



The Glass Box

Young People's Chorus of New York City and the Yale Choral Artists

Merkin Hall

June 18, 2018

Young People's Chorus of New York City

Forever Is My Song

Francisco J. Núñez

Out of the Mist, Above the Real (An Irish Cantata)

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Satakieli

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with Haven String Quartet

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To Sing

Michael Gordon

"West Side Story" Medley

Leonard Bernstein

Arr. Matt Podd

Yale Choral Artists and Young People's Chorus of New York City

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Paola Prestini

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the national anthems

David Lang

with Haven String Quartet

1. our land with peace
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4. keep us free

Sarah Yanovich, Sarah Brailey, Kate Maroney, Gene Stenger, Stephen

Hrycelak, *soloists*

5. our common fate

Sarah Brailey, *soloist*

You Do Not Walk Alone

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Yale Choral Artists and Young People's Chorus of New York City

You Can't Judge a Book By Its Cover

Willie Dixon

Arr. Francisco J. Núñez

Biographies

Paola Prestini (Have picture – credit Axel Dupeux)

Paola Prestini is “the imaginative composer” (NY Times), “Visionary-In-Chief” (Time Out NY), Co-founder and Artistic Director behind the Brooklyn venue National Sawdust. She was recently named an “Innovator” on the list of Top 30 Professionals of the Year by Musical America, the country’s oldest classical music magazine; she is on Brooklyn Magazine’s latest list of “influencers of Brooklyn culture...in perpetuity” alongside such household names as Chuck Schumer and Spike Lee; she is one of the “Top 35 Female Composers in Classical Music” (The Washington Post); and on the “Top 100 Composers in the World” list by NPR. Prestini’s music and works have been commissioned by and performed at The Cannes Film Festival, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, BAM, Barbican Centre, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, New York Philharmonic, and the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, among others. Since 1999 when she co-founded the multimedia production company VisionIntoArt while at the Juilliard School, (now relaunched as National Sawdust Projects), she has collaborated with poets, filmmakers, conservationists and astrophysicists in large-scale multimedia works (often in collaboration with Beth Morrison Projects). She was a Paul and Daisy Soros Fellow, and studied with Peter Maxwell Davies, Samuel Adler and Robert Beaser at the Juilliard School.

Royce Vavrek (Have Picture)

Royce Vavrek is a librettist and lyricist whose opera *Angel’s Bone* with composer Du Yun was awarded the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Music. He is known for his diverse collaborations with composers including David T. Little (*Dog Days, JFK*), Missy Mazzoli (*Song from the Uproar, Breaking the Waves, Proving Up*), Ricky Ian Gordon (*27, The House Without a Christmas Tree*), Joshua Schmidt (*Midwestern Gothic*), Paola Prestini (*Yoani, The Hubble Cantata*) and Gregory Spears (*O Columbia*). Upcoming projects include *Film Stills*, a quartet of operatic monologues for mezzo-soprano Eve Gigliotti, directed by R.B. Schlather and composed by Du Yun, Missy Mazzoli, Nico Muhly and Paola Prestini; *Jacqueline* with composer Luna Pearl Woolf; *Song of America: Beyond Liberty* created for Thomas Hampson with director Francesca Zambello; and a new opera with David T. Little through the Met/LCT commissioning program. Royce is co-Artistic Director of The Coterie, an opera-theater company founded with Tony-nominated soprano Lauren Worsham. The company is currently developing a series of short operatic films adapted from Aaron Teel’s novella-in-flash *Shampoo Horns*, a project supported by the Canada Council for the Arts’ New Chapter program. He holds a BFA in Filmmaking and Creative Writing from Concordia University, Montreal and an MFA from the Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program at NYU. He is an alum of American Lyric Theater’s Composer Librettist Development Program. www.roycevavrek.com Twitter/Instagram: @rvavrek

Arturo O’Farrill (Have Picture – credit Laura Diliberto)

ARTURO O’FARRILL, pianist, composer, and educator, was born in Mexico and grew up in New York City. He received his formal musical education at the Manhattan School of Music, Brooklyn College Conservatory, and the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College. Arturo’s professional career began with the Carla Bley Band and continued as a solo performer with a wide spectrum of artists, from Dizzy Gillespie and Lester Bowie to Wynton Marsalis and

Harry Belafonte. An avid supporter of the arts, Arturo has performed with Ballet Hispanico, Ron Brown's EVIDENCE Dance Company, and the Malpaso Dance Company, for whom he has written two ballets. Arturo has received commissions from Meet the Composer, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Philadelphia Music Project, the Apollo Theater, Symphony Space, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, the Young People's Chorus of New York, and the New York State Council on the Arts. Arturo is a six-time Grammy Award-winner, most recently for *Three Revolutions* from the album "Familia-Tribute to Chico and Bebo," presented to him earlier this year for Best Instrumental Composition. Others include *Afro-Latin Jazz Suite* from "CUBA: The Conversation Continues" (Motéma) in 2016 for Best Instrumental Composition, in addition to a 2016 Latin Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Recording. In 2007, he founded the Afro Latin Jazz Alliance, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the performance, education, and preservation of Afro Latin music. <http://www.afrolatinjazz.org>

Kevork Mourad (Have photo)

KEVORK MOURAD is an Armenian artist from Syria who has exhibited around the world and is represented by the Galerie Claude Lemand. His technique of spontaneous painting brought him to collaborations in which art and performance develop in counterpoint to each other. As an artist-performer, he is an active member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, with which he has performed, among others, at the Brooklyn Museum, Nara Museum in Japan, Art Institute of Chicago, and the American Museum of Natural History, (and with whom he appears in the 2016 documentary *The Music of Strangers*). He has performed around the world in such prestigious institutions as the Lincoln Center Atrium, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Rhode Island School of Design, Harvard University, the Rubin Museum of Art, Tanglewood, the Festival du Monde Arabe de Montréal, the Dutch Royal Palace for the Prince Claus Foundation, the Elbphilharmonie, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He recently had two large works exhibited at the Rose Art Museum in Boston. This past February he created and performed the visuals for the LA Master Chorale's production of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. The 2016 recipient of the Robert Bosch Stiftung prize, he is currently at work on an animated short film about Syria.

The Yale Choral Artists (Have Picture)

The Yale Choral Artists is a professional choir recently founded by the Yale School of Music and the Yale Glee Club to enhance and enrich Yale's strong commitment to the choral arts. The choir is a project-based ensemble comprised of leading singers from around the country and is directed by School of Music faculty member Jeffrey Douma. Current members of the Choral Artists also perform in the ranks of such acclaimed ensembles as the Trinity Wall Street Choir, Chanticleer, the Handel and Haydn Society Chorus, the Oregon Bach Festival Chorus, Voices of Ascension, Conspirare, and many others, and are also leading concert soloists, particularly in the area of early music.

The Yale Choral Artists made their debut in an all-Handel program led by guest conductor William Christie at Yale and in Zankel Hall in February of 2012. They have since performed as a featured ensemble at the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, the Yale International Choral Festival, and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, have appeared in two productions with the

renowned Mark Morris Dance Group, and have presented premiere performances of new works by Hannah Lash, Ted Hearne, and David Lang. Recent projects include their first collaboration with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra in a program of Britten and Pärt, a performance of David Lang's *The National Anthems* and Frank Martin's *Mass for Double Choir*, a program of motets from the 15th century to the present day, an appearance at the New York Philharmonic Biennial, and a performance of new works by Yale composers Hannah Lash, David Lang, and Ted Hearne with the Yale Philharmonia. In 2017, they performed to much acclaim the premiere of Martin Bresnick's new oratorio, *Passions of Bloom: Whitman, Melville, Dickinson*, as well as a program pairing Poulenc's virtuosic cantata *Figure humaine* with Josquin's *Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales*.

Soprano

Arianne Abela
Sarah Brailey
Molly Netter
Sarah Yanovich

Alto

Eric Brenner
Kate Maroney
Emily Marvosh
Virginia Warnken

Tenor

Colin Britt
Noah Horn
Steven Soph
Gene Stenger

Bass

Stephen Hrycelak
Glenn Miller
Edmund Milly
Tian Hui Ng

Jeffrey Douma (Have Picture)

Since the fall of 2003, Jeffrey Douma has served as Director of the Yale Glee Club, hailed under his direction by *The New York Times* as "one of the best collegiate singing ensembles, and one of the most adventurous." He also serves as Professor of Conducting at the Yale School of Music, where he teaches in the graduate choral program, as founding Director of the Yale Choral Artists, and as Artistic Director of the Yale International Choral Festival.

Douma has appeared as guest conductor with choruses and orchestras on six continents, and has prepared choruses for performances under such eminent conductors as William Christie,

Valery Gergiev, Sir Neville Marriner, Sir David Willcocks, Dale Warland, Krzysztof Penderecki, Nicholas McGegan, and Helmuth Rilling.

An advocate of new music, Douma established the Yale Glee Club Emerging Composers Competition and Fenno Heath Award, and has premiered new works by such composers as Caroline Shaw, Jennifer Higdon, Dominick Argento, Bright Sheng, Martin Bresnick, Ted Hearne, Hannah Lash, David Lang, Rene Clausen, and James Macmillan. He also serves as editor of the Yale Glee Club New Classics Choral Series, published by Boosey & Hawkes. His original compositions are published by G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes.

Douma earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Concordia College, Moorhead, MN, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of Michigan.

Haven String Quartet (Have Picture)

Featured in the New York Times and on NPR, and sought after for both their command on the concert stage and their mastery as teachers, Haven String Quartet has been described as “exquisite” by the NH Register.

Its four members represent the world’s top conservatories and bring outstanding chamber music performances to New Haven neighborhoods and throughout the region with a full season of concerts, recitals, educational workshops, and performances for diverse audiences in public spaces.

The Quartet serves as the permanent quartet-in-residence and teaching faculty for Music Haven, and spearheads the organization’s tuition-free strings program for youth, which has been recognized as a top 50 after-school arts program in the country by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities for six years. Each member of HSQ teaches a full studio of 15-20 Music Haven students in private lessons, group classes, studio classes, chamber groups, and an advanced chamber orchestra.

The Young People’s Chorus of New York City

Concert Chorus:

Eve Barenberg

Alyssa Blake

Georgia Bomar

Fei Bu

Thenjiwe Buthelezi

Eve Calderon-Caswell

Kendra Castro

Miriam Ciacca

Katharine Cook

Zaria Dickerson-Parker

Madeline Dominguez

Michaela Duryea
Dea Elezaj
Eloise Esseks
Amberlis Fernandez
Lennon Franklin
Naya Griles
Chyanne Gyemfi
Alexia Heurtelou
Nyota Holmes-Cardona
Raychel Jackson
Bianca Jeffrey
Jessica Jiao
Kai Kelly
Gia Khanna
Nefelie Kiskinis
Irena Kogarova
Riya Koshy
Gabrielle Kuker
Victoria Manning
Natalie McCormick
Francesca Michielli
Mina Moore
Anna Moustakerski
Jasmine Neal
Kayla Phanor
Iandra Ramos
J'Noir Richardson
Aiyana Roman
Thea Rose
Hannah Rudt
Jeniacy Scarlett
Alexa Schwartz
Thalia St. Hubert
Skye Tarshis
Kaia Tien
Theodora Tomuta
Tais Torres
Caroline Watters
Cierra Willis
Sylvie Winkler

Young Men

Aaron Agudelo
Dylan Batista

Jordan Batista
Sean Beauge
William Brooks
Samuel Chachkes
Nicolas De Azevedo
Byron De Leon
Sebastian Garcia
Andy Guzman
Jackson Hill
Dwayne Lewis
Brandon Louisor
Ronan McKinnon
Howell-John Nunez
Adam Osman-Krinsky
Marcelo Ranghelli-Duran
Isaac Reeves
Elliot Sadoff
Johnathan Screen
Tucker Smith
Alec Spector
Maximilian Stein
Santiago Vargas
Elliangel Vega
Karll Velez-Domingo
Aundre Williams
Zaccariah Wright
Martin Zakoian

Francisco J. Núñez (Have Picture)

Francisco J. Núñez, a MacArthur Fellow, is a composer, conductor, visionary, leading figure in music education, and the artistic director/founder of the Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC). Since he founded YPC in 1988, Mr. Núñez has heightened an awareness of the ability of children to rise to unforeseen levels of artistry. Mr. Núñez also leads the University Glee Club of New York City, its fifth conductor since the all-men's chorus was established in 1894. He is sought after nationwide as a guest conductor by professional orchestras and choirs, as a master teacher, and a frequent keynote speaker as a leading authority on the role of music in achieving equality and diversity for children in today's society. Mr. Núñez composes countless compositions and arrangements in all musical formats and styles for choirs, orchestras, and solo instruments and has received an ASCAP Victor Herbert Award and the New York Choral Society's Choral Excellence Award. ABC-TV has honored him as its "Person of the Week" and Fox News has profiled him for "changing young lives with music." Musical America named him its 2018 Educator of the Year, NYU Steinhardt honored him with its Distinguished

Alumnus Achievement Award; and he has received Honorary Doctor of Music degrees from both Ithaca College and Gettysburg College.

Jon Holden (Have Picture)

Jon Holden has been the principal pianist for the Young People's Chorus of New York City since 1990. He has accompanied the ensemble in the world premieres of more than 100 new works, as well as on recordings, radio and television appearances, and hundreds of concerts and competitions on four continents. In addition to YPC, Jon is the principal pianist for the NYU Vocal Jazz Ensemble, the University Glee Club of New York City, and a pianist for Broadway orchestras. Jon received a Masters Degree in Music from Yale University and a Ph.D. from New York University, where he is has been a faculty member since 1995.

Program Notes & Texts

Forever is My Song

Music by Francisco J. Núñez

Text by Eric Gamalinda

The kulintang is a potent cultural symbol in the Phillipines. It is native to the southern island of Mindanao among indigenous peoples who have constantly been subjected to war (from the Spanish era to the present day), poverty, and displacement – and their culture is being threatened out of existence. The idea of children singing about the kulintang, therefore, is a very significant symbol: innocence and hope in the face of sorrow and war. (Eric Gamalinda)

When others grow old
I will always grow young
And my tender soul
Will sing like the kulintang

When they talk of war
I will sing my praise of love
They say no but I say yes
They say yin and I say yang

In a time of orphans
I remember how my mother sang
And in the dead of night
How bright the music rang

When all is weakened by the pang
Of loss,
I am made of metal,
My voice as strong
As the brass gong's clang.

I will not disappear
I will always be here

My world is my poem
And forever is my song
For I am the future
And I have just begun

Out of the Mist, Above the Real (An Irish Cantata)

I. Who But I?

Music by Daniel Brewbaker

Words after Amergin

Out of the Mist, Above the Real,” an Irish Cantata, resulted from the confluence of several cultural and personal journeys...The cantata and the poems on which it is based express a search for ancient origins, a passionate yearning to find the most distant, primal, earthly, and heavenly progenitor of existence.

Who But I?” is set to an incantation by Amergin, presumed by legend to have been the first Druid priest/poet to arrive on Irish shores. His origins lie in the ancient Irish mists of time. The words invoke the myriad forms through which consciousness and the all-pervading *anima mundi*, the soul of the world, are made manifest, and their embodiment by the speaker/singer through a mystical transformative power known as “Shape-shifting.” The uilleann pipes represent this primal cry of original genesis. The children represent the power of knowledge and experience, and man’s unity with nature. (Daniel Brewbaker)

I am Wind upon the Sea,
I am Wave of the Ocean,
I am Murmur of the Billows,
I am Ray of Golden Sun,

I am Hawk above the Cliff,
I am Wild Boar in Valour,
I am Point of Lance in Battle,
I am Stag of Seven Tynes.

Who but I can throw the Light upon the Meeting of the Mountains,
Who but I will cry aloud the Ageless Phases of the Moon,
Who but I can know the place where Sun returns at Time of Rest?
Who but I?

Satakieli (Nightingale)

Music by Pekka Kostainen

Text by Mika Waltari

Jossain laulaa lintu hopeinen,
Lintu kuolematon nuoruuden,
Auki sulaa ovi jäätynyt sydän,
Hetkesi on tullut juuri nyt.

Somewhere a silver bird sings
Immortal bird of youth
The door to the frozen heart melts open
Your moment has just arrived.

Finnish composer and choral conductor Pekka Kostainen composed “Satakieli” for the Philomela Female Choir, who premiered the piece in Helsinki in 1989. The piece sets four lines of text from Finnish writer Mika Waltari’s poem “Viimeinen kevätö” or “Last Springtime.” The contrasting textures and close harmonies in Kostainen’s setting suggest the freeing effect of a nightingale’s song on a cold and sleeping heart. (Emma Hathaway)

Três Cantos Nativos Dos Índios Kraó

Traditional Brazilian

Arr. Marcos Leite

Freely based on melodies sung by the *Kraó* tribe – a group of native Brazilian Indians who live in the *Xingú* river area of the *Amazônia* forest of northwestern Brazil - *Três Cantos Nativos Dos Índios Kraó* takes the listener on a journey through the Brazilian rainforest. The work is divided into three short sections or *cantos*. Because the meaning of the text is unknown, Leite treated each word as a group of phonemes, emphasizing the natural rhythms and percussive nature of the text. (Emma Hathaway)

RAM Dekekeke korirare hê

Jaramutum korirare

Patchô iunerê djô sire

Patchô parrare adjôsirê

Iunerê kaporra djô sire

Kamerrêra kidéri kema

Tiôiremô uaritete ahâm

West Side Story Medley

Music by Leonard Bernstein

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Arr. Matt Podd

Since it debuted on Broadway in 1957, *West Side Story* has become one of the most iconic, most beloved, and most performed musicals in the history of American musical theater. The brainchild of Jerome Robbins (choreography), Arthur Laurents (script), Leonard Bernstein (music), and Stephen Sondheim (lyrics), *West Side Story* tells a “Romeo and Juliet” based tale whose message has resonated with audiences for generations: love can overcome hate. Matt Podd’s “West Side Story Medley” combines five songs from Bernstein and Sondheim’s score: “Something’s Coming,” “Tonight,” “I Feel Pretty,” “America,” and “Somewhere.” Through these five excerpts, the medley captures *West Side Story*’s distinct combination of youthful playfulness and earnest anticipation for a world with fewer divisions - “a new way of living.” (Emma Hathaway)

Could be! Who knows?

There’s something due any day;

I will know right away, soon as it shows.

I got a feeling there’s a miracle due,

Gonna come true, coming to me!

Could it be? Yes it could.

Something's coming, something good, if I can wait!
Something's coming, I don't know what it is,
But it is gonna be great!
With a click, with a shock,
Phone'll jingle, door'll knock
Open the latch!
Something's coming, don't know when but it's soon;
Catch the moon, one-handed catch!
Around the corner or whistling down the river,
Come on, deliver to me!
Who knows?
It's only just out of reach,
Down the block, on a beach, maybe tonight.

Tonight, tonight, won't be just any night,
Tonight there will be no morning star.
Tonight, tonight, I'll see my love tonight
And for us, stars will stop where they are.
Today the minutes seem like hours,
The hours go so slowly, and still the sky is light.
Oh moon, grow bright,
And make this endless day endless night. Tonight!

I feel pretty, oh so pretty,
I feel pretty and witty and bright,
And I pity any girl who isn't me tonight.
I feel charming, oh so charming,
It's alarming how charming I feel,
And so pretty that I hardly can believe I'm real.
See the pretty girl in the mirror there.
Who can that attractive girl be?
Such a pretty face, such a pretty dress,
Such a pretty smile, such a pretty me!
I feel stunning and entrancing
Feel like running and dancing for joy,
For I'm loved by a pretty wonderful boy!

I like to be in America!
O.K. by me in America!
Ev'rything free in America for a small fee in America!
I like the city of San Juan
I know a boat you can get on.
Hundreds of flowers in full bloom.
Hundreds of people in each room!

Immigrant goes to America!
Many hellos in America!
Nobody knows in America, Puerto Rico's in America!

There's a place for us,
Somewhere a place for us.
Peace and quiet and open air
Wait for us somewhere.
There's a time for us,
Someday a time for us,
Time together with time to spare,
Time to look, time to care
Some day! Somewhere!
We'll find a new way of living,
We'll find a way of forgiving, somewhere.
There's a place for us,
A time and place for us.
Hold my hand and we're halfway there.
Hold my hand and I'll take you there
Somehow! Someday! Somewhere!

Borderless

Music by Arturo O'Farrill

Words by Eric Gamalinda and Luisa Muhr

I would've been a candidate for DACA. My parents brought us here on a temporary visa and we ended up being undocumented for 15 years. I found out when invited to perform internationally only to be told that if I left the country I would not be able to return. I traveled under a Mexican passport with a reentry permit and a green card for several years. I married a US citizen and tried to naturalize only to be told I was automatically a citizen because my mother was born in Detroit and my father immigrated in 1976. Yes, it does seem completely arbitrary.

This piece was inspired by the idea that citizenship is not a national reality. That political and national borders are constructs created by men who want to parcel the earth into profitable portions that enrich only those who subscribe to them. The imposition of walls, checkpoints and borders are an unnatural phenomenon that is contrary to the true order of the planet.

Our home is the earth and we are one people. Nothing less than this is acceptable. The United States land stolen from an indigenous nation and therefore every one of us is an "immigrant".

Humans share more than physiology. The root components of language, the sounds that our mouths naturally make are common to all. By the creative spirit imbedded in us, they result in the thousands of languages we speak.

The sounds in "Borderless" come from research done by a wonderful artist named Luisa Muhr. The base componentry of keywords that are found throughout the piece are also fragments of words from many languages. Ma-n-ti-ca from ancient Greek means divination. T-o-ke-ta from Japanese derivation means the "hold down" is broken. Bi-tza-nu from Hebrew means we perform. A-ga-pe is ancient Greek for the most important word of all, Love. And finally, the root sounds, Da-ca, the dreamers act proposed by President Barack Obama to end the nightmare of undocumented young people who only know the United States as their home.

The text is from the pen of master poet, Eric Gamalinda and describes the reality as opposed to the construct, the dream versus the possibility, the truth versus the condition we find ourselves in. We find solace in the words that dare propose such a truth, that proclaim such a victory. "I will keep the light on, and wait for you to enter the dream"

I wish to thank Maestro Francisco Núñez, Young People's Chorus of New York City, Eric Gamalinda and Luisa Muhr for giving me the opportunity to write this piece and share the dream. – (Arturo O'Farrill)

Dreamers

I dream of a world
where the world is everyone's home.

My place of birth is love.
My language is music
that everyone can sing.

My faith is the one that says
the light of heaven shines on all.

My color is the color
of everything that is beautiful to me.

I belong to one people,
the race of you and me.

The earth is my country,
I look after it as it looks after me,
and for everything I've lost
something else is given back in full.

Is this the world of dreams,

or the world of possibilities?

I will name it Here and Now.
I will leave all roads open
and hope that I will find you,
and you will find me.

I will keep the light on
and wait for you
to enter the dream.

To Sing

Michael Gordon

Michael Gordon composed “To Sing” for the Young People’s Chorus of New York City in 2017 on the issue of free speech. The piece, premiered at the Songbridge Festival 2017 with Vox Aurea and the Indonesian Children and Youth Choir Cordana, was inspired by the energy and passion of the large scale demonstrations that took place in the United States throughout 2016 and 2017. As Gordon participated in these marches, he heard chants of hope, protest, and liberty. He reflects: “The right to criticize our own government is basic human right, yet more than half of the world lives without this freedom. In many countries, newspapers, TV, internet, literature and the arts are censored.” He condensed these many ideas and expressions of freedom to one line: Everybody has the right to sing this song.

Everybody has the right to sing this song.
Todos tienen el derecho a cantar esta canción.
Everybody has the right to sing this song.

You Can’t Judge a Book By Its Cover

Words and Music by Willie Dixon

Arr. Francisco J. Núñez

Written by American blues musician, songwriter, and producer Willie Dixon, “You Can’t Judge a Book By the Cover” was first recorded by the legendary blues-rock musician Bo Diddley in 1962. In this first rendition, Bo Diddley addresses a potential lover, trying to persuade them through a series of metaphors that they cannot judge him by his looks, just as they cannot “judge a book by looking at the cover.” Recorded by a wide variety of artists since 1962, “You Can’t Judge a Book By Its Cover” has become much more than a pointed love song, taking on broader social connotations about overcoming baseless stereotypes. In January 2018, R&B singer SZA recorded the song alongside six emerging artists as part of Mastercard’s “Start Something Priceless” campaign, with the intention of inspiring a diverse audience to pursue their passions in the face of adversity. The Young People’s Chorus of New York City premiered Francisco

Núñez's choral arrangement of the song as part of the "Start Something Priceless" campaign as well. The driving rhythm and bright, percussive style of Núñez's gospel-inflected arrangement sounds as a joyful celebration of difference and shared humanity. (Emma Hathaway)

You can't judge an apple by looking at a tree
You can't judge honey by looking at the bee
You can't judge a daughter by looking at the mother
You can't judge a book by looking at the cover

Oh can't you see, Oh you've misjudged me?
I look quite different but I'm your brother
You can't judge a book by looking at the cover.

You can't judge sugar by looking at the cane,
You can't judge a woman by looking at her man,
You can't judge a sister by looking at her brother,
You can't judge a book by looking at the cover.

You can't judge a fish by lookin' in the pond,
You can't judge right from looking at the wrong,
You can't judge one by looking at the other,
You can't judge a book by looking at the cover.

You Do Not Walk Alone

You Do Not Walk Alone is a setting of a traditional Irish blessing. Its meaning speaks of those who give support in times of trial. We rely on the good graces and hope of others even in our darkest moments. My musical tapestry is one of unadorned a cappella mixed chorus, using soft dissonances and free-flowing counterpoint. The voices are sometimes asked to divide, creating a sonic wash of color and overtones. Together in song, we do not walk alone.

This work was commissioned by and is dedicated to the Macalester Concert Choir and their director, and my good friend, Michael McGaghie. – (Dominick DiOrio)

May you see the light on the path ahead
When the road you walk is dark.
May you always hear, even in your hour of sorrow,
The gentle singing of the lark.
When times are hard,
May hardness never turn your heart to stone,
May you always remember when the shadows fall
– You do not walk alone.

the national anthems

David Lang

Every country has a history – how it came to be, how its wars were won or lost, how strong its people are, or how proud, or how sad. We group ourselves into nations, but it has never really been clear to me what that means, or what we get out of it. Are we grouped together because we believe something together and are proud of associating with others who believe the same way? Or are we grouped together because our ancestors found themselves pushed onto a piece of land by people who didn't want them on theirs? It seems that all nations have some bright periods and some dark periods in their past. Building a national myth out of our bright memories probably creates a different character than if we build one out of the dark.

I had the idea that if I looked carefully at every national anthem I might be able to identify something that everyone in the world could agree on. If I could take just one hopeful sentence from the national anthem of every nation in the world I might be able to make a kind of meta-anthem of the things that we all share. I started combing through the anthems, pulling out from each the sentence that seemed to me the most committed. What I found, to my shock and surprise, was that within almost every anthem is a bloody, war-like, tragic core, in which we cover up our deep fears of losing our freedoms with waves of aggression and bravado.

At first I didn't know what to do with this text. I didn't want to make a piece that was aggressive, or angry, or ironic. Instead, I read and re-read the meta-anthem I had made until another thought became clear to me. Hiding in every national anthem is the recognition that we are insecure about our freedoms, that freedom is fragile, and delicate, and easy to lose. Maybe an anthem is a memory informing a kind of prayer, a heartfelt plea:

There was a time when we were forced to live in chains.
Please don't make us live in chains again. (David Lang)

1.
our land with peace
our land with swords
all of us are brave
we have one wish
we have one goal
we swear by lightning
and by our fragrant blood
heaven gave us life
and we alone remain
we fight for peace
our country calls us
and we hear her call
we hear the sound of our chains breaking
we crown ourselves in glory and we die

death is the same for everyone
but dying for our land will make us blessed
for we are young and free
land with mountain
land with river
land with field
if you need our death
our blood, our heart, our soul
we are ready
we lift our heads up to the rising sun
our peace
our values
our skies
our hearts
our songs
our tears
our time
our land
our seed
our pride
we have no doubts or fears
our faithful friends
are faithful in the battle
our land, we swear to you
our blood is yours to spill
keep watch, angels
keep watch, stars
keep watch, moon
our parents knew how to fight
the sun will shine on us forever
when the wicked come
let them prepare for death
for we would rather die
than live as slaves
our land, you fill our souls with fire
our blessed land
our parents left this land to us
our hearts defy our deaths
a vivid ray of love and hope descends
upon us and our land
bless us with long life
our land is love and beauty without end
harvest our vows, which ripen underneath your sun
our land, to lead a peaceful life

we give our lives
we were wounded
we were bruised
then we rose up
our past is sleeping in our forests
you are our garden
and our grave

2.

our hearts are glowing
sing brother, sister
our freedom must be sung
we were slaves
we were scorned
but now, our future is ours
our flowers
our fields
our fertile soil
we will die before we let
the wicked step upon them
we are not slaves
we are the seed that sprouts
upon the fields of pain
we are one blood
on our land we were born
our heads were bowed –
now raise them
we are wild with joy
and if we have to die
what does it matter?
our children know
the fight has made our faces glow
sweet shelter
kissed by our sun, our trees, our wind
we don't fear death
die for our land and live
we know our selves
by our terrifying sword
ours is our land
ours is our beautiful land
our land is where
our heroes rest
our earth
our sky

our peace
our blood
these are our gifts
we broke our chains
united, firm, determined
our face is brighter than our sun
we are our loyal guardian
in each of us the hero remembers how to fight
we walk the path of happiness
to our rightful place
with our last breath
we thank ourselves

3.
fame and glory
fame and glory
no valley
no hill
no water
no shore
the bloody flag is raised
the wicked howl
they come to cut our throats
to throw us back in chains
no sorcerers
no poison
no deceivers
no fear
we strive
we work
we pray
our star rises up
and shines between two seas
our heart and hand
are the pledges of our fortune
with mind and strength of arm
we recognize ourselves
by our terrifying sword
with heads, with hearts, with hands
we will die before we are made slaves
our historic past
our sun, our sweat, our sea
our pain, our hope
the flower of our blood

branches of the same trunk
eyes in the same light
the sea, the land, the dawn, the sun are singing
our parents never saw the glory that we see
we turn our faces up
there is a star, the clearest light
bring us happier times and ways
each day is like a thousand years
victory, victory, victory
long live our land, our people, our body, our soul
the light in our eyes is the brilliance of our faith
will we see you?
our woe or our wealth
our eyes turn east
we are awake

4.
keep us free
be our light
until pebbles turn to boulders
and are covered in moss
our light and our guide
golden sun, golden seed
fill our hearts with thanks
when our hearts beat as one
show us the way
until the mountains wear away
and the seas run dry
be safe and be glorious
build our own fortune
move forward
our sons sing
our daughters bloom
our parents and our children
await our call
our peace
our rain
be green
we are your sacrifice
fortunate and faithful
the sun drives off the clouds
we risk everything
we sing new songs
for you, for you, for ever

our love, our zeal, our loyalty
our land, where our blood spills
our fields will flower with hope
our land gives us our name
and we will never leave
we walk the path we have chosen
we will die while we are on it
our land, sweet is your beauty
a thousand heroes
our full measure of devotion
our language is a burning flame
our flag flies in the wind
our unwavering land
our rocky hills
from where our lights rise up
our name is freedom
our blood waters it
we pray for you
woven from a hundred flowers
we won't let the wicked wash their hands
in this guiltless blood of ours
may our blessings flow
let nothing dim the light
that's shining in our sky
a single leap
into the dazzling sky
obey our call
we are not many
but we are enough
be happy
and may our land be happy
interpret our past
glorify our present
inspire our future
we are coming forth
with strength and power
our seas roar at our feet
shout our name
shout it again
there is no middle ground
between the free man and the slave
may the light be denied us
if we break our solemn vow
the burning of the heart

in our chests is alive
our land will not die
as long as we live
the rays of the sun
are a mother's kiss
we swear by the sky
by the spreading light
now, or never
we will make our fate ourselves
it was, it is, it will always be
at last, our pride is worth our pride

5.
our common fate
our brighter day
our loyalty and love and vow
our crown
our virtuous honor
our sacred hymn of combat
our light, reflecting guidance
our sword with no flaw
our sepulcher of ages
our only land
our voices on high
our noble aspiration
our thunders, wildly beating
our fire in every vein
our tears, flowing down our cheeks
our everlasting mountains
our milk, our honey, our people working hard
our different voices, our one heart
our breath of life
our death, our glory and our land
our fight – there is a fight to fight
our fair land, its hills and rivers
our memories of days long gone
our morning skies, grown red
our sacred home, our suns that never set
our future is the future, our meaning is the meaning
our shields are wisdom, unity and peace
our sacrifice of every drop of blood
our love, our service, our untiring zeal
our prayer for us, unseen
our fires of hope and prayer

our thunderbolts, our fire
our star, and it will shine forever
our light and song and soul
our song forever more
our own dear land
our fate, which smiles once more
our sacrifice, our blood, our souls
our enemies, scattered and confounded
our land, our home, our free, our brave
our land, our grave
our glory, for as long as the world shines
our many ways before and our many ways today
our rock, our beacon
our scream out loud
our steps, resounding on the long and tiring road
our song – echoing over and over again
our brothers and sisters under the sun

may the rains come

Glass Box

Music by Paola Prestini

Text by Royce Vavrek

The Glass Box” is a concert work for double chorus that follows the illness of young refugees in Sweden who fall into a coma-like sleep when their families are slated for deportation, a syndrome known as uppgivenhetssyndrom, or “resignation syndrome.” Known only to occur in Sweden, the victims, called “de apatiska” (the apathetic) withdraw from the world, their minds and bodies giving up on life. The only cure is the reversal of the government’s immigration decision.

The experience is viewed from the perspective of both children and parents whose request for asylum is twice denied. The children’s identity is entrenched in Swedish culture and thus they stop speaking, eating, moving, and finally they rest in bed like invalids, their bodies unresponsive to any external stimuli.

Throughout the work, the sensory experience of the sleeping children is explored. A filmed wall of children in their beds in a deep sleep paint, an almost hallucinogenic portrait of the illness’s haunting effects. The choirs are loosely assigned identities, the parents going to the SATB chorus, and the children to the treble chorus. Electronic moments enhanced by improvisation depict water rushing a glass box, and a moment where children write letters to their missing friends is enhanced by an electronic score enhancing the multitude of voices and experiences.

Lyricism is injected with cluster chords, and mono-thematic moments that tell the story in cantata-like form then explode into fully contrapuntal and poly-thematic writing. In the culmination of the work, the children slowly come out of their comas when news that the family has been granted permanent residence, leading to the final words in the work: "the sun shone through the slatted lines, kissed our face, and welcomed us home," which are painted in distorted courante-like lines that dissolve into cluster chords on "home", depicting the uncertainty of our times. – (Paola Prestini, Composer; Royce Vavrek, Librettist)

Prologue (Glass)

We float in a glass box.
Holding our breath,
As taking air into our lungs
Would cause all things to shatter.
We float deep inside of the ocean.
The darkness of many fathoms
Suspended endlessly in stillness.
One word spoken
Could cause everything to shatter.
Water pours in
Through every crack.
Water pours in
Deep in the ocean.
We float in this state.
Our bodies shut down,
Sleeping without dreaming,
As our dreams of safety
shatter.
We float in a glass box.
Uppgivenessyndrom

Part 1: Once upon a time

Once upon a time
We are refugees.
Once upon a time
We are happy,
Energetic all the time,
Good human beings,
Kind...
Amazingly kind,
Awesome at sports,
Soccer especially,

Sly.
Once upon a time
We are refugees
In a country that looks,
That feels
That is home.
A country
That is home,
Once upon a...
Once upon a...
Today a letter came.
Our new home,
Our Swedish home...
"You must leave"
Once upon a...
Today
The letter came.
"Leave."
Once upon a time
Time stands still.
At the kitchen table
We translate
For our parents
"Deportation."
"Leave"
Go where?
Might as well be the moon.
On the moon,
We'd be welcome.

Part 2: Unwanted Refugees

In the homes of unwanted refugees,
The children sleep.
Not a peaceful sleep,
A shut-down sleep.
Our bodies revolting
Protesting,
Falling away from the world,
Losing the will to live.
Sleeping beauty scared of her prince.
Sleeping children waiting for exodus.

Losing the will to live.

Part 3: Sacrifice (Solo)

My body liquefies.

My hands, my feet soften...

My eyelids want to close,

Want to remain closed.

My throat no longer cares to swallow.

My brain, my ears in a vice.

I sacrifice my consciousness

For my family.

Part 4:

Totally passive.

Totally immobile.

Totally withdrawn.

Totally mute.

Passive, immobile, withdrawn, mute.

Passive, immobile, withdrawn...

We can't eat or drink or laugh or cry.

We can't swim or run or fly or love.

The soul takes flight to the world that is invisible...

An invisible world of sleep

Without swimming or running or flying or love.

Totally withdrawn.

Totally immobile.

Permanent residence

Is the only treatment.

Part 5:

Dear... (add names)

These weeks,

These months,

This year without you

Has been so hollow.

You are my best friend.

I want to hug you.

I want to laugh with you.

Cry and jump and sing with you.

You make everyone happy.

Your classmates miss your smile.

We miss your questions
And your sportsmanship
And your friendship
Your empty desk
Brings darkness to the classroom,
You are pure light.

Part 6: Glass (reprise)

We float in a glass box.
Holding our breath,
As taking air into our lungs
Would cause all things to shatter.
We float in this state.
Our bodies shutting down,
Sleeping without dreaming,
As our dreams of safety
Shatter.

Part 7: Lullabye

Love, love, my love,
stop dreaming of the war,
of exile, or even of the moon.
Love, love, my love, my love,
a letter came
Love, love, come back to us
Our lives are here
love, love, my love, our love.

Part 8: Residence

The mother reads the letter:
The Migration Board
finds no reason to question
what is stated
About the child's health.
The child is in need
Of a safe
And stable environment
In order to recuperate.
Permanent residence is granted.
The message is read to the sleeping child.
The sleeping child continues to sleep.

The sleeping child doesn't listen.
The mother's voice changes,
She is decisive,
Positive.
Slowly, the child will respond.
Slowly, the child will wake.
The only country the child knows,
Is Sweden.

Epilogue (We are Refugees)

Once upon a time
We are refugees
In a country,
Waiting for permission
To exist.
Once upon a time
We lost the meaning of life,
And found it again
After a dreamless sleep.
After the box,
The glass,
Shattered.
Once upon a time,
Our eyes opened
The sun shone through slatted blinds
Kissed our faces
And welcomed us
Home.