



Los Angeles Master Chorale

Giving a Voice to Walt Disney Concert Hall
Grant Gershon | Music Director

2006 | 07 Season

JANUARY 2007

2006 | 07 CONCERT SCHEDULE

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embark: Haydn & Glass

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN | *Creation Mass*

PHILIP GLASS | *Itaipú*

Sunday, October 22 at 7 pm

resonate: Rachmaninoff

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF | *All-Night Vigil, Op. 37*

Sunday, November 12 at 7 pm

holiday wonders

Saturday, December 9 at 1 pm and 4 pm

2 great family matinees!

rejoice

BACH | *Cantata 6 from Christmas Oratorio*

& holiday favorites

Sunday, December 10 at 7 pm

Messiah Sing-Along

Monday, December 11 at 7:30 pm

Monday, December 18 at 7:30 pm

shine: Reich 70th Birthday Tribute

STEVE REICH | *Daniel Variations* (WEST COAST PREMIERE)

STEVE REICH | *You Are (Variations)*

Early Renaissance Motets

Sunday, January 28 at 7 pm

shout: The Music of Mary Lou Williams

MARY LOU WILLIAMS | *Mary Lou's Mass*

Sunday, March 4 at 7 pm

awaken: Christopher Rouse

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE | *Requiem* (WORLD PREMIERE)

Sunday, March 25 at 7 pm

ignite: Haydn & Ramírez

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN | *Lord Nelson Mass*

ARIEL RAMIREZ | *Misa Criolla (Creole Mass)*

Sunday, April 22 at 7 pm

lift: Beglarian, MacMillan and Pärt

EVE BEGLARIAN | WORLD PREMIERE

JAMES MACMILLAN | *Cantos Sagrados (Sacred Songs)*

ARVO PÄRT | *Te Deum*

Sunday, June 3 at 7 pm

Thursday, June 7 at 8 pm

COMING NEXT:

shout

MARY LOU WILLIAMS

Mary Lou's Mass

Sunday, March 4 at 7 pm

With Luckman Jazz Orchestra,
vocalists Cedric Berry and Carmen Lundy,
and a special appearance by
the Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers

awaken

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

Requiem

(WORLD PREMIERE)

Sunday, March 25 at 7 pm

With Sanford Sylvan, baritone;
Los Angeles Children's Chorus

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Grant Gershon
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Born: November 10, 1960, in Norwalk, California

At the Chorale: Music Director, now in his sixth season, Grant has expanded the choir's repertoire considerably by conducting a number of world premieres:

You Are (Variations) by Steve Reich, *Messages and Brief Eternity* by Bobby McFerrin and Roger Treece, *Broken Charms* by Donald Crockett, *Rezos (Prayers)* by Tania León, *Mother's Lament* by Sharon Farber and *Two Songs to Poems of Ann Jäderlund* by Esa-Pekka Salonen (U.S. premiere).

Press: "Gershon has found a richness of tone and a strength of phrasing that could launch the Chorale onto a new tier of musical importance." — *L.A. Weekly*

"Gershon is a direct, unfussy conductor, who values clarity, clean execution and immediate statements." — *Los Angeles Times*

"visionary" — *Daily Breeze*
Hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* for creating "a dark, rich sound awash with resonant sparkling amplitude." Programming has been applauded for being "as warmly spiritual as it is ambitious."

Other appearances: San Antonio Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Lincoln Center, Houston Grand Opera, Juilliard Opera Theatre, Gustav Mahler Chamber Orchestra, the Finnish chamber orchestra, the Edinburgh, Vienna, Helsinki, Ravinia, Rome, Madrid and Aspen; Music Director of the Idyllwild Arts Festival Chorus

Coming up: Will conduct all performances of a new opera by Ricky Ian Gordon, *Grapes of Wrath*, to be premiered in February 2007 by Minnesota Opera and in May 2007 by Utah Opera.

Previous assignments: Los Angeles Philharmonic assistant conductor, 1994–97

Member of: the USC Thornton School of Music Board of Councilors

On disc: Two Grammy Award-nominated recordings — *Sweeney Todd* (New York Philharmonic Special Editions) and Ligeti's *Grand Macabre* (Sony Classical) — and *Glass-Salonen* and *You Are (Variations)* (Nonesuch) with the Master Chorale.



© Steve Cohn

Los Angeles Master Chorale

Founded: 1964 as one of three founding companies at the Music Center; now in its 43rd season

Music Directors: Grant Gershon, since 2001; Paul Salamunovich, 1991–2001; John Currie, 1986–1991; Roger Wagner, 1964–1986

Awards: ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming

Press: "the most exciting chorus in the country under Grant Gershon" — *Los Angeles Times*

"singing and direction are first-rate" — *Billboard*

"sonically exhilarating" — *Gramophone*

On disc: with Music Director Grant Gershon featuring Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Two Songs to Poems of Ann Jäderlund* and Philip Glass' *Itaipú* and Steve Reich's *You Are (Variations)*. With Music Director Emeritus Paul Salamunovich includes the Grammy Award®-nominated *Lauridsen – Lux Aeterna, Christmas*, and a recording of Dominick

Argento's *Te Deum* and Maurice Duruflé's *Messe "Cum Jubilo"*

On film: motion picture soundtracks with Paul Salamunovich include *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *The Sum of All Fears*, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *Waterworld*

Website: LAMC.org

PROGRAM



Los Angeles Master Chorale

Grant Gershon | Music Director

The Rena Waltz Pierson Music Directorship, a gift of the Pierson and Lovelace families to honor Lillian Lovelace's mother

Sunday, January 28, 7pm | Walt Disney Concert Hall
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Grant Gershon, conductor

Jubilate Deo omnis terra

Sing joyfully to God, all the earth

Josquin des Prez
(ca. 1440-1521)

Haec Dies

William Byrd
(1543-1623)

You Are (Variations)

You are wherever your thoughts are
Shiviti Hashem L'negdi (I place the Eternal before me)
Explanations come to an end somewhere
Ehmoor m'aht, v'ahsay harbay (Say little and do much)

Steve Reich
(1936-)

INTERMISSION

Absalon fili mi

Absalon, my son

Josquin des Prez

Justorum animae

The souls of the just

William Byrd

Daniel Variations

(WEST COAST PREMIERE)

I saw a dream. Images upon my bed and visions in my head frightened me.
My name is Daniel Pearl.
Let the dream fall back on the dreaded.
I sure hope Gabriel likes my music, when the day is done.

Steve Reich

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of House Management. Use of tape recorders, telephones, pagers, and/or cameras is prohibited in the auditorium. Program, prices and artists subject to change.

The Los Angeles Master Chorale, which annually participates in the Daniel Pearl World Music Days, is honored to present the West Coast premiere of *Daniel Variations*, commissioned, in part, by the Daniel Pearl Foundation. We welcome Daniel Pearl's family and friends to this performance.

Tonight's Listen Up! pre-concert discussion is hosted by Music Director Grant Gershon and KUSC's Alan Chapman.

This concert is funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS
A great nation
deserves great art.

From the Renaissance to Reich: Riches for All

BY VICTORIA LOOSELEAF

Impressionist artist Paul Gauguin once told a friend, “Above all, don't sweat over a painting.” This is clearly not the modus operandi of minimalist titan Steve Reich, whose works, conceived in a painstakingly slow manner, have nevertheless been many.

Embedding themselves into the musical landscape for more than four decades, these pieces include a slew of critically lauded vocal works – from 1981's Psalm-based *Tehellim* to the composer's 1995 homage to Perotin, *Proverb*. His repeating patterns and resonating timbres have also left their soundprints on the commercial scene, the Reichian influence heard in the innovations of airport music king Brian Eno and erstwhile glam rocker David Bowie. In addition, scads of disc jockeys have spun his tunes, with pop music

aficionados wearing out the grooves on *Reich Remixed*, a 1999 album with electronica acts reworked to his formidable compositions. Having turned 70 last October, the New York-born maverick reached an apex of hipness, with celebrations taking place in London, where his *Daniel Variations* was given its first performance, his hometown, including a weekend of Carnegie Hall concerts, and now, in Walt Disney Concert Hall. No stranger to these walls, Reich's aural tableaux have provided concertgoers with many breathtaking musical experiences, none more thrilling, perhaps, than *You Are (Variations)*. The first Reich composition to have its world premiere in Los Angeles – the work, a co-commission by the Los



Steve Reich

Angeles Master Chorale, Lincoln Center, and Friends of Ensemble Modern – was performed on October 24, 2004, with Music Director Grant Gershon at the helm. Hailed as a “masterpiece” by the *Los Angeles Times*, the 26-minute opus, teeming with bold, brilliant variations of slow-moving chord sequences, was so successful that the Chorale followed the performance with a recording on Nonesuch. Released in September 2005, the disc, too, received plaudits. Recalling Reich's Jewish roots and his abiding interest in the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, the four-movement *You Are (Variations)*, opens with rhythmic urgency, the chorus singing the words of Rebbe Nachman (“You are wherever your

thoughts are”). Hurling the listener into a musical world akin to a spiritual rave, its canons recall early music constructs. The second movement, from Psalm 16, also makes use of a text sung in Hebrew (“I place the Eternal before me”), with brilliant splashes of color – marimbas, vibes and four pianos – surging forward in constantly changing meters. It is this relentlessness of the pianos bursting with orgiastic harmonies that unites the piece in a buoyant D major chord. The meditative third section offers fragments

of Wittgenstein (“Explanations come to an end somewhere”), in which Reich employs brooding, minor harmonies as a gambit to complement the varying text repetitions. A summation of the work, the final movement (“Say little and do much”), explodes into an E-ticket ride tempo, propelling the piece to an abrupt end: a shattering silence, a vision unveiled. While Reich has sometimes been considered cool and distant, fires simmer beneath those glistening surfaces. Having tackled an array of politically charged topics over the years, including the Holocaust (1988's *Different Trains*), the composer now gives us his most politically overt work to date, *Daniel Variations*. Continuing his consolidation

of forty years of musical discovery, Reich, in this life-affirming work that receives its West Coast premiere and was commissioned in part by the Los Angeles-based Daniel Pearl Foundation, an organization formed in memory of the slain journalist to promote cross-cultural tolerance, the piece yields new sonic riches. Bringing to mind the romantic aural bling of *You Are (Variations)*, Reich, in this 30-minute four-movement tribute to Pearl (each movement also based on a short text), unleashes a flood of tightly-wound power: Again writing for four pianos and vibraphones, abetted by bass drum and tam tam, the composer pulls no punches in warning of the inevitable, coming crash. The first and third movements quote from the book of Daniel, representing a juxtaposition of the violence and cruelty found in the Bible with the mercy and compassion of Pearl's own words. The first text is spoken by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (modern day Iraq), asking Daniel to interpret his dream of terror ("I saw a dream. Images upon my bed and visions in my head frightened me."). The immense, slow chords of the opening are ominous harbingers before voices enter and augment the bone-chilling atmosphere in this journey to the heart of darkness. Piano interludes become chopped, with sopranos ascending on the word, "dreaming." The second text, "My name is Daniel Pearl," was spoken by the journalist as his captors videotaped him. According to Reich, these five words are emblematic of Pearl – the remarkable person – his name indicative of his character. As the journalist was also an avid violinist, this was a musical cue for Reich to soar. Jazzy, hopeful and bright, the words looping and curling around a steroidal string quartet, this movement makes luminous the name "Pearl," taking us away from the horrific circumstances surrounding his death. "Let the dream fall back on the dreaded," the third movement, assaults again with the clashing pianos, the permutations of harmonies and word-parsings continuing

to cast an unspeakable shadow. Reich, not one for superficialities, then delivers a knockout fourth movement. With words partially taken from Stuff Smith's 1936 jazz fiddle album, "I sure hope Gabriel likes my music, when the day is done" (Pearl had also spoken those words), the syncopated string riffs pile on top of the



Photo courtesy of the Daniel Pearl Foundation

same colliding piano chords heard in the work's opening. Building to a huge, riveting climax, the piece ends with a shocking, abrupt jolt. Neither requiem nor eulogy, *Daniel Variations* is living, breathing, exhilarating music that embodies the humanity of its subject, and, as an acoustic force, can shed grace on us all.

Also shedding grace is the music of Franco-Flemish polyphony maven Josquin des Prez. Often called the father of modern harmony, the composer, who lived from 1440-1521, counted among his patrons France's Louis XII. Considered the greatest music maker of the high Renaissance, he was also willful and expensive to commission – the Usher of his day – but was nevertheless one of the first westerners to concentrate on the motet and make use of "motivic cells." Short, easily recognizable melodic fragments that passed from voice to voice in a contrapuntal texture, this is a basic organizational principle in music that still stands today. Two pristine examples are

Josquin's *Absalon fili mi* (Samuel 18) and *Jubilate Deo omnis terra* (Psalm 100). With their flexible combinations of textures encompassing the technique of pervasive imitation based on word-generated motifs, these are nothing less than Reichian. Born nearly a century later, William Byrd (often called the English

The second text, "My name is Daniel Pearl," was spoken by the journalist as his captors videotaped him.

Palestrina), was the foremost composer of the Elizabethan age and a master of keyboard music, madrigals and church music. It was Elizabeth I, in fact, who granted Byrd and his student, the renowned Thomas Tallis, a monopoly for printing music in England, enabling the distinguished contrapuntists to become both financially and artistically secure. Whether in the more meditative *Iustorum animae*, from the book of Wisdom, or the joyous, elegantly intricate six-part setting of Psalm 117, *Haec Dies*, written in 1607, these a cappella works, sung in Latin, have the transcendent power, as only the human voice does, to transport and elate.

Victoria Looseleaf is an award-winning arts journalist and regular contributor to the Los Angeles Times, Reuters and Performances Magazine. In addition, she is the Program Annotator for the Geffen Playhouse as well as the producer-host of the long-running cable access television show on the arts, "The Looseleaf Report." This is her third season with the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

A Letter From Grant Gershon

When people ask me if I get nervous before a big concert, my stock reply is “Naw, not nervous—just excited”. However I will freely confess to being nearly petrified with ‘stage fright’ before an informal rehearsal in a backstage dressing room at Lincoln Center this past October. The piece in question was “Clapping Music” by Steve Reich, a duet for two ‘clappers’, and I was about to have a first run-through of this iconic work with STEVE REICH himself as the ‘other’ clapper. It didn’t help my state of agitation to know that Steve has probably performed the piece hundreds of times over the years with various members of his own ensemble, while this was my professional clapping debut, so to speak. It must also be said that although I’d had nothing but wonderfully positive experiences with Steve up until then, we conductors tend to get anxious when we have to ‘put pedal to metal’ and actually make sound instead of merely telling everyone else what to do! Be that as it may, there I was with Steve Reich in this cramped little dressing room, my heart racing, clapping away like a maniac... when gradually the extraordinary inner strength of his music began to transform my terror into exhilaration and, as so often



Steve Scharf

(L to R): Composer Steve Reich, LAMC Executive Director Terry Knowles, Nonesuch President Bob Hurwitz and Music Director Grant Gershon, at the recording session for *You Are (Variations)*

happens with Steve’s music, time itself seemed to fade away. The run-through ended, we were back in the dressing room, and Steve was his usual gracious self. “Maybe that was a little quick?” was his only implied suggestion (an extreme understatement, I imagine).

In the year 2000, shortly after I was appointed Music Director-Designate of the

Los Angeles Master Chorale, I made a list of the composers I would most like to commission new works from for the Chorale. Steve Reich, a hero of mine ever since my student days, was at the very top of this list. For me, Steve has always transcended genres and stereotypes. His music is equally satisfying to study in depth or to groove to in the car driving through the desert. I’ve always been particularly taken with his vocal music, from the wordless interplay of *Music for 18 Musicians* to the exuberant Psalm settings of *Tehillim*. The only problem with the notion of engaging Steve Reich to write a piece for the Chorale was that I had never met him, and given that he had never accepted a commission from a choral organization, I had no idea if he would even respond to an unsolicited inquiry. Nevertheless, we drafted a letter to Steve expressing our interest in commissioning a piece from him for the Master Chorale.

I happened to be in Paris on November 10, 2000 (my 40th birthday) when I received this email from the Master Chorale’s Executive Director, Terry Knowles: “Grant: I just picked up the phone and there was Steve Reich! This job definitely has its moments....” That was the beginning of the amazing journey that the Chorale has taken with one of the great composers of our time.

A month or two later I was invited to Steve’s apartment in lower Manhattan (I myself was living in upper, upper, “uppest” Manhattan) to talk about this potential project. I was extremely excited (all right, nervous) about meeting this great man whom I had heard could be rather ‘prickly’. As it turned out he could not have been more warm and welcoming that day. He said that he remembered quite fondly a performance of *The Desert Music* that the Master Chorale had participated in some years back and that he was



(L to R): Steve Reich with Ruth and Judea Pearl at the October, 2004 premiere of *You Are (Variations)*

therefore eager to hear what we might have in mind. I had brought some sketches of this crazy concert hall designed by Frank Gehry which was looking like it might actually get built in L.A., and I talked about how the Chorale would love to have a new choral work that would capture some of the kinetic energy of our future home.

Steve seemed interested but cautious at that first meeting. He said he had a lot on his plate at the moment (he was in the midst of composing a full evening’s work entitled *3 Tales* at that time), but that he was intrigued by the idea of writing ‘pure music’ again (as he put it) after working with spoken word and video on several large recent projects. I left feeling cautiously optimistic about the prospects for this potential new work.

Well, as they say, ‘the rest is history’. The piece that developed from that meeting was *You Are (Variations)*, which has been hailed as a masterpiece all over the world. The premiere in October 2004 was one of the highlights of my artistic life, and I know that all of the singers and players that were involved in that first performance felt that something very special had happened. There was a giddy energy at the post-performance party. In fact, at that party two momentous events occurred almost in passing. The first was that Steve quietly stated to me that he would like to have the Master Chorale record *You Are (Variations)* in Los Angeles for Nonesuch Records. The second was

that Steve was introduced to Ruth and Judea Pearl, the parents of slain journalist Daniel Pearl. Although no one could have known it at the time, that meeting laid the groundwork for *Daniel Variations*, the work which will receive its West Coast premiere this evening.

In March of 2005 the Chorale recorded *You Are (Variations)* in the legendary Studio 'A' at Capitol Records in Hollywood (pictures of Ray Charles, John Coltrane and Frank Sinatra adorning the walls). The sessions were a dream. Everybody involved was 'in the zone' from beginning to end and we are all extremely proud of the results.

It was at Musso and Frank's Grill after the final recording session that Steve suggested that "the whole gang" should come to New York to premiere the piece in 2006 during the festivities surrounding Steve's 70th birthday. Although we certainly didn't exactly need to be asked twice, I don't think that any of us knew the incredible amount of media and public excitement that this 70th birthday celebration would engender.

I for one have never imagined such an outpouring of adulation for a living composer as has taken place in honor of Steve Reich this past few months. From London to New York and now Los Angeles, Steve

has been feted by audiences, musicians and critics alike. The Master Chorale and I have been unspeakably proud to be a part of this celebration, first through our concert at Lincoln Center as part of their 'Great Performers' series, and now tonight with the pairing of *You Are (Variations)* and *Daniel Variations* at Disney Hall. As we look back on the past few years since that first "Hail Mary Pass" of a letter to an iconic composer, it has been a truly incredible journey. To you, Steve, all we can say is thanks for the wild ride!



Composer Bios



Steve Reich

Born: October 3, 1936, in New York

Education: graduated with honors from Cornell University in 1957; studied at the Julliard School of Music from 1958 to 1961; received his M.A. in Music from Mills College in 1963

Awards and Honors: 2 Grammy Awards for Best Contemporary Composition (in 1990 for *Different Trains* and in 1999 for *Music for 18 Musicians*); was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1994; was elected to the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in 1995, and, in 1999, awarded Commandeur de l'ordre des Arts et Lettres; in 2000, was awarded the Schuman Prize from Columbia University, the Montgomery Fellowship from Dartmouth College, the Regent's Lectureship at the University of California at Berkeley, an honorary doctorate from the

California Institute of the Arts and Musical America's Composer of the Year

Compositions include: *It's Gonna Rain, Pendulum Music, Phase Patterns, Drumming, Clapping Music, Six Pianos, Music for 18 Musicians, Tehillim, Different Trains, The Cave, Three Tales, Cello Counterpoint*

Works have been performed by: London Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, The Ensemble Modern, The Ensemble Intercontemporain, the London Sinfonietta, the Theater of Voices, the Schoenberg Ensemble, the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, the Saint Louis Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the BBC Symphony, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Quotes: "...America's greatest living composer." (*The Village VOICE*), "...the most original musical thinker of our time" (*The New Yorker*), "...among the great composers of the century" (*The New York Times*), and "There's just a handful of living composers who can legitimately claim to

have altered the direction of musical history and Steve Reich is one of them," *The Guardian* (London).



Josquin des Prez

Born: c. 1440/55 in what is now Belgium

Died: 1521

Widely regarded: as one of the finest and most influential composers in the history of Western music, whose works are always marked by a subtlety and serenity characteristic of the Franco-Flemish school

Musical compositions include: masses, motets, and secular songs in both French and Italian

Notable compositions include: motets *Miserere mei, Deus, Stabat Mater dolorosa,* and *Praeter rerum serium*; mass *Missa de beata virgine*; the frottolas *El grillo* and *In te Domine speravi*



William Byrd

Born: 1543 in Lincoln, England

Died: 1623 in Stondon Massey, Essex

Considered by many: the greatest English composer of any age, and his substantial volume of high quality compositions in every genre of the time makes it easy to consider him the greatest composer of the Renaissance

Appointments: Organist and choirmaster of the Lincoln Cathedral; Gentleman of the Chapel Royal

Notable compositions include: *Cantiones Sacrae* motets, three *Latin Masses, Gradualia, Psalmes, Sonets @ Songs, Songs of Sundrie Natures, Passing Measures Pavan @ Galliard, Quadran Pavan @ Galliard*

Jubilate Deo omnis terra

Josquin des Prez

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra:

Servite Domino in laetitia.

Introite in conspectus ejus,

In exultatiome.

Scitote quoniam Dominus epse

est Deus:

Ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos.

Populus ejus, et oves pascuae ejus.

Introite portas ejus in confessione,

Atria ejus in hymnis: Confitemini illi.

Laudate nomen ejus:

Quoniam suavis est Dominus,

In aeternum misericordia ejus,

Et usque in generationem,

Et enerationem veritas ejus.

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands:

Serve the Lord with gladness

and come before his presence with

a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord, he is God;

It is he that hath made us and not we

ourselves;

We are his people and the sheep of

his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with

thanksgiving,

and into his courts with praise; be

thankful unto him,

and speak good of his name.

For the Lord is gracious,

His mercy is everlasting;

and his truth endureth

from generation to generation.

Haec Dies

William Byrd

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus.

Exultemus et laetemur in ea. Alleluia!

This is the day the Lord has made:

Rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

You Are (Variations)

Steve Reich

You are wherever your thoughts are

Shiviti Hashem L'negdi

(I place the Eternal before me)

Explanations come to an end

somewhere

Ehmor m'aht, v'ahsay harbay

(Say little and do much)

Absalon fili mi

Josquin des Prez

Abaolon, fili mi

Ques det ut moriar pro te,

Non vivam ultra

Sed descendam in infernum plorans.

Absalon my son,

if only I had died instead of you,

Absalon!

I shall live no more,

but go down to hell, weeping.

Justorum animae

William Byrd

Justorum animae in manu Deisunt,

Et non tanget illos tormentum mortis

Visi sunt oculis insipientium mori: Illi

autem sunt In pace

The souls of the just are in the hand

of God, and the torment of death

shall not touch them.

In the sight of the unwise they

seemed to die: But they are

in peace.

Daniel Variations

Steve Reich

"I saw a dream. Images upon my bed

and visions in my head frightened

me." (Daniel 4:2 or 4:5 in Christian

translations)

"My name is Daniel Pearl." (I'm a Jewish

American from Encino, California)

"Let the dream fall back on the

dreaded." (Daniel 4:16 or 4:19)

"I sure hope Gabriel likes my music,

when the day is done."

NOTES ON THE TEXT:

The first text, from the book of Daniel, is spoken by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (modern day Iraq). He is asking Daniel to interpret his dream of terror. Right now it is unfortunately possible to feel a chill of identification with these words.

The second text was spoken by Daniel Pearl while his captors video taped him. I use only the first five words in the music itself since 'My name is Daniel Pearl' is so emblematic of this remarkable person. In Jewish tradition, and in many others, names are indicative of character.

The third text is the Biblical Daniel's response to Nebuchadnezzar.

The last text is a bit of a surprise and is explained by a friend of Daniel Pearl as follows:

"Once, during a two-day bike trip up the Potomac River, his friend Tom Jennings asked about his belief in an afterlife.

"I don't know," Danny replied. "I don't have answers, mainly just questions."

Then he added: "But I sure hope Gabriel likes my music."

After Danny died, Tom was going through his friend's vinyl collection (Dvorak, Liszt, Miles Davis, REM) and stumbled across this album: Stuff Smith and the Onyx Club Orchestra. "Danny loved Stuff Smith – a great jazz violinist," Tom says. "Here on side A, track 3, I found this: Stuff Smith playing 'I Hope Gabriel Likes My Music.'"

—Steve Reich

PERFORMERS

Los Angeles Master Chorale

SOPRANO

Tania Batson
Karen Hogle Brown
Claire Fedoruk
Rachelle Fox
Marie Hodgson
Emily Lin

TENOR

Pablo Corá
Jody Golightly
Shawn Kirchner
Michael Lichtenauer
Kevin St.Clair
George Sterne

ALTO

Nicole Baker
Amy Fogerson
Alice Kirwan Murray
Nike St.Clair
Nancy Sulahian
Kimberly Switzer

BASS

Aaron Cain
Paul Cummings
Gregory Geiger
Scott Graff
Stephen Grimm
Steve Pence

Daniel Variations: Sopranos and Tenors only

You Are (Variations): Sopranos, Altos and Tenors only

The singers of the Los Angeles Master Chorale are represented by the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, Leanna Brand, AGMA Delegate

Los Angeles Master Chorale Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Ralph Morrison*
CONCERTMASTER
Jayme Miller
Margaret Wooten

VIOLIN II

Steve Scharf
PRINCIPAL
Tereza Stanislav*
Cynthia Moussas

VIOLA

Kazi Pitelka*
PRINCIPAL
Shawn Mann
Dmitri Bovaird

CELLO

Rowena Hammill*
PRINCIPAL
Delores Bing
Nadine Hall

BASS

Donald Ferrone
PRINCIPAL

FLUTE

Geri Rotella
PRINCIPAL
Sara Weisz

OBOE

Joel Timm
PRINCIPAL
Stuart Horn

CLARINET

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Calendar of Events

MARCH

3 10:00 AM

D Invited Dress Rehearsal for *Mary Lou's Mass*

4 7:00 PM

C **shout** | Mary Lou Williams, *Mary Lou's Mass*

24 10:00 AM

D "Building Music" Coffee & Conversation, with Grant Gershon and Christopher Rouse

25 7:00 PM

C **awaken** | Christopher Rouse, *Requiem* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Following the concert

D Red Carpet Premiere Party, with composer Christopher Rouse

APRIL

LAMC with the Los Angeles Philharmonic:
April 12-14, *The Tristan Project*

LAMC with the Los Angeles Philharmonic:
April 18 & 24, *Tristan and Isolde*, complete

22 7:00 PM

C **ignite** | Franz Joseph Haydn, *Lord Nelson Mass* & Ariel Ramirez, *Misa Criolla*; with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

MAY

3 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

High School Choir Festival

JUNE

3 7:00 PM

C **lift** | Eve Beglarian, **WORLD PREMIERE**; James MacMillan, *Cantos Sagrados*; Arvo Pärt, *Te Deum*

Following the concert:

D "LA is the World" toasting event, with composer and artists

7 8:00 PM

C **lift** | Eve Beglarian, **WORLD PREMIERE**; James MacMillan, *Cantos Sagrados*; Arvo Pärt, *Te Deum*

8 LAMC at the Ojai Festival

Stravinsky *Les Noces*
Peter Eötvös, Conductor

12 LAMC at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Mexican Baroque, with Alex Acuña Grant Gershon, Conductor

JULY

8 LAMC with the LA Philharmonic

at the Hollywood Bowl
Mozart *The Magic Flute*
Leonard Slatkin, Conductor

31 LAMC with the LA Philharmonic

at the Hollywood Bowl
Beethoven Symphony No. 9
Michael Tilson Thomas, Conductor

C CONCERT **D** DONOR EVENT

Rocking and Rolling with the Soul of Jazz

By Victoria Looseleaf

“I play all styles, everybody should.” Only, that is, if everybody had the gifts of Mary Lou Williams, the late great jazz pioneer and speaker of those words. Purveyor of cool harmonic inventions, hot propulsive rhythms and all-embracing spirituality, this legendary musician was a true original.

Indeed, Williams’ high-powered compositions will rock Disney Hall on March 4, in a concert aptly entitled, *shout*, when another towering musical figure – Los Angeles Master Chorale Music Director Grant Gershon – raises his baton to conduct not only the Chorale, but the Luckman Jazz Orchestra in what might be deemed a channeling of the sounds of the artist born Mary Elfrieda Scruggs in 1910 in Atlanta, Georgia.



Providing even more soul in this concert that pays homage to an American classic, will be the renowned Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers and guest vocalists Carmen Lundy and Cedric Berry. Making use of Williams’ *Mass* as a framework for a celebration of her sacred works as well as

a comprehensive exploration of her solos, choruses and big band sounds, the free-form evening will explode with Williams’ unique brand of rhythm and blues.

Long regarded as the greatest female composer and instrumentalist in jazz history, Williams was a piano prodigy with perfect pitch. Raised in Pittsburgh, she made her professional debut at age 12 as Mary Lou Burley (her stepfather’s name), before joining a group led by saxophonist John Williams in 1925.

“She...made artistic choices that made her career difficult commercially. But that made her more interesting as an artist.”

—GRANT GERSHON

Subsequently marrying, the couple trekked to Oklahoma, where the “little piano girl” hooked up with Andy Kirk’s band, becoming principal arranger for more than a decade. By the late 1930s she was also arranging for jazz greats Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman.

Influenced by Earl Hines, Fats Waller and Jelly Roll Morton, Williams penned the boogie-woogie smash, *Roll ‘Em* for Goodman. On fire, Williams even managed to impress Morton, the father of jazz, with her own ivory-tinkling.

“Jelly Roll,” she said, “was considered a big deal then, and he had me scared.”

Not too scared to split from Kirk, however, and head to the Big Apple. It was there, in 1942, that she formed a group with second husband, trumpeter Shorty Baker, while Ellington recorded her *Trumpet No End* two years later. Williams’ embrace of bebop also resulted in *Waltz Boogie*, in which she adapted jazz to non-duple meters, recording it with her women’s band, Girl-Stars.

But there was also frustration in the life of this ground-breaking artist: Her 1945 *Zodiac Suite*, the first of many large compositions, received lukewarm reviews; and, being a woman, she was underpaid and under recognized for her composing-arranging skills. Despite Williams counting younger New York jazz royalty – Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker among her circle – she craved to be taken more seriously.

Moving to Europe in 1954, the musician walked off a Paris stage two year later, forsaking jazz for religion. Converting to Catholicism, the erstwhile boogie-woogie Goddess became obsessed, praying by name for 1,000 people daily, until 1957, when she returned to musicmaking with a vengeance.

Williams' third act yielded a wealth of sacred compositions, among them 1964's *St. Martin de Porres* (Black Christ of the Andes), and three complete masses, notably *Music for Peace or Mary Lou's Mass*. Papally commissioned, the work was recorded in 1970 on her own label, Mary Records.

This spiritual stew, a profound mixture of blues-based funk, swing, gospel and rock, reflects the tumultuousness of the era, its musical message of brotherhood still blowing minds today. Williams continued to flower in her final decade, one filled with recordings, concerts and a teaching appointment at Duke University, before dying from cancer in 1981 at the age of 71.

"I had known of Mary Lou as a big band pianist and arranger," explains Gershon, "but in doing research I learned she had the most amazing life and what a really fascinating woman she was. She wrote three masses and several cantatas and in them she combines all of her influences – from big band to gospel to funk and avant-garde.

"There is still a debate," points out Gershon, "about what her real place is in the history of jazz, and how different it would have been if she had been a man. She also made artistic choices that made her career difficult commercially. But that made her more interesting as an artist."

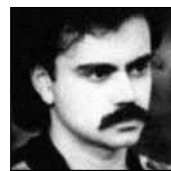
And conducting the Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers and LJO, the latter who has combined forces with the Chorale in concerts past to critical acclaim, also adds to the Gershon mystique.

Recalls the fiendishly busy music director: "The most interesting things are how beautiful the collaboration is between the groups, while people in the Chorale and in the band just found it to be a really life-changing experience – completely unforgettable."

Mary Lou Williams, no doubt, would have dug it, too.

LA IS THE
world

THE THIRD IN A SERIES



(L to R): Eve Beglarian, Manoochehr Sadeghi, Pejman Hadadi

The Persian Radif

When we think of music, we think of the Western classical system – a series of base notes and semitones, use of harmony in composition, and a musical tradition that is scripted and remains constant no matter what the instrument or type of music you are reading. There is a reassuring certainty to knowing that Middle C will always be Middle C whether you are singing or playing the violin, and that if two singers are reading the first tenor line in the score of, say, Verdi's *Requiem*, assuming all goes well they will be singing the same notes at the same time in the same meter.

Imagine then a world of music far more intuitive and fluid – one whose musical landscape is mainly melodic, includes microtones in addition to base notes and semitones, and relies heavily on improvisation; one that, though an ancient art form, until the twentieth century was never written down in any form whatsoever; whose essence is not dramatic or cerebral but rather mystical and contemplative; whose closest relative in Western music might be certain kinds of free-form jazz or electronic music – the classical Persian Radif.

The Radif is the collection of musical material that is the basis for all Persian music, passed generation to generation from a Master Musician to his students through oral tradition. Much of the music has no specific meter, or beat, but follows a rhythm like that of speech and is likely related

to the rhythms of Persian poetry. It is a musical tradition that is inherently improvisational and deeply personal, and when the musician performs his music for an audience it is meant to be an expression of spirituality, or of love.

The Radif, which literally means "row" or "series", consists of twelve *dastgahs*, or tonal systems. Each *dastgah* has its own repertory of melodies, each of which is called a *gushe*. The *Ostad*, or Master, teaches his students "chest to chest" – they learn his version of the Radif, internalize it, then develop and eventually perform their own. The student becomes a master when he has reached a level of technical, emotional and innovative virtuosity which allows him to improvise freely and richly in performance and in teaching.

It is this level of artistry that Master Musicians Manoochehr Sadeghi and Pejman Hadadi bring to this first *LA is the World* commission. Both musicians are passionate, soulful players whose improvisatory skills are finely honed. The challenge for the composer, Eve Beglarian, is to navigate between the Western and the Persian traditions, and compose a piece of music that is part of their world and yet wholly her own.

Next stop: Ferdowsi and Al-Ghazzali – two viewpoints of a parable about choices.

—MIKI SHELTON

Read the entire series online @ LAMC.org

D O N O R S

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