

# **VOX Cape Town**

## **A Choral Anthology: Celebrating The Words Behind The Music**

**15h00**

**Sunday 6 May 2018**

**Christ Church, Constantia**

### **1. If ye love me (Thomas Tallis, c. 1505-1585, England)**

*Our opening piece is preceded by a reading from 1 Corinthians 13 (“The Way of Love”) by Aaron Juritz.*

If ye love me, keep my commandments.  
And I will pray the Father,  
and he shall give you another comforter,  
that he may abide with you for ever,  
ev’n the spirit of truth.  
Amen.

(John 14:15-17)

### **2. O magnum mysterium (Tomás Luis de Victoria, 1548-1611, Spain)**

*Anthea van Wieringen recites a translation of the text of this piece, which is a responsorial chant from the Matins of Christmas.*

O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should witness the new-born Lord,  
lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the Virgin  
whose womb was deemed worthy to bear  
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!

### **3. Ave verum corpus (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756-1791, Austria)**

*Christina Goodall reads an extract from one of Mozart’s letters to his friend Joseph Stoll, for whom Mozart wrote this “Ave verum corpus” in 1791. Johan van der Walt accompanies this piece on the organ.*

Hail, true body, born  
of the Virgin Mary,  
having truly suffered, sacrificed  
on the cross for mankind,  
from whose pierced side  
water and blood flowed:  
Be for us a foretaste  
in the trial of death! Amen.

(14th century, attributed to Pope Innocent VI)

#### **4. This Marriage (Eric Whitacre, b. 1970, United States)**

*Elinor and Casey Driver together read a translation of the text of this piece, which was written by Persian mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī (1207-1273). Eric Whitacre, the composer, wrote this piece as a “small and simple gift” to his wife on their seventh wedding anniversary.*

May these vows and this marriage be blessed.  
May it be sweet milk,  
like wine and halvah.  
May this marriage offer fruit and shade  
like the date palm.  
May this marriage be full of laughter,  
our every day a day in paradise.  
May this marriage be a sign of compassion,  
a seal of happiness here and hereafter.  
May this marriage have a fair face and a good name,  
an omen as welcomes the moon in a clear blue sky.  
I am out of words to describe  
how spirit mingles in this marriage.

#### **5. The Seal Lullaby (Eric Whitacre)**

*Kyle Paulssen reads a summary of the tale “The White Seal” by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), on which this piece is based. Kipling travelled to South Africa many times between 1898 and 1908 and always stayed at “The Woolsack”, a house on Cecil John Rhodes’s estate at Groote Schuur. Anthea van Wieringen accompanies this piece on the piano.*

Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,  
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.  
The moon, o’er the combers, looks downward to find us  
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.

Where billow meets billow, then soft be thy pillow;  
Ah weary wee flipperling curl at thy ease!  
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,  
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas.

## **6. Sleep (Eric Whitacre)**

*Nicholas Gorven reads the poem “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost (1874-1963, United States), on which this piece of music was originally based.*

The evening hangs beneath the moon,  
A silver thread on darkened dune.  
With closing eyes and resting head  
I know that sleep is coming soon.

Upon my pillow, safe in bed,  
A thousand pictures fill my head,  
I cannot sleep, my mind’s a-flight;  
And yet my limbs seem made of lead.

If there are noises in the night,  
A frightening shadow, flickering light,  
Then I surrender unto sleep,  
Where clouds of dream give second sight.

What dreams may come, both dark and deep,  
Of flying wings and soaring leap  
As I surrender unto sleep,  
As I surrender unto sleep.

(Charles Anthony Silvestri)

## **7. Song for Athene (Sir John Tavener, 1944-2013, United Kingdom)**

*Suzanne Buchanan recites Hamlet’s best-known soliloquy, “To be or not to be”, from Shakespeare’s famous play that was written between 1599 and 1602. The first line of this piece – “May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest” – is uttered by Hamlet’s companion, Horatio, when Hamlet dies. Johan van der Walt accompanies this piece on the organ.*

Alleluia. May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.  
Alleluia. Remember me, O Lord, when you come into your kingdom.  
Alleluia. Give rest, O Lord, to your handmaid who has fallen asleep.  
Alleluia. The Choir of Saints have found the well-spring of life and door of paradise.  
Alleluia. Life: a shadow and a dream.  
Alleluia. Weeping at the grave creates the song: Alleluia.  
Alleluia. Come, enjoy rewards and crowns I have prepared for you.

(Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and the Orthodox Funeral Service)

### **8. Only in Sleep (Ēriks Ešenvalds, b. 1977, Latvia)**

*Jenni van Doesburgh recites a poem by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933, United States) called "Nights Without Sleep" in which the poetess describes the challenges, and sometimes loneliness, experienced by creative artists. Stephanie Pulker and Jenni van Doesburgh are the soprano soloists.*

Only in sleep I see their faces,  
Children I played with when I was a child,  
Louise comes back with her brown hair braided,  
Annie with ringlets warm and wild.

Only in sleep Time is forgotten –  
What may have come to them, who can know?  
Yet we played last night as long ago,  
And the doll-house stood at the turn of the stair.

The years had not sharpened their smooth round faces,  
I met their eyes and found them mild –  
Do they, too, dream of me, I wonder,  
And for them am I too a child?

(Sara Teasdale)

### **9. May It Be (Enya, b. 1961, Ireland, arranged by Warren Poquiz)**

*Jennifer Matlock recites an extract from "The Fellowship of the Ring" by JRR Tolkien (1892-1973). Tolkien was born in Bloemfontein. This piece was originally written for the 2001 motion picture "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" and won the Academy Award for Best Original Song the following year. Part of this piece is sung in Quenya, one of Tolkien's fictional Elvish languages.*

May it be an evening star  
Shines down upon you.  
May it be when darkness falls  
Your heart will be true.  
You walk a lonely road  
Oh! How far you are from home.

*Darkness has come*  
Believe and you will find your way.  
*Darkness has fallen*  
A promise lives within you now.

May it be the shadow's call  
Will fly away.  
May it be your journey on  
To light the day.  
When the night is overcome  
You may rise to find the sun.

\*\*\* INTERVAL \*\*\*

**10. Drei Schöne Dinge Fein (Daniel Friderici, 1584-1638, Germany)**

**11. Now is the month of maying (Thomas Morley, 1557-1602, England)**

**12. Il est bel et bon (Pierre Passereau, 1509-1547, France)**

**13. Horizons (Peter Louis van Dijk, b. 1953, South Africa)**

*John Woodland describes the context of this piece in the composer's words.*

Sleep, my springbok baby,  
Sleep for me, my springbok child,  
When morning comes I'll go out hunting,  
For you are hungry and thirsty.

Small moon, Hai! Young moon,  
When the sun rises you must speak to the Rain,  
Charm her with herbs and honeycomb,  
O speak to her, that I may drink, this little thing...

She will come across the dark sky:  
Mighty Raincow, sing your song for me,  
That I may find you on the far horizon.

Sleep, my springbok baby,  
Sleep for me, my springbok child,  
When morning comes I'll go out hunting,  
For you are hungry and thirsty.

O Star, Hai! Hunting Star,  
When the sun rises you must blind with your light the Eland's eyes,  
O blind his eyes, that I may eat, this little thing...

He will come across the red sands:  
Mighty Eland, dance your dance for me,  
That I may find you on the far horizon.

Sleep, my springbok baby,  
Sleep for me, my springbok child,  
When morning comes, they'll come a-hunting,  
For they are hungry and thirsty.

They will come across the waters:  
Mighty saviours in their sailing ships,  
And they will show us new and far horizons.

And they came, came across the waters:  
Gods in galleons, bearing bows of steel,  
Then they killed us on the far horizon.

(Peter Louis van Dijk)

#### **14. Shenandoah (American folk song arranged by James Erb)**

O Shenando', I long to see you,  
And hear your rolling river.  
O Shenando', I long to see you,  
'Way, we're bound away,  
Across the wide Missouri.

I long to see your smiling valley,  
And hear your rolling river,  
I long to see your smiling valley,  
'Way, we're bound away,  
Across the wide Missouri.

'Tis sev'n long years since last I see you,  
And hear your rolling river.  
'Tis sev'n long years since last I see you,  
'Way, we're bound away,  
Across the wide Missouri.

### **15. Pula, Pula! (Franco Prinsloo, b. 1987, South Africa)**

Let it rain,  
Let the river flow,  
Let the river clean our hearts,  
And heal the barren earth.

### **16. Cover Me With The Night (Peter Klatzow, b. 1945, South Africa)**

*Lesley Jennings reads an extract from an interview with Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, in which Tutu describes the concept of ubuntu.*

Come, Lord, and cover me with the night.  
Spread your grace over us  
As you assured us you would do.

Your promises are more than all the stars in the sky;  
your mercy is deeper than the night.  
Lord, it will be cold.  
The night comes with its breath of death.  
Night comes; the end comes; you come.

Lord, we wait for you day and night.

### **ABOUT VOX CAPE TOWN**

VOX Cape Town, the city's most innovative choral collective, spans musical history in its focus on a cappella works, oratorios and local compositions to enrich the musical life of Cape Town. Founded in 2015 to continue the choral legacy of the St George's Singers, led for over fifty years by Dr Barry Smith, VOX intends to invigorate local choral music through imaginative programming and staging to create intimate, immersive sensory experiences.

In pursuit of this aim, VOX embarked on a series of four concerts designed to expose Cape Town's audiences to fresh choral sounds. These "New Soundscapes" performances featured a smorgasbord of contemporary choral music ranging from Arvo Pärt to Eric Whitacre. Besides performing in traditional choral spaces, VOX participates in the "In The Dark" series in the Youngblood Gallery and also presents a multisensory wine and music pairing called "ViniChoral" at Groot Constantia.

Outreach and community involvement are important aspects of VOX's musical and social vision and these include fruitful collaborations with Fine Music Radio and local ensembles such as Camerata Tinta Barocca. Follow VOX online at [www.voxcapetown.com](http://www.voxcapetown.com) or on social media @VOXCapeTown.

Zoë Angelucci, Chris Arnold, Peter Borchers, Suzanne Buchanan, Casey Driver, Elinor Driver, Shaun February, Matthew Ferrandi, Quanta Gauld, Christina Goodall, Nick Gorven, Karen Hahne, Lesley Jennings, Chloë Joustra, Aaron Juritz, David Langford, Maryke Louw, Michael Marchant, Jennifer Matlock, Maryanne McLachlan, Kyle Paulssen, Stephanie Pulker, John Rennie, Nyambura Shawa, Johan van der Walt, Jenni van Doesburgh, Anthea van Wieringen, Christiaan van Woerden, Jean Westwood, John Woodland

## **FORTHCOMING PERFORMANCES**

### **“In The Dark :: Górecki/Glass”**

For the third year running, VOX will present an unusual performance (literally) “in the dark”. This year, the programme features music by contemporary classical minimalists Henryk Górecki (1933-2010, Poland) and Philip Glass (b. 1937, United States).

When: 20h00 on Wednesday 13 June 2018  
Where: Youngblood Art Gallery, Bree Street  
Tickets: R150 (R100 for seniors and students)  
Bookings: [info@youngblood-africa.com](mailto:info@youngblood-africa.com)