

## **Allahu Echad (God is One)**

*Words from The Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:4) and Adhan (Call to Worship) in Hebrew and Arabic*

Hebrew: שמע  
Translation: Hear.

Arabic: الله أكبر  
Translation: God is greatest.

Arabic: أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله  
Translation: I declare that there is no deity except God.

Hebrew: שמע: יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד  
Translation: Hear: The Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Arabic: الله أكبر  
Translation: God is greatest.

Arabic: لا إله إلا الله  
Translation: There is no deity except God.

Hebrew: שמע  
Translation: Hear.

## **O Sacrum Convivium**

*Latin Office antiphon, Vespers for the feast of Corpus Christi, Attr. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274)*

O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur;

recolitur memoria passionis ejus;

mens impletur gratia;

et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.

Alleluia!

O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received,

the memory of his passion is renewed,

the mind is filled with grace,

and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

Alleluia!

## **Mystery**

*Jennifer Lucy Cook*

Life keeps her mystery

Mystery, mystery

Life keeps her mystery

Carefully guarded

I hear the whispering

Whispering, whispering

I hear the whispering

Of the uncharted

Fate likes to hide away,

Hide away, hide away

Fate likes to hide away

Keeping me guessing

Once you tell a secret

There's no secret left to tell

Tell me tell me tell me tell me

Don't tell me

I tried to know it all

Know it all, know it all

I tried to know it all

From the beginning

Like it was logical

Logical, logical

Like it was logical

Stepping-stone motion

But the plans changed

And the plans changed

And the plans changed

And the plans changed

Trust is a miracle

Miracle, miracle

Trust is a miracle

I am still learning

I'm laughing wondering

Wondering, wondering

I'm laughing wondering

Where am I going now

Composer Notes: Nothing has brought me nearer to the brink of insanity more than my futile grip on life. Controlling, planning, and carefully crafting the next step continues to be virtually pointless, and yet I persist. \*sigh\* Letting go is beautiful but elusive, like hanging onto smoke, and impatience is always at my heels. Mystery is the musical ravings of a slightly deranged person reminding themselves to trust the process – after all, what good is a life without surprises? “Once you tell a secret, there’s no secret left to tell”, and thus, life keeps her mystery guarded. There’s an unrelenting rhythm, to be sure, but the accents are off kilter, the piano in clusters, and sometimes the tenors and sopranos sing two clashing melody lines simultaneously, all at a tempo that could easily become a runaway train. It’s a hymn for the chaotic good that ultimately awaits us when we sit back and enjoy the view of the unknown.

## **A Noiseless Patient Spider**

*Walt Whitman*

A noiseless patient spider,  
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,  
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,  
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,  
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.  
And you O my soul where you stand,  
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,  
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them,  
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,  
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

## **June Night**

*Sara Teasdale*

Oh Earth, you are too dear tonight,  
How can I sleep while all around  
Floats rainy fragrance and the far  
Deep voice of the ocean that talks to  
the ground?  
Oh Earth, you gave me all I have,  
I love you, I love you, -- oh what have I  
That I can give you in return --  
Except my body after I die?

## **Old Poets**

*Joyce Kilmer*

If I should live in a forest  
And sleep underneath a tree,  
No grove of impudent saplings  
Would make a home for me.

I'd go where the old oaks gather,  
Serene and good and strong,  
And they would not sigh and tremble  
And vex me with a song.

The pleasantest sort of poet  
Is the poet who's old and wise,  
With an old white beard and wrinkles  
About his kind old eyes.

For these young flippertigibbets  
A-rhyming their hours away  
They won't be still like honest men  
And listen to what you say.

The young poet screams forever  
About his sex and his soul;  
But the old man listens, and smokes his pipe,  
And polishes its bowl.

There should be a club for poets  
Who have come to seventy year.  
They should sit in a great hall drinking  
Red wine and golden beer.

They would shuffle in of an evening,  
Each one to his cushioned seat,  
And there would be mellow talking  
And silence rich and sweet.

There is no peace to be taken  
With poets who are young,  
For they worry about the wars to be fought  
And the songs that must be sung.

But the old man knows that he's in his chair

And that God's on His throne in the sky.  
So he sits by the fire in comfort  
And he lets the world spin by.

### **Delbaré**

*Traditional*

دلبر سیمین عذار  
گشتهام زار و نزار  
یک شب بیایی در برم  
جانم چطور میشد؟  
بکنی درمان دردم  
جانم چطور میشد؟  
ایار ملکی نم نمکی  
که در گوشهی چشمت  
صد هزاران مشتاق  
از دلم بی خبری  
کن به حالم نظری

### **Delbaré**

Delbar-é sīmīn ezār,  
Gashte-am zār o nazār  
Yek shab bīyayī dar baram  
Jānam chetour mīshod?  
Bokonī darmān-e dardam,  
Jānam chetour mīshod?  
Yār malakī, nam namakī!  
Ke dar gushe-ye chashmat.  
Sad hezārān moshtāq.  
Az delam bi khabarī,  
Kon be hālam nazarī.

## **Belovèd**

My love of the silver cheeks,  
I have wandered wearily –  
Come one night upon my breast!  
O my soul! how will it be?  
Ah! Work a cure for my pain at last!  
O my soul! how will it be?  
Salt of my heart! belovèd Queen!  
Thou, in the corner of whose eye  
A hundred thousand longings lie!  
My heart is sore for news of thee,  
Look on my sickness – pity me!

Composer Notes: Reflecting on a text and tune handed down to me from my late father, *Delbaré* focuses on passion for an object of affection, fully embracing Sufi tendencies of unification and oneness. Book-ended by an expressive solo line, there is a constant teetering between lush and dense harmonic areas, active and static textures, and heartbreak and nostalgia. These varied gestures work together to provide a diverse landscape for an evocative text which focuses on a maddening desire for intimacy, a reflection on unrequited love, and a passionate longing for that which is unattainable.

## **A Golden Day**

*Paul Lawrence Dunbar*

I found you and I lost you,  
All on a gleaming day.  
The day was filled with sunshine,  
And the land was full of May.  
  
A golden bird was singing  
Its melody divine,  
I found you and I loved you,  
And all the world was mine.  
  
I found you and I lost you,  
All on a golden day,  
But when I dream of you, dear,  
It is always brimming May.

## **Joy Will Lead You**

*Dominic Gregorio*

i love to put my heart on things  
see, love is a resonance that rings  
it's a bell so delightful as it sings  
how i adore all the joy that it brings

so i'm devoted in supporting all your wonder  
as you draw out all your radiant colour  
your heart, eyes, focused like a hunter  
following your bliss, through your inner splendour

and in choosing the "practical" you hate  
all your being all your doing, a heavy weight  
this elicits all your worst, now you're irate  
loathing self, and your elation, you negate

and this spirals down and down until you're lost  
wand'ring sadly to and fro, this is the cost  
be practical, realistic! we've been taught  
is it clear yet, the anguish this has brought?

so now take action, what is your highest thrill?  
ask your heart now, what's it yearning to fulfill?  
with fiery fervour, you develop your true gift  
soon you'll see your whole life begins to shift

and thus is your love so magnified  
it grows bigger stronger brighter, let's recognize  
how by practicing delight you've clarified  
you're now your greatest highest you, you're so alive

so cultivate delight, for this is Life's great clue  
Joy will lead you to your true authentic you

Composer Note: In the fall of 2012, when Dr. Dominic Gregorio began his position at the University of Regina, I was in my final year of an education degree—feeling lost and unfulfilled, wanting to pursue composition but stuck on a predetermined career path and suddenly feeling trapped. In Dom's first year at the university, he launched a composition competition, which enabled the performances of my very first choral works—and set me down the path of specializing in choral music, a path I've continued to follow for the past seven years. When news spread of his passing in early 2019, I was shocked and confused. Dom was, to so many people, an embodiment of life and joy, and the community—both in Regina and across Canada—was shaken by his sudden loss. When I was approached by Tim Friesen to compose a work in Dom's memory, I knew this was a project I needed to take on. The text, a poem about always following your passions, seems even more poignant given Dom's own influence in helping me pursue my dreams, and I hope this piece holds meaning for every person who continues to be touched by his life.

**Let Your True Self Sing**



Ryan Heller

Cold winds blow over my barren soul,  
Scattered pieces of my life across broken time,  
I am alone.  
Surrounded by eternity  
I hear a voice  
Calling me:  
    come back

I am broken, yet whole.  
Listen deeply,  
Your true self sings  
Throw open the door,  
Come back to that voice,  
Share that voice,  
Your voice...

Composer Notes: ***Let Your True Self Sing*** is my first “official” piece in 2022 since writing *Fresh Fruit*. I tell you this because I have learned that creating my pieces is to go on an emotional journey, and after *Fresh Fruit*, I needed time to process. When Alexander Bruce, artistic director of Suono, told me about this commission, I experienced what felt like a big hug...the kind that tells you that everything is going to be ok.

My husband Ryan and I have often talked about collaborating as composer and poet/writer, and I mentioned this could be our first collaboration. Last year, as I was approaching my 30th birthday, I told him: “Write me a text about knowing myself and listening to the voice within that will lead me to the hope of singing my true self. Happy, free, not worried about being. Fully giving my all to all around me, and being proud of what I do, feel, and who I am.” What he wrote was exactly what I needed to read; I hope it also resonates with you on whatever level you may need.

**A Spirit's Song**

*Ryan Heller*

Commissioned by Chorus Austin. in celebration of the 10th anniversary of Chorus Austin's Composer's Competition and "Southwest Voices." Made possible with generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**I Sing A New Song**

Sing a new song!  
Let it resound  
from your highest highs  
to the deepest lows.  
Let it echo throughout the universe  
Booming a great  
I AM!

**II A thousand blazing suns**

A thousand blazing suns  
The mightiest of roaring winds  
And vastness of the seas,  
Innumerable shining stars  
Or the most fragrant of roses—  
Are no match  
For the magnificence of your being

**III "You are" meditations**

You  
    You are  
        You are perfect  
Let go of anger  
Jealousy  
Shadows cannot dim the wildflowers' beauty;  
Allow your colors to flare and blaze  
    Do not let comparison steal your joy.

**IV Silverly shining**

Silverly shining  
The shore—roaring, caressing  
Inspire, release, joy

**V Within**

They who find peace and joy  
and radiance within  
Are one with divine bliss.

**VI You**

Even in your darkest night

remember this:

The divine lives in you.

Be you

Just you

Beautiful you

## VII Where and When?

Where and when? Why here and now, of course

Time rushes on, and will us all pass by;

Unknown tomorrow, gone yesterday's remorse,

Care not for them, and live today, say I!

Some grasping for the riches of this world and some

Longing for a paradise to come;

The wine of life is pouring drop by drop

Go, fill your soul, 'tis but the only one!

## VIII The Masterpiece You Are

Time beckons and stretches

boundless life surrounds us;

The body may perish, but our song (art?) endureth ever.

Colors swirling

endless horizons

We each hold the spark

Be the masterpiece you are!

## IX Awake

"Awake!" The spirit's sun cries out

Throw wide the doors, go forth and fly;

Let us sing a joyful song

For too soon will life's cup be dry.

Composer Notes for "Within": Many people say the answer is within. If the question is: "what piece should I program?" Yes, the answer is *Within!* (ba dn ts).

In all seriousness, finding the answers within myself is a huge struggle! I am learning to trust others and their kindness. I am trying to trust my voice, my decisions, and my ideas. Writing *Within* is a fun journey—I say fun, which is Carlos' Spanish for *scary*— because it allows me to fight back the doubting side that questions if it is too simple, too naked. It reminded me that vulnerability of asking for help.

Ryan wrote such a tender text, very pure and with no pretensions. When I composed the piece, I thought I'd call it *Divine Bliss*, but after I finished, I realized I was missing the point. The goal was to think about the self within, not about the divine bliss. You might even say I avoided looking inward and try to be completely comfortable with myself.

The piece goes from loud to soft. Simple. Sometimes, the answers are softly talking in the background, and we must dare to sit and keep listening until we can reach and find that light within. I know, easier said than done, right?