MUSIC FOR VOICES
ALLEN BRINGS
Navona Records
FINE MUSIC

Three Holy Sonnets for chorus and orchestra (1988)

It is curious that I have set more texts in languages not my own, especially Latin. When choosing texts in English, however, I seem to have gravitated more to those by John Donne than to those by any other single poet. Why this should be so, I think, has less to do with the twentieth century's rediscovery of this early seventeenth-century Englishman, especially after T. S. Eliot's renowned study of Donne's work published in the 1930s, than with his own choice of subject matter and the powerful and complex means by which he expressed it. If Donne's evocation of human love held special meaning for me as a young man, the depth of Donne's faith in Man's true destiny holds even greater meaning for me as a mature man and artist. Of Donne's nineteen *Holy Sonnets* I chose three with overlapping subject matter. These express Donne's—and my own—conviction that Death indeed holds no real power over us and is capable only of opening the gate through which we must pass in order to achieve that final union with the "three person'd God," the union for which we were created in the first place. Yet before we can achieve that, we must allow Him to "ravish" us, to "breake that knot" which ties us to whatever would separate us.

To express such powerful thoughts I chose whatever melodic and, especially, harmonic means I felt were necessary. The range of emotions then is extreme and the level of intensity often very high. But without these I did not believe that Donne's extraordinary poetry could be adequately conveyed nor audiences moved as deeply as I have been.

Three Holy Sonnets was completed in February, 1988, with the aid of a grant from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts and first performed by the Ars Brunensis chorus and the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Toshiyuki Shimada in Olomouc, The Czech Republic, on June 23, 2002.

I

At the round earths imagin'd corners, blow
Your trumpets, Angells, and arise, arise
From death, you numberlesse infinities
Of soules, and to your scattred bodies goe,
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
All whom warre, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despaire, law, chance, hath slaine, and you whose eyes,
Shall behold God, and never tast deaths woe.
But let them sleepe, Lord, and mee mourne a space,
For, if above all these, my sinnes abound,
'Tis late to aske abundance of thy grace,
When wee are there; here on this lowly ground,
Teach mee how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou'hadst seal'd my pardon, with thy blood.

II

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadfull, for, thou art not soe,
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill mee.
From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures bee,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee doe goe,
Rest of their bones, and soules deliverie.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poyson, warre, and sicknesse dwell,
And poppie, or charmes can make us sleepe as well,
And better than thy stroake; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

III

Batter my heart, three person'd God; for, you
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend,
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow mee,'and bend
Your force, to breake, blowe, burn and make me new.
I, like an usurpt towne, to'another due,
Labour to'admit you, but Oh, to no end,
Reason your viceroy in mee, mee should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weake or untrue.
Yet dearely'I love you,'and would be loved faine,
But am betroth'd unto your enemie:

Divorce mee,'untie, or breake that knot againe,
Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I
Except you'enthrall mee, never shall be free,
Nor ever chast, except you ravish mee.

John Donne

A Herrick Suite for chorus and piano (1977)
A Herrick Suite was composed during the summer of 1977 in response to a suggestion made earlier that year by Lawrence Eisman, to whom the work has been dedicated. Designed primarily for performance by mixed choruses of youngsters some of whose voices may still be changing, *A Herrick Suite* employs diatonic materials almost exclusively and vocal ranges that are considerate of young voices. Although the music is plainly centered around one or another tonal center, its harmonic vocabulary is by no means restricted to the traditional triad; indeed it is in the rich way in which intervals are combined that shows the music to be truly of the twentieth century. Originally scored only for piano, the accompaniment of *A Herrick Suite* was later orchestrated to make it attractive to community choruses of limited means.

What unifies the five contrasting movements of this suite besides the common threads that run through the poetry of Robert Herrick himself is principally the sense of key, the consistency of the harmonic language, and the occasional restatement of thematic fragments heard in earlier movements. For these reasons the work is a true suite, that is, an orderly arrangement of otherwise independent pieces, each capable of being performed separately as well as in the order specified by the composer.

The texts of *A Herrick* Suite were drawn from the collection of his poems that the early seventeenth-century English poet Robert Herrick published in 1648 as *Hesperides (with Noble Numbers)*. Several of Herrick's most endearing themes were chosen as the basis for

A Herrick Suite, some of which may be found in the first poem of the collection, entitled *The Argument of his Book*. It was from this poem that I chose the lines for the opening movement of *A Herrick Suite*.

1. *I Sing of Brooks*

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bow'rs:
Of April, May, of June, and July flow'rs.
. . . . . .
I write of youth, of love, and have access
By these to sing of cleanly wantonness.
. . . . . .
I write
How roses first came red, and lilies white.
. . . . . .
I sing (and ever shall)
Of Heaven, and hope to have it after all.

2. *Corinna's Going a Maying*

Get up, get for shame, the blooming morn
Upon her wing presents the god unshorn.
. . . . . .
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew-bespangling herb and tree.
. . . . . .
Come, let us go, while we are in our prime;
And take the harmless folly of the time.
. . . . . .
Come, my Corinna, come let's go a Maying.

3. *To Primroses Filled with Morning Dew*

Why do you weep, sweet babes? Can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teemed her refreshing dew?
. . . . . .
Speak, whimp'ring Younglings, and make known
The reason, why
Ye droop, and weep;
. . . . . .
No, no, this sorrow shown

4. *To Live Merrily, and to Trust to Good Verses*

Now is the time for mirth,
Nor cheek, or tongue be dumb:
For with the flow'ry earth,
The golden pomp is come.
. . . . . .
Now reigns the rose, and now
Th'Arabian dew besmears
My uncontrolled brow,
And my retorted hairs.

Homer, this health to thee,
In sack of such a kind,

. . . . . .
Would have this . . . read,
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with tears brought forth.

5. *To Music, to Becalm his Fever*

Charm me asleep, and melt me so
With thy delicious numbers;
That being ravished, hence I go
Away in easy slumbers.
Ease my sick head,
And make my bed,
Thou power that canst sever
From me this ill:
And quickly still:
Though thou not kill
My fever.
. . . . . .
Fall on me like a silver dew,
Or like those maiden showers,
Which, by the peep of day, do strew
A Baptime o'er the flowers.
Melt, melt my pains,
With thy soft strains;
That having ease me given,
With full delight,
I leave this light;
And take my flight
For Heaven.

That it would make thee see,
Though thou wert ne'r so blind.
. . . . . .
A goblet next I'll drink
To Ovid; and suppose,
Made he the pledge, he'd think
The world had all one nose.
. . . . . .
Round, round, the roof does run;
And being ravished thus,
Come I will drink a tun
To my Propertius.

Now, to Tibullus, next,
This flood I drink to thee:
But stay; . . . . . .
Behold, Tibullus lies
Here burnt, whose small return
Of ashes, scarce suffice
To fill a little urn.

Trust to good verses then;
They only will aspire,
When pyramids, as men,
Are lost, i'th'funeral fire.

And when all bodies meet
In Lethe to be drowned;
Then only numbers sweet,
With endless life are crowned.

Robert Herrick

Three Songs of Blake & Donne for soprano and piano (1954-6)
Although they have frequently been performed together, these songs do not constitute a cycle. They do reveal, however, similarities in their treatment of text, in the relationship between vocal melody and accompaniment, and in numerous details of harmony, rhythm, and form.

For the first and third songs, only those lines of the original poems were selected which would establish a basic *Affekt* for each song, an *Affekt* which could then be musically elaborated. As a result, little of the poetry's original thought remains, its words becoming less verbal symbols than suggestive devices, each of which contributes its individual timbre and rhythm to the polyphonic fabric of the composition. Contemplative and lyrical to begin with, these poems lend themselves to long, sustained lines moving predominantly in steps rather than skips. Although both songs are diatonic for the most part, only the Donne setting projects an unmistaken sense of key. Harmonically, both are based on traditional triads, which are contrapuntally elaborated. Marked by clearly defined cadences and unified by key, the phrases of the Donne setting fall into three contrasting sections, the last restating the thematic material of the first. *A Cradle Song*, on the contrary, is through-composed and, perhaps for this reason, relies heavily on a single pervading motive to achieve unity. This motive, which consists of a descending whole or half-step, not only opens every phrase but is also found in many cadences and occasionally even provides the basic framework for some phrases.

By contrast, the character of *Never Seek To Tell Thy Love* is more dramatic. Because Blake's poem actually describes a series of events, only a single line of the text could be omitted in the musical setting. Since an understanding of the words is essential to an understanding of the progress of the music in this song, a more declamatory, less lyrical vocal line was decided upon. Indeed, this song might almost be compared to a miniature operatic scene in which the vocal line has been extended to extremes in pitch and dynamic ranges and in which the accompaniment supports but rarely assumes an active

role. The music, by its greater emphasis on chromaticism and dissonance, is more strident, more taut. Because the music here follows the meanings of individual words more closely, word painting was occasionally used to heighten poetic meaning. Note, for example, how the vocal melody sways to and fro with the phrase "the gentle wind does move" and how the accompaniment becomes silent when the phrase "silently, invisibly" is sung the second time. More subtly, the contrasting middle section of the song concludes with the word "departs." More importantly, however, the last four lines of the poem are sung to a modified restatement of the music of the first section, thus establishing a significant relationship with the first four lines that Blake himself seems merely to suggest.

In style these songs continue the tradition of the Romantic art song. They employ a musical idiom that is both old and familiar but which, in my view, can still prove useful now and again even to a composer who, like myself, customarily prefers to work with a musical language more recent in origin, especially in instrumental compositions. Far from rejecting the older language out of hand simply because it *is* older, I am more in agreement with those composers who during the seventeenth century recognized a "first practice" as well as a "second practice" and who felt equally comfortable in both.

Originally composed only for voice and piano, these songs were orchestrated in 1958 while I was stationed with the U.S. Forces in Germany as conductor of a regimental band. They were first performed in this version in Norwalk, Connecticut, on March 2, 1964, by Patricia Hetkin with the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra under my direction.

A Cradle Song

Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave they brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep, Angel mild, . . .
. . . . . .

Never Seek To Tell Thy Love

Never seek to tell thy love
Love that never told can be;
For the gentle wind does move
Silently, invisibly.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from they eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles.
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

William Blake

I told my love, I told my love,
. . . . . .
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears —
Ah, she doth depart.

Soon as she was gone from me
A traveller came by
Silently, invisibly —
O, was no deny.

William Blake

Song

Sweetest love, I do not goe,
    For wearinesse of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
    A fitter Love for mee;
        But since that I
Must dye at last, 'tis best,
To use my selfe in jest
    Thus by fain'd deaths to dye;
. . . . . .

O how feeble is mans power,
    That if good fortune fall
Cannot adde another houre,
    Nor a lost houre recall!

But come bad chance,
And wee joyne to'it our strength,
And wee teach it art and length,
It selfe o'r us to'advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not winde,
But sigh'st my soule away,
. . . . . .

Let not they divining heart
Forethinke me any ill,
. . . . . .
But thinke that wee
Are but turn'd aside to sleepe;
They who one another keepe
Alive, ne'r parted bee.

John Donne

Cor Jesu Trinitatis for mixed chorus *a cappella* (1954)
The motet *Cor Jesu Trinitatis* is one of my earliest attempts to contribute to an improvement of the repertory of liturgical music in the Catholic Church. If the prinicpal melodic line is clearly influenced by Gregorian chant, the harmony, though both diatonic and predominantly triadic, is very much of the twentieth century. While the preference for a Latin text may be explained by the motet's pre-Vatican II origin, there would be ample reason even today for such a preference. The excellent "practical" English translation by Joseph Machlis, my colleague at Queens College and one of the most accomplished translators of opera libretti of his time, was prompted rather by the wishes of the motet's publisher. If I was pleased by the musical results in 1954, the year of its composition, it

seems to me now, a half-century later, to be even a little better than I thought it was then! I conducted the first performance of the piece in a liturgical setting during Mass at Holy Family church in Flushing, New York, where I was then living with my family while attending Queens College as an undergraduate. The published score bears a dedication to John Castellini, who was more than my instructor in conducting at Queens College, the conductor under whom I sang in the student choir, and later my colleague when I joined the faculty of the music department at Queens College; he was above all the standard-bearer of those musical and other values that, following his example, I too have tried to uphold.

Cor Jesu Trinitatis

1. Cor Jesu Trinitatis,
   Sacrum palatium:
   Fons divus caritatis,
   Amoris vinculum.

2. Virtutem sedes mira
   Caelorum gaudium!
   Pro nobis passum dira,
   Nostram refugium.

3. Amore nos accende,
   Largire gratias
   Quas devovisti pende
   Opes ditissimas.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus

1. O sacred heart of Jesus,
   Our hope and our defense,
   Who gives all grace and charity
   In bonds of holy love.

2. O wondrous throne in heaven,
   From You all virtues flow;
   You died for our salvation,
   Our strength in time of woe.

3. O grant us Your devotion,
   Enflame us with Your love,
   Through death You brought eternal life
   And hope to all mankind.

Refrain:	Refrain:
Sit laus cum gloria	Let praise and glory be
Quae vis per tempora,	Enthroned in heav'n above,
Amanti cordi Jesu	Beloved heart of Jesus
Nunc et in saecula.	Adored forevermore.
Flemish, 18th Century	English translation by Joseph Machlis (used by permission)

The Lament of Rachel for chamber choir and piano, four-hands (1997)
A parent can imagine no more devastating loss than that of a child. To express the grief over the slaughter of the Innocents by Herod following the birth of Jesus, the evangelist Matthew invoked the near-mythical Rachel of the Book of Genesis, who weeps both for parents who have actually experienced such a loss and for those who fear it above all else.

The inspiration for my composing *The Lament of Rachel* was the performance by The Waverly Consort of an adaptation of the *Ordo Rachelis*, a liturgical drama recorded in a twelfth-century Fleury playbook but better known now as part of *The Play of Herod*. Even as I heard it, I realized that only an ensemble having the extraordinary abilities of The New York Virtuoso Singers accompanied by two pianists at one instrument could adequately convey the intensity of Rachel's anguish. No less needed, I decided, was the use of a dense, chromatic harmonic language and an accompanying instrument capable of producing sharp attacks within extreme ranges of both pitches and dynamics.

Just as it was when it was heard more than 900 years ago, Rachel's lament is dramatic, alternating as it does between the cries of the inconsolable Rachel and the pleas of those who try in vain to console her. Even after an angel reminds her—and us—of Jesus' command to "Suffer the little children to come unto me," we leave the "theater" still hear-

ing the moans of Rachel, whose own individual voice can be heard for the first time only toward the end of the piece as she continues to grieve for herself and for us.

My own setting of Rachel's lament was completed—coincidentally—on Trinity Sunday, 1997, and was first performed by The New York Virtuoso Singers under the direction of Harold Rosenbaum in New York City on April 24, 1999.

RACHEL:
Heu, teneri partus,
laceros quos cernimus artus!
Heu, dulces nati,
sola rabie iugulati!
Heu, quem nec pietas
nec vestra coercuit aetas!
Heu, matres miserae,
quae cogimur ista videre?
Heu, quid nunc agimus?
Cur non haec facta subimus?
Heu, quia memores
nostro quae levare dolores.
Gaudia non possunt,
nam dulcia pignora desunt!

RACHEL:
Alas, little babes,
such savage wounds we see!
Alas, sweet children,
slaughtered, butchered in madness.
Alas, neither pity
nor tender age could save you.
Alas, wretched mothers,
can we know what we behold here?
What, then, within us
can bear such deeds?
Alas, our memories
do but double grief!
No more can we know joy;
our gifts of love have perished.

CONSOLATRICES:
Noli, virgo Rachel,
noli, dulcissima mater,
pro nece parvorum
fletus retinere dolorum.

CONSOLERS:
No more, pure Rachel,
no more, sweetest of mothers,
for the sons here slain
cease weeping.

Si quae tris namque tui nati
vivunt super astra beati.

RACHEL:
Heu, heu, heu!
Quomodo gaudebo,
dum mortua membra videbo,
Dum sic commota
fuero per viscera tota?
Me facient vere
pueri sine fine dolere.
O dolor!
O patrum mutataque gaudia matrum
ad lugubres luctus!

CONSOLATRICES:
Quid tu, virgo
mater Rachel, ploras formosa,
cuius vultus Jacob delectat?
Quam te decent genarum rivuli?

RACHEL:
Heu, heu, heu!
Quid me incusasti
fletus incassum fudisse?
Cum sim orbata nato,
paupertatem meam qui solus curaret;
quo multos, proh dolor,
extulit, esse profuturus?

Rejoice now even in your mourning,
for they live among the stars with the blessed

RACHEL:
Alas!
How then shall I rejoice
while forever these lifeless limbs I see?
When so rent
with grief is my soul?
Mine shall be but
endless sorrow for these babes.
O, sorrow!
O, how torn from joy these parents,
given unto grief and mourning.

CONSOLERS:
Wherefore thou, O maid,
O mother Rachel, dost thou weep so fair,
thou whose face delighteth Jacob?
Do rivers of tears become thy cheek?

RACHEL:
Alas!
Wherefore do you say
that vainly have I shed these tears,
bereft as I am of my son,
alone, in my want, my care?
Ask you, then why this grief
that he be borne unto the grave?

CONSOLATRICES:
Num quid flendus est iste,
qui regnum possidet coeleste.

CONSOLERS:
Why dost thou weep for him thus
when he hath gained the kingdom of heaven?

RACHEL:
Anxiatus est in me spiritus meus:
in me turbatum est cor meum.

RACHEL:
Great is the anguish of my soul;
my heart is troubled within me.

ANGELUS:
Sinite parvulos venire ad me,
talium est enim regnum coelorum.

ARCHANGEL:
Suffer little children to come unto me,
for such is the kingdom of Heaven.

English translation by Kenneth C. Ritchie courtesy of The Waverly Consort

From Psalterium Davidicum for chorus and orchestra (1994)
Those who have found both challenge and solace in Sacred Scripture have long held the belief that we have been created with an innate craving for union with God. Sin is merely whatever we do or do not do that prevents us from achieving that union. Few of us, however, can expect to approach such a union until death, which is not seen as an end but rather as a beginning. It has always seemed to me that the reason for the continued popularity of the psalms of David for over two thousand years lies in their ability to express this belief in language that is both simple and powerful. They speak of the most important matters that ought to concern us, and they do it in a way that is understandable to everyone, whether well educated or not educated at all. They speak of a loving God who has reasonable expectations of us and who may be trusted to be merciful when we err, that is, wander, provided that we are willing to atone and to raise our hearts and minds to learn, not our ways, but His. The order in which I chose to set the excerpts I selected from the psalms describes the path which the sinner, or wanderer, must take in order to be reconciled to God.

The musical form of *From Psalterium Davidicum* reflects the sinner's progress from the "errant" chromatic lines sung by the chorus in the beginning, accompanied as they are by harsh harmonies in the orchestra, to the hopeful, joyful outcries of the concluding measures. Within, the music is more contemplative, more imploring, and therefore more diatonic and lyrical in the choral parts; the orchestral textures are also less dense here and the harmonies less pungent. One may even detect in some of these passages influences—superficial at best, though—of Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony.

My reasons for setting St. Jerome's Latin translation of the psalms are various. For one, I have heard Latin spoken or sung almost all my life and can read it (though by no means fluently). It is for me still a universal language, which I can remember singing in St. Peter's basilica in Rome together with people from all over the world. As the psalms themselves are enduring in their meaning for us, I wished to employ a language which has also endured, a language, furthermore, which was used by some of the world's greatest writers. As a composer, I have always found it an evocative language so that, whenever I read it aloud (and in the ancient world all "reading" was done aloud), I can, if I wish, already begin to hear the music which might set it. Compare the effect, for example, that would be produced by singing the literal English translation of the opening line or imagine how less urgent the final supplication would sound if it were sung to "and teach me your paths" rather than "edoce me semitas tuas!"

From Psalterium Davidicum was completed in January, 1994, and was composed especially for the Queens College Choral Society, which gave it its first performance at Queens College on May 13, 1995 under the direction of Lawrence Eisman.

Psalm 129, 1-4
De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine; Domine, exaudi vocem meam. Fiant aures tuae intendentes in orationem servi tui. Si iniquitates observaveris Domine: Domine, quis sustinebit? Qui apud te propitiatio est, et propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine.

From the depths I have cried out to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to the prayer of your servant. If you will notice iniquities, O Lord, who will endure it? For with you is atonement, and because of your law I have waited for you, O Lord.

Psalm 56, 2, 4
Miserere mei, Deus, miserere mei: quoniam in te confidit anima mea. Misit de coelo, et liberavit me: dedit in opprobrium conculcantes me.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for my soul trusts in you. He has sent from heaven and freed me; he has reproached those who despised me.

Psalm 24, 1-4
Ad te levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam: neque irrideant me inimici mei: et enim universi qui te exspectant, non confundentur. Vias tuas, Domine, demonstra mihi: et semitas tuas edoce me.

To you, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul. In you, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed. Neither let my enemies laugh at me, for none of them that wait for you will be confounded. Show me your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths.

Encore: **Mountain Song** for soprano and piano
When Leonard Cochran offered me the text of *Mountain Song*, he wrote that it was the result of an attempt to "imitate the kind of work sometimes found among the Elizabethans. . . and, by a natural progression, among the people who live in the Southern highlands of the United States." He referred to it as a "literary" attempt to produce what he suspected "came about quite naturally in certain times and in certain places." He went on to say that he wrote it "in hopes that it might be set to music" and that he would "rather see it put to

music than published as a poem." *Mountain Song* then began its existence as a kind of *poesia per musica*, for which there is a rich and honorable tradition that extends many centuries into the past.

Concerning the music I have tried to capture the disarming simplicity of Leonard Cochran's text by choosing a scale which strongly suggests the almost-but-not-quite pentatonicism often found in American folk melodies and by employing a litany-like form in which each line begins similarly with a variant of the same opening motive but which continues thereafter quite differently in order to reflect the ever changing meaning of the text. However, unlike in litanies, where all lines tend to be the same, the lines of *Mountain Song* are constantly varied; indeed they appear almost to have been improvised. For all of its folk-like character in both text and music, *Mountain Song* is, in fact, a consciously conceived work of art invented by a poet and musician fully aware of what they were doing. Composed and published first as a setting for mixed chorus and piano, *Mountain Song* was later published also as a solo song with piano accompaniment and is performed here in this version.

Mountain Song is only the latest example of a collaboration that began when I asked Leonard Cochran to provide a text to a vocal piece that I had already composed, the text for which I had long ago discarded. The result, *The Maid of Astolat*, is a technically brilliant achievement certainly, but it is also exceedingly beautiful poetry. The second example was the text for the hymn *O God Whose Voice*. Whatever can be said for the music I composed to set it, Father Cochran's text is one of the most beautiful hymn texts I know. From my work with Father Cochran I continue to draw the inescapable conclusion that good poets have the same "ears" as good musicians. Perhaps not so incidentally, Leonard Cochran is a Dominican priest at The Priory of St. Thomas Aquinas and a retired member of the faculty at Providence College, where he continues to teach a course in the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Mountain Song

I'd bind my love with hempen cords
To keep her always near.
I'd bind my love with hempen cords
But them she would not bear.

I'd bind my love with iron bands
If that were wise to do.
I'd bind my love with iron bands,
But they'd not hold her true.

I'd bind my love with silken threads
And cast a wizard spell.
I'd bind my love with silken threads,
But those she'd break, as well.

I'll bind my love with promises
That 'round her heart I'll cast.
I'll bind my love with promises,
And they will hold her fast.

Leonard Cochran
(used with permission)

The performers -

Music Director and Conductor of the Portland (Maine) Symphony Orchestra since 1986, **Toshiyuki Shimada** was born in Tokyo in 1951. He began to study the violin at the age of four, joined the Tokyo Boys' Choir at the age of eight, and made his conducting debut with that distinguished group at the age of eleven. At fifteen he moved to the United States and earned degrees in conducting and clarinet at the University of California at Northridge. He later studied conducting with Hans Swarovsky at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna and with Leonard Bernstein, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Herbert Blomstedt. A finalist in the Herbert von Karajan Competition in 1979, he can also be heard with the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra on several recordings released by Vienna Modern Masters, one of which includes his performance of Allen Brings' *Scherzi musicali.*

The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra of Olomouc in the Czech Republic was founded in May, 1945, and ranks among the foremost and oldest symphony orchestras in the Czech Republic. Prominent conductors have been Otto Klemperer, Yehudi Menuhin, Vaclav Neumann, Arvid Jansons and many others. In addition to a large standard repertory, the orchestra specializes in music of the old Czech masters as well as many contemporary composers. It has given more than 250 first-performances and can be heard on numerous Vienna Modern Masters compact discs.

Ars Brunensis, a mixed choir established in 1979 as the Brno Music Youth Choir, adopted its present name in 1990. It is regarded as one of the finest choruses in the Czech Republic and collaborates frequently with such ensembles as the Moravian Philharmonic, the Janáček Opera Orchestra, and the National Theater in Prague. Conductors were Jan Rohzenal from 1990 to 1993 and Roman Valek from 1993 to 2002. The present conductor is Dan Kalousek. The chorus can be heard on several Vienna Modern Masters compact discs as well as on the Supraphon and Orfeus labels.

Founded in 1988 as an off-shoot of the chorus-in-residence of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, **The New York Virtuoso Singers** under founder and artistic director Harold Rosenbaum

Artistic-Director/Conductor **Marguerite Mullée** is also Music Director and Professor of Music at Holy Apostles College in Cromwell, Connecticut, Music Director for the School of Performing Arts in Sherman, Connecticut, and Chorus Director for Dover High School, New York. She was recently named conductor of the Millennium Orchestra, a multi-generational instrumental group in New York City, and has conducted numerous community, festival and church choirs in New York and Connecticut. While completing her doctorate in conducting and vocal pedagogy at Columbia University, she worked closely with Dino Anagnost and served as assistant conductor of the Metropolitan Singers/Greek Choral Society and the Little Orchestra Society in New York City. An active choral clinician, she has presented workshops and given lectures throughout the Northeast including at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Connecticut, Manhattanville College, and the Caramoor Summer Festival in Katonah, New York. She maintains a studio in Kent, Connecticut, where she teaches voice and conducting.

Acclaimed for her "electric stage presence" and purity of tone, soprano **Mara Bonde** has performed throughout the United States and travelled to Brussels, Belgium, with Boston Musical Theater for a fiftieth anniversary birthday tribute to NATO. She made her Boston Pops debut under the direction of Keith Lockhart in "Brush up your Shakespeare," which was televised on PBS's *Evening at Pops*, and has become a frequent soloist with that orchestra, recently appearing on its *Holiday Pops* tour. On the concert stage she has appeared with the Utah, New Haven, San Diego, and Cape Ann Symphony Orchestras, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Baroque Orchestra, and the OPUS Chamber Orchestra. She appears as a soloist in a performance of Ravel's *Trois Beaux Oiseaux du Paradis* under Robert Shaw in Shaw's Telarc compact disc *Appear and Inspire*.

A national semifinalist in the 2002 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Ms. Bonde includes among her operatic roles Frasquita in *Carmen*, Mrs. Nordstrom in *A Little Night Music*, and Sister Miriam in *The Three Hermits* with Utah Opera; the title role in Mollicone's *Starbird* and Frasquita with Opera Company of North Carolina; Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, and Carolina Etheridge in the world premiere

Artistic-Director/Conductor **Marguerite Mullée** is also Music Director and Professor of Music at Holy Apostles College in Cromwell, Connecticut, Music Director for the School of Performing Arts in Sherman, Connecticut, and Chorus Director for Dover High School, New York. She was recently named conductor of the Millennium Orchestra, a multi-generational instrumental group in New York City, and has conducted numerous community, festival and church choirs in New York and Connecticut. While completing her doctorate in conducting and vocal pedagogy at Columbia University, she worked closely with Dino Anagnost and served as assistant conductor of the Metropolitan Singers/Greek Choral Society and the Little Orchestra Society in New York City. An active choral clinician, she has presented workshops and given lectures throughout the Northeast including at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Connecticut, Manhattanville College, and the Caramoor Summer Festival in Katonah, New York. She maintains a studio in Kent, Connecticut, where she teaches voice and conducting.

Acclaimed for her "electric stage presence" and purity of tone, soprano **Mara Bonde** has performed throughout the United States and travelled to Brussels, Belgium, with Boston Musical Theater for a fiftieth anniversary birthday tribute to NATO. She made her Boston Pops debut under the direction of Keith Lockhart in "Brush up your Shakespeare," which was televised on PBS's *Evening at Pops*, and has become a frequent soloist with that orchestra, recently appearing on its *Holiday Pops* tour. On the concert stage she has appeared with the Utah, New Haven, San Diego, and Cape Ann Symphony Orchestras, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Baroque Orchestra, and the OPUS Chamber Orchestra. She appears as a soloist in a performance of Ravel's *Trois Beaux Oiseaux du Paradis* under Robert Shaw in Shaw's Telarc compact disc *Appear and Inspire*.

A national semifinalist in the 2002 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Ms. Bonde includes among her operatic roles Frasquita in *Carmen*, Mrs. Nordstrom in *A Little Night Music*, and Sister Miriam in *The Three Hermits* with Utah Opera; the title role in Mollicone's *Starbird* and Frasquita with Opera Company of North Carolina; Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, and Carolina Etheridge in the world premiere

of *Kitty Hawk* with the National Opera Company in Raleigh, North Carolina; and Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at the Lake George Opera Festival.

Ms. Bonde holds a bachelor's degree in French from Mount Holyoke College and a master's degree from Boston University and has studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. She has sung in music festivals at Tanglewood and Aspen and at the Britten-Pears School with Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonynge in Aldeburgh, England.

Genevieve Chinn has made many appearances as both soloist and chamber player in the United States, Europe and Asia. With Allen Brings she has recorded music for piano, four-hands, for Centaur Records, Orion Master Recordings and Composers Recordings, Inc. and solo works for Capstone and Centaur Records. Among her awards are the French Government Prize in piano, the Chopin Fellowship for composers awarded by the Kosciuszko Foundation, and two Teacher Grants awarded by the Danforth Foundation. She holds a doctorate in musicology from Columbia University and is Professor of Music at the C. W. Post campus of Long Island University.

As a composer **Allen Brings** has written for orchestra, band, chorus, a wide variety of chamber ensembles, piano, organ, harpsichord, guitar, and voice. He has twice served as chairman of the eastern region of the American Society of University Composers and is currently vice-president of Connecticut Composers, Inc. His music has been recorded by Navona Records, Capstone, Centaur, Grenadilla, Contemporary Record Society, North/South Recordings, Arizona University Recordings, and Vienna Modern Masters. As a pianist he has performed extensively both here and abroad especially in programs of music for piano, four-hands, with Genevieve Chinn, with whom he has recorded for Orion, CRI, and Centaur. He is also co-author of A New Approach to Keyboard Harmony, published by W. W. Norton, and has contributed articles to College Music Symposium, Contemporary Music Newsletter, New Music Connoisseur, Society of Composers Newsletter, New Oxford Review, ComposerUSA, sounding board, and The Adoremus Bulletin. Brings is currently Professor Emeritus of Music at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College of the City University of New York.

Three Holy Sonnets and *From Psalterium Davidicum* were recorded in Philharmonic Hall in Olomouc, The Czech Republic. Frantisek Poul was both the recording engineer and the editor. *A Herrick Suite* and *Cor Jesu Trinitatis* were recorded in St. Joseph's Chapel at the Kent School in Kent, Connecticut. Justin Kurtz was the recording engineer and Da-Hong Seetoo the editor. *Three Songs of Blake & Donne*, *The Lament of Rachel*, and *Mountain Song* were recorded in LeFrak Hall at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College (CUNY). Rick Krahn was the recording engineer and Da-Hong Seetoo the editor. The entire recording was mastered by Da-Hong Seetoo.

THREE HOLY SONNETS (1988)
for chorus & orchestra (ASCAP)

Ars Brunensis & The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra
Toshiyuki Shimada conductor

1 AT THE ROUND EARTHS IMAGIN'D CORNERS 3:44
2 DEATH BE NOT PROUD 5:01
3 BATTER MY HEART, THREE PERSON'D GOD 3:08

A HERRICK SUITE (1977)
for chorus & piano (ASCAP)

The Kent Singers | Marguerite Mullée conductor
Allen Brings pianist

4 I SING OF BROOKS 1:25
5 CORINNA'S GOING A MAYING 0:51
6 TO PRIMROSES FILLED WITH MORNING DEW 2:03
7 TO LIVE MERRILY, AND TO TRUST TO GOOD VERSES 2:13
8 TO MUSIC, TO BECALM HIS FEVER 1:56

THREE SONGS OF BLAKE & DONNE
for soprano & piano (ASCAP)

Mara Bonde soprano Allen Brings pianist

9 A CRADLE SONG 2:13
10 NEVER SEEK TO TELL THY LOVE 2:55
11 SONG 4:55

12 COR JESU TRINITATIS (1954) 3:28
for a cappella chorus (ASCAP)

The Kent Singers | Marguerite Mullée conductor

13 THE LAMENT OF RACHEL (1997) 8:53
for chamber choir & piano, four-hands (ASCAP)

The New York Virtuoso Singers
Margery Daley, Melisssa Kelley, Cynthia Wallace sopranos
Karen Krueger, Mary Marathe, Nancy Wertsch (soloist) altos
Neil Farrell, Mukund Marathe, Michael Steinberger tenors
Frank Barr, Steven Moore, Jon Szabo basses
Genevieve Chinn, Allen Brings pianists
Harold Rosenbaum conductor

14 FROM PSALTERIUM DAVIDICUM (1994) 13:57
for chorus & orchestra (ASCAP)

Ars Brunensis & The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra
Toshiyuki Shimada conductor

15 ENCORE: MOUNTAIN SONG (1992) 2:30
for soprano & piano (ASCAP)

Mara Bonde soprano Allen Brings pianist

info@navonarecords.com
www.navonarecords.com
223 Lafayette Road
North Hampton NH 03862

Navona Records FINE MUSIC

Executive Producer Bob Lord
Executive A&R Sam Renshaw
A&R Alex Bourne
Audio Director Jeff LeRoy
Engineer Manager Lucas Paquette
Art & Production Director Brett Picknell
Graphic Design Ryan Harrison
Marketing Samantha Granville, John Higgins

©2017 NAVONA RECORDS LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THE NAVONA IMPRINT IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF PARMA RECORDINGS LLC. UNAUTHORIZED DUPLICATION IS A VIOLATION OF APPLICABLE LAWS.