A Concert of One’s Own

Phoenix Club & Hosmer Choir
Nils Klykken, conductor
Welcome

On behalf of Phoenix Club and Hosmer Choir, please allow me to welcome you to “A Concert of One’s Own.”

In Virginia Woolf’s seminal essay *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), Woolf examines the relationship between socioeconomic hardships women have suffered and endured for millennia and one’s ability to create works of art. Although Woolf largely writes about women and fiction, the questions she asks are relevant to women and composition:

“Why was one sex so prosperous and the other so poor? What effect has poverty on fiction? What conditions are necessary for the creation of works of art?”

Woolf’s conclusion is that intellectual freedom depends upon material things:

“Women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Women have had less intellectual freedom than the sons of Athenian slaves. Women, then, have not had a dog’s chance of writing poetry,” or in our case, music. “That is why I have laid so much stress on money and a room of one’s own.”

In order to better situate yourself for tonight’s concert experience, we invite you to read quotes that both inspired and challenged us on the projection screen before you. We also invite you to read the reflection “Mirrors” and the composers’ biographies beginning on page eight.

Please enjoy,

-Nils Klykken, conductor
Phoenix Club
Nils Klykken and Chris Sarkis, conductors

Please refrain from applause until intermission

O cruor sanguinis (unfinished) 
Hildegard of Bingen 
(1098–1179) 
Improvisation, Phoenix Club

Faith Kuliszewski, cello
Chris Sarkis, conductor

Three Heavens and Hells (1992) 
Meredith Monk 
(b. 1949)

Nils Klykken, conductor

Women’s Protest Songs
we invite you to sing along with us

Keep Woman in her Sphere (c. 1880) 
Music to the tune of
Auld Lang Syne

I have a neighbor, one of those 
Not very hard to find 
Who know it all without debate 
And never change their mind 

I asked him "Should not woman vote"
He answered with a sneer--
"I've taught my wife to know her place,
Keep woman in her sphere."

I asked him "What of woman's rights?"
He said in tones severe--
"My mind on that is all made up,
Keep woman in her sphere."

I saw a man in tattered garb 
Forth from the grog-shop come 
He squandered all his cash for drink 
and starved his wife at home

I met an earnest, thoughtful man 
Not many days ago 
Who pondered deep all human law 
The honest truth to know

I asked him "What of woman's cause?"
The answer came sincere --
"Her rights are just the same as mine,
Let woman choose her sphere."
The Battle Hymn of the Women (c. 1970)  

Music to the tune of The Battle Hymn of the Republic

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the flame of women’s rage  
Kept smoldering for centuries, now burning in this age.  
We no longer will be prisoners in that same old gilded cage  
That’s why we’re marching on.

CHORUS:  

Move on over or we’ll move on over you  
Move on over or we’ll move on over you  
Move on over or we’ll move on over you  
For women’s time has come!

You have told us to speak softly, to be gentle and to smile  
Expected us to change ourselves with every passing style.  
Said the only work for women was to clean and sweep and file  
That’s why we’re marching on!

CHORUS

It is we who’ve done your cooking, done your cleaning, kept your rules.  
We gave birth to your children and we taught them in your schools.  
We’ve kept the system running but we’re laying down our tools.  
That’s why we’re marching on!

CHORUS

You think that you can buy us off with crummy wedding rings  
You never give us half the profit that our labor brings  
Our anger eats into us, we’ll no longer bend to kings,  
That’s why we’re marching on.

CHORUS

We have broken through our shackles, now we sing a battle song  
We march for liberation and we’re many thousands strong  
We’ll build a new society, we’ve waited much too long,  
That’s why we’re marching on!

CHORUS

“These are the stories too dangerous to tell”  
in improvisation, Phoenix Club

Daughters of Freedom (1871)  
Edwin Christie  
(n.d.)

Trust the seeds (1995)  
Elizabeth Alexander  
(b. 1962)

Faith Kuliszewski, cello  
Chris Sarkis, conductor

“Step out of line, ladies—step out of line”  
in improvisation, Phoenix Club
Intermission

Hosmer Choir,
Nils Klykken, conductor

Please refrain from applause until the end of program

Panda Chant II  
Meredith Monk

Music, when soft voices die (1907)  
Rebecca Clarke (1886–1979)

I Flow… I Am (2009)  
Mari Esabel Valverde (b. 1987)

from *Crossings* (1991)  
No Mirrors in My Nana’s House  
Ysaÿe Barnwell (b. 1946)

Down by the Riverside  
Various aural referents including Mahalia Jackson (1911–1972)
Reflection on “No Mirrors in my Nana’s House”

Mirrors

There were No Mirrors in My Nana’s House but that doesn’t mean I never encountered them. It was always the mirrors in my friends’ house, or the mirrors in the school bathrooms or the mirrors at that one store I wish I could shop in but apparently my nose was too flat and my skin was too black so I never went in and that really spoke to me. These mirrors actually spoke to me and they always had an opinion. One that used to differ from mine but at some point, became the reason for the demise of my own happiness. You start to listen to these mirrors and you start to rely on these mirrors when you are so lonely that you have nobody else to listen to and nobody else to rely on. Its oddly comforting but it slowly becomes an addiction and like any addiction, it starts to eat you alive. It starts with the brain, making little mental notes about everything that needs to change and it slowly begins to show itself when you start to believe. You start to take every word that mirror speaks to you into consideration because who else is gonna have your back, nowadays you can only trust yourself. Your hair has changed, your style has changed, your body has changed even your voice has changed and you think to yourself “I’m making basic changes to better myself and there is nothing wrong with that” and there really is nothing wrong with that but what was so bad that needed to be so much ‘better’ in the first place? Days go by, weeks go by, months, years go by and these mirrors are still speaking to you every day. It’s always subtle. Never too blatant but convincing enough to spark some curiosity in you. The whispers and the lingering glances used to be practically overwhelming but you got so used to it and now you can’t live without them. You wait for them and wait for them and when you realize you’ve been left in silence, all you can do is cry. At this point in time, everything about you is a lie. The you that you think everyone wants to see but its not the you that you truly are. You’ll go ahead and try to convince yourself that this is the real you and you’re happy. But there is a difference between being happy and being so numb that you forget what real happiness is so you create this new feeling of what you think is happiness just so you don’t feel so hollow when you look at yourself in the mirror. And then one day it all hits you. You come to your senses and you see the big picture and you look at yourself in the mirror and you realize that the person you see staring back at you, is so far beyond everything you’d ever hoped and dreamed. A huge disappointment is what you see but then you feel something. You feel more than you’ve felt in years and it all starts coming back to you. It’s like a weight has been lifted off your shoulders and that hollow feeling inside has finally been filled by something warm and truly comforting. Happiness. You remember the feeling, it is truly something you never expected to get back after all this time but all it took was realizing the mirrors weren’t important. The mirrors should’ve meant absolutely nothing and they will never really mean anything. Realizing the beauty was truly in your own eyes even if you were the only one willing to see it. There were no mirrors in my Nana’s house, and there certainly won’t be any in mine.

-Joia Green, Hosmer Choir
Composer Biographies
(notes written by members of Phoenix Club and Hosmer Choir)

Elizabeth Alexander (b. 1962) spent her childhood in the Carolinas and the Appalachia region of Ohio. She studied composition with Jack Gallagher at The College of Wooster, and Steven Stucky, Karel Husa, and Yehudi Wyner at Cornell University, where she received her doctoral degree. Her passion for language is reflected in over 100 choral and vocal works, which have been performed by thousands of choirs. A 2011 McKnight Composition Fellow, her frequent commissions include works for orchestras, chamber ensembles, choruses, and solo musicians. She believes she has the best job in the world.

Ysaye M. Barnwell (b. 1947) is a famously renowned musician, graduating from SUNY Geneseo with two degrees; A Bachelor and Master of Science in speech Pathology, as well as a Master of Science in Public Health from Howard University. She also earned her PhD in Speech Pathology at the University of Pittsburg. Barnwell practiced the violin alongside her father from ages two to sixteen. In addition to her early years as a musician, Barnwell performed as an actor on television, appearing on “Sesame Street” and “A Man Called Hawk.” She was a member of Sweet Honey in the Rock, an all-woman, African-American a cappella ensemble from 1979–2013.

Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) was the earliest known composer of Western music. In addition to her work as a composer, Hildegard was recognized by the Catholic Church as a prophet. Her vivid synesthetic visions served as inspiration for her to write a series of lyric poems, 77 of which she then set to plainchant. Hildegard composed the first piece we now know as the liturgical musical drama, Ordo Virtutum. She traveled throughout Germany, evangelizing large groups of people on religious values grounded in her visions. Her other publications include treatises on medicine and natural history; and her records show that she created her own language, Lingua ignota (Unknown Language), which she used for mystical and private purposes. For a woman of her time, Hildegard is an anomaly—a torch-bearing trailblazer and pioneer of the Catholic Church. Her music reflects these qualities; Hildegard’s plainchant is more melodic and florid than surviving plainchant of her anonymous contemporaries; additionally, her plainchant intentionally disregards rules of the early church modes in order to rhetorically express and the otherworldliness visions she experienced. Because O cruor sanguinis is unfinished, Phoenix Club will improvise the ending, with Hildegard as our guide.

Rebecca Clarke (1886–1979) wrote nearly 100 pieces of music but only 20 were published during her lifetime and those 20 were neglected and soon forgotten. The majority of her compositions remain in the custody of her family, who still refuse to release it. She was one of the first female professional orchestral musicians when she selected to play in the Queen’s Hall Orchestra in 1912, participated in a world tour with her piano quartet from 1918–1919, and founded The English Ensemble, an all women's chamber group, in 1927. In September, 2000 the Rebecca Clarke Society was established in order to promote her music and keep her legacy alive. Clarke wrote “Music, when soft voices die” around the year 1907. Her experiences as a violist likely impacted the prominence of the inner voices in the piece. Interestingly, she began as a violinist and switched to the viola because she wanted to “be the middle of the sound.”
Mahalia Jackson (1911–1972). American gospel singer. Growing up in the Baptist faith, she also drew influences from the worship practices of the Holiness church and the blues. She moved to Chicago in 1927 and joined the choir of the Greater Salem Baptist Church. She formally started her career with the Johnson Gospel Singers, an early professional gospel quintet. With greater frequency, she made appearances as a soloist, eventually coming under the tutelage of Thomas A. Dorsey, who maximized the blues-inspired quality of her voice while tempering the excitable, shouting manner of gospel singing, which was her initial approach. Rhythmically unfettered, her slow, intentional execution of phrases and the careful manipulation of text became synonymous with her maturing style. However, she retained the folk qualities of moans, hums, and hollers that readily identified her upbringing and the black cultural experience. Jackson was among a growing number of artists who performed gospel in venues outside of the black church during the post-World War II years. She appeared in an unprecedented gospel celebration program at Carnegie Hall (1950) and later at the Newport Jazz Festival (1958). She was invited to appear in nightclubs and to perform secular music, but always rejected such offers. However, numerous radio and television appearances, including hosting her own radio and television programs, broadened her appeal. She also sang for the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy (1961). Jackson developed an international following and made numerous trips abroad during the last decade of her life. She secured two prizes from the French Academy, the first for “Let the Power of the Holy Ghost Fall on Me” (1949) and second for “I can put my trust in Jesus” (1952).

-Merited program note by Henry Pleasants

Meredith Monk (b. 1942) studies extended vocal-technique and is especially interested in interdisciplinary performance, which are performances that simultaneously integrate many art forms: she is a composer, singer, director, choreographer, filmmaker, and creates works in which movement and music are fused into one performance. All of these elements go into works which Monk calls “composite theatre,” an art form which combines many elements surrounding a given theme in one concrete performance that is illuminating. Monk often uses the voice as a non-texted instrument and explores “sounds that unearth feelings, energies, and memories for which there are no words.” In “Panda Chant II,” from her opera The Games (written in collaboration with Ping Chong) Monk explores the sounds of Earthly culture as the characters imitate earthly sounds in the context of a post-apocalyptic ritual, in which these particular sounds no longer carry meaning. Hosmer Choir used a Modular Score in the rehearsal of this piece where each part or cycle was learned separately and layered over one another. “...I am mostly interested in fundamental energies and human behavior that repeat in cycles through time. When you have that perspective, you realize that things you think are happening only in the moment have actually happened before.”

Mari Esabel Valberde (b. 1987), a native of North Texas, holds degrees from St. Olaf College, the European American Alliance, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Her music has been featured at conventions and festivals such as Chorus America, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Association of British Choral Directors, and TMEA. In dialogue with Hosmer Choir, Valberde described herself as political, sensual, and neoromantic. Calling herself a “Frenchy,” her compositions are largely tonal with counterpoint and purposeful dissonance—“not to be overindulged in.” A trans-woman of color, Valverde spoke to Hosmer Choir about the barriers she faces as an artist as well as the privileges her supportive family and friends afford her, in order to create her art to share with the world at large.
**O cruor sanguinis**  
(text derived from a vision by Hildegard of Bingen)

\[ O \text{ cruor sanguinis qui in alto sonuisti} \]
\[ \text{cum omnia elementa} \]
\[ \text{se implicuerunt} \]
\[ \text{in lamentabilem vocem} \]
\[ \text{cum tremore, quia sanguis} \]
\[ \text{Creatoris sui illa tetigit:} \]
\[ \text{unque nos de langoribus nostris.} \]

O stream of blood, to heaven’s height you cried,  
when every element  
enwrapped itself  
within a voice of woe  
with trembling misery  
for the Creator’s blood had covered them:  
Anoint us and heal our feebleness

**Three Heavens and Hells**  
(text by Tennesse Reed, age 11)

There are three heavens and hells  
People heaven and hell  
Animal heaven and hell  
Things heaven and hell

What do the three heavens and hells look like?  
They are all the same.

**Daughters of Freedom**  
(text by George Cooper)

Daughters of freedom arise in your might!  
March to the watchwords Justice and Right!  
Why will ye slumber? wake, O wake!  
Lo! on your legions light doth break!  
Sunder thy fetters “custom” hath made!  
Come from the valley, hill and glade!

Daughters of freedom, the truth marches on,  
Yield not the battle till ye have won!  
Heed not the “scorner,” day by day  
Sunder thy fetters “custom” hath made!  
Come from the valley, hill and glade!

Daughters of freedom, the “Ballot” be yours,  
Wield it with wisdom, your hopes it secures.  
“Rights that are equal” this ye claim,  
Bright be your guerdon, fair your fame!  
Sunder thy fetters “custom” hath made!  
Come from the valley, hill and glade!
Trust the Seeds
(text by Elizabeth Alexander)

Trust the seeds, although they lie in darkness,
Stirring beyond your watchful eye.
Though they may not flower as you dreamed they would,
When the planting’s over you must trust the seeds.

Some soon bloom to fill your heart with wonder,
Some only after you are gone.
You must give them freedom to grow as they should.
Give them room to spread their roots, and trust the seeds.

In your heart you know that some may wither,
All you can do is hope and pray.
Some will rise up grander than you dreamed they could.
There is joy in planting if you trust the seeds.

Music, when soft voices die
(text by Percy Blythe Shelley)

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovéd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

I Flow… I am
(Rainer Maria Rilke translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy)

Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.
Let this darkness be a bell tower
and you the bell. As you ring,

what batters you becomes your strength.
Move back and forth into the change.
What is it like, such intensity of pain?
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.

In this uncontainable night,
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,
the meaning discovered there.
And if the world has ceased to hear you,
say to the silent earth: I flow.
To the rushing water, speak: I am.

No Mirrors in my Nana’s House
(text by Ysaÿe Barnwell)

So I never knew that my nose was too flat,
and I never knew that my skin was too black,
and I never knew that my clothes didn’t fit,
and I never knew there were things that I’d missed,
and the beauty of everything was in her eyes.

And I was intrigued by the cracks in the walls,
the dust in the sun looked like snow that would fall,
the noise in the hallway was music to me,
the trash and the rubbish would cushion my feet
and the beauty of everything was in her eyes.

The world outside was a magical place,
I only knew love, and I never knew hate,
the beauty of everything was in her eyes.

Child, look deep into my eyes.
PERSONNEL

Phoenix Club
Chris Sarkis, student conductor

Olivia Capozzi
Megan Combs
Emily Cooke
Amanda DiBartolo
Jillian DiBennardo
Brianna Gerhardt
Kayleigh Junz

Jasmine Lites
Rebecca Matte
Caitlin Pendleton
Amanda Rizzo
Anna Rosen
Kristina Strang
Bre Valdez

Hosmer Choir

Francis Altamirano
Hayden Aron
Caroline Aroune
Elias Assimakopoulos
Matthew Bahr
Sai Barnes
Anastasia Basini
Jacquelynn Bender
Isabel Bergerson
Noah Best
Helena Blackwell
Elizabeth Boissey
Anthony Bokina
Susan Boyle
Daniel Braun
Madison Bray-Trophia
Malikyi Brewster-Holland
Donnalynn Brown
Samuel Burgess
Caleb Butchko
Kyra Byrne
Hannah Caccamo
Melissa Casey
Sara Chemi
Jacqueline Conlon
Emily Corlew
Alexandria Costanza
Hanna Cozzolino
Grace Craig
Alexis Czeck
Meaghan Deasey
Andrea Dempsey
Cole Denton
Allison Duguid
Courtney Dunn
Olivia Faul
Jessica Felber
Nicolette Filiberto

Cole Fortier
Rebecca Fox
Spencer Frenyea
Zachary Geller
Hannah Gerber
Fayth Gessner
Casandra Gilbert
Johnathan Goldblatt
Fernando Gomez
Kristen Grajek
Margaret Gray
Joia Green
Anna Grovtola
Molly Guarton
Madelynn Haffey
Adam Hartmann
Nicholas Hausman
Declan Hawthorne
Jessica Henry
Morgan Holznagel
Bradon Jarosz
Matthew Keating
Charles Koder
Matthew Lampel
Ben Lewandowski
Thomas Loomis
Anna Macedonio
James Malone
Alex Mariano
Alexander Matula
Jayne Matzelle
Claire McCarthy
Kali McCracken
Sara Mistler
Hailey Morgan
Michael Newberger
Alexis Newman
Arianna O'Connell

Emmanuelle Paluch
Antoinette Parisi
Michael Parks
Erin Parnapy
Chelsea Perticone
Gabriella Perticone
Megan Privatera
Rishi Ramsingh
Bea Rendelman
Esther Richardson
Joshua Richbart
Alyssa Rumph
Salvatore Sanfilippo
Chris Sarkis
Gina Seward
Patrick Silk
Zara Smith
Hosanna Snell
Rebecca Spencer
Emily Stark
Quinn Stevenson
Jessica Stolecki
Morgan Tiller
Marco Tomassi
Gabriella Toriseva
Gianna Tucci
Medina Vandyne
Nathan Vonder Haar
Lydia von Hof
Hali Wack
Ethan Wagner
Jared White
Michael White
Michael Woods
Nicolas Worden
Liam Zaffora-Reeder
Donna Zarrabi