

Crossing Borders: Shifting the Lens

December 8, 2021

Virtual Concert

Durme, Durme by Elisha Denburg (2021)*
Four Ladino Folk Songs
Traditional Texts

1. Durme, durme
2. Alta, alta es la luna
3. Ir me kero, madre, a Yerushalayim
4. A la una yo nasi

Maureen Batt, soprano
Tara Scott, piano

Miniatures 1 – 4 by Claire Harris (2020-2021)**

Claire Harris, piano

Blood and the Moon by Chia Yin Wu (2020)*
Poetry by W. B. Yeats

1. Blood and the Moon
2. Symbols
3. An Irish Airman Foresees His Death

Fabián Arciniegas, tenor
Claire Harris, piano

INTERMISSION

(Intermission track: **The Fog** from *Lighthouse* album)

Sixteenth century, a cheat! by Mario Gómez-Vignes (2019)*

From *Cancionegro*

Text by William Shakespeare; Sonnet LXVI

Fabián Arciniegas, tenor

Claire Harris, piano

Come Find Me In A Dream

From *Lighthouse*

Lyrics by Tom Belding, Grej

Live self-taped footage

Video edited by Tom Belding

Pieces Of You

From *Lighthouse* album

Lyrics by Maureen Batt, Grej

Video by Tom Belding

*World première

**World première of Miniatures 2 & 3

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Daisy Sadaka Braverman for lyric diction coaching and the help with texts and translation. Thank you to the teams of people in Toronto and Halifax who made this project possible: Leaf Music, Jeremy VanSlyke, Ben B. Creelman, Pouya Hamidi, Michael Fisher, Stream Studio, Anna Shepard, Kwasi Asare, and Braden Lam.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of Arts Nova Scotia and FACTOR for their support of this concert production. Thank you to the Ontario Arts Council, the Waterloo Arts Fund, and the Canada Council for the arts for funding commissions with Elisha Denburg, Chia Yin Wu, and Amy Brandon.

Thank you for watching this broadcast and for celebrating new music with us!

HISTORY OF CROSSING BORDERS

Crossing Borders is a concert series founded by Batt in 2014 that features contemporary music by living Canadian composers and musical artists from around the world. With themes of compassion, contemplation, beauty, loneliness, darkness, healing, and warmth, the pieces presented in this series mirror both modern societal views and ancient cultural contexts through the lenses of humour, hope, and nostalgia. Art song is a featured genre on this recital series, but programs also often include opera, musical theatre, and electronics. One of the cycles that Crossing Borders commissioned and premièred, Breathing in the Shadows (Saman Shahi) was released on a commercial album in September 2020 on Leaf Music's label, with support from Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts.

Texts & Translations

DURME, DURME

Four Ladino Folk Songs

by Elisha Denburg

traditional texts

texts and translations edited by Daisy Sadaka Braverman

Durme, durme

Durme, durme ijiko de madre,
Durme, durme sin ansya i dolor.
Siente djoya palavrikas de tu madre
Las palavras de *Shema Israel*
Durme, durme ijiko de madre
Kon ermozura de *Shema Israel*.

Sleep, sleep

Sleep, sleep, mother's little one
Sleep, sleep, free from worry and grief
Listen, my jewel, to your mother's words,
The words of *Hear O Israel*.
Sleep, sleep, mother's little one.
With the beauty of *Hear O Israel*.

Alta, alta es la luna

Alta, alta es la luna
Kuando empesa'esklareser
Ija ermoza y sin ventura
Nunka yege a naser.

High, high is the moon

High, high is the moon
When dawn is breaking.
May a beautiful but hapless girl
Never be born.

Mis ojos me se incheron
De tanto mirar la mar.
Vaporikos van i vienen.
Letra para mi no ay.

My eyes are swollen
From gazing so much at the sea.
Steamboats come and go.
There is no letter for me.

Mi kerido es ermozo,
Dos tarras tiene kon el:
La una arondja dados,
La otra ke echa shesh besh.

My beloved is handsome,
He has two weaknesses:
One is that he shoots craps,
The other is that he plays backgammon.

Mi kerido es alto i vano,
I una vara de espander
Mi madre izo kolada,
Lo metió a detener.

My beloved is tall and vain
Just like a clothesline pole.
My mother did her laundry
And had him hold the line.

La, la, la, da, da, da etc.

La, la, la, da, da, da etc.

Ir me kero, madre

Ir me kero, madre, a Yerushalayim
Komer de sus frutos
Bever de sus aguas

En el me arimo yo
I en el m'afalago yo
En el Sinyor de todo el mundo

I el Bet Hamigdash lo veo d'enfrente
I me parese la luna kresiente

En el me arimo yo
I en el m'afalago yo
En el Sinyor de todo el mundo

I lo estan fraguando
Kon piedras presiozas
I lo estan lavrando
Kon piedras presiozas.

En el me arimo yo,
I en el m'afalago yo
En el Sinyor de todo el mundo

A la una yo nasi

A la una yo nasi,
A las dos m'engrandesi,
A las tres tomi amante,
A las kuatro me kazi.
Alma i vida i korason.

Di-me, ninya, de donde vienes,
Ke te kero konoser.
I si no tienes amante,
Yo te are defender.
Alma i vida i korason.

Yendome para la Guerra,
Dos bezos al aire di.
El uno es para mi madre,
I el otro para ti.
Alma i vida i korason.

I want to go, mother

I want to go, mother, to Jerusalem
To eat its fruits
To drink its waters

I lean onto Him
And in Him I trust
The Lord of all the world

And I see the Holy Temple in front of me
It looks to me like the crescent moon

I lean onto Him
And in Him I trust
The Lord of all the world

And they're building it
With precious stones
And they're embroidering it
With precious stones

I lean onto Him
And in Him I trust
The Lord of all the world

At one I was born

At one I was born,
At two I grew up,
At three I took a lover,
At four I married.
Soul, life, and heart.

Tell me, little girl, where do you come from?
I want to get acquainted.
If you have no lover,
I will defend you.
Soul, life, and heart.

Going off to war,
I threw two kisses into the air.
One is for my mother,
And the other is for you.
Soul, life, and heart.

BLOOD AND THE MOON

by Chia Yin Wu

poetry by W. B. Yeats

Blood and the Moon

I

Blessed be this place,
More blessed still this tower;
A bloody, arrogant power
Rose out of the race
Uttering, mastering it,
Rose like these walls from these
Storm-beaten cottages—
In mockery I have set
A powerful emblem up,
And sing it rhyme upon rhyme
In mockery of a time
Half dead at the top.

II

Alexandria's was a beacon tower,
and Babylon's
An image of the moving heavens, a log-
book of the sun's journey and the moon's;
And Shelley had his towers, thought's
crowned powers he called them once.

I declare this tower is my symbol; I declare
This winding, gyring, spiring tread-
mill of a stair is my ancestral stair;
That Goldsmith and the Dean,
Berkeley and Burke have travelled there.

Swift beating on his breast in sibylline
frenzy blind
Because the heart in his blood-sodden
breast had dragged him down into mankind,
Goldsmith deliberately sipping at the
honey-pot of his mind,

And haughtier-headed Burke that
proved the State a tree,
That this unconquerable labyrinth of
the birds, century after century,
Cast but dead leaves to mathematical
equality;

And God-appointed Berkeley that
proved all things a dream,
That this pragmatism, preposterous
pig of a world, its farrow that so solid seem,
Must vanish on the instant if the mind
but change its theme;

Saeva Indignatio and the labourer's hire,
The strength that gives our blood and
state magnanimity of its own desire;
Everything that is not God consumed
with intellectual fire.

III

The purity of the unclouded moon
Has flung its arrowy shaft upon the floor.
Seven centuries have passed and it is pure,
The blood of innocence has left no stain.
There, on blood-saturated ground, have stood
Soldier, assassin, executioner,
Whether for daily pittance or in blind fear
Or out of abstract hatred, and shed blood,
But could not cast a single jet thereon.
Odour of blood on the ancestral stair!
And we that have shed none must gather there
And clamour in drunken frenzy for the moon.

IV

Upon the dusty, glittering windows cling,
And seem to cling upon the moonlit skies,
Tortoiseshell butterflies, peacock butterflies,
A couple of night-moths are on the wing.
Is every modern nation like the tower,
Half dead at the top? No matter what I said,
For wisdom is the property of the dead,
A something incompatible with life; and power,
Like everything that has the stain of blood,
A property of the living; but no stain
Can come upon the visage of the moon
When it has looked in glory from a cloud.

Symbols

A STORM-BEATEN old watch-tower,
A blind hermit rings the hour.
All-destroying sword-blade still
Carried by the wandering fool.
Gold-sewn silk on the sword-blade,
Beauty and fool together laid.

An Irish Airman Foresees His Death

I know that I shall meet my fate
Somewhere among the clouds above;
Those that I fight I do not hate
Those that I guard I do not love;
My country is Kiltartan Cross,
My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
No likely end could bring them loss
Or leave them happier than before.
Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
Nor public man, nor cheering crowds,
A lonely impulse of delight
Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
I balanced all, brought all to mind,
The years to come seemed waste of breath,
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death.

Text permission for *Blood and the Moon*, *Symbols*, and *An Irish Airman Foresees His Death* by
A P Watts at United Agents on behalf of Caitriona Yeats

SIXTEENTH CENTURY, A CHEAT!

from "Cancionegro"

by Mario Gómez-Vignes

text by William Shakespeare; Sonnet LXVI

Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn.
And guiled honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled.
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly [doctor-like], controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill:
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

Lighthouse Album Credits:

The Fog (intermission), *Pieces of You*, and *From This Universe To The Next* (credits excerpt):

All music composed by Grej in collaboration with Maureen Batt

Maureen Batt: Vocals, Field Recordings

Grej: Piano, Harmonium, Synths, Vocals, Electronics, Field Recordings

Recorded at Gillespie House Inn, Parrsboro, NS, April 2021

Producers: Gregory Harrison (Grej) and Maureen Batt

Recording engineer: Gregory Harrison

Editing & mixing: Gregory Harrison (Oxford Studios, Fredericton, NB)

Mastering: Jeremy VanSlyke, Leaf Music

COME FIND ME IN A DREAM

by Grej in collaboration with Maureen

lyrics by Tom Belding, Grej

Come find me in a dream

Come find me in a dream

I'll be with you in this place

I'll be with you in this place

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

So many questions but not enough time

So many questions but not enough time

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

A little more time with you

Don't cry, don't be sad

A little more time with you

Don't cry, don't be sad

Just a little more time with you

Don't cry, don't be sad

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

Come find me in a dream

I'm here, light-years away

PIECES OF YOU

by Grej in collaboration with Maureen

lyrics by Maureen Batt, Grej

I hear you

I see you

I hear you/ can you hear my voice?

I see you/ can you hear my voice?

Fragments of/ can you hear my voice?

Like raindrops/ can you hear my voice?

I'm sinking/ can you hear my voice?

Falling down/ can you hear my voice?

I hear you/ can you hear my voice?

Fragments of you around

Like raindrops falling down

I'm sinking in the ground

Like raindrops

BIOGRAPHIES

Fabián Arciniegas (he/him)

Fabián Arciniegas is a versatile Colombian-Canadian singer-actor (tenor).

Deeply committed as an opera, oratorio and chamber singer, he discovered a passion for new composers and has successfully toured in Canada and internationally as part of the series Crossing Borders with soprano Maureen Batt and pianist Claire Harris, featuring living Latin American and North American composers.

After having premièred the song cycle Orbit by Saman Shahi in 2015, Fabián was invited by the composer to perform and record the songs again for his debut album released in September 2020.

He has also premièred works from Latin American composers Mario Gómez-Vignes and Leo Herrera.

In past seasons he has performed as part of the chorus with the Canadian Opera Company in Verdi's Aida (cancelled due to COVID 19), Otello and Wagner's Götterdämmerung and was Le Remendado for Julie Nesrallah's production Carmen on Tap!

He has performed under the baton of conductors such as Johannes Debus, Kevin Mallon, Derek Bate, Sandra Horst, Miah Im, Andres Posada, Miguel Caballero, Alberto Guzmán and Dmitri Manolov.

Maureen Batt (she/her)

Maureen Batt's career is centred on promoting Canadian classical contemporary repertoire by collaborating with composers to commission, première, and re-perform their works. Her discography includes *Lighthouse*; *Aunt Helen*; *Mirror, Mirror*; *Breathing in the Shadows*; and *Lady of the Lake*.

Celebrated for her "rich, warm sound and masterful acting" (*Opera Canada*), Maureen has created many Canadian opera roles, including Helen (*Aunt Helen*), Dorothy Parker (*Etiquette*), Bride (*Cake*), and Top Priority Air Customer Service representative and security guard (*December*) by Monica Pearce; Anna (*Regina*) and Keri Ferrell (*Hipster Grifter*) by Elisha Denburg; Cindy (*Heather: Cindy + Mindy = BFFS 4EVER*) and Hannah (*Hannah & Paige and the Zombie Pirates*) by Christopher Thornborrow; Lorelie Henderson (*Stockholm Syndrome*) by Fiona Ryan; and Sister Mary Francis (*Time of Trouble*) by Elizabeth Raum.

She is the co-artistic director of Essential Opera, an opera company founded in 2010 with Erin Bardua. In 2015, Maureen founded Crossing Borders, a contemporary classical recital series which has toured programs of art song, opera arias, musical theatre, and electronics to the United States, Canada, and Colombia. Maureen has a Master of Music from the University of Toronto, a Bachelor of Music from Dalhousie University, and a Bachelor of Arts from St. Thomas University.

Claire Harris (she/her)

Claire is a collaborative pianist, vocal coach and music director, specialising in opera and art song, with new music being a particular interest. Originally from New Zealand, Claire studied at the New Zealand School of Music before moving to London, England to attend the Royal College of Music, graduating with a Masters of Performance (collaborative piano) in 2015. She then worked with many UK-based companies including English Touring Opera, Waterperry Opera Festival and the Rossini Young Artists' Festival as well as La Roche d'Hys summer opera program in Burgundy, France.

In 2018, Claire moved to Toronto to join Opera by Request as Associate Music Director. With this company, she has been Music Director for productions of Don Pasquale, The Medium (in collaboration with White Mills Theatre Company), Don Giovanni, Hansel and Gretel, Madame Butterfly and Cosi Fan Tutte. Claire has recently begun composing for the piano and Crossing Borders: Shifting The Lens features her first work, a set of piano miniatures.

Tara Scott (she/her)

Tara Scott is one of Atlantic Canada's most renowned collaborative pianists. Her love of teaching and performing has led her to pursue staff accompanist positions at Western, Dalhousie, Acadia, and Mount Allison Universities. She has performed extensively with singers, instrumentalists and choirs across Canada. Tara has worked as Music Director for Maritime Concert Opera, Eastern Front Theatre, Essential Opera, Acadia's Singing Theatre and has performed with Opera Nova Scotia, Opera New Brunswick and Halifax Theatre for Young People. Originally from Grand Bay-Westfield NB, Tara maintains a busy private piano studio in Dartmouth, NS, and is on faculty at the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts.

Elisha Denburg (he/him)

Elisha Denburg's music focuses on vocal and chamber works, and is commissioned, premiered, recorded, and toured across Canada and in the US. He collaborates with artists such as Angela Schwarzkopf, junctQín keyboard collective, TorQ Percussion Quartet, New Music Edmonton, Halifax Camerata Singers, Sneak Peek Orchestra, Thin Edge New Music Collective, Blythwood Winds, Ensemble Paramirabo, Esprit Orchestra, The Bicycle Opera Project, the Array Ensemble, and Essential Opera. His music can be heard on CBC Radio 2's "The Signal" with Laurie Brown, "Shift" with Tom Allen, and "Tempo" with Julie Nesrallah. His three-movement work *Sonatina for Vibraphone & Harp* is featured on the JUNO-winning album *detach* by Angela Schwarzkopf.

Elisha lives in Toronto, and was a founding member and co-Artistic Director of the Toy Piano Composers, a collective founded in 2008 by Monica Pearce and Chris Thornborrow, dedicated to the presentation of engaging new music with a playful approach.

Chia Yin Wu (she/her)

Chia Yin Wu is a Taiwanese-Canadian composer whose musical journey is rooted in the Reformed tradition of Presbyterian hymnody. She studied piano and voice at National Taiwan Academy of Arts, composition at McGill University, and theology at Knox College, University of Toronto. She is a winner of the BMO Merit Award by Boston Metro Opera, 2014, and a winner of the composition competition by La Société de Concerts de Montréal (now Temps Fort), 2017. Her music is performed in Canada, Taiwan and Malaysia.

Mario Gómez-Vignes (he/him)

Mario Gómez-Vignes, Chilean composer and teacher, who has lived in Colombia since 1960. He holds a degree in Music from Universidad del Valle (Colombia). In the field of composition, he considers himself self-taught. For fifty years he has worked as a professor in the university chair (Universities of Antioquia, Pontificia Bolivariana, Del Valle, Del Cauca, EAFIT, ICESI, Autonomous University of Bucaramanga).

His compositions – in different genres – have been released both in Colombia and abroad (Austria, Germany, Italy, USA, Costa Rica, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico). He is the author of a well-documented biography of the Colombian composer Antonio María Valencia (1902-1952), in two large volumes that deserved Honorable Mention at the Robert Stevenson Musicology Prize, Washington D.C. 1993. The Departmental Institute of Fine Arts (Cali), conferred the degree of Doctor Honoris Causa in Music, in 1997.

GREJ (he/him)

Composer/ Multi-instrumentalist/ Producer

Toronto-based percussionist and Dora-nominated composer Gregory Harrison is emerging as one of Canada's finest talents in contemporary music. His extensive resume spans artists and groups including Jeremy Dutcher, Cirque du Soleil, Video Games Live, R. Murray Schafer, and Fred Penner. He has performed extensively internationally at notable venues such as Massey Hall, NPR Tiny Desk Concerts, the JUNO's, and The Kennedy Center. Described as a "percussion & electronics wizard" (Bob Boilen - NPR Music), Harrison's performative and compositional style merge his classical music background with his passion for electronic music.

In recent years, Harrison's commissions have been coveted by Kaeja d'Dance, ProArte Danza, Toronto Dance Theatre, Human Body Expression, Architek Percussion, Fifth Wind Quintet, CCDT, Dr. Morris Palter (University of Arizona), Popular Demand Pictures Inc., NB Tourism, and Division 85 Films. Harrison is also co-founder of his groups Mear and Taktus marimba duo.

Amy Brandon (she/her)~

Composer and guitarist Amy Brandon's pieces have been described as "...gut wrenching and horrific" (Critipeg), and "otherworldly, a clashing of bleakness with beauty" (Minor Seventh). Her performances, installations and acoustic works have been presented at the Gaudeamus Festival (Screen Dive), National Sawdust (NYC), Trinity College (Dublin), the mise-en Festival, and the Winnipeg New Music Festival. She has received Canadian and international composition awards and honourable mentions including the Leo Brouwer Guitar Composition Competition (Grand Prize 2019) and a JACK Studio Artist commission.

In addition to performance and composition, she is completing an interdisciplinary PhD examining augmented reality, motor control and guitar performance at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Jeff Joudrey (he/him)~

Artistic Director Jeff Joudrey founded the Halifax Camerata Singers in 1986, and under his leadership the choir has developed an enviable reputation for performance excellence, innovative programming, and support for Canadian composers. Jeff is Director of Music at Trinity-St. Stephen's United Church, Amherst, and Chorus Master of the Symphony Nova Scotia Chorus. He is a past president of Choral Canada and a former president of the Nova Scotia Choral Federation. In addition to serving on juries for the JUNO and East Coast Music Awards, the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and Choral Canada, he is in demand nationwide as a choral clinician, teacher, adjudicator, and guest conductor. Jeff was the recipient of Sing Canada Harmony's 2017 Dr. Paul E. Tamblyn Music Educator Award, and in 2018 was honoured to conduct the National Youth Choir of Canada on its tour of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Halifax Camerata Singers

The **Halifax Camerata Singers** is Atlantic Canada's premier chamber choir. Founded in 1986 by Artistic Director Jeff Joudrey, the Nova Scotia ensemble has distinguished itself by performing exciting choral repertoire that covers all periods and styles, with a special focus on Canadian music. The choir collaborates frequently with chamber ensembles, Symphony Nova Scotia and other musicians, and since 2001 has been the core choir of the Symphony Nova Scotia Chorus. Awards and honors include Choral Canada's Healey Willan Grand Prize; Music Nova Scotia's Classical Recording of the Year (2016), and several nominations for East Coast Music Awards. The choir's recordings include *A Time for All Things* (2015), *Solace: Songs of Remembrance* (2009), *Songs of the Stable: Christmas Music from Canada* (2006), *Songs of Home* (1997), and *Celtic Mass for the Sea* (1993).

~Please note that Amy Brandon's piece, *Vertical Labyrinth*, with Maureen and the Halifax Camerata Singers has been postponed to 2022 due to illness.

Vertical Labyrinth will be recorded and premiered in 2022 and your ticket to this concert gives you access to that premiere as well. For this commission, Amy set Hugh Hazelton and Sophie M. Lavoie's translations of poetry by Argentinian-Canadian poet Nela Rio.

CROSSING
B O R D E R S