



IF I WERE A BIRD...

Saturday, December 5 at 2 pm

Sunday, December 6 at 2 pm

The video will be available for 48 hours after the Sunday rebroadcast

LISA NEHER mezzo-soprano
STEPHANIE THOMPSON piano

featuring
Winged from Within, a new work
by **THERESA KOON** composer

In collaboration with
PORTLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

First Presbyterian Church

1200 SW Alder Street | Portland, Oregon 97205 | 503.228.7331 | www.firstpresportland.org

IF I WERE A BIRD...

with

Lisa Neher, mezzo-soprano

Stephanie Thompson, piano

FREEDOM AND CAPTIVITY

The year's at the spring

from Three Browning Songs, op. 44

text by Robert Browning

Amy Beach

(1867-1944)

Sympathy

text by Paul Laurence Dunbar

Florence Price

(1887-1953)

LOVE & DREAMS

Frühling

text by Joseph von Eichendorff

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

(1805-1947)

Ständchen

text by Ludwig Rellstab

Franz Schubert

(1797-1828)

Nachtwanderer

text by Joseph von Eichendorff

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

THE BIRDS AROUND US

A Humming-bird

op. 128, No. 3

Piano Solo

Amy Beach

To Arthur Davison Ficke (July 9, 1943)

from Letters from Edna

text by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Juliana Hall

(b. 1958)

Winged from Within

World Premiere 2020

Theresa Koon

(b. 1955)

DEATH AND GHOSTS

Sweet Suffolk Owl

text from Anonymous Verses 1619

Richard Hundley

(1931-2018)

Evening

text from John Milton, from *Paradise Lost, Book IV*

Charles Ives

(1874-1954)

Carnaval de Tambobamba

from Cuatro Canciones Andinas

text by Jose Maria Arguedas

Gabriela Lena Frank

(b. 1972)

The White Gulls

text by Maurice Morris

Charles Ives

Waterbird

text by James Purdy

Richard Hundley

PASSION LOST, PASSION CONSUMMATED

En sourdine

text by Paul Verlaine

Gabriel Fauré

(1845-1924)

Der Verschwiegene Nachtigall

text by Walther von der Vogelweide or Karl Joseph Simrock

Edvard Grieg

(1843-1907)

HOPE

A Minor Bird

text by Robert Frost

Celius Dougherty

(1902-1986)

Nature, the Gentlest Mother

text by Emily Dickinson

Aaron Copland

(1900-1990)

These are the days when birds come back

from Songs of Summer

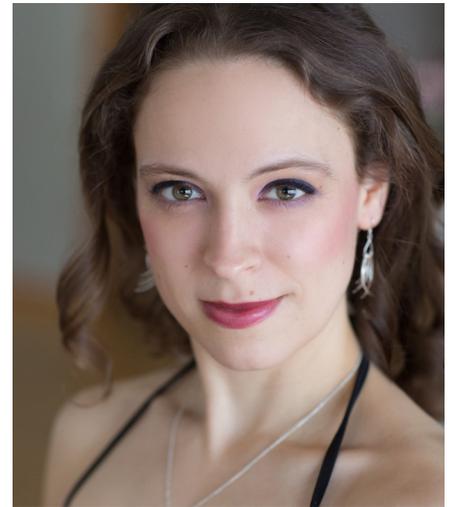
text by Emily Dickinson

Ryan Woodhouse

(b. 1983)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Mezzo-soprano **LISA NEHER** thrives in the crossroads of the concert hall and the theatre stage, bringing dramatic specificity and committed physicality to her performances. A composer and contemporary music specialist, she was recently heard with Third Angle New Music, the Resonance Ensemble, the University of Nebraska at Kearney New Music Series, New Music Gathering, Queer Opera, the International Saxophone Symposium, Opera Theatre Oregon, and Cascadia Composers. Lisa premiered the leading role of Jennifer in Rita Ueda's chamber opera *One Thousand White Paper Cranes* for Japan with the Singaporean ensemble Chamber Sounds. Her commissions include works for Third Angle New Music, Durward Ensemble, the Glass City Singers, Coe College Orchestra, pianist Michael Kirkendoll, and flutist Rose Bishop. She is a fellow of the Cortona Sessions for New Music and the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music. www.lisanehermusic.com.



STEPHANIE THOMPSON pianist, takes delight in exploring textures and tone colors in solo and collaborative repertoire. A passionate advocate of art song, she is committed to text analysis and expressing poetic nuance in music. Recent performance highlights include a Pacific Northwest concert tour of Her Songs with mezzo-soprano Lisa Neher and the premiere of Damien Geter's *1619*, a song cycle for choir and piano on the legacy of slavery with Capella Nova under the direction of Dr. Katherine FitzGibbon. Thompson is staff accompanist and teaches classical piano and piano accompaniment at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, where she performs with all three choral ensembles. She is an alumni of the Aspen Music festival and is a founding member of the Lewis & Clark Faculty New Music Ensemble, The Friends of Rain.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

continued

THERESA KOON composes music primarily for the voice, emerging from an international performance career. Operas, song cycles and choral music make up the center of her work, generally with chamber ensemble or piano accompaniment. Influences include J.S. Bach, Samuel Barber and Kurt Weill. Collaborators have included Fear No Music, 45th Parallel, Artists Repertory Theater, Sinfonia Concertante Orchestra, the Ensemble of Portland, the Resonance Ensemble, Nautilus Music Theater (Minnesota), the Detroit Institute of ART, and the National Opera Association. When not composing, Theresa enjoys teaching Vocal Music Appreciation Classes for Friends of Chamber Music, and also teaching voice at PCC and in her eclectic studio. Theresa is the founding director of Opera For The Hesitant, and has performed in operas, concerts, music theater and cabarets in Germany, Canada and across the US. Her choral work "Mother of Exiles" —a setting of the poem inscribed on the Statue of Liberty— will be released by PARMA Recordings in 2020. www.promisetheopera.wordpress.com

about our partners

PORTLAND AUDUBON

Portland Audubon wishes to express its gratitude to First Presbyterian Church, Lewis & Clark Music Department, Theresa Koon, and Dr. Lisa Neher, who have made today's performance possible.

During these challenging times, nature has never meant more to us: healthy and life-giving places that provide rejuvenation and inspiration, natural spaces and animals that are here for us because so many caring individuals and organizations have been present for them.

Our motto is "Together for Nature," and this concert exemplifies that belief in the value of community. We welcome everyone to visit our nature sanctuary and trails on NW Cornell Road, where we have social distancing rules in place to keep everyone safe and connected with the Earth.

Thank you, and enjoy the show.

-Nick Hardigg, Executive Director of Portland Audubon

Find out more about Portland Audubon at

www.portlandaudubon.org



American Kestrel | Photo by Mick Thompson

Join us for our next concert

Saturday, Feb. 6, 2021 at 2 pm and Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021 at 2 pm

NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED

Sopranos **Christine Johnson** and **Madeline Ross**, join forces with **Hannah Brewer**, harpsichord, and **Adaiha MacAdam-Somer**, viola da gamba, to share stories of brave, vulnerable women and how they persisted.

If you would like to receive information about our concerts, please add your name to our email list by emailing music@firstpresportland.org.

THANK YOU

to the visionary donors of the 2020-2021 Season

BENEFACTOR (\$1,000 and above)

Rev. Linda & John† Gebetsberger
Chris Nilson
Ann and Peter van Bever

PATRON (\$500-\$999)

Don and Norma Fales
Brenda Peterson
Janet and Mike Starosciak

SUPPORTER (\$200-\$499)

MaryAnn and Steve Anderson
Jon and Sally Bates
Andy Chen and Michelle Lin
Cindy and David Finch
David Hawkins
Kathryn Hill
Greg Homza and Leah Papay
Emily Jo and John Jensen
Linda and Timothy Killen
Carol Kirklin
Linda Lewis
Gordon Lindbloom and Fran Page
Beverly North
Kimberly and Mark Reller
Bill and Deborah Resley
Tim Sercombe and Jane VanBoskirk
Chuck Shaw
Lisa and Steve Snodderly
Marilyn Weber

DONOR (\$100-\$199)

Anonymous
Cam and Midge Birnie
Karol and Zane Buxton
David and Helen Crowell
John and Peggy Crowell
Bill Edwards
Elizabeth Goy
Marlin and Nancy Icenogle

DONOR (\$100-\$199)

continued

Ted and Nancy Magnuson
Walt and Jean Meihoff
Jan and Ron Mittelstaedt
Diane Ponder
Charles and Ruth Poindexter
Candace and Steve Primack
Bruce Felix and Audrey Schindler
June and Fred Young
Sharon Ziel

FRIEND (up to \$99)

Zak Eidsvoog and Madeline Ross
Nevill Eschen
Linda Grabe
David and Jan Halsey
Maurine and Jerry Hoder
Jim Jandacek
Jerry Johnson and Susan True
Ann Leuthauser
Carolyn and Merritt McCall
Dick McFall
Vakarė Petrolūnaitė
Karen Ward
Joe and Phyllis Whittington

Want to make a donation to Celebration Works?

Visit our website

www.firstpresportland.org/music-arts/celebrationworks

Click **DONATE** and choose
"Celebration Works Contribution"

or send a check to the church.
with "Celebration Works" in the memo line.

Celebration Works concert series is dedicated to supporting local artists and offering thoughtful and inspiring musical programs for our community.

Celebration Works Administrative Team

Madeline Ross, *Celebration Works* Coordinator | Greg Homza, Director of Music Ministries
Audrey Schindler, Pastor and Head of Staff | Marc Lavender, Church Business Administrator
Chris Nilson and Murlan Kaufman, Audio and Video Engineers

Special thanks to Nick Hardigg and the team at Portland Audubon for partnering with us!

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

FREEDOM AND CAPTIVITY

The year's at the spring

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

Sympathy

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals —
I know what the caged bird feels!

Sympathy (cont.)

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And the pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting —
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings —
I know why the caged bird sings!

LOVE & DREAMS

Frühling

Übern Garten durch die Lüfte
Hör ich Wandervögel ziehn.
Das bedeutet Frühlingsdufte,
Alles fängt schon an zu blüh'n.

Jauchzen möcht' ich, möchte weinen.
Lenz und Liebe muß das sein!
Alle Wunder wieder scheinen
Mit dem Mondesglanz herein.

Und der Mond, die Sterne sagen
Und in Träumen rauscht der Hain,
Und die Nachtigallen schlagen:
Sie ist dein, ja sie ist dein!

Ständchen

Leise flehen meine Lieder
Durch die Nacht zu Dir;
In den stillen Hain hernieder,
Liebchen, komm' zu mir!
Flüsternd schlanke Wipfel rauschen
In des Mondes Licht;
Des Verräters feindlich Lauschen
Fürchte, Holde, nicht.
Hörst die Nachtigallen schlagen?
Ach! sie flehen Dich,
Mit der Töne süßen Klagen
Flehen sie für mich.
Sie verstehn des Busens Sehnen,
Kennen Liebesschmerz,
Rühren mit den Silbertönen
Jedes weiche Herz.
Lass auch Dir die Brust bewegen,
Liebchen, höre mich!
Bebend harr' ich Dir entgegen!
Komm', beglücke mich!
Schubert Song Edition

Spring

Above the garden through the breezes
I heard the birds of passage fly,
That means spring scents soon will come
Everything is starting to blossom.

I want to shout, I want to weep.
This must be spring, this must be love!
All miracles return again
With the light of the moon.

And the moon and stars proclaim it,
And the dreaming wood murmurs,
And the nightingales sing:
She is yours, yes, she is yours!
Translation: Carol Kimball

Serenade

Softly my songs plead
through the night to you;
down into the silent grove,
beloved, come to me!
Slender treetops whisper and rustle
in the moonlight;
my darling, do not fear
that the hostile betrayer will overhear us.
Do you not hear the nightingales call?
Ah, they are imploring you;
with their sweet, plaintive songs
they are imploring for me.
They understand the heart's yearning,
they know the pain of love;
with their silvery notes
they touch every tender heart.
Let your heart, too, be moved,
beloved, hear me!
Trembling, I await you!
Come, make me happy!
Translation © Richard Wigmore

LOVE & DREAMS

continued

Nachtwanderer

Ich wandre durch die stille Nacht,
Da schleicht der Mond so heimlich sacht
Oft aus der dunkeln Wolkenhülle,
Und hin und her im Tal,
Erwacht die Nachtigall
Dann wieder alles grau und stille.

O wunderbarer Nachtgesang,
Von fern im Land der Ströme Gang,
Leis Schauern in den dunkeln Bäumen --
Irrst die Gedanken mir,
Mein wirres Singen hier,
Ist wie ein Rufen nur aus Träumen.
Mein Singen ist ein Rufen,
Ein Rufen nur aus Träumen.

Night-wanderer

I wander through the still night,
Where often the moon floats so gently
Out from behind the dark clouds.
And here and there in the valley
A nightingale awakes but then
All is gray and still.

O magical night song,
From the distant land of rushing streams,
The soft rustling in the dark treetops--
You confuse my thoughts,
My wild singing here
Is like a call out of dreams.
My song is a call,
A call out of dreams.
Translation: Lisa Neher

THE BIRDS AROUND US

To Arthur Davison Ficke (July 9, 1943)

I have wanted so often to write you--not that I like
writing letters--I loathe it--but just that I have
wanted to write to you. About what, I don't know, in
particular.

--Perhaps to ask the advice of the Sage of the Hill--
perhaps to tell you that the young wrens in the house
under the peak of the ice-house are flying this morning

(and what a to-do! And what beautiful singing from
their father!--as if to say: some day you will have as
handsome feathers as I, and a tail that sticks up straight
behind your rump, and a song as beautiful as mine--
-you boys, that is,--and even you girls will have fun,
engineering long twigs through small doorways!)

--this is just to say,

Hello, darling Artie.

Winged from Within

If
If I were
If I were a bird
Sometimes I'd be silent,
Storing up a throatful of notes:
Beams of sunlight I had heard
Communing in my flight,
Drops of water, scented wind,
Dreams of kinship within the earth;
The gleeful ache of joys that I had
gathered for the night.

Come morning,
Air would stir in me.
My breath would begin to glow
And soon my voice would flow,
Winged from within,
While I, still seated in my tree,
Allowed it--
Let my voice come pouring forth
In soaring ecstasy
To join the grateful avian chorus:

And then,
Sensing danger hungering for this light,
I'd leap into the vast and gaping sky
And let a laugh escape
So I could fly.

DEATH AND GHOSTS

Sweet Suffolk Owl

Sweet Suffolk Owl, so trimly dight
With feathers like a lady bright,
Thou singest alone, sitting by night,
Te whit, te whoo! Te whit, te whoo!
The note, that forth so freely rolls,
With shrill command the mouse controls;
And singest a dirge for dying souls,
Te whit, te whoo! Te whit, te whoo!

Carnaval de Tambobamba

Un río de sangre
Ha arrastrado al joven tambobambino.
Él ha muerto.
Sólo su quena está flotando
sólo su poncho está flotando
sólo su charango está flotando
sobre la corriente.
Y la jovena que él amaba
está llorando en las orillas.
Su idolatrada amante
llora en las orillas.
Su adorada está llorando.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

Él ya no existe.

Un cóndor mira desde los cielos, dando vueltas.
Busca al joven tambobambino.
No lo encontrará jamás.
Un río de sangre, el río sangriento
lo arrastró, lo envolvió.
Su adorada está llorando.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

Sólo su quena está flotando
solo su poncho está flotando
solo su charango está flotando
sobre la corriente.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

The White Gulls

The white gulls dip and wheel
Over waters gray like steel.
The white gulls call and cry
As they spread their wings and fly.
The white gulls sink to rest
On the tides slow heaving breast.

Souls of men that turn and wheel
Over waters cold as steel.
Souls of men that call and cry
As they know not where to fly.
Souls of men that sink to rest
On an all receiving breast.

Evening

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for the beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence is pleased....

Tambobamba Carnaval

A river of blood
has dragged down the young man of Tambobamba.
He has died.
Only his flute is floating
only his poncho is floating
only his small guitar is floating
along the current.
And the girl whom he loved
is weeping along the banks.
His idolized sweetheart
weeps along the banks.
His adored one is weeping.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

Now he does not exist.

A condor watches from the skies, wheeling around,
he looks for the young man of Tambobamba.
He will never find him.
A river of blood, a bloody river
has dragged him down, enveloped him.
His adored one is weeping.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

Only his flute is floating
only his poncho is floating
only his small guitar is floating
along the current.
¡Huifalítay, huífala!

Waterbird

Waterbird, waterbird
gently afloat,
know you my yearning
for places remote?

Water bird, water bird
under the sea,
keep you a kingdom
for sleepers like me?

PASSION LOST, PASSION CONSUMMATED

La Voix qui dit: Je t'aime

Petits rossignols, n'ayez peur,
Rassemblez-vous sous ma fenêtre:
Dans vos chants je crois reconnaître
La voix qui parlait à mon cœur;
Abusez moi toujours de même,
Chantez l'amour, suivez ses lois!
Ah rien n'est doux comme la voix
Qui dit: je t'aime.

Autour de moi, je crois toujours
Entendre soupirer Marie,
Et comme une voix qui me crie:
Bien aimé songe à nos amours!
Prolongez ce charme suprême,
Oiseaux, fixez-vous dans ces bois!
Ah rien n'est doux comme la voix
Qui dit: je t'aime.

Mais l'aquilon de tous côtés
Souffle en grondant sur ce rivage,
Pour éviter un temps d'orage,
Eh quoi? déjà vous me quittez!
Ingrats, je reviens à moi-même,
Ah rien au monde, je le vois,
N'est passager comme la voix
Qui dit: je t'aime.

En sourdine

Calmes dans le demi-jour
Que les branches hautes font,
Pénétrons bien notre amour
De ce silence profond.
Mêlons nos âmes, nos cœurs
Et nos sens extasiés,
Parmi les vagues langueurs
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,
Et de ton cœur endormi
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader
Au souffle berceur et doux
Qui vient, à tes pieds, rider
Les ondes des gazons roux.
Et quand, solennel, le soir
Des chênes noirs tombera
Voix de notre désespoir,
Le rossignol chantera.

The voice that says: I love you

Little nightingales, don't be afraid
Gather under my window
In your songs I believe I recognize
The voice that spoke to my heart.
Little birds, keep on deceiving me,
Sing of love, follow its laws!
Ah, nothing is sweeter than the voice
That says: "I love you."

All around me, I always believe
I heard Marie sighing
And a voice that cries to me:
Beloved, dream of our love!
Go on with this great illusion
You birds, remain in these woods!
Ah nothing is sweeter than the voice
That says: "I love you."

But a north wind is blowing
Thundering near this shore
To avoid the stormy weather,
So then? You are leaving me!
Ungrateful ones, I am coming to my senses,
Ah, nothing in the world, I can see,
Nothing is more fleeting than the voice
That says: "I love you."

Muted

Calm in the twilight
Cast by loft boughs,
Let us steep our love
In this deep quiet.
Let us mingle our souls, our hearts
And our enraptured senses
With the hazy languor
Of arbutus and pine.

Half-close your eyes,
Fold your arms across your breast,
And from your heart now lulled to rest
Banish forever all intent.

Let us both succumb
To the gentle and lulling breeze
That comes to ruffle at your feet
The waves of russet grass.
And when, solemnly, evening
Falls from the black oaks,
That voice of our despair,
The nightingale shall sing.
English Translation © Richard Stokes

PASSION LOST, PASSION CONSUMMATED

continued

Die verschwiegene Nachtigall

Unter den Linden,
An der Haide,
Wo ich mit meinem Trauten saß,
Da mögt ihr finden,
Wie wir beide
Die Blumen brachen und das Gras.
Vor dem Wald mit süßem Schall,
Tandaradei!
Sang im Tal die Nachtigall.
Ich kam gegangen
Zu der Aue,
Mein Liebster kam vor mir dahin.
Ich ward empfangen
Als hehre Fraue,
Daß ich noch immer selig bin.
Ob er mir auch Küsse bot?
Tandaradei!
Seht, wie ist mein Mund so rot!
Wie ich da ruhte,
Wüßst' es einer,
Behüte Gott, ich schämte mich.
Wie mich der Gute
Herzte, keiner
Erfahre das als er und ich—
Und ein kleines Vögelein,
Tandaradei!
Das wird wohl verschwiegen sein.

The Secretive Nightingale

Under the lime trees
By the heath
Where I sat with my beloved,
There you may find
How both of us
Crushed the flowers and grass.
Outside the wood, with a sweet sound,
Tandaradei!
The nightingale sang in the valley.
I came walking
To the meadow,
My beloved arrived before me.
I was received
As a noble lady,
Which still fills me with bliss.
Did he offer me kisses?
Tandaradei!
See how red my mouth is!
If anyone knew
How I lay there,
God forbid, I'd be ashamed.
How my darling hugged me,
No one shall know
But he and I—
And a little bird,
Tandaradei!
Who certainly won't say a word.
English Translation © Richard Stokes

HOPE

A Minor Bird

I have wished a bird would fly away,
And not sing by my house all day;
Have clapped my hands at him from the door
When it seemed as if I could bear no more.
The fault must partly have been in me.
The bird was not to blame for his key.
And of course there must be something wrong
In wanting to silence any song.

Nature, the gentlest mother

Nature, the gentlest mother
Impatient of no child,
The feeblest or the waywardest,—
Her admonition mild
In forest and the hill
By traveller is heard,
Restraining rampant squirrel
Or too impetuous bird.
How fair her conversation,
A summer afternoon,—
Her household, her assembly;
And when the sun goes down
Her voice among the aisles
Incites the timid prayer
Of the minutest cricket,
The most unworthy flower.
When all the children sleep

Nature, the gentlest mother (cont.)

She turns as long away
As will suffice to light her lamps;
Then, bending from the sky,
With infinite affection
And infiniter care,
Her golden finger on her lip,
Wills silence everywhere.

These are the days when birds come back

These are the days when birds come back,
A very few, a bird or two,
To take a backward look.
These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June,—
A blue and gold mistake.
Oh, fraud that cannot cheat the bee,
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief,
Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf!
Oh, sacrament of summer days,
Oh, last communion in the haze,
Permit a child to join,
Thy sacred emblems to partake,
Thy consecrated bread to break,
Taste thine immortal wine!