

MIT CONCERT CHOIR
Dr. William Cutter, Conductor
Joseph Turbessi, organ

In Memoriam

Lamentations of Jeremiah
Alberto Ginastera

Stabat Mater
Virgil Thomson

Take Him, Earth, For Cherishing
Herbert Howells

Requiem Op. 48
Gabriel Fauré

Saturday, December 3, 2011 at 8PM

Kresge Auditorium, MIT

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PROGRAM

Lamentations of Jeremiah Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)

- I. O vos omnes qui transistis per viam
- II. Ego vir videns paupertatem meam
- III. Recordare Domine quid acciderit nobis

Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Stabat Mater Virgil Thomson (1896-1989)

Elizabeth George, soprano
Soo Gyeong Lee; Thomas Hofmann, violins
Vanessa Buttolph, viola
Javier Caballero, cello

Requiem, Op. 48 Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

- I. Introit and Kyrie
- II. Offertory
Christopher M. Jones, baritone
- III. Sanctus
- IV. Pie Jesu
Betsy Flowers, soprano
- V. Agnus Dei
- VI. Libera me
Eric Chan, baritone
- VII. In paradisum

PROGRAM NOTES

The choice of repertoire on this evening's program was chosen with the intention of observing the 10th anniversary of 9/11. The texts of these compositions convey a wide variety of emotions having to do with loss, mourning, and comfort. Some are intensely personal expressions of loss while others are quite public in their cries of grief. We hope in some very small way to honor those who lost their lives on that fateful day, as well as the families and friends of the victims of this tragedy, with these beautiful and heartfelt musical memorials.

The Argentinian composer **Alberto Ginastera** is widely regarded as one of the most important and original South American composer of the 20th century. Exhilarating rhythmic energy, captivating lyricism and a hallucinatory atmosphere are some of the characteristics of his musical style. Ginastera is also fond of using Argentine folk and popular elements and more often than not, introduces them in a very straight-forward manner.

The Book of Lamentations is a poetic book of the Hebrew Bible composed by the Jewish prophet Jeremiah. The text mourns the destruction of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple in the 6th century BCE and reflects the theological view that what happened to Jerusalem was a deserved punishment, and that its destruction was instigated by their god for the communal sins of the people. Jeremiah pours out his emotions in compassion, and empathy for God's nation, as he watches the people of Jerusalem inhabit a foreign land.

The book consists of five separate poems, three of which were set by Ginastera – namely books two, three and five.

Chapter two describes the anger of the Lord, who brought judgement to the wicked land, as He had warned, "In fierce anger, He has cut off all the strength of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand from before the enemy..." (2:3)

In Chapter three Jeremiah is expressing his troubled spirit and suffering in gloom. He too is afflicted, as his homeland is pillaged.

In Chapter five, the people of Israel repent and asked to be "turned back to you"..."renew our days as in the beginning."

Ginastera's musical responses to these texts are as dramatic as the words themselves. Heart-wrenching and desperate sobs in the soprano and alto voices introduce the first movement followed quickly by incredibly powerful declamatory singing from the basses and tenors. A brief energetic fugal section follows culminating in extremely high fortissimo chords from the full chorus. The movement concludes with a furious and forceful return of the opening music.

In stark contrast, movement two exploits the low registers of each voice part. Together with a ploddingly slow tempo, the rich Renaissance style counterpoint (featuring the expressive qualities of the suspension) heightens the sense of agony and despair of the people of Jerusalem.

Movement three begins with a gentle and lyric plea to “look and consider our disgrace” and concludes with an allegro characterized by jagged melodic lines, punching dissonant harmonies, and finally, a majestic confirmation that “the Lord will remain forever”.

English composer, organist and teacher **Herbert Howells** is known particularly for his large output of Anglican church music, including complete service music as well as settings of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis, and a fifty-minute setting of the Stabat Mater, one of the longest extant settings of this text.

There is no doubt that Howells’ rare capacity for friendship – with places as well as people – sustained a profound influence upon his compositional output. Notwithstanding an all-consuming fascination with buildings, art, craft, history and tradition, the trouble that he himself took over his personal appearance bespeaks an individual as much concerned with the visual as the aural.

“In all my music for the Church, people and places have been a dual influence. The Cathedral in Gloucester, St Paul’s and Westminster Abbey in London, Christ Church and New College in Oxford, St John’s and King’s College Chapels in Cambridge – these and their recent Directors of Music have been a paramount shaping force. Men, choir, ecclesiastical buildings have become inseparably a part of that force. So too have exemplars and – acoustics.”

The vast kaleidoscope of vocal challenges which Howells’s music presents, especially to the amateur singer, encompasses a remarkable, chameleon-like ability to discern what will “go well” as he himself might very well have said. The decorative expansion of so many of his musical motifs and themes combine to make a Howells sonority instantly recognizable.

Take Him, Earth, For Cherishing composed in the spring of 1964, and dedicated “to the honoured memory of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, President of the United States of America” is considered by many to be his finest acappella anthem. The work was premiered later that year in Washington, D.C. Having lost his own young son to a debilitating neurological disease a few years earlier, Howells was aware of the pained state of the audience who would first hear this music, so his setting begins with a sense of quiet reverence. Quickly the harmonies become thicker, the mood more agitated, leading to an expansive climax at the words, “Take, O take him, mighty Leader, Take again thy servant’s soul.” From here the music broadens and dies back until the final repetition of the opening text: “Take him, Earth, for cherishing.”

Virgil Thomson, whose centennial was celebrated in 1996, was a many faceted American composer of great originality and a music critic of singular brilliance. Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Thomson studied at Harvard University. After a prolonged period in Paris where he studied with famed French pedagogue Nadia Boulanger, he returned to the United States where he was chief music critic for the New York Herald Tribune from 1937 to 1951.

Virgil Thomson composed in almost every genre of music. Utilizing a musical style marked by sharp wit and overt playfulness, Thomson produced a highly original body of work rooted in American speech rhythms and hymnbook harmony. His music was most influenced by Satie’s ideals of clarity, simplicity, irony, and humor.

The composer's **Stabat Mater** was written in Paris in 1931. Its text, in French, by Max Jacob, represents, like the Latin hymn by Saint Bernard from which it takes its title, sorrowing Mary at the foot of the Cross. In this miniature drama there are four speakers – an Angel, Mary, Jesus, and Saint John. The work is scored for string quartet and soprano.

Gabriel Fauré began work on his **Requiem** in 1887 purely, in his own words, “for the pleasure of it,” though the death of his father in 1885 and of his mother two years later may well have given impetus to the composition.

This is not a complete liturgical Requiem (in fact, the *In Paradisum* text comes from the Burial Service); Fauré made a personal selection of texts, laying emphasis on the idea of rest and peace and omitting the Day of Judgement altogether. The instrumentation is restrained and somber: Fauré may have gotten the idea for his string group of divided violas and cellos with basses but no violins from the opening chorus of the Brahms Requiem.

Of the many settings of the *Requiem*, this is probably the most widely loved. In comparison with the large-scale masterpieces of Verdi, Brahms and Berlioz, Fauré's setting seems gentle and unassuming, yet it is this very quality of understatement which contributes so eloquently to the work's universal appeal.

TEXTS and TRANSLATIONS

Lamentations of Jeremiah - Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)

I. O vos omnes qui transistis per viam

Oh all you who pass this way,
Behold and see if there be any sorrow like mine.
For the Lord has afflicted me as he said in the day of his anger.
See Lord, I am troubled, my bowels are disrupted.
See Lord, my heart is turned within me, for I am full of bitterness.
See Lord, abroad the sword destroys
And at home it is death.
For that reason I lament and my eye pours down water.
For the consoler is taken from me and my mind whirls around.
My sons are ruined and the enemy grows strong!
You persist in fury and you grind down those under the heavens, Lord!

II. Ego vir videns paupertatem meam

I am the man who sees impoverishment by the rod of his indignation.
He has drawn me in and suspended me in darkness and not in light.
He has made my skin and my flesh old.
He has broken my bones and put me in dark places as if with the eternally dead.
But whenever I cry out and plead, he shuts out that prayer. And I said...
My strength and hope have perished because of the Lord.

III. Recordare Domine quid acciderit nobis

Remember Lord what has come upon us.
Look and consider our disgrace.
Turn us back to you Lord and we will be turned.
Renew our days as in the beginning.
You however Lord will remain forever.
Your throne through the generations.
You, Lord, will remain forever!

Take Him, Earth, For Cherishing - Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Take him, earth, for cherishing To thy tender breast receive him.
Body of a man I bring thee, Noble even in its ruin.
Once was this a spirit's dwelling, By the breath of God created.
High the heart that here was beating, Christ the prince of all its living.

Guard him well, the dead I give thee, Not unmindful of his creature Shall He ask it:
He who made it Symbol of His mystery.

Comes the hour God hath appointed To fulfill the hope of men, Then must thou, in very
fashion, What I give, return again. Body of a man I bring thee.

Not though ancient time decaying Wear away these bones to sand, Ashes that a man
might treasure In the hollow of his hand: Not though wandering winds and idle winds,
Drifting through the empty sky, Scatter dust was nerve and sinew, Is it given to man to
die. Once again the shining road Leads to ample Paradise; Open are the woods again,
That the Serpent lost for men.

Take, O take him, mighty Leader, Take again thy servant's soul. Grave his name, and
pour the fragrant Balm upon the icy stone. Take him, Earth, for cherishing, To thy
tender breast receive him. Body of a man I bring thee, Noble in its ruin. By the breath
of God created. Christ the prince of all its living. Take him earth, for cherishing.

Prudentius (348-413), from *Hymnus circa Exsequias Defuncti* translated by Helen
Waddell; used with permission

Stabat Mater - Virgil Thomson (1896-1989) (Max Jacob) translated from the original French by Virgil Thomson

Angel: O, lady, do not cry. Although your son must die today, by a miracle he will arise
from the sepulcher.

Mary: How could I not mourn such a son?

Angel: Hold back your tears if you can.

Mary: Let me go by. I want to stand beside him. I want to die with my son.

Angel: You shall die in your own time, lady; and you yourself will arise for Assumption Day.

Jesus: O Mother, do not cry (said the only son). I do what I have to do. Preserve my blood. It is a treasure.
It cannot be had excepting through my death.

Mary: What mother could hold back her tears to behold her son of thirty dying?

Jesus: O Mother, believe in me.

Mary: You are God on earth. Do what your father bids you do. I shall stay by the cross and mourn.

Jesus: Comfort her despair, Saint John.

St. John: And who, my Lord, shall comfort me?

Jesus: I shall console you with the Sacraments.

Requiem - Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

I. INTROIT and KYRIE

Grant eternal rest to them, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.

A hymn befits you, God in Zion,
and a vow to you shall be fulfilled in Jerusalem.

Hear my prayer, for unto you all flesh shall come.

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

II. OFFERTORY

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory,
free the souls of the dead from infernal punishment, and from the deep abyss.

Free them from the mouth of the lion, do not let Hell swallow them up,
do not let them fall into the darkness.

Sacrifices and prayers of praise we offer to you, O Lord.

Receive them for the souls of those whom we commemorate today.

Lord, make them pass from death to life, as you once promised to Abraham, and to his seed.

III. SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, the heavens and earth are filled with your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!

IV. PIE JESU

Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest, eternal rest.

V. AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, who removes the sins of the world, grant them rest.

Lamb of God, who removes the sins of the world, grant them rest.

Lamb of God, who removes the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest.

May eternal light shine on them, Lord, with your saints, for eternity, for you are merciful.

Grant eternal rest to them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them.

VI. LIBERA ME

Free me, Lord, from eternal death, on that day of dread,

when the heavens and earth shall move,

when you shall come to judge the world by fire.

I am made to tremble, and to fear,

when destruction shall come,

and also your coming wrath.

O that day, that day of wrath,

of calamity and misery,

the great and exceedingly bitter day.

Grant eternal rest to them, Lord,

and let perpetual light shine on them.

VII. IN PARADISUM

May angels lead you into Paradise.

At your coming may martyrs receive you,

and may they lead you into the Holy City, Jerusalem.

May the chorus of angels receive you,

and with Lazarus, who once was a pauper,

may you have eternal rest.

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. William Cutter is Director of Choral Programs at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he is conductor of the MIT. Concert Choir and Chamber Chorus. A member of the conducting and theory faculty and former Director of Choral Studies at the Boston Conservatory, he teaches graduate conducting as well as harmony and ear training courses. He has also held academic posts at the Boston University School for the Arts, the University of Lowell and the Walnut Hill School for the Arts. He served as music director and conductor of the Brookline Chorus, an auditioned community chorus of eighty voices, for five seasons. Dr. Cutter currently serves as the artistic director for the Boston Conservatory Summer Choral Institute for high school vocalists and served as Chorus master and Associate Conductor of the Boston Lyric Opera Company from 2002-2007. For four summers he was conductor of the

Boston University Young Artists Chorus of the Tanglewood Institute, and was music director and conductor of the Opera Laboratory Theater Company, as well as founder and music director of the vocal chamber ensemble CANTO, which specialized in contemporary choral music.

As assistant to John Oliver for the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, he has prepared choruses for John Williams and Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops. In August 2002, Cutter prepared the Tanglewood Festival Chorus for their performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 under the baton of Sir Roger Norrington. In 2007, Cutter was guest conductor of the New England Conservatory Chamber Singers and the Chorus Pro Musica in Boston. During the summer of 2009, Cutter was chorus master for the "Red Sox Album" CD recorded by the Boston Pops. He also prepared backup singers for a concert with James Taylor at Tanglewood in August 2009 and August 2011. In August 2010, Cutter was guest chorus master for the Montreal Symphony Chorus, preparing Haydn's "Creation" for Maestro Kent Nagano, and was chorus master for the women of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus for a performance of Holst's "The Planets" at Tanglewood under the baton of David Zinman. In April of 2011, the MIT Chamber Chorus performed with the Kronos String Quartet as well as the Bang on a Can All-Stars in a new version of Brian Eno's "Music for Airports." In May of 2011, Cutter was invited to serve as guest conductor of the Boston Choral Ensemble, preparing a program entitled "Bang", music for percussion and chorus, featuring works by Dominick Argento, Leonard Bernstein, Peter Klatzow, and Timothy Takach. In March of 2012, Cutter will serve as chorus master for a performance of Andrew Imbries "Songs of Then and Now" with the Collage New Music Ensemble, David Hoose, music director.

Dr. Cutter has also served on the faculty of the North Carolina Summer Institute of Choral Art and is in demand as a guest conductor and adjudicator throughout the United States and Canada. In 2002, he was asked to serve as a choral consultant for the Boston Symphony's educational outreach program.

With degrees in composition, Cutter maintains an active career as a composer with recent performances by The Chatham Chorale, the Illinois State University School of Music Orchestra, Cantata Singers, PALS Children's Chorus, Monmouth Civic Chorus, the New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus, the Boston Pops, the New World Chorale in Boston, Melodious Accord of New York City, and Opera Omaha. His music is published by E.C. Schirmer, Boston; Lawson and Gould, New York; Alfred Educational Publishers, Los Angeles; Roger Dean Publishers, Wisconsin; Shawnee Press, Pennsylvania; and Warner/Chappell of Ontario, Canada. His primary composition teachers included Pulitzer Prize-winning composers David del Tredici and Bernard Rands.

As a professional tenor, he has sung with the premiere vocal ensembles in Boston, including the Handel and Haydn Society, Cantata Singers, Boston Baroque, Emmanuel Music, and the Harvard Glee Club. He has been a featured soloist on the Cantata Singers Recital Series and has been a recitalist on the MIT faculty performance series.

Joseph Turbessi is active in the greater Boston area as a solo and collaborative pianist, organist, and chamber musician. He has performed with Boston area ensembles Boston New Music Initiative, Juventas, and Lorelei; and has performed solo recitals on the Jamaica Plain and Equilibrium concert series. He is a strong advocate for new music, has premiered a number of works by young composers and has performed in new music festivals in Oregon and Italy. Turbessi also accompanies choirs at MIT and the Boston Conservatory, and serves as music director at Belmont United Methodist Church.

Christopher M. Jones is a senior in course 6 hoping to focus his work on Artificial Intelligence and story understanding. This is Christopher's second semester singing with the Concert Choir. He has studied voice with Taylor Stilson.

Betsy Flowers is a Chemistry Major and a Music Minor at MIT. She is the oldest of 5 siblings and is originally from Houston, TX. Betsy has studied voice with Desiree Maira and Ana Treviño-Godfrey and this is her second semester in the MIT Concert Choir. She is also a member of the MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players and has performed in six of their productions: her roles have included Lady Saphir in *Patience* (2010), Peep-Bo in *The Mikado* (2009), and Edith in *Pirates of Penzance* (2008). She has also performed with the MIT Musical Theatre Guild as Olive Ostrovsky in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (2011) and Simon Zealots in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (2011).

Eric Chan started singing in the concert choir of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where he studied physics. This is his third semester with the MIT Concert Choir. Eric works as a Web Applications Developer and Software Service Technician in Boston.

Elizabeth George is a senior majoring in electrical engineering and music. She has participated in MITSO, Chamber Music Society, Chamber Chorus, Concert Choir, the Emerson Scholarship Program and the MIT Gilbert and Sullivan Players while at MIT and is excited to continue her involvement in music next year as an M.Eng student. You may find her on campus wearing large amounts of pink, soldering, in rehearsals, giving tours, baking with pumpkin and chocolate or speaking French.

2011-2012 MIT Concert Choir

Sopranos

Angela Park '13
Betsy Flowers '12
Candice Kaplan '15
Cassandra Swanberg** '12
Cathy Cao '13
Elizabeth Attaway '13
Fangdi Sun '14
Hannah Alpert G
Jackie Chen '14
Jennifer Fong '13
Jingnan Lu G
Julia Berk '14
Lauren Burke** '14
Lillian McKinley '15
Marcela Rodriguez '13
Mary Munro '14
Nargiss Mouatta '13
Noele Norris G
Sarah Don '13
Tiandra Ray '15
Yi-Hsin Lin G

Altos

Alexandra Sailsman '13
Amelia Brooks '15
Carmela Lao '15
Elizabeth Qian** '14
Erika Trent '15
Katarina Popovic '12
Kelly Snyder '14
Manishika Agaskar '12
Margaret Coad '15
Marianne Gosciniak '15
Megan Cherry '13
Megan O'Donnell '12
Shirleen Soh G
Solveig Skaland
Victoria Enjamio '14
Xin Qi Li '12

Tenors

Anthony Lu '15
Benjamin Stein G
Brian Lee '11
Chris Reyes '12
Daesum Yim '13

David B. Rush '13
James Saunderson** G
Justin Mazzola Paluska G
Meng Heng Touch '12
Qiaochu Yuan '12
Sabeel Saif Hakim '14
Victor Morales '14

Basses

Ben Gunby '15
Ben Sena '13
Cappie Pomeroy '13
Christian Bernt Haakonsen G
Christopher Michael Jones '12
Eric Chan
Felix Sun '15
Ian Osborn '14
Joseph Chism '15
Jose Cabal-Ugaz '12
Josh Hester** G
Justin Breton** '13
Luis Gil '13
Luis Orrego '13
Mike Walsh
Thomas Alcorn '14
Troy Welton '15

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