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The National Anthems : Music of Lang, Shaw and Hearne

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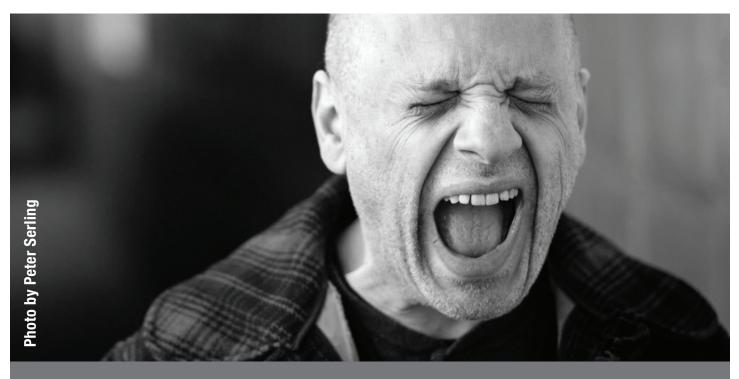
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Office of Arts + Cultural Programming and PEAK Performances at Montclair State University, "The National Anthems : Music of Lang, Shaw and Hearne" (2018). *2018-2019 Borders and Boundaries*. 3. https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/peak-performances-2018-2019/3

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New York Area Premiere! The Crossing Donald Nally, conductor with the strings of International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) **the national anthems** Music of David Lang, Caroline Shaw, and Ted Hearne



September 30, 2018 Alexander Kasser Theater

Arts + Cultural Programming MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY



Print

Dr. Susan A. Cole, President Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts + Cultural Programming

New York Area Premiere! The Crossing Donald Nally, conductor with the strings of International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) **the national anthems** Music of David Lang, Caroline Shaw, and Ted Hearne

THE CROSSING

Katy Avery Nathaniel Barnett Julie Bishop Karen Blanchard Steven Bradshaw Colin Dill Micah Dingler Robert Eisentrout Ryan Fleming Joanna Gates Dimitri German Steven Hyder Michael Jones Heidi Kurtz Chelsea Lyons Rebecca Myers Becky Oehlers Jack Reeder Alissa Ruth Daniel Schwartz Rebecca Siler Daniel Spratlan Elisa Sutherland Shari Wilson Donald Nally, conductor John Grecia, keyboards

INTERNATIONAL Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Josh Modney, violin Salley Koo, violin Wendy Richman, viola Chris Gross, cello Lizzie Burns, double bass

Program

Consent (2014) *To the Hands* (2016) from *Seven Responses** *What It Might Say* (2016) from *Jeff Quartets** Ted Hearne (b. 1982) Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) Hearne

~~Pause~~

the national anthems (2014)

David Lang (b. 1957)

First Impressions: Join composer David Lang, conductor Donald Nally, and Peak Performances' executive director Jedediah Wheeler to share impressions and reactions to the performance.

*written for The Crossing

To the Hands was commissioned by The Crossing for the project *Seven Responses* in 2016. *What It Might Say* was commissioned by The Crossing for the project *Jeff Quartets* in 2016.

This engagement of The Crossing is funded through the Mid Atlantic Tours program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Duration: 60 minutes, with one brief pause.

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.

About the Artists

The Crossing is a professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and dedicated to new music. It is committed to working with creative teams to make and record new, substantial works for choir that explore and expand ways of writing for choir, singing in choir, and listening to music for choir. Many of its more than 70 commissioned premieres address social, environmental, and political issues.

With a commitment to recording its commissions, The Crossing has issued 14 releases, receiving a Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance in 2018, its second nomination in as many years. The Crossing, with Donald Nally, is the American Composers Forum's 2017 Champion of New Music. They are the recipients of the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, three ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, and the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award from Chorus America. crossingchoir.org

The Crossing is represented by Alliance Artist Management. allianceartistmanagement.com

The **International Contemporary Ensemble** (ICE) is an artist collective that is transforming the way music is created and experienced. As performer, curator, and educator, ICE explores how new music intersects with communities across the world. The ensemble's 35 members are featured as soloists, chamber musicians, commissioners, and collaborators with the foremost musical artists of our time.

A recipient of the American Music Center's Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, ICE was also named the 2014 Musical America Ensemble of the Year. The group currently serves as artists-in-residence at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart Festival and previously led a five-year residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

New initiatives include OpenICE, made possible with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which offers free concerts and related programming wherever ICE performs and enables a working process with composers to unfold in public settings. DigitICE, a free online library of over 350 streaming videos, catalogues the

ensemble's performances. ICE's First Page program is a commissioning consortium that fosters close collaborations between performers, composers, and listeners as new music is developed. EntICE, a side-by-side education program, places ICE musicians within youth orchestras as they premiere new commissioned works together. Yamaha Artist Services New York is the exclusive piano provider for ICE. iceorg.org

Donald Nally (Conductor) is responsible for imagining, programming, commissioning, and conducting at The Crossing. He is also the director of choral organizations at Northwestern University, where he holds the John W. Beattie Chair of Music. Nally has served as chorus master at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and for many seasons at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. With The Crossing, Nally was the American Composers Forum 2017 Champion of New Music; he received the 2017 Michael Korn Founders Award from Chorus America and is the only conductor to have two ensembles receive the Margaret Hillis Award for Excellence in Choral Music. This season, Nally is visiting resident artist at the Park Avenue Armory.

Program Notes

TED HEARNE (b. 1982)

Consent

Text culled by the composer, from the following sources: Love letters the composer wrote in 2006 Love letters the composer's father wrote in 1962 The Catholic Rite of Marriage Traditional Jewish Ketubah (Wedding contract) Text messages by Trent Mays and Lucas Herrington, used as evidence in the Steubenville Rape Trial, 2013

A note from the composer:

"The purpose of these untranslated and mystical utterances was to sidestep the Devil and to reach God directly."

—Teju Cole, in an essay about *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* and the tradition of "speaking in tongues."

"There is a gestalt that orders things together, and if you pull back further, there's another order there; the things are arranged as they are for some reason, it might not be a rational reason, but there is a reason."

> —David Byrne, regarding his album with Talking Heads, Speaking in Tongues

I originally wrote *Consent* to be paired with a performance of the remarkably beautiful motet *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* by Thomas Tallis, in which the composer sets the text "the apostles spoke in different tongues."

The above ideas—that to communicate with the holy spirit one had to bypass language entirely, that the structure and meaning of language is inextricably linked to the power structures and hierarchies that created it—set me on a journey to explore language that might have a duplicitous role in my own life.

The text for *Consent* is a juxtaposition of passages from five different sources: love letters I wrote in 2002, love letters my father wrote in 1962, the Catholic Rite of Marriage, the traditional Jewish Ketubah (wedding contract), and text messages by high-school students Trent Mays and Lucas Herrington that were used as evidence in the infamous Steubenville Rape Trial in 2013. I set these words in order to explore my personal relationship to gender inequality and our connection to language that justifies sexual violence.

Text:

i want you i want to i want you i want to i want you i want to

l do.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you It will be good, we can do it, and we need it.

It can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back. I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you It will be good, we can do it, and we need it I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—

It can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back.

I just took care of your daughter.

* * *

Declare your consent The missing you hurts You'll be in it soon What a way to feel Who gives this woman

i want you

i want to

All of it shall be mortgageable—

I just took care of your daughter

and bound as security—

she said you could take a picture

i want you

i want to

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe she was so in love with me that night

I ask you to state your intentions

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security-

it can be taken from me, even from the shirt on my back-

during my lifetime and after this lifetime,

this day and forever.

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe she said you could take a picture she looks dead Imao

l do.

* * *

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you It will be good, we can do it, and we need it. I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way I'm really looking forward to adding to it

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—

it can be taken from me, even from the shirt on my back-

during my lifetime and after this lifetime,

this day and forever.

How have you been holding out on me with that picture for so long? she said you could take a picture

oh i am looking at all my pictures of you

You don't even want to know what I'm imagining you doing right now she was so in love with me that night

Declare your consent before God

I just took care of your daughter when she was drunk

* * *

This original amount, I accept upon myself and my heirs after me— It can be paid from the best part of my property and possessions that I own under all the heavens.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security-

it can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back—

during my lifetime and after this lifetime—

from this day and forever.

even from the shirt on my back

she said you could take a picture

I refuse to get excited

Will you accept children lovingly from God?

Declare your consent before God and the church.

I felt knowing what was right

she looks dead Imao i just took care of your daughter but i also know we are equal to almost any... she said you could take a picture Who gives this woman?

CAROLINE SHAW (b. 1982) *To the Hands* commissioned for The Crossing's *Seven Responses*, 2016

A note from the composer:

How does one respond to an image of another person's pain? And how does one respond to the music of another artist who is trying to ask that same question? These are the two queries that anchored my approach to The Crossing's incredible *Seven Responses* project. *To the Hands* begins and ends with strains of Buxtehude's own *Ad manus,* with small harmonic and melodic references woven occasionally throughout. The division of the piece into six parts reflects the partitioning of *Membra Jesu Nostri,* and I continued the tradition of blending old text with new.

The first movement acts as a prelude and turns the opening tune of *Ad manus* into a wordless plainchant melody. The second movement fragments Buxtehude's setting of the central question, *"quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum,"* or "what are these wounds in the midst of your hands?" It settles finally on an inversion of the question, so that we reflect, "What are these wounds in the midst of our hands?" We notice what may have been done to us, but we also question what we have done and what our role has been in these wounds we see before us.

The text that follows in the third movement is a riff on Emma Lazarus's sonnet "The New Colossus," famous for its engraving at the base of the Statue of Liberty. The poem's lines "Give me your tired, your poor,/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and its reference to the statue's "beacon-hand" present a very different image of a hand—one that is open, beckoning, and strong. No wounds are to be found there—only comfort for those caught in a dangerous and complex environment. While the third movement operates in broad strokes from a distance, the fourth zooms in on the map so far that we see the intimate scene of an old woman in her home, maybe setting the table for dinner alone. Who is she, where has she been, whose lives has she left? This simple image melts into a meditation on the words *in caverna* from the Song of Solomon, found in Buxtehude's fourth section, *Ad latus.*

In the fifth movement the harmony is passed around from one string instrument to another, overlapping only briefly, while numerical figures are spoken by the choir. These are global figures of internally displaced persons, by country, sourced from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data reported in May 2015 (accessed on 03/20/2016 at www.internal-displacement.org). Sometimes data is the cruelest and most honest poetry.

The sixth and final movement unfolds the words *in caverna* into the tumbling and comforting promise of "ever ever"—"ever ever will I hold you, ever ever will I enfold you." They could be the words of Christ, or of a parent or friend or lover, or even of a nation.

Text:

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Ι.
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Prelude: wordless

ΙΙ.

in medio. in medio. in medio manuum tuarum quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum nostrarum

in the midst. in the midst.
in the midst of your hands
what are those wounds in the midst of your hands
what are those wounds in the midst of our hands
—from Buxtehude's *Ad manus* (Zechariah 13:6, adapted by the composer, with the addition of *"in medio manuum nostrum"* ["in the midst of our hands"])

|||. Her beacon-hand beckons: give give to me those yearning to breathe free tempest-tossed they cannot see what lies beyond the olive tree whose branch was lost amid the pleas for mercy, mercy give give to me your tired fighters fleeing flying from the from the from let them i will be your refuge i will be your refuge i will be i will be we will be we will

IV.

ever ever ever in the window sills or the beveled edges of the aging wooden frames that hold old photographs hands folded folded gently in her lap ever ever in the crevices the never-ending efforts of the grandmother's tendons tending to her bread and empty chairs left for elijahs where are they now *in caverna in caverna*

—the composer; the final line, *"in caverna,"* is drawn from Buxtehude's *Ad latus,* from the Song of Songs; "in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow of the cliff"

V.

The choir speaks global figures of internally displaced persons, by country. Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data as of May 2015. (Accessed on 03/01/2016 at www.internal-displacement.org/global-figures.)

VI.

i will hold you i will hold you ever ever will i hold you ever ever will i enfold you *in medio in medio*

—the composer, with the final line a reprise from the original Zechariah text

HEARNE What It Might Say

commissioned for The Crossing's *Jeff Quartets*, 2016 Setting an excerpt from "Communication between infant and mother, and mother and infant, compared and contrasted" (1968) by D.W. Winnicott (1896–1971), adapted by the composer

Text:

So in the end we can come down to the fact that the baby communicates creatively and in time becomes able to use what is found. For most people the ultimate compliment is to be found and used, and I suppose, therefore, that these words could represent the communication of the baby with the mother.

I find you; You survive what I do to you as I come to recognize you as not-me; I use you; I forget you; But you remember me; I keep forgetting you; I lose you; I am sad.

DAVID LANG (b. 1957) *the national anthems*

A note from the composer:

Every country has a history—how it came to be, how its wars were won or lost, how strong its people are, or how proud, or how sad. We group ourselves into nations, but it has never really been clear to me what that means, or what we get out of it. Are we grouped together because we believe something together and are proud of associating with others who believe the same way? Or are we grouped together because our ancestors found themselves pushed onto a piece of land by people who didn't want them on theirs? It seems that all nations have some bright periods and some dark periods in their past. Building a national myth out of our bright memories probably creates a different character than if we build one out of the dark.

I had the idea that if I looked carefully at every national anthem I might be able to identify something that everyone in the world could agree on. If I could take just one hopeful sentence from the national anthem of every nation in the world I might be able to make a kind of meta-anthem of the things that we all share. I started

combing through the anthems, pulling out from each the sentence that seemed to me the most committed. What I found, to my shock and surprise, was that within almost every anthem is a bloody, warlike, tragic core in which we cover up our deep fears of losing our freedoms with waves of aggression and bravado.

At first I didn't know what to do with this text. I didn't want to make a piece that was aggressive, or angry, or ironic. Instead, I read and re-read the meta-anthem I had made until another thought became clear to me. Hiding in every national anthem is the recognition that we are insecure about our freedoms, that freedom is fragile, and delicate, and easy to lose. Maybe an anthem is a memory informing a kind of prayer, a heartfelt plea:

There was a time when we were forced to live in chains. Please don't make us live in chains again.

Text:

our land with peace our land with swords all of us are brave we have one wish we have one goal we swear by lightning and by our fragrant blood heaven gave us life and we alone remain we fight for peace our country calls us and we hear her call we hear the sound of our chains breaking we crown ourselves in glory and we die death is the same for everyone but dying for our land will make us blessed for we are young and free land with mountain

land with river land with field if you need our death our blood, our heart, our soul we are ready we lift our heads up to the rising sun our peace our values our skies our hearts our songs our tears our time our land our seed our pride we have no doubts or fears our faithful friends are faithful in the battle our land, we swear to you our blood is yours to spill keep watch, angels keep watch, stars keep watch, moon our parents knew how to fight the sun will shine on us forever when the wicked come let them prepare for death for we would rather die than live as slaves our land, you fill our souls with fire our blessed land our parents left this land to us our hearts defy our deaths

a vivid ray of love and hope descends upon us and our land bless us with long life our land is love and beauty without end harvest our vows, which ripen underneath your sun our land, to lead a peaceful life we give our lives we were wounded we were bruised then we rose up our past is sleeping in our forests you are our garden and our grave

||.

our hearts are glowing sing brother, sister our freedom must be sung we were slaves we were scorned but now, our future is ours our flowers our fields our fertile soil we will die before we let the wicked step upon them we are not slaves we are the seed that sprouts upon the fields of pain we are one blood on our land we were born our heads were bowednow raise them we are wild with joy and if we have to die

what does it matter? our children know the fight has made our faces glow sweet shelter kissed by our sun, our trees, our wind we don't fear death die for our land and live we know our selves by our terrifying sword ours is our land ours is our beautiful land our land is where our heroes rest our earth our sky our peace our blood these are our gifts we broke our chains united, firm, determined our face is brighter than our sun we are our loyal guardian in each of us the hero remembers how to fight we walk the path of happiness to our rightful place with our last breath we thank ourselves Ш.

fame and glory fame and glory no valley no hill no water

no shore the bloody flag is raised the wicked howl they come to cut our throats to throw us back in chains no sorcerers no poison no deceivers no fear we strive we work we pray our star rises up and shines between two seas our heart and hand are the pledges of our fortune with mind and strength of arm we recognize ourselves by our terrifying sword with heads, with hearts, with hands we will die before we are made slaves our historic past our sun, our sweat, our sea our pain, our hope the flower of our blood branches of the same trunk eyes in the same light the sea, the land, the dawn, the sun are singing our parents never saw the glory that we see we turn our faces up there is a star, the clearest light bring us happier times and ways each day is like a thousand years victory, victory, victory

long live our land, our people, our body, our soul the light in our eyes is the brilliance of our faith will we see you? our woe or our wealth our eyes turn east we are awake

IV.

keep us free be our light until pebbles turn to boulders and are covered in moss our light and our guide golden sun, golden seed fill our hearts with thanks when our hearts beat as one show us the way until the mountains wear away and the seas run dry be safe and be glorious build our own fortune move forward our sons sing our daughters bloom our parents and our children await our call our peace our rain be green we are your sacrifice fortunate and faithful the sun drives off the clouds we risk everything we sing new songs

for you, for you, for ever our love, our zeal, our loyalty our land, where our blood spills our fields will flower with hope our land gives us our name and we will never leave we walk the path we have chosen we will die while we are on it our land, sweet is your beauty a thousand heroes our full measure of devotion our language is a burning flame our flag flies in the wind our unwavering land our rocky hills from where our lights rise up our name is freedom our blood waters it we pray for you woven from a hundred flowers we won't let the wicked wash their hands in this guiltless blood of ours may our blessings flow let nothing dim the light that's shining in our sky a single leap into the dazzling sky obey our call we are not many but we are enough be happy and may our land be happy interpret our past glorify our present

inspire our future we are coming forth with strength and power our seas roar at our feet shout our name shout it again there is no middle ground between the free man and the slave may the light be denied us if we break our solemn vow the burning of the heart in our chests is alive our land will not die as long as we live the rays of the sun are a mother's kiss we swear by the sky by the spreading light now, or never we will make our fate ourselves it was, it is, it will always be at last, our pride is worth our pride

V.

our common fate our brighter day our loyalty and love and vow our crown our virtuous honor our sacred hymn of combat our light, reflecting guidance our sword with no flaw our sepulcher of ages our only land our voices on high our noble aspiration our thunders, wildly beating our fire in every vein our tears, flowing down our cheeks our everlasting mountains our milk, our honey, our people working hard our different voices, our one heart our breath of life our death, our glory and our land our fight—there is a fight to fight our fair land, its hills and rivers our memories of days long gone our morning skies, grown red our sacred home, our suns that never set our future is the future, our meaning is the meaning our shields are wisdom, unity and peace our sacrifice of every drop of blood our love, our service, our untiring zeal our prayer for us, unseen our fires of hope and prayer our thunderbolts, our fire our star, and it will shine forever our light and song and soul our song forever more our own dear land our fate, which smiles once more our sacrifice, our blood, our souls our enemies, scattered and confounded our land, our home, our free, our brave our land, our grave our glory, for as long as the world shines our many ways before and our many ways today our rock, our beacon

our scream out loud our steps, resounding on the long and tiring road our song—echoing over and over again our brothers and sisters under the sun

may the rains come

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Programs in this season are made possible in part by funds from:

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts

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