Our 36th Season

2021-2022

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Christopher Theofanidis

Ildebrando Pizzetti

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PROGRAM

Immortal Bach

Requiem (1922)

Requiem Aeternam II Dies Irae

IIISanctus IV Agnus Dei Libera Me

Fantasia No. 1

intermission

Door Out of the Fire (2021)

Guitar Prelude

Burning Cathedral Guitar Interlude I

The Book of Rahul II Guitar Interlude II

Guitar Interlude III IVMigration Patterns

III Ruth's Aria

Abigail Nims, mezzo-soprano Nicolò Spera, guitar

Thomas Edward Morgan, conductor



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Christopher Theofanidis (b. 12/18/67 in Dallas, Texas) has had performances by many leading orchestras from around the world, including the London Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony, the Moscow Soloists, the National, Baltimore, St. Louis, and Detroit Symphonies, among many others.

Mr. Theofanidis holds degrees from Yale, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Houston, and has been the recipient of the International Masterprize, the Rome Prize, a Guggenheim fellowship, a Fulbright fellowship to France to study with Tristan Mural at IRCAM, a Tanglewood fellowship, and two fellowships from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2007 he was nominated for a Grammy award for best composition for his chorus and orchestra work, *The Here and Now*, based on the poetry of Rumi, and in 2017 for his bassoon concerto. His orchestral work, *Rainbow Body*, has been one of the most performed new orchestral works of the new

millennium, having been performed by over 150 orchestras internationally.

Mr. Theofanidis has written a ballet for the American Ballet Theatre, a work for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra as part of their 'New Brandenburg' series, and two operas for the San Francisco and Houston Grand Opera companies. Thomas Hampson sang the lead role in the San Francisco opera. His work for Houston, *The Refuge*, features six sets of international non-Western musicians alongside the opera musicians. He has a long-standing relationship with the Atlanta Symphony and Maestro Robert Spano, and has four recordings with them, including his concert length oratorio, *Creation/Creator*, which was featured at the SHIFT festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. this year with the ASO, chorus, and soloists. His work, *Dreamtime Ancestors*, for the orchestral consortium, New Music for America, has been played by over fifty orchestras over the past two seasons. He has served as a delegate to the US-Japan Foundation's Leadership Program, and he is a former faculty member of the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University as well as the Juilliard School. Mr. Theofanidis is currently a professor at Yale University and composer-in-residence and co-director of the composition program at the Aspen Music Festival.

Door Out of the Fire (2021) is a setting of four choral "messages in a bottle" based on poems by Melissa Studdard—a kind of time capsule reflecting some of the major worries and issues of our time.

The first, "Burning Cathedral," is about the inability to find metaphoric and literal oxygen in the time of COVID, set within the context of the forest fires created as a result of climate change, and the desperation and exasperation felt across the nation in the Black Lives Matter movement.

The second, "The Book of Rahul," lauds the heroic efforts of Rahul Dubey, who welcomed BLM protesters into his home overnight in Washington, D.C. at the moment in which they were about to be arrested for breaking curfew.

The third, "Ruth's Aria," is a solo reflection on the quiet power of Ruth Bader Ginsberg's life and her evolving understanding and movement toward creating greater justice.

The last, "Migration Patterns," is an ode to open borders and open hearts that imagines smuggling a star to another part of the sky, and suggests what is needed is a world anthem that "everyone knows the words to."

Each of the movements has an accompanying prelude or interlude, played on the acoustic guitar, and in fact that instrument serves as the contemplative soul of the piece. I am incredibly indebted to Nicolò Spera, who was a guiding hand in the guitar writing, and whose vision and drive made this work possible. – *Note by Christopher Theofanidis*



Italian guitarist **Nicolò Spera** brings to his teaching and performing a unique synthesis of European and American traditions. Nicolò is one of the few guitarists in the world to perform on both six-string and ten-string guitars, as well as on theorbo. His wide-ranging repertoire includes the extraordinary music of the Franco-Andalusian composer Maurice Ohana. He has given lecture-recitals on the music of Ohana at different institutions and festivals, including the Mediterranean Guitar Festival, Arizona State University, Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana, Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, San Francisco Conservatory, and the University of Surrey for the launch of the International Guitar Research Centre. His CD of Ohana's complete works for solo guitar (Soundset Recordings), presenting the world première recording of *Estelas*, was awarded the 5-stars "Disco del mese" review by Seicorde, the major Italian classical guitar magazine. With Soundset Recordings, Nicolò has also published his own transcriptions of Bach's *Cello Suites 4*, *5*, *and 6* for the ten-string guitar. In 2017, the Anglo-Spanish label Contrastes Records

presented Nicolò's recording of his transcriptions for the ten-string guitar of works by Catalan composers Federico Mompou and Enrique Granados.

Nicolò has presented recitals for some of the oldest concert series in Europe, such as the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin and the Sibelius Museum in Turku, and for major guitar events: Sanremo Guitar Festival, Festival Mediterraneo della Chitarra, and Festival Corde d'Autunno in Italy, Festival de la Guitarra de Sevilla in Spain, International Guitar Symposium at the University of Surrey in the UK, and guitar concert series at the University of Louisville, University of Kentucky, University of Rhode Island, Vanderbilt University and Belmont University in the US. As a soloist, he has performed in the US and Europe with conductors Michael Butterman, Andrés Cárdenes, Alejandro Gómez Guillén, Devin Hughes, William Intriligator, Cynthia Katsarelis, René Knetsch, and Michael Summers.

His most influential teachers are Oscar Ghiglia, Jonathan Leathwood, and Lorenzo Micheli. Nicolò holds degrees from the Claudio Monteverdi Conservatory in Bolzano and the prestigious Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy; an Artist Diploma in Guitar Performance at the University of Denver; and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Colorado-Boulder.

In 2011, Nicolò was appointed to the faculty at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where he is professor of Classical Guitar. He is also on the faculty of the study abroad program Chigiana Global Academy in Siena, Italy. In 2013, he founded the University of Colorado International Guitar Festival and Competition, an unprecedented event that attracts prestigious guests, guitar performers, and students from all over the world.

Mezzo-soprano **Abigail Nims** has established herself as a musician of integrity and versatility, garnering praise for her performances of repertoire from the Baroque to contemporary premieres.

Acclaimed for her committed interpretations and tonal beauty in the concert repertoire, Ms. Nims has performed as soloist with renowned orchestras and festivals including the San Francisco Symphony, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the São Paulo Symphony, Boston Baroque, and others. In Colorado, Ms. Nims has appeared as soloist with the Colorado Symphony, the Colorado Music Festival, the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, the Boulder Philharmonic, and the Colorado MahlerFest, and is a regular soloist with the Colorado Bach Ensemble.

On the opera stage, Ms. Nims has appeared in leading roles with companies throughout the United States and abroad including Wexford Festival Opera, New York City Opera, Atlanta Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Florentine Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, the Princeton Festival, Opera Delaware, and Opera North.

Ms. Nims joined the voice faculty at the University of Colorado-Boulder in 2013. Prior to joining the faculty of CU-Boulder, Ms. Nims taught voice at the University of California, Berkeley and at Yale University. Originally from Delaware, Ohio, Ms. Nims holds degrees from Yale School of Music, Westminster Choir College, and Ohio Wesleyan University. She has received awards from distinguished foundations and institutions including the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation Competition, Santa Fe Opera, the Carmel Bach Festival, Yale School of Music, and the American Bach Society/Bach Choir of Bethlehem Competition.



Ildebrando Pizzetti, Requiem

I. Requiem Aeternum

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem Exaudi orationem meam ad te omnis caro veniet Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

II. Dies Irae

Dies iræ, dies illa, Solvet sæclum in favilla: Teste David cum Sibylla. Quantus tremor est futurus, Quando Iudex est venturus, Cuncta stricte discussurus!

Tuba, mirum spargens sonum Per sepulchra regionum, Coget omnes ante thronum. Mors stupebit, et natura, Cum resurget creatura, Iudicanti responsura.

Liber scriptus proferetur, In quo totum continetur, Unde mundus iudicetur. Iudex ergo cum sedebit, Quidquid latet, apparebit: Nil inultum remanebit.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus? Quem patronum rogaturus, Cum vix iustus sit securus? Rex tremendæ maiestatis, Qui salvandos salvas gratis, Salva me, fons pietatis.

Recordare, Iesu pie, Quod sum causa tuæ viæ: Ne me perdas illa die. Quærens me, sedisti lassus: Redemisti Crucem passus: Tantus labor non sit cassus.

Iuste Iudex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis.
Ingemisco, tamquam reus:
Culpa rubet vultus meus:
Supplicanti parce, Deus.

Qui Mariam absolvisti, Et latronem exaudisti, Mihi quoque spem dedisti. Preces meæ non sunt dignæ: Sed tu bonus fac benigne, Ne perenni cremer igne.

Inter oves locum præsta, Et ab hædis me sequestra, Statuens in parte dextra. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them. Thou, O God, art praised in Zion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come. Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

The day of wrath, that day, will dissolve the world in ashes: (this is) the testimony of David along with the Sibyl. How great will be the quaking, when the Judge is about to come, strictly investigating all things!

The trumpet, scattering a wondrous sound through the sepulchers of the regions, will summon all before the throne. Death and nature will marvel, when the creature will rise again, to respond to the Judge.

The written book will be brought forth, in which all is contained, from which the world shall be judged. When therefore the Judge will sit, whatever lies hidden, will appear: nothing will remain unpunished.

What then shall I, poor wretch, say? Which patron shall I entreat, when [even] the just may [only] hardly be sure? King of fearsome majesty, Who gladly saves those fit to be saved, save me, O fount of mercy.

Remember, merciful Jesus, that I am the cause of Your journey: lest You lose me in that day. Seeking me, You rested, tired: You redeemed [me], having suffered the Cross: let not such hardship be in vain.

Just Judge of vengeance, make a gift of remission before the day of reckoning. I sigh, like the guilty one: my face reddens in guilt: Spare the imploring one, O God.

You Who absolved Mary, and heard the robber, gave hope to me also. My prayers are not worthy: but You, [Who are] good, graciously grant that I be not burned up by the everlasting fire.

Grant me a place among the sheep, and take me out from among the goats, setting me on the right side. Confutatis maledictis, Flammis acribus addictis, Voca me cum benedictis.

Oro supplex et acclinis, Cor contritum quasi cinis: Gere curam mei finis. Lacrimosa dies illa, Qua resurget ex favílla Iudicandus homo reus: Huic ergo parce, Deus:

Pie Iesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen.

III. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

IV. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi dona eis requiem Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi dona eis requiem, sempiternam requiem.
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

V. Libera Me

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna in die illa tremenda quando coeli movendi sunt et terra dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem Tremens factus sum ego et timeo dum discussio venerit atque ventura ira Dies illa dies irae calamitatis et miseriae dies illa, dies magna et amara valde Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna in die illa tremenda quando coeli movendi sunt et terra dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.

Once the cursed have been silenced, sentenced to acrid flames, Call me, with the blessed.

[Humbly] kneeling and bowed I pray, [my] heart crushed as ashes: take care of my end. Tearful will be that day, on which from the glowing embers will arise the guilty man who is to be judged: Then spare him, O God.

Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest, everlasting rest.

May eternal light shine on them, O Lord, with Thy saints forever, because you are merciful.

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine on them.

Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death on that dreadful day when the heavens and the earth shall be moved when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire. I quake with fear and I tremble awaiting the day of account and the wrath to come. That day, the day of anger, of calamity, of misery, that day, the great day, and most bitter. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them. Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death on that dreadful day when the heavens and the earth shall be moved when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

The first time that I met Ildebrando Pizzetti was at Milan, in March, 1915, the occasion being the first representation of [Pizzetti's opera] Fedra at La Scala. Some search was required to discover the quiet, outlying street where, in a modest rented apartment he had hidden himself away with his family after coming from Florence to follow and superintend the rehearsals of the opera. Then and there, at first sight and on hearing his first words, I experienced a feeling of I will not say disappointment but certainly of disorientation; his personality, his manner of receiving me, his language, all were very different from what I had expected. In Milan people spoke of Ildebrando Pizzetti as if he were a revolutionary, a rebel, an inexorable castigator of evil customs in music through the columns of the papers for which he had been the musical critic. Moreover, the high-sounding and discreetly emphatic expressions wherewith his collaborator on Fedra, Gabriele d'Annunzio, had saluted the advent of the musician Ildebrando of Parma, would justify one in fancying him of a temperament exquisitely attuned to that of the poet, even in those outward and worldly traits which were and are characteristic of the latter. After a quarter of an hour's conversation with Pizzetti, I suddenly arrived at the conviction that my preconceived notions concerning the maestro were wholly false, and that the indiscreet gossip of our dear



Milanese colleagues was quite misleading, with (alas!) a dash of treachery and malicious envy. And great was my rejoicing when I realized that Pizzetti, besides being a grand artist—for thenceforward my conviction was firm and unquestionable—was likewise a man, a real man, that is, a creature compact of kindliness and goodwill, for whom art was the loftiest and serenest expression of the simple and eternal emotions of humanity, the clearest intuition of the truth to which man can attain in the divine mysteries of love and death.

Door Out of the Fire

Burning Cathedral

I'm not sure exactly when the forest turned into a burning cathedral, but I have seen the animals inside it release to the sky like a soul leaving a body. I wore a paper bag on my face to their unofficial funeral—something to hyperventilate into, to remind myself that I still have lungs beneath the heat, beneath corona, still have lungs inside the chokehold of law enforcement gone awry.

I walk into what's burning and burn myself with it—

because every time I view the news, there's another story to bandage, another tragedy to bury.

I can't plant fast enough: the trees in my yard, the heart in my garden, the words that could be a conduit for some lone moment of grace, can't plant fast enough to make up for what is lost in a year, a decade, a lifetime when no one can breathe.

At the edge of compassion, I circle and look for a trail. I resuscitate a memory of who we were before we caused this. I study it all, study nothing, study life and death and the enclosure of an atmosphere-less world. I recall a human who is part of nature, not a lord of it, and I step in, step into the thicket

like a deer

before the first hunter was born.

The Book of Rahul, Marginalia

Chapter 1, Verse 1, Fact Check

"Rahul Dubey, 44, described the chaotic moments just before 9:30 p.m. when he opened the door of his Swann Street home, near Dupont Circle, to scrambling protesters."

—Derrick Bryson Taylor, *The New York Times*

Chapter 1, Notes on Verse 1

He was long and wide-minded and reminded them of love hugging itself, the way a hurricane swirls around its own eye, holding what it wants in its center, hurtling everything else away with its broad arms, the way love doesn't back down, doesn't close its Swann wings, or its doors.

Chapter 4, Fact Check

"Dubey also gave them food, water, and helped them charge their phones. As some of the protesters were hit by pepper spray, he helped them with milk and water for relief for their eyes."—Reethu Ravi, *The Logical Indian*

Chapter 4, Notes on Verse 23

They said *hungry*, and he said *here*.
They said *thirsty*, and he said *here*.
They said *tired*, and he said *here*.
They said *change*, *together*, and he said *here*.

Chapter 5, Response to Verse 17

Shelter is an anchor in a wave of city streets, a night opening to its kin.

Chapter 5, Quote from Rahul Dubey

"They're the ones out there who got sprayed. I just held a door open," he said. "They're the heroes. They are America."

—Qtd. by Tasneem Nashrulla, *BuzzFeed*

Chapter 8, Notes on Verse 12

In the first hour, he washes white lies from their eyes, transforms their fear into remembrance of who they are, have always been, what they have already achieved.

Chapter 11, Response to Verse 22

(R)evolution is ancient, the expansion and contraction of space into star.

Chapter 11, Quotes from Allison Lane, Protester

"Cops are trying to convince Rahul to get us out of the house. He said we not leaving and bring me my pizza."

Chapter 11, Notes on Verse 24

God says, Thou shalt not kill. Rahul says, But what about with kindness? God says, Honor thy father and mother. Rahul says, I'll honor our children, too.

Chapter 17, Notes on Verse 16

Anger is vertical. Raising us, raising us higher than a tower of ideas, higher than a flag.

Chapter 17, Verse 25

Reminded me of this line: "Freedom is what you do with what has been done to you."—Sartre

But anyway, to hell with Sartre.

Chapter 23, Notes on Verse 2

Is he a man or a bomb shelter in the fallout of God's mind?

Chapter 25, Quote from Rahul Dubey

"I hope that my 13-year-old son grows up to be just as amazing as they are."

Chapter 25, Notes on Verse 3

The man who birthed a family from the pitch of his eye.

Chapter 25, Quote from Rahul Dubey

"I'm getting text messages and calls from the random 70 strangers who are now family who sheltered with me." —Qtd. by Marisa M. Kashino, *Washingtonian*

Chapter 26, Notes on Verse 8

On the final day, he said, *Go forth*, and they went forth, neither broken sounds, nor the singing of eagles, neither home, nor completely away. He said, *The future is not a knotted rope in the hands of a man you cannot see. It is an empty certificate, and you are the signature, the pane, the frame.*

*Note: the entry under "Chapter 11, Notes on Verse 24" is a variation on two lines from a poem by Katie Condon.

Ruth's Aria

for the notorious RBG

Because I was a hundred-year flower the world was waiting to see bloom,

I unlatched the scabbard for cutting shadows away from

decisions ill-made. I cut hackneyed, hand-me-down, halftime rights

from the hands that held them, and I returned them stitched back whole. Society

had raised me on baloney and broken wishbones,

babel and busted platitudes, on repeated, ruthless

galaxies of restraint. And I said, No matter. I said, While everyone else was learning

Pig Latin, I was writing a new alphabet, a new country, empathy's

affidavit. While the world was burning in history's buildings, I was building

a door out of the fire. I saw that the law was busy watering

weeds, so I drank rainwater and opera, set my heart cycle to *bloom*. And I bloomed

and bloomed and bloomed. And left a seed-spangled wake behind me.

Migration Patterns

In the dream I tell customs my llama is a goat. Because sometimes the heart is not large

enough to hold what is beautiful if the mind finds it exotic. Sometimes the mind

mistakes itself for a hoarded piece of land and little campfires spring up everywhere. Smoke

slinks through chain link. Small hands and shoulders capsize beneath a dehydrated, salt-sick

sun. In the dream I carry mountains through international waters. I carry the hills, their babies,

to safety. Sometimes I wave away a predator and there is fire in my hand and my hand

does not want to be part of a human body. It wants to belong to the llama, the goat, the hills,

the mountain. In the dream I've got the North Star in my trunk. I'm driving it across a border.

I'm taking it to a different part of the sky. It can't stand what it has seen. What we need

is not a fixed point. What we need is a world anthem that everyone knows the words to, one

that says, *Come in, come on, come over. I've got you.* In the dream, light leaks from thin cracks

where the trunk door meets the body of the car. The star says, *Put me on the dashboard, and I will guide*

you. The officer says, Illegal. You can't take a star to another part of the sky. And I say, Watch me.

I say, I've got enough light to do anything.

- Poems by Melissa Studdard



Melissa Studdard is the author of five books, including the poetry collection I Ate the Cosmos for Breakfast, the poetry chapbook Like a Bird with a Thousand Wings, and the young adult novel Six Weeks to Yehidah, as well as a forthcoming collection of poems, Dear Selection Committee. Her work has been featured by NPR, PBS, The New York Times, The Guardian, and Houston Matters, and has also appeared in a wide variety of periodicals, such as POETRY, Kenyon Review, Psychology Today, New Ohio

Review, Harvard Review, New England Review, and Poets & Writers.

Her book awards include the Forward National Literature Award, the International Book Award, the Kathak Literary Award, the Poiesis Award of Honor International, the Readers' Favorite Award, and two Pinnacle Book Achievement Awards. Also, her works have been listed in *Cutthroat: A Journal of the Arts*' Best Books of the Year, *January Magazine's* Best Children's Books of the Year, Bustle's "8 Feminist Poems To Inspire You When The World Is Just Too Much," and *Amazon's Most Gifted Books*.



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June 2022

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Consider putting YOUR name on this list! We're seeking energetic individuals to serve on the Board for this dynamic organization. See our website for details.

www.arsnovasingers.org

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

Our 37th Season Begins in September!

Gala!

A Summer Evening in the Country
Sunday, September 11
Lone Hawk Farm, Longmont

Renaissance Music for 10 Voices: Mad Madrigals and More November 4, 5, 6

Solstice: The Turning Ars Nova Holiday Concerts December 9, 11, 15, 16

Searching for Stardust February 10, 11, 2023

Ars Nova Presents: VOCES 8

Wednesday, March 1 Macky Auditorium, Boulder Thursday, March 2 St. John's Cathedral, Denver

Music Beyond Words
April 13, 14, 15 (Regional Tour)
April 21-22