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly, and without fear.

### II. Phenomenal Woman (excerpt)

Text by Maya Angelou

I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.

It's in the reach of my arms,  
The span of my hips,  
The stride of my step,  
The curl of my lips.

It's the fire in my eyes,  
And the flash of my teeth,  
The swing in my waist,  
And the joy in my feet.

It's in the arch of my back,  
The sun of my smile,  
The ride of my breasts,  
The grace of my style.

# Text and Translations

It's in the click of my heels,  
The bend of my hair,  
the palm of my hand,  
The need for my care.

III. River Song  
Text by Arlene Geller

She heard the song by the river  
And reached to capture every note  
Holding her treasure close to her heart

Her muse heard her river song  
And a crescendo filled  
The head, the heart, the soul  
Of everywoman

And they harmonized

They sang a song for the downtrodden  
And the forgotten  
Those cast off made whole again  
Those ordinary made extraordinary  
Through the magic of music

With her muse by her side, she flourished  
Her voice, uplifted, heard by every woman

Her sisters joined her  
Across the oceans and continents  
Singing with one voice one song

IV. Love is Anterior to Life  
Text by Emily Dickinson

Love is anterior to life,  
Posterior to death,  
Initial of creation, and  
The exponent of breath.

V. Still I Rise (excerpt)  
Text by Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may tread me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.

You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your hatefulness,  
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

## Acknowledgments

A very special thank you to all our concert volunteers this evening for assisting in making this concert a stellar experience for our audience.

For this performance, the Orchid Quartet is comprised of Lisa Dondlinger and Elizabeth Bacher, violin; Bryan Gonzalez, viola; and Leah Metzler, cello.

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