

2020 Cincinnati May Festival

April 5, 2020—Basilica Concert

ANON.	Psalm 23 from the <i>Bay Psalm Book</i>
BOBBY McFERRIN	The 23rd Psalm (Dedicated to My Mother)
TORREJÓN Y VELASCO	<i>A este sol peregrino cántale glorias</i>
JEFFREY VAN	Fourteen Angels
arr. HOWARD HELVEY	Saints Bound for Heaven
IVES	Psalm 90
JOHN WILLIAMS	“With Malice Toward None” from <i>Lincoln</i>
VILLA-LOBOS	<i>Bendita sabedoria</i> Sapientia foris prædicat Vas pretiosum labia scientire Principium sapientiæ Vir sapiens, fortis est Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam Dexeteram tuam
HANSON	A Prayer of the Middle Ages
ARGENTO	<i>To God “In Memoriam M.B.”</i>
THOMPSON	<i>Alleluia</i>

Notes on the Program by DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

PSALM 23 from the *BAY PSALM BOOK*

Text printed in 1640; music printed in 1698.

The Whole Booke of Psalmes—commonly known as the *Bay Psalm Book*—was the first book printed in America. It was printed in 1640, just twenty years after the Pilgrims' arrived at Plymouth, and comprised metrical translations of Psalm verses included in the liturgy of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Those first colonists had brought with them several Psalters from England and Holland, but they were apparently dissatisfied with the English translations from the Hebrew they contained and engaged "thirty pious and learned Ministers" to do new ones for this edition. There were 1,700 copies of the original issue turned out on the press London printer Stephen Daye had brought over in 1638 and set up in Cambridge. (Daye had died during the voyage and the business—and the country's first printed book—were overseen by his wife.) The edition was sold through Hezekiah Usher of Cambridge, the first bookseller in British America, and was immediately popular. It was reissued regularly, sometimes with revisions, but the earliest edition to include music was the ninth, in 1698, with thirteen tunes consisting of melody and bass lines taken from John Playford's *A Breefe Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (London, 1654). The notation was printed separately from the texts, and an introduction indicated which tune was to be used for which Psalm. *Cambridge Short Tune*, originally printed in *Damon's Psalter* of 1579, was assigned to Psalm 23. Eleven copies of the first edition are known to exist, some incomplete. (The copy at the Library of Congress lacks nineteen leaves, including the title page.) In November 2013, Sotheby's auctioned a 1640 copy of the *Bay Psalm Book* owned by Boston's Old South Church. The price was \$14,165,000, a record for a single printed book.

THE 23rd PSALM (Dedicated to My Mother)

Bobby McFerrin

Born March 11, 1950 in New York City.

Composed in 1990.

Bobby McFerrin is a protean musician—jazz vocalist with an astounding technique sufficient to encompass all the lines of a Bach fugue or trade licks with Yo-Yo Ma, Chick Corea and the Marsalis brothers, composer for concert and film, guest conductor with major orchestras across Canada and the United States, Creative Chair with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, co-host of a 2009 PBS documentary titled *The Music Instinct* based on the best-selling book *This Is Your Brain on Music* by psychologist Daniel Levitin, innovative record producer (his 1988 Grammy-winning international hit "Don't Worry, Be Happy" has seven separate, over-dubbed vocal tracks; his choral album *VOCABuLarieS* has thousands), recipient of ten Grammy Awards, an Honorary Doctorate of Music from Boston's Berklee College of Music, and a Lifetime Achievement Award at the A Cappella Music Awards.

In addition to being one of his generation's finest and most versatile musicians, Bobby McFerrin is also a man of deep spiritual convictions. When asked in a 2017 interview at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, New York (where he had taught) why he had changed the gender in his 1990 choral version of the *23rd Psalm*, he replied, "*The 23rd Psalm* is dedicated to my mother. She was the driving force in my religious and spiritual education, and I have so many memories of her singing in church. But I wrote it because I'd been reading the Bible one morning, and I was thinking about God's unconditional love, about how we crave it but have so much trouble believing we can trust it, and how

we can't fully understand it. And then I left my reading and spent time with my wife and our children. Watching her with them, the way she loved them, I realized one of the ways we're shown a glimpse of how God loves us is through our mothers. They cherish our spirits, they demand that we become our best selves, and they take care of us."

The Lord is my Shepherd, I have all I need
She makes me lie down in green meadows
Beside the still waters, She will lead

She restores my soul, She rights my wrongs
She leads me in a path of good things
And fills my heart with songs

Even though I walk, through a dark and dreary land
There is nothing that can shake me
She has said She won't forsake me
I'm in her hand

She sets a table before me, in the presence of my foes
She anoints my head with oil
And my cup overflows

Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me
All the days of my life
And I will live in her house
Forever, forever and ever

Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter
And to the Holy of Holies
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be
World, without end

A ESTE SOL PEREGRINO CÁNTALE GLORIAS ("Sing Praise, O Shepherd, to the Pilgrim Sun")

Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco

Baptized December 23, 1644 in Villarrobledo, Spain.

Died April 23, 1728 in Lima, Peru.

Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco was born in the town of Villarrobledo, 130 miles southeast of Madrid, in 1644, at the height of the Spanish exploration (and exploitation) of the New World. When Torrejón's father got a job as a huntsman to King Philip IV, the family moved to Fuencarral, near a royal hunting ground at the edge of Madrid, where Tomás, at age fourteen, became a page in the household of the powerful Pedro Fernández de Castro y Andrade, Count of Lemos. Torrejón was still serving in that position when the Count was appointed Viceroy of Peru in 1667, and he was taken to the New World as part of the large noble retinue. Torrejón became superintendent of the armory at Lima when they landed and five years later was appointed magistrate and chief justice of Chachapoyas Province. In addition to his administrative abilities, Torrejón was also a gifted musician, and in 1676 he was named *maestro de capilla* of Lima Cathedral, then one of the most important music centers in Spanish America.

He held that post until his death 52 years later, earning wide respect for his compositions and his wise counsel to other music establishments in the region. In addition to several motets, a few organ pieces and many *villancicos* (Spanish Christmas carols), Torrejón composed *La púrpura de la rosa* (“The Purple Rose”), based on the story of Venus and Adonis but with popular Spanish characters added. *La púrpura de la rosa*, the first opera composed in the New World, was commissioned by the new Viceroy of Peru, the Count of Monclova, and premiered in Lima on October 19, 1701 in celebration of King Philip V’s eighteenth birthday and the first anniversary of his ascension to the Spanish throne.

Torreón’s *A este sol peregrino cántale glorias* (“Sing Praise, O Shepherd, to the Pilgrim Sun”) is a *villancico*, a vocal form with a refrain whose verses and music were derived from or modeled on rustic or popular songs that originated in Spain in the 15th century. (The word is a derivative of *villano*—“peasant.”) Its subjects could encompass courtly love, satire, country life and even bawdiness, but most were associated with religious feasts, especially Christmas. After 1600, the *villancico* became essentially a church genre associated with Christmas, various Marian feasts and certain saints’ days, but it retained its secular associations through both its musical and poetic styles and its occasional reference to stock characters from the popular theater, suggesting that some may have been given a rudimentary staging.

A este sol peregrino cántale glorias, zagalejo
 Y con gusto y donaire, con gozo y contento,
 Cantale que del orbe dora las cumbres, zagalejo.
 Y pues vive a sus rayos, goce sus luces.

Sing glory to this wandering sun, O shepherds!
 With passion and grace, with joy and contentment,
 Sing how that golden orb lights up the heavens,
 And because of these rays, we can enjoy life!

Divino pequeño tus glorias hoy acobardan mi voz
 Que no dejar registrase supone la luz mayor.

Divine St. Peter, your glory today quiets my voice
 Because your light so overwhelms me.

De Oriente a Oriente camina tu
 soberano esplendor
 Que aun el ocaso es principio donde siempre
 nace el sol.

Your glory travels from East to East
 So that every day brings a new birth of the sun.

FOURTEEN ANGELS

Jeffrey Van

Born in 1941.

Composed in 2008.

Jeffrey Van studied at the University of Minnesota School of Music, where he subsequently taught for forty years. During Van’s long tenure at the school, he performed regularly on its concert series, was a founding member of St. Paul’s Hill House Chamber Players, premiered and recorded commissioned works by Stephen Paulus, William Bolcom, Robert Sierra, Dominick Argento, Tania Leon, Michael Daugherty, Libby Larsen and other prominent composers, appeared at Carnegie Hall, London’s Wigmore Hall, Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and other noted venues, was featured on *St. Paul Sunday* and many other NPR broadcasts, and made numerous solo and ensemble recordings, including eight with St. Paul’s famed Dale Warland Singers. Jeffrey Van has composed for guitar, guitar and violin, guitar and flute, chorus, chamber ensembles, vocal solo, and organ, including a concerto for two guitars titled *Reflexiones Concertantes*, released on the Centaur label.

Jeffrey Van wrote, “*Fourteen Angels* was commissioned by Kurt Wolf for his friends Jerry and Christine da Silva in memory of Elena Maria da Silva (December 28, 2007–February 1, 2008). The piece is

an intertwining of friendship and guitar, since Jerry studied guitar with Kurt, who was a master's degree student of mine at the University of Minnesota and now also a close friend. Following the tragic loss of their infant daughter, Elena, at the age of one month, Kurt commissioned this work as a gift of something lasting in the face of impermanence. *Fourteen Angels* is a setting of a translation of an Old German evening prayer, a peaceful message of hope and protection from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* ['The Boys' Magic Horn,' a 19th-century collection of folk poems and songs that was also the source of Gustav Mahler's well-known work]. As requested, I included a quotation of the Catalan Christmas carol *El Noi de la Mare* ('The Child of the Mother'), which is also famous as a guitar solo. It was Jerry's intention that this gift could be used by others as a soothing lullaby, as though always being played for his own infant child."

When at night I go to sleep
Fourteen angels watch do keep
Two my head are guarding
Two my feet are guiding
Two to whom 'tis given
To guide my steps
To heaven
To guide me
When at dawn my eyes do wake
Fourteen angels my peace do take
Two there are who need me
Two there are who feed me
Two who sway before me show me
All I've known
Is wrong, that I am
Not me
Two there are to take my soul
Away from here
To guide my steps

SAINTS BOUND FOR HEAVEN

Arranged by Howard Helvey

Born in 1968.

Arranged in 1996.

Howard Helvey earned his bachelor's degree in conducting, voice, piano and organ at the University of Missouri-Columbia and master's degree at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music; he was also an Undergraduate Scholar at New York's Chautauqua Institution, where he pursued additional studies in piano. Helvey has been Organist and Choirmaster at Cincinnati's Calvary Episcopal Church since 1968, and in 2013 became co-founder and conductor of the professional chamber choir Cincinnati Fusion Ensemble. He has written hundreds of original compositions and arrangements published by over twenty major companies and performed by innumerable choirs across America and England. As a pianist, he has collaborated with Richard Steinbach since 1997 in concerts and recordings of solo and four-hand repertory in appearances throughout the United States, Canada and England. He received international awards in 2002, 2003 and 2006 (as First Prize winner) from the John Ness Beck

Foundation, which annually recognizes outstanding achievement in choral composition. Among Helvey's numerous treatments of American spirituals is "From Egypt's Yoke Set Free," arranged in 1996.

From Egypt's yoke set free,
Hail the glorious jubilee,
And to Canaan we'll return
By and by, by and by.

Our bondage it shall end
By and by, by and by,
Our bondage it shall end
By and by.

From Egypt's yoke set free...

Our deliverer will come,
By and by,
Our deliverer will come,
By and by.
And our sorrows have an end,
With our threescore years and ten,
And vast glory crown the day
By and by, by and by.

Though our enemies are strong,
We'll go on, we'll go on.
Through our hearts dissolve with fear,
Lo! Sinai's God is near,
While the fiery pillar moves
We'll go on, we'll go on.

And when from Jordan's flood
We are come, we are come,
Jehovah rules the tide,
And the waters He'll divide,
And the ransomed host shall shout,
"We are come, we are come."
By and by, we'll go on.

PSALM 90

Charles Ives

Born October 20, 1874 in Danbury, Connecticut.

Died May 19, 1954 in New York City.

Composed around 1900 and in 1923–1924.

Premiered on April 18, 1966 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, conducted by Gregg Smith.

In the years immediately after graduating from Yale and moving to New York City in 1898, Ives filled his every waking hour with learning the insurance business as a clerk for the Mutual Life Insurance Company (at \$5 per week), serving as organist for the Central Presbyterian Church on 57th Street, and composing as much as six hours a day. Throughout those early years in New York, until he resigned from Central Presbyterian in 1902 to devote himself to the surer career path of insurance sales, Ives worked up a dozen or so choral pieces in which he experimented with various traditional Protestant church styles and tried out some of his most daring iconoclasm: a number of Psalm settings, a processional, an ambitious cantata titled *The Celestial Country*, and the three *Harvest Home Chorales*. Many of those manuscripts were lost or discarded, but one that Ives did preserve contained ideas for a setting of Psalm 90 (*Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place from one generation to another*) that he probably wrote down sometime between about 1898 and 1901. As he did in creating many of his compositions over the next twenty years, Ives returned constantly to his early sketches, taking up those for Psalm 90 again in 1923 and bringing the work to its finished form the following year. There is no record of a public performance of any of these materials during Ives' lifetime, though he may have tried them out informally with his church choirs; the score was not published until 1966 in an edition by John Kirkpatrick and Gregg Smith, who conducted its premiere on April 18, 1966 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Ives lived until 1954, but his creativity essentially ended around 1924, the time of Psalm 90. He told his wife, Harmony, that he was more satisfied with the piece than anything else he had composed, perhaps because it codified many of the stylistic and expressive techniques he had been dealing with for the preceding forty years in a succinct, ten-minute form. Ives strove for an almost visionary state in his music, comparable to that in the writings of the American Transcendentalists (he wrote or considered substantial works inspired by Emerson, Hawthorne, Whittier, Whitman, the Alcotts, Thoreau and others), and he encapsulated his expressive ambition in the Psalm 90 by labeling the opening organ chords, "The Eternities, Creation, God's Wrath Against Sin, Prayer of Humility, and Rejoicing in Beauty and Work" and associating them with appropriate harmonies and conforming the arc of the piece to their implicit message. Each of the Psalm's seventeen verses is set intact and matched carefully to its music, and culminate beginning with Verse 14—*O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days*—as the beatific, hymnal stanzas are floated upon what the score describes as "church bells, in distance."

Text: King James Bible

1. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place from one generation to another.
2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
3. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, "Return, ye children of men."
4. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.
5. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
6. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
7. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.
8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
9. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.
10. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.
12. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13. Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.
14. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
15. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.
16. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.
17. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Amen

“WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE” from *LINCOLN*

John Williams

Born February 8, 1932 in Flushing, New York.

Composed in 2012.

Premiered on October 8, 2012 at the New York Film Festival.

Producer-director Stephen Spielberg had hoped for years to make a movie about Abraham Lincoln, but the idea only came to fruition in 2011 when two-time Oscar-winner Daniel Day-Lewis agreed to portray the 16th President of the United States and Sally Field to play his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln. The production was planned meticulously as regards characters, historical incident and period authenticity; a stellar cast was assembled (including Hal Holbrook, Tommy Lee Jones, James Spader and David Strathairn); Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist Tony Kushner was engaged to write the screenplay; and John Williams, Spielberg’s musical collaborator for almost forty years, agreed to compose the score. *Lincoln* was first seen at the New York Film Festival on October 8, 2012 and released theatrically the following month, garnering both critical accolades and box office success, and earning twelve Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Score, and winning Oscars for Day-Lewis and Best Production Design. The film concerns the last four months of Lincoln’s life and his devoted struggle to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, which would abolish slavery. Williams’ widely praised score distills the pathos, passion and humanity of the President who not only helped to shape the perilous times in which he lived but also preserved the Union for succeeding generations.

***BENDITA SABEDORIA* (“Blessed Wisdom”)**

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Born March 5, 1887 in Rio de Janeiro.

Died there November 17, 1959.

Composed in 1958.

Premiered on December 2, 1958 by the New York University College Chorus, conducted by Maurice Peress.

Heitor Villa-Lobos, Brazil’s greatest composer, had little formal training. He learned the cello from his father and earned a living as a young man playing with popular bands, from which he derived much of his musical background. From his earliest years, Villa-Lobos was enthralled with the indigenous songs and dances of his native land, and he made several trips into the Brazilian interior to study the native music and ceremonies. Beginning with his earliest works, around 1910, his music shows the influence of the melodies, rhythms and sonorities that he discovered. He began to compose prolifically, and, though often ridiculed for his daring new style by other Brazilian musicians, he attracted the attention of the pianist Artur Schnabel, who helped him receive a Brazilian government grant in 1923 that enabled him

to spend several years in Paris, where his international reputation was established. Upon his permanent return to Rio de Janeiro in 1930, Villa-Lobos became an important figure in public musical education, urging the cultivation of Brazilian songs and dances in the schools. He made his first visit to the United States in 1944, and he spent the remaining years of his life traveling in America and Europe to conduct and promote his own works and those of other Brazilian composers. Villa-Lobos summarized his creative philosophy in an interview with *New York Times* critic Olin Downes by saying that he did not think of music as “culture, or education, or even as a device for quieting the nerves, but as something more potent, mystical and profound in its effect. Music has the power to communicate, to heal, to ennoble, when it is made part of man’s life and consciousness.”

Villa-Lobos devoted much of his career to establishing a system of music education in Brazil that would help promote the country’s traditions and native cultures while raising general musical literacy. He was adamant in featuring vocal music—“the instrument everyone has”—as part of his regime, and composed works for chorus and edited numerous anthologies of varied repertory for educational, public and church use. As Villa-Lobos’ international reputation flourished after World War II, he entrusted the educational work to others and devoted most of his energies to composing, conducting and teaching in Europe and the United States. In 1957, by which time he was largely confined to Rio de Janeiro by deteriorating health, he fulfilled two commissions for choral pieces. The first was from Pope Pius XII himself for a work observing the centennial of the apparition of the Virgin Mary that appeared to the peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous (canonized in 1933) in the southern French village of Lourdes. That *Magnificat-Alleluia* was premiered on November 8, 1958 at the Teatro Municipal in Rio. Through Carlton Sprague Smith, music scholar and librarian and New York University faculty member (and the earliest proponent of what became the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center), Villa-Lobos was commissioned to compose *Bendita sabedoria* (“Blessed Wisdom”) for the NYU College Chorus, austere settings of verses from Proverbs and the Psalms. The work was premiered in New York on December 2, 1958. Villa-Lobos traveled to New York the following spring to receive an honorary degree from NYU, but his health worsened considerably after his return home in July and he died four months later. His passing was observed with respect and remembrance across the country.

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| I. Sapientia foris prædicat,
in plateis dat vocem. | Wisdom calls aloud in the streets,
she raises her voices in the public squares.
(Proverbs 1:20) |
| II. Vas pretiosum labia scientire. | Lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel.
(Proverbs 1:15) |
| III. Principium sapientiæ, posside sapientiam. | Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom.
(Proverbs 4:7) |
| IV. Vir sapiens, fortis est. | A wise man has great power.
(Proverbs 24:5) |
| V. Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam
et qui affluit prudentia; melior est
acquisitio eius negotiatione argenti
et auri primissimi. | Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man
who gains understanding, for she is more profitable
than silver and yields better returns
than gold.
(Proverbs 3:13-14) |
| VI. Dexeteram tuam sic notam fac: Tuum! | Teach us to number our days aright, |

et eruditos corde in sapientia.

that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

(Psalm 90:12)

A PRAYER OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Howard Hanson

Born October 28, 1896 in Wahoo, Nebraska.

Died February 26, 1981 in Rochester, New York.

Composed in 1976.

Howard Hanson was one of the foremost composers, conductors, teachers and academic administrators of 20th-century American music. Born in Wahoo, Nebraska in 1896 to Swedish immigrants, he studied at Luther Junior College in Wahoo in 1911 and then spent a term at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, but left that school to earn enough as a freelance cellist to enroll a year later at the Institute of Music and Art in New York. His money ran out after a year there, however, and he finished his undergraduate work at Northwestern University. In 1916, Hanson was appointed to teach theory and composition at the College of the Pacific in San Jose, California; three years later, at the age of 22, he was named dean of the College's Conservatory of Fine Arts. In 1921, he was awarded the first American *Prix de Rome* and spent the following two years in Italy, where he studied with Ottorino Respighi and completed and premiered his First Symphony ("Nordic," inspired by his ancestral heritage). Hanson returned to the United States in 1923 and conducted the American premiere of his First Symphony in Rochester, New York, an event that brought him to the attention of George Eastman, founder two years before of the music school bearing his name. Eastman invited Hanson to become the school's director, and thus began one of the most distinguished tenures in the annals of American musical academe—during the forty years of his directorship, Hanson raised the Eastman School to the front rank of American conservatories. Among his many awards were 36 American honorary degrees, a Pulitzer Prize (for his Symphony No. 4), and election to both the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Hanson composed "A Prayer of the Middle Ages," his first work for a cappella chorus, in 1976 in tribute to the American Bicentennial. In the score, the text is identified as an anonymous "8th-century poem" translated into English by James Francis Cooke (1875-1960), composer, pianist, journalist, music educator and President of Theodore Presser Music Publishing from 1925 to 1936. As befits the occasion, the work is, by turns, both thoughtful and uplifting.

We declare unto all the ages as the greatest marvel,
ere there were hills and trees or the mighty ocean,
ere the sunlight shone forth or the moon cast its beams,
when naught was, from end to end,
there wert Thou, O God, Thou almighty God,
from time unknown to time unknown, Eternal God,
Thou who madest heaven and earth,
give to us wisdom, prudence and strength,
give through Thy holy blessing faith unending
that Thy will we may do.
Amen.

TO GOD "IN MEMORIAM M.B."

Dominick Argento

Born October 27, 1927 in York, Pennsylvania.

Died February 20, 2019 in Minneapolis.

Composed in 1994.

Dominick Argento was born into an Italian immigrant family in York, Pennsylvania in 1927. His interest in music was first stirred by chancing upon a biography of George Gershwin in a local library that excited his curiosity about composers and creativity. He read his way through music history and convinced his parents to provide him with a piano and lessons; he taught himself harmony from library books. After a stint in the army, he enrolled at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore in 1947, where he studied theory with Nicolas Nabokov and was guided toward opera composition by Hugo Weisgall. After graduating from Peabody in 1951, Argento won a Fulbright Fellowship that allowed him to study at the Conservatorio Cherubini in Florence, where his principal composition teacher was the Italian serialist Luigi Dallapiccola. Argento received his master's degree in 1954 from Peabody (as a student of omnivorous modernist Henry Cowell), the same year in which appeared his first opera, *Sicilian Limes* (based on Pirandello, now withdrawn), and then undertook doctoral work at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester as a student of Hanson, Rogers and Hovhaness; he received his Ph.D. from Eastman in 1957. Following a second sojourn in Italy as a Guggenheim Fellow in 1958 (another Guggenheim followed six years later), he joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis, where he remained as teacher of composition and opera history until his retirement in 1997; in 1979, he was named Regents Professor, the University's highest distinction. In 1964, he helped found the Center Opera in Minneapolis, which premiered several of his stage works; the company was later renamed the Minnesota Opera. Argento's numerous awards include the Pulitzer Prize (for the 1975 song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*), election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1979), a National Music Theater Award (1986), Peabody Medal of the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore (1993, previously bestowed only upon Leonard Bernstein and Benny Goodman), and honorary doctorates from York College in Pennsylvania (1976) and Valparaiso University (1982).

Marlene Baver was Deputy Organist–Choirmaster at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, whose musical program was directed by Philip Brunelle. The Plymouth Music Series that he founded in 1969 became nationally known through its performances and recordings, and Marlene filled in for him during his frequent engagements elsewhere, as well as performing on trumpet and flute. When she died in January 1994 after almost a quarter-century serving at Plymouth, Argento composed *To God "In Memoriam M.B."* to a poem by the 17th-century English writer and cleric Robert Herrick. Marlene Baver's trumpet playing is echoed in the work's postlude, played as if from a distance.

ALLELUIA

Randall Thompson

April 21, 1899 in New York City.

Died July 9, 1984 in Boston.

Composed in 1940.

Premiered on July 8, 1940 in Lenox, Massachusetts, conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth.

Randall Thompson, one of America's most distinguished men of music, was born on April 21, 1899 in New York City, attended the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey (where his father taught English), and earned his bachelor's (1920) and master's degrees (1922) in music from Harvard, where he studied with

Walter Spalding, Edward Burlingame Hill and Archibald T. Davison; he also took some private lessons from Ernest Bloch in New York. Soon after leaving Harvard in 1922, Thompson won an American *Prix de Rome* for his orchestral prelude *Pierrot and Cothurnus* (suggested by Edna St. Vincent Millay's drama *Aria da Capo*), which awarded him a three-year residency in Italy, where he composed a number of instrumental and vocal works and began his Symphony No. 1. He returned to the United States in 1925, and two years later was appointed to the faculty of Wellesley College; he taught there until moving to Harvard to lecture in 1929. Guggenheim Fellowships in 1929 and 1930 enabled him to oversee the premiere of his First Symphony and to compose his Symphony No. 2, which enjoyed considerable acclaim and numerous performances following its premiere in Rochester under the direction of Howard Hanson in March 1932. Between 1932 and 1935, Thompson investigated the state of music study in the nation's colleges and universities under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation (his resulting book, *College Music*, was published in 1935), and he thereafter taught and administered at Wellesley (1936-1937), Berkeley (1937-1939), the Curtis Institute (1939-1941), the University of Virginia (1941-1946), Princeton (1946-1948) and Harvard (1948-1965). He died in Boston in 1984. In addition to honorary degrees from several American conservatories and universities, Thompson's distinctions included an Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Award, membership in the National Institute of Arts and Letters, medals from Harvard and Yale, and appointment as *Cavaliere ufficiale al merito della Repubblica Italiana* by the Italian Government.

In the spring of 1940, Sergei Koussevitzky, Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Director of the Tanglewood Festival, asked Thompson to compose a choral piece, a "fanfare" for voices, for the opening exercises of the new Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood that summer. War was spreading across Europe at the time, however—France had just fallen—and Thompson did not feel it appropriate to write anything festive in nature, so he settled on a setting of the Hebrew word of praise, "Alleluia," for unaccompanied chorus. The piece was composed during the first five days of July, and first performed by the students of the Center on July 8th under the direction of G. Wallace Woodworth. Thompson wrote that the *Alleluia* is "a very sad piece. The word 'Alleluia' has so many possible interpretations. The music in my particular *Alleluia* cannot be made to sound joyous. It is a slow, sad piece, and...here it is comparable to the Book of Job, where it is written, 'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.'" The range of expressive possibilities within the glowing sonorities of this work—somber, prayerful, meditative, hopeful—helped it to become not only Thompson's most famous creation, but one of the best-loved numbers in the 20th-century choral repertory.

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