

LISTENING IN PARADISE

MUSIC BY ANDREW SCHULTZ

March 25, 2023

7:00pm

John Knowles Paine Concert Hall

Harvard University

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Sofia Troncoso, soprano
Stephen Emmerson, piano
Bernard Lanskey, piano
Alan Toda-Ambaras, cello

To the evening star - five songs for soprano and piano (2009) SCHULTZ
Sofia Troncoso (soprano), Stephen Emmerson (piano) (b. 1960)
I. Lake Isle of Innisfree
II. Pied beauty
III. Mezzo Cammin
IV. Money, O!
V. To the evening star

Sea-Change for piano (1987)
Bernard Lanskey (piano)

12 Variations for piano duet (“*Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung*”) (1997)
Stephen Emmerson & Bernard Lanksey (piano)

INTERMISSION

Nocturnes and Variations for piano (2014)
Stephen Emmerson (piano)
I. Nocturne - Lento
II. Variations - Sostenuto e misterioso
III. Nocturne - Liquido (quasi senza misura)

Paradise - five songs for soprano, cello, and piano (2013)
Sophia Troncoso (soprano), Alan Toda-Ambaras (cello),
Bernard Lanksey (piano)
I. Suspended earth
II. Safety glass
III. Child, who are you?
IV. Jigsaw
V. Almost flight

PROGRAM NOTES

To the evening star – five songs for soprano and piano

ANDREW SCHULTZ
(b. 1960)

- I. Lake Isle of Innisfree (William Butler Yeats)
- II. Pied beauty (Gerard Manley Hopkins)
- III. Mezzo Cammin (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)
- IV. Money, O! (W H Davies)
- V. To the evening star (William Blake)

BACKGROUND

To the evening star was composed in February – April 2009 at the Leighton Studios, Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, and at Point Piper House in Sydney. It was written for Margaret Schindler and Stephen Emmerson with the assistance of an Australia Council for the Arts Composer Fellowship. Stephen and Margaret gave the premiere performance in August 2009 at the Bangalow Music Festival. The work was awarded the Paul Lowin Prize in 2009. *To the evening star* is about 17 minutes duration.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
che la diritta via era smarrita.

Dante's *Divine Comedy* begins with words of poetry, quoted above, that describe the psychological experience of finding oneself lost. "In the middle of the journey of our life, I found myself in a dark wood with the right road lost." The road is lost in a crisis. As Longfellow puts it in *Mezzo Cammin*:

Half of my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspiration of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.

So I think the subject of this song cycle is obvious from my choice of diverse but very personal texts that reflect on the creative inner life. The poems move from deep longing in the first song, through whimsy and humour in the second and fourth songs, to anguished fear and regret in the third song, and finally, to a mix of wonder at the world's beauty and an acceptance of time passing in the final song.

It is the final song, a setting of a text by William Blake, which provides the overall title and brings a positive mood to the work. As Dante put it, “E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle” — ‘And so we came forth and once again beheld the stars.’

TEXTS

Lake Isle of Innisfree – William Butler Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping
slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket
sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

Pied beauty – Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things —

For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;

For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise Him.

Mezzo Cammin – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Half of my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspiration of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure, nor the fret
Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow, and a care that almost killed,
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet;
Though, half-way up the hill, I see the Past
Lying beneath me with its sounds and sights, —
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming lights, —
And hear above me on the autumnal blast
The cataract of Death far thundering from the heights.

Money, O! – W H Davies

When I had money, money, O!
I knew no joy till I went poor;
For many a false man as a friend
Came knocking all day at my door.

Then felt I like a child that holds
A trumpet that he must not blow

Because a man is dead; I dared
Not speak to let this false world know.

Much have I thought of life, and seen
How poor men's hearts are ever light;
And how their wives do hum like bees
About their work from morn till night.

So, when I hear these poor ones laugh,
And see the rich ones coldly frown
Poor men, think I, need not go up
So much as rich men should come down.

When I had money, money, O!
My many friends proved all untrue;
But now I have no money, O!
My friends are real, though very few.

To the evening star – William Blake

Thou fair-hair'd angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest:
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence!

Sea-Change for piano

BACKGROUND

Sea-Change was composed in 1987 at a house near the beach in Wombarra on the Illawarra coast, south of Sydney. The work was commissioned by Bernard Lanskey with financial assistance from the Music Board of the Australia Council for the Arts. Bernard gave the premiere of the work in June 1987 at Australia House in London. *Sea-Change* is about 15 minutes duration.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

It is hard to say the sea excites the imagination, without sounding clichéd. Yet its constant regeneration, its power, its myriad shapes and temporal patterns, and its dramatic changes of colour are for me, overwhelming and endlessly inspiring. As Shakespeare knew, the sea is also a metaphor for life and death.

Full Fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are corals made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him doth remain that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:

Ding-dong.

Hark! now I hear them, – ding-dong, bell.

[William Shakespeare, "Ariel's Song," *The Tempest*, Act I, Sc. ii]

Sea-change has a simple shape of two peaks and a calm, but not settled, end. The piece is constructed from an initial impetus consisting of three slowly rotating harmonic sequences of different duration – one in the left hand and one in the right hand (both played in bell-like chords) and the third sequence moving through the piano's mid-range as arpeggios. These sequences of harmony revolve around each other eventually enmeshing and evolving at key points in the work.

12 Variations for piano duet

(“Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung”)

BACKGROUND

12 Variations for piano duet (that is, one piano with two performers) is a work of about 12 minutes duration and was composed for Stephen Emmerson and Bernard Lanskey in 1997 with commission funding from the Music Board of the Australia Council for the Arts. Stephen and Bernard gave the work its first performance at the Eugene Goossens Hall in Sydney in August 1997. The work was composed in early 1997 at the Schultz family home in Keiraville, a suburb of Wollongong.

COMPOSER’S NOTE

12 Variations takes as its subtitle the expression marking from the second movement of Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata in E Major*, Opus 109: “*Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung.*” Literally, ‘songful with inner feeling’. The subtitle suggests an internalised depth and calmness of expression as well as the presence of an ‘inner line’ in the musical texture. This idea of ‘the inner’ is also captured visually in my work by the ways the four hands of the performers often overlap and reach over each other.

Variation form has continually attracted me as it seems to offer an imaginative way to interpret and develop an idea within a listener-attuned sound world. The idea in *12 Variations* is the gradual expansion of the music from a spacious, gentle melody to richer and more textured worlds drawing on an ambiguity of structure where the discontinuity of variation form is offset by a larger dramatic shape.

The brief quote from the Beethoven fragment, with its perpetually hovering harmony and unresolvable trills, is not heard clearly until the climax of the work. The idea, as in other of my works, was to attempt to find a seamless way to incorporate this fragment so that it appears naturally as a new expression yet something familiar.

Nocturnes and Variations for piano

- I. Nocturne – Lento
- II. Variations – Sostenuto e misterioso
- III. Nocturne – Liquido (quasi senza misura)

BACKGROUND

Nocturnes and Variations was composed in January – March 2014 at the Leighton Studios, Banff Centre for the Arts and in Forest Lodge, Sydney. It was commissioned by Stephen Emmerson with the assistance of a grant from Griffith University and the work is dedicated to Stephen. He gave the premiere performance in October 2014 at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, Brisbane. The work is about 15 minutes duration.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

In unlit places without streetlamps or yelping neon, night is profound and often comes as ease. Relief from looking out for and away from. [Toni Morrison, *Love*]

The two outer movements of this work are slow and dream-like nocturnes and the middle, larger movement is a set of highly compressed variations. The two nocturnes are muted and atmospheric night pieces that unfold slowly but each has a more jubilant passage at its centre. It was fascinating for me to return to the “Nocturne” as a form – my last attempt had been as a student of George Crumb in Philadelphia in 1982 where he had set me the task of creating Chopin ‘forgeries’. Chopin’s subtle use of dissonance and the lucidity of his piano colouration was something into which George had fantastic insight.

The outer movements frame the larger, central variations movement. In all there are 31 variations of four measures each, based on the harmonically ambiguous but simple four measure chordal theme that opens the movement. Each variation draws on the opening material of the theme but also takes up the material

of the surrounding variations; hopefully, that achieves a kind of organic flow and dramatic shape in the overall set of variations.

***Paradise* – five songs for soprano, cello and piano**

- I. Suspended earth
- II. Safety glass
- III. Child, who are you?
- IV. Jigsaw
- V. Almost flight

BACKGROUND

Paradise is a cycle of five songs for soprano, cello and piano written for Felicitas Fuchs, Li-Wei Qin and Bernard Lanskey. They gave its first performance in June 2015 at La Loingtaine, Paris. Halcyon gave the Australian premiere in St Bede's Church, Sydney shortly afterwards. The work's duration is about 17 minutes and the texts are by the composer. *Paradise* was a prize winner in both the National Art Music Awards and Paul Lowin Awards in 2015.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

The work is a setting of my own texts in which a physician observer wrestles with the small-scale detail and the large-scale effect of an horrific and violent event. The concept of 'paradise' is interpreted in three ways in the work: the aloof beauty of the natural environment; the paradise of childhood, so often destroyed by adults; and, the *faux* paradise of religion.

For some time I have either been writing my own texts or quietly editing, translating and adapting pre-existing texts to suit my musical purposes. In choosing to write my own texts I have been attracted by the freedom and precision of expression this allows me to bring to my vocal music. This is partly because of the inevitable constraints that a text places on a composer but also because I am looking for a personal, specific and clear expression of ideas and that requires a high level of unity of artistic means.

In the case of *Paradise* the subject matter of the work's texts is sensitive and tricky to pull off. The work occupies a similar creative space to my opera, *Going Into Shadows*, in the way it addresses callous violence and its traumatic aftermath in the contemporary world. Finding a nuanced way to deal with such confronting material is an artistic enigma for me as my aspiration is always a quest for beauty. As Emerson put it in his *Journal*, "Beauty can never be clutched: in persons & in nature is equally inaccessible."

TEXTS

I. Suspended earth

The still, suspended earth
spreads dreams across the sky.
It has no answers.
Blue mist and green sea
stretch through horizons of dust.
They have no answers.
They cannot see.
They cannot hear.

Thick glass catches light
then flashes and flames.
A slow rumble through space
is a deep throb then gone.
Ask no questions.
It has no answers.
It cannot feel.
It cannot know.

II. Safety Glass

The shapes of dust caught in the light
are intricate and perfect hexagons.
Patterns of dust move up and down.

Who could have guessed the safety glass
as it hung suspended would fracture craze fall
to earth with shapes the same as dust.

Mobile lines in frozen patterns.
Rough-edged hexagons.

III. Child, who are you?

What is your name?

Wer sind sie? Wie ist dein name?

Chi sei? Qual'è il tuo nome?

Qui êtes-vous? - L'enfant perdu. Quel est votre nom?

Ya toufla, meen inti? Habibi, ma ismaki?

At last, a flicker in the eye but then it's gone.

Now she's gone.

IV. Jigsaw

The hexagons of dust and light
are tattooed on your body:
perfect shapes of red and blue
fit together on your chest, face and legs.

But your arm is torn off, jagged.
Flesh hangs, sinews, cords and bones –
sticky blood in pools.

Even if all the pieces were found there could be no repair.

One – side two
side three side
four side five
side six side
to make a
hexagon.

V. Almost flight

When you dreamed, as children often do,
of flying above the earth,
cool and still:
is this what you had in mind?

A sudden flight this one, without any choice
as the blast lifted you into glass
and beyond.

When he looked at your face
did he see you
or all those faces he hated?

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

SOFIA TRONCOSO, SOPRANO

Sofia Troncoso's engaging performances and beautiful soprano has been gaining attention on both sides of the Atlantic and recently in Australia. Since arriving in Australia in 2020 she has made major concert, recital, and operatic debuts in almost every major city starting in Brisbane with Camerata for Musica Viva at QPAC and met critical acclaim as Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* with Opera Queensland and in multiple concerts with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. Sofia debuted in Sydney with Pinchgut Opera in Cesti's *Oronthea*, in Melbourne in Derrick Wang's *Scalia/Ginsburg* with Orchestra Victoria, and has an upcoming debut with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

Previously, Sofia studied, trained, and worked in the UK having retained an Exceptional Talent Visa after completing a Master with Distinction at the Royal Academy of Music. Subsequently she won a place in the acclaimed National Opera Studio and took a prize at Les Azuriales International Competition. She went on to sing in concert with Xi'an Symphony Orchestra and debuted as Poppea in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with

Longborough Festival Opera. Sofia was then selected as a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist where she debuted in concert with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. In 2020 she was invited back to sing Tytania in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Originally from the United States, Sofia is a Northwestern University alumna, and was a young artist for Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival and for Central City Opera. In 2022 she returned to Chicago in Haymarket Opera's production of *L'incoronazione di Poppea*.

ALAN TODA-AMBARAS, CELLO

Recipient of the Prize for Most Promising Contestant at the 2005 Rostropovich International Cello Competition in Paris, **Alan Toda-Ambaras** is active as both a soloist and a chamber musician. He has performed with Midori; Yo-Yo Ma, Sandeep Das, and other members of the Silk Road Ensemble; the Parker Quartet; the Borromeo Quartet; and has appeared twice as a soloist with the North Carolina Symphony.

Recent appearances include performances in Tokyo's Ohji Hall, Osaka's Phoenix Hall, National Academy of Music in Vietnam, Massachusetts State Hall, the Taos Music Festival, Harvard University's Paine Hall, and the New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall. He has been featured on French television and in several European documentaries due to his participation in the Rostropovich Competition; he has also been heard on NPR's *From The Top* program, New York's WKCR Classical station, and Boston's Neighborhood News Network.

Alan has a B.A. in History of Art and Architecture from Harvard and an M.M. from the New England Conservatory, where he studied with Laurence Lesser. He is a co-founder of the Eureka Ensemble, a young social action-oriented Boston music organization.

BERNARD LANSKEY, PIANO

Bernard Lanskey is a distinguished pianist and music leader and educator who recently took up the position as Professor and Director of Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University in Brisbane. Lanskey was previously Dean of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music at the National University of Singapore. Prior to his appointment in Singapore, he was the Assistant Director of Music (Head of Ensembles and Postgraduate Programmes) from 1994-2006 at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama London, where he was awarded a Fellowship (FGSM) in 2001.

His research and performance interests derive from his longstanding activity as a collaborative pianist and chamber music coach, focusing particularly on exploring the vital role played by metaphor and gesture in the pedagogical process and in performance preparation. Professor Lanskey grew up in Cairns, where, as a young pianist, he played the cathedral organ and took part in musicals, concert hall recitals and gigs with local pop and jazz bands. His studies started at the University of Queensland and then took him to the Conservatoire de Paris and the Royal College of Music, London. Bernard has worked throughout Australia, Southeast Asia, China, the United Kingdom and Europe as a pianist, festival director, recording producer and educator.

He has recently performed in concert with Joshua Bell, Renaud Capuçon and Li-Wei Qin, and has made recordings of music by Brahms, Schumann, Schubert and Australian composer Andrew Schultz whose music he has frequently played and commissioned.

STEPHEN EMMERSON, PIANO

Stephen Emmerson is a Professor at Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, Brisbane where he has taught since 1987. His work in recent years has been heavily involved with developments in practice-based research through post-graduate supervision and

interrogations of his own performance projects.

He has Masters and Doctoral degrees from Oxford University and is a founding member of the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre. As a student, he studied piano with Pamela Page in Brisbane at the University of Queensland and later with Peter Wallfisch in London. He maintains an active career as a pianist both as soloist and in various chamber ensembles regularly performing around Australia and internationally.

In addition to solo performances, the focus of his performance career has been within various chamber ensembles including the Griffith Trio (an Ensemble-In-Residence at the Queensland Conservatorium for over a decade), Dean–Emmerson–Dean, the Lunaire Collective and the Endeavour Trio. Over a dozen of his recordings in collaboration with a variety of performers are available commercially, many of these involving new Australian compositions.

ANDREW SCHULTZ, COMPOSER

Andrew Schultz's acclaimed music covers a broad range of chamber, orchestral and vocal works, and has been performed and broadcast widely by many leading groups and musicians internationally. Andrew studied at the Universities of Queensland, Pennsylvania and King's College London where his teachers and mentors included George Crumb, David Lumsdaine and Luciano Berio. He has held prizes, awards and many commissions including from all the major Australian orchestras.

Andrew has written a number of large-scale works, including three operas (*Black River*, *Going Into Shadows* and *The Children's Bach*), which have been presented live and on film around the world. Other major works include *Journey to Horseshoe Bend*, *Song of Songs* and three symphonies. Recent orchestral works include *Sound Lur*

and Serpent for the Sydney Symphony, *Peace and Endling* for the Tasmanian Symphony, *Maali* and *Bassoon Concerto* for WASO and *August Offensive* for the centenary of Gallipoli.

Andrew has held residencies and academic posts in Australia, Canada, Czechia, France, Germany, USA, and the UK. He is Emeritus Professor of Music at UNSW, Sydney and currently a Visiting Professor at Harvard University. Recent composition successes include the Paul Lowin Prize, Schueler Award, Fulbright Award, Art Music Awards, Australia Council Fellowships, Cité des Arts Paris residency and the Centenary of Canberra symphony commission.

Recordings of his orchestral music performed by the Sydney, Queensland, West Australian, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphonies are available on ABC Classic; Moravian Philharmonic has released his *Falling Man/Dancing Man* and *Symphony No 2 – Ghosts of Reason* for Navona; three volumes of chamber music are available on Tall Poppies label; Brisbane Chamber Choir and Kühn Choir of Prague have each released his *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*; a disc of ensemble vocal music has been released by The Song Company; and Wirripang have released a solo piano CD played by Antony Gray, a chamber music album played by Southern Cross Soloists, and the opera, *The Children's Bach*.

Andrew's papers and manuscripts are held in the National Library of Australia and his work is available from the Australian Music Centre, Sydney.

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Prof David Haig, immediate past Chair, Committee on Australian Studies

Prof Michael J. Hiscox, Chair, Committee on Australian Studies

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Andrew Schultz is Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser Visiting Professor of Australian Studies at the Harvard Music Department this academic year. This concert is sponsored by the Committee on Australian Studies at Harvard University. The Committee's generous support is gratefully acknowledged.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MONDAY, APRIL 10 AT 12:15PM IN UNIVERSITY HALL

Parker Quartet perform Adams' *The Wind in High Places* and Beethoven's *String Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4* for the Dean's Noontime Concert Series.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14 AT 8PM IN PAINE HALL

Parker Quartet perform Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 4 in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4*, Adams' *The Wind in High Places*, and Brahms *Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34* with special guest Orli Shaham, piano.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 AT 8PM IN PAINE HALL

Harvard Group for New Music presents collective lovemusic for the Thelma E. Goldberg concert of the 2022-2023 season. Lovemusic is a collective of musicians specialised in new music based in Strasbourg.

Events are open to the public; some require ticket purchases.

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