

Labyrinths

Cortez Mitchell, Gerrod Pagenkopf*, Kory Reid,
Bradley Sharpe, Logan Shields, Adam Ward – *countertenor*
Vineel Garisa Mahal*, Matthew Mazzola, Andy Van Allsburg – *tenor*
Andy Berry*, Zachary Burgess, Matthew Knickman – *baritone and bass*

Tim Keeler – *Music Director*

	I	
Virgo dei throno digna In exitu Israel Tu pauperum refugium		Johannes Tinctoris (ca.1435–1511) Josquin des Prez (ca.1450–1521) Anonymous (ca.1504)
	II	
III. All night† from <i>The Lotus Lovers</i> <i>Commissioned for Chanticleer in 2011 by Mary Rodgers and Hank Guettel</i>		Stephen Paulus (1949–2014)
Lopin' along through the cosmos		Judee Sill (1944–1979), arr. Adam Ward
III. Strange how we can walk (in L.A.)† from <i>Trade Winds</i> <i>Commissioned by Chanticleer in 2019</i> <i>and funded in honor of William Fred Scott by Scott Beth and Keith Jantzen</i>		Zhou Tian (b. 1981)
	III	
Oh Daedalus, fly away home God's gonna trouble		Trevor Weston (b.1967) Traditional, arr. Jonathan Woody
	-intermission-	
	IV	
Blow, blow thou winter wind† Stormy Weather†		George Walker (1922–2018) Harold Arlen (1905–1986), arr. Gene Puerling
Both sides now†		Joni Mitchell (b.1943), arr. Vince Peterson
	V	
III. Her beacon-hand beckons from <i>To the Hands</i> Calling my children home†		Caroline Shaw (b.1982) Doyle Lawson (b.1944), Charles Waller (1935–2004), Robert Yates (1936–2015), arr. Joseph H. Jennings
	VI	
	(to be selected from)	
The road home My way home Goin' home to God Rock a my soul† I'll fly away		Paulus Christopher H. Harris (b.1985) Traditional Spiritual, arr. Steve Barnett Traditional Spiritual, arr. Jennings Albert E. Brumley (1905–1977), Dean Webb (1937–2018), Mitch Jayne (1928–2010), arr. Tim Keeler

†These pieces have been recorded by Chanticleer.

*Andy Berry occupies *The Eric Alatorre Chair* given by Peggy Skornia. Vineel Garisa Mahal occupies *The Tenor Chair*, given by an Anonymous Donor. Gerrod Pagenkopf occupies *The Ning G. Mercer Chair for the Preservation of the Chanticleer Legacy*, given by Ning and Stephen Mercer.



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Program notes

Labyrinths twist and turn. They wind and wend, meander and mosey. Exploring a labyrinth can be scary, but it can also be meditative, and sometimes even healing. A labyrinth is not a maze. Labyrinths are “unicursal,” meaning they have only one path, while mazes branch in different directions. To walk a labyrinth is to admire the journey. Left and right, forward and backward, how did you end up here today? And what lies around the next corner? Life is one long labyrinth. Let's explore it together.

Our program starts with “*Virgo Dei throno digna*” by the Renaissance composer and music theorist Johannes Tinctoris. This brief singer's prayer is a send-off for our journey. “*In exitu Israel*,” by Josquin des Prez, is a setting of Psalm 113, which retells the story of the Jewish exodus from Egypt – a journey full of twists and turns. The text includes surreal images of parting seas and shifting mountains as the travelers make their way to the promised land. Psalm 113 is typically set to the *tonus peregrinus*, and Josquin follows that tradition here. This wandering (or “pilgrim”) tone is unique among psalm tones because the recitation note changes in the middle of each verse, thus acting as a musical representation of the text it sets.

“*Tu pauperum refugium*” presents a glimmer of hope for those wandering in the desert. Here, God is the “refuge of the poor” and “the hope of exiles.” The music's stark and spare beauty comes, in part, from its use of the Phrygian mode, which lends the work a feeling of stasis and eternity. “*Tu pauperum refugium*” is often attributed to Josquin. Indeed, it is similar to other works by the famous composer (“*Mille regretz*” comes to mind). However, this motet first appeared in print in 1504 without any composer attribution.

Wandering through life can be lonely without companionship, whether that be friends, family, or the divine. Written for Chanticleer in 2011 by the GRAMMY Award-winning composer Stephen Paulus, “*All night*” captures the extreme emptiness and hollowness of a suddenly solitary existence. “*Lopin' along through the cosmos*,” by Judee Sill, takes a more pragmatic view of life's ebbs and flows, a view which she arrives at through incredible self-awareness and a certain kind of mysticism – “I'll tell you a secret: however we are is okay.” Born in California and active throughout the 1970s as a singer-songwriter, Sill's Baroque-infused harmonies and carefully chosen lyrics give her music a timelessness and depth that maintains its relevance now, some five decades later. Sill died in 1979 from a drug overdose at the age of 35.

The GRAMMY-nominated, Chinese-American composer Zhou Tian wrote “*Strange how we can walk (in L.A.)*” for Chanticleer in 2019. The text, by Seth Michelson, describes the contradictions inherent in life's ups and downs. A day, just like any other day, can contain good news or bad news. Zhou Tian captures the contradictory frivolity of disaster with a pop-inflected interlude squeezed between an intense and rhythmically driven beginning and end.

W.H. Auden describes a similar disconnect in his poem, “*Musée des Beaux Arts*.” In it, he muses on the fall of Icarus, a disaster almost unworthy of note:

“[...]In Breughel’s *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; [...] the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.”

Icarus’s fateful flight too close to the sun is often taken as a warning on the dangers of hubris. However, there’s much more to the myth than that, and a brief retelling will help us understand the next piece on the program. According to Greek mythology, Daedalus (the father of Icarus) built a labyrinth for King Minos of Crete to imprison the half-man, half-bull Minotaur. After Daedalus helped the hero Theseus kill the Minotaur, King Minos imprisoned Daedalus and Icarus in the very labyrinth Daedalus had built. Daedalus crafted wings of feathers and wax so he and his son might escape. And escape they did, though with disastrous consequences.

Robert Hayden, the first Black Poet Laureate of the United States, references this myth in his 1943 poem, “Oh Daedalus, fly away home.” Daedalus’s prison, in this context, is slavery. Hayden describes a drifting Georgia night with mournful reminiscences of Africa. Flying, either physical or metaphorical, is the means of escape back home. An epigraph precedes the poem: “Lots uh slaves wut wuz brung ovuh from Africa could fly ... Dey dohn like it heah ... and go back to Africa ...” Hayden cites this as the *Legend of the Flying African*. The origin of that myth, like all myths, is uncertain, but the legend gained some notoriety after the Igbo Landing mass suicide in 1803, an event in which a group of slaves killed themselves by drowning rather than being forced into slavery. Flight, in this sense, becomes an allegory for escape through death. Trevor Weston captures the heat and sweat of the Georgia night, the stomping juba dance, the memories of Africa, and that longed-for escape with harmonies and scales as lush and dense as the Georgia pines themselves. Dr. Weston is the chair of the music department at Drew University where he teaches theory and composition.

“God’s gonna trouble” is a slave song medley arranged by Jonathan Woody featuring both “Follow the drinking gourd” and “Wade in the water.” The drinking gourd in the first song represents the big dipper, a helpful northward guide on the underground railroad, while “wade in the water” is an instruction to get off the road and into the water to avoid sniffing dogs and slave catchers. The biblical references in the latter song bring us back to where our program began: the Jordan River is the same river referenced in Psalm 113 that the Israelites crossed in order to reach the promised land. The arranger, Jonathan Woody, is a “charismatic” and “riveting” (*New York Times*) bass-baritone and composer living in New York City, whose compositions have been performed by the Handel and Haydn Society and Les Délices. As a soloist he has performed with, among others, the Boston Early Music Festival, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Apollo’s Fire, and the Choir of Trinity Wall Street.

The next three pieces give us different perspectives on the storms and challenges life throws our way. The text for “Blow, blow thou winter wind” comes from William Shakespeare’s *As you like it* and is set here by Washington D.C. native George Walker, who was the first Black American to win the Pulitzer Prize for music. George Arlen wrote “Stormy Weather” in 1933, and the vocal jazz legend Gene Puerling arranged it specifically for Chanticleer in 1988. Rounding out the set, Joni Mitchell’s iconic “Both sides now” reminds us that sometimes all you need to deal with those storms is a change of perspective.

After life’s twists and turns and ups and downs, the labyrinth ends somewhere we might call home. Home can mean many things: a return, an end, or a new beginning. Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw wrote “Her beacon-hand beckons” to directly address the meaning of “home” in America today. Excerpted from her larger work, *To the Hands*, “Her beacon-hand” is a reimagining of the Emma Lazarus poem engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty. The motherly figure of acceptance described by Lazarus and Shaw could be the narrator in “Calling my children home.” Joseph H. Jennings, Chanticleer’s music director emeritus, arranged this piece for the ensemble in 2002.

“The road home,” by Stephen Paulus, has become a favorite among choirs all over the world. The melody comes from *The Southern Harmony Songbook* of 1835 although the words, by Michael Dennis Browne, are new. The sentiment is one of joy and solace in belonging. “My way home,” on the other hand, is more somber. Composer Christopher H. Harris wrote the text himself in response to the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.

He takes the perspective of one of the children and implores us to “mourn me with grace” for “I have found my way home.” It is a message of comfort in the middle of incredible darkness. Dr. Harris is the director of choral activities at Arkansas Tech University.

program notes by Tim Keeler

Texts and translations

Virgo Dei throno digna – Johannes Tinctoris

Virgo Dei throno digna	O virgin worthy of the throne of God
spes unica musicorum	the only hope of singers
devotæ plebi cantorum	making music for the faithful masses
esto clemens et benigna.	be merciful and kind.

In exitu Israel – Josquin des Prez

In exitu Israel de Aegypto,	When Israel went out from Egypt,
domus Jacob de populo barbaro,	the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,
facta est Judaea sanctificatio ejus;	Judah became his sanctuary,
Israel potestas ejus.	Israel his dominion.
Mare vidit, et fugit;	The sea looked and fled;
Jordanis conversus est retrorsum.	Jordan turned back.
Montes exultaverunt ut arietes,	The mountains skipped like rams,
et colles sicut agni ovium.	the hills like lambs.
Quid est tibi, mare, quod fugisti?	What ails you, O sea, that you flee?
et tu, Jordanis, quia conversus es retrorsum?	O Jordan, that you turn back?
montes, exultastis sicut arietes?	O mountains, that you skip like rams?
et colles, sicut agni ovium?	O hills, like lambs?
A facie Domini mota est terra,	Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
a facie Dei Jacob:	at the presence of the God of Jacob,
qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum,	who turns the rock into a pool of water,
et rupem in fontes aquarum.	water, the flint into a spring of water.
Non nobis, Domine, non nobis,	Not to us, O Lord, not to us,
sed nomini tuo da gloriam:	but to your name give glory,
super misericordia tua et veritate tua;	for your mercy and your truth;
nequando dicant gentes: Ubi est Deus eorum?	Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?”

Tu pauperum refugium – Anonymous

Tu pauperum refugium, tu languorum remedium,	Thou art the refuge of the poor, remedy for afflictions,
spes exulum, fortitudo laborantium,	hope of exiles, strength of those who labor,
via errantium, veritas et vita.	way for the wandering, truth and life.
Et nunc Redemptor, Domine, ad te solum confugio;	And now, Redeemer, Lord, in thee alone I take refuge;
te verum Deum adoro, in te spero,	thee, true God, I adore, in thee I hope,
in te confido, salus mea, Jesu Christe.	in thee I confide, my salvation, O Jesus Christ.
Adjuva me, ne unquam obdormiat in morte anima mea.	Help me, lest my soul ever sleep in death.

III. All night from *The Lotus Lovers* – Stephen Paulus

All the sleepless night
In the moon's white light,
Alone,
She listens.
Does his voice call out?
She replies to an empty room.
All the sleepless night,
Alone.

text by Tzu Yeh (4th century, Jin Dynasty)

Lopin' along through the cosmos – Judee Sill, arr. Adam Ward

Lopin' along through the cosmos,
And sideways I slide through the square,
I'm hopin' so hard for a kiss from God,
I missed the sweet love of the air.

A silver chariot soars
Through Mercury ripples of sky.
I'm lookin' so hard for a place to land,
I almost forgot how to fly.

So keep on movin',
Or stay by my side,
Either way,
I'll tell you a secret
I've never revealed:
However we are is okay.

III. Strange how we can walk (in L.A.) from *Trade Winds* – Zhou Tian

Strange how we can walk
into new light each morning, same
city, same sidewalk, but somehow
this daybreak: downtown L.A., late May,
and you're walking alone,
a white flame, the birds singing
as they mull yesterday's news:
aortic stenosis; *Your heart, Sir, it's
leaking.*

text by Seth Michelson (b. 1978)

Oh Daedalus, fly away home – Trevor Weston

Drifting night in the Georgia pines,
Coonskin drum and jubilee banjo.
Pretty Malinda, dance with me.

Night is juba, night is conjo.
Pretty Malinda, dance with me.

Night is an African juju man
Weaving a wish and a weariness together
To make two wings.

O fly away home fly away

Do you remember Africa?

O cleave the air fly away home

My gran, he flew back to Africa,
Just spread his arms and
Fly away home.

Drifting night in the windy pines;
Night is a laughing, night is a longing.
Pretty Malinda, come to me.

Night is a mourning juju man
Weaving a wish and a weariness together
To make two wings.

O fly away home fly away

text by Robert Hayden (1913–1980)

God's gonna trouble – Traditional, arr. Jonathan Woody

Follow the drinking gourd!
Follow the drinking gourd!
For the old man is a'waiting
for to carry you to freedom,
if you follow the drinking gourd,
follow the drinking gourd!

God's gonna trouble

The river bank makes a mighty good road,
dead trees to show you the way.
Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,
just follow the drinking gourd.

The river ends between two hills,
follow the drinking gourd,
there's another river on the other side,

God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water,

wade in the water children,
wade in the water,
God's gonna trouble the water.

Jordan river is chilly an' cold,
God's gonna trouble the water,
it chills the body but not the soul,
God's gonna trouble the water,

If you don't believe I've been redeemed,
God's gonna trouble the water,
Then follow me down to Jordan's stream,
God's gonna trouble the water.

For the old man is a'waiting
for to carry you to freedom,
if you follow the drinking gourd!

Blow, blow thou winter wind – George Walker

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
*Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.*

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly...

text by William Shakespeare (ca.1564–1616), As You Like It, Act II, Sc. 7

Stormy Weather – Harold Arlen, arr. Gene Puerling

Don't know why
There's no sun up in the sky
Stormy weather
Since my man and I ain't together
Keeps raining all the time

Life is bare
Gloom and misery everywhere
Stormy weather,

Just can't get my poor self together,
I'm weary all the time,
so weary all the time.

When he went away
the blues walked in and met me,
if he stays away
ol' rocking chair will get me,
All I do is pray
the Lord above will let me
walk in the sun again.

Can't go on,
Everything I had is gone
Stormy weather,
Since my man and I ain't together
Keeps raining all the time.

text by Ted Koehler (1894–1973)

Both sides now – Joni Mitchell, arr. Vince Peterson

Rows and flows of angel hair
And ice cream castles in the air
And feather canyons everywhere.
I've looked at clouds that way.
But now they only block the sun.
They rain and they snow on everyone.
So many things I would have done
but clouds got in my way.
I've looked at clouds from both sides now,
from up and down and still somehow
it's cloud illusions I recall.
I really don't know clouds at all.

Moons and Junes and ferris wheels,
the dizzy dancing way that you feel,
as ev'ry fairy tale comes real,
I've looked at love that way.
But now it's just another show.
And you leave 'em laughing when you go.
And if you care, don't let them know.
Don't give yourself away.
I've looked at love from both sides now,
From give and take and still somehow,
It's love's illusions that I recall.
I really don't know love at all.

Tears and fears and feelin' proud,
to say "I love you" right out loud,
dreams and schemes and circus crowds,
I've looked at life that way.
But now old friends are acting strange.

They shake their heads, they say I've changed
somethin's lost, and somethin's gained
in living every day.
I've looked at life from both sides now,
from win and lose and still somehow
it's life's illusions I recall.
I really don't know life,
I really don't know life at all.

III. Her beacon-hand beckons from *To the Hands* – Caroline Shaw

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

*text by Caroline Shaw,
responding to the 1883 sonnet "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus,
which was mounted on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty in 1903*

Calling my children home – Doyle Lawson, Charles Waller, Robert Yates, arr. Joseph H. Jennings

Those lives were mine to love and cherish,
To guard and guide along life's way.
Oh, God forbid that one should perish,
that one alas should go astray.

Back in the years with all together,
around the place we'd romp and play.
So lonely now, I often wonder,
oh, will they come back home someday?

I'm lonesome for my precious children,
they live so far away.
Oh, may they hear my calling,

and come back home someday.

I gave my all for my dear children,
their problems still with love I share.
I'd brave life's storms, defy the tempest,
to bring them home from anywhere.

I lived my life, my love I gave them,
to guide them through this world of strife.
I hope and pray we'll live together,
in that great glad hereafter life.

I'm lonesome for my precious children,
they live so far away.
Oh, may they hear my calling,
and come back home someday.

The road home – Stephen Paulus

Tell me where is the road
I can call my own,
That I left, that I lost,
So long ago?
All these years I have wandered
Oh, when will I know
There's a way, there's a road
That will lead me home?

After wind, after rain,
When the dark is done
As I wake from a dream
In the gold of day,
Through the air there's a calling
From far away,
There's a voice I can hear
That will lead me home

Rise up, follow me,
Come away is the call,
With love in your heart
As the only song;
There is no such beauty
As where you belong
Rise up, follow me,
I will lead you home.

text by Michael Dennis Browne (b.1940)

My way home – Christopher H. Harris

I know that sorrow's been here and peace may long be gone,
I know my touch is fading though my memory lingers on.

Still your heart and calm your mind, if tears must flow and pain
must grow, mourn me with grace, I've finished my race.

I know disdain has spoken and heartache's had its say,
In spite of what seems hopeless this is what I must pray.
Still your heart and calm your mind, if tears must flow and pain
must grow, mourn me with grace, I've finished my race.

Weep not for me.
I have seen my struggle cease.
I have seen my fight's end.
I have found my way home.

Text by Christopher H. Harris

Goin' home to God – Traditional Spiritual, arr. Steve Barnett

*Soon I will be done with the troubles of the world,
Goin' home to God.*

I want to meet my mother,
I want to meet my father,
I want to meet my sisters and brothers,
Goin' home to God.

Soon I will be done...

I want to see my Jesus,
I want to see my Jesus,
I want to see my Jesus,
Goin' home to God.

Soon I will done...

No more weepin' and a-wailin'
No more weepin' and a-wailin'
No more weepin' and a-wailin'
Goin' home to God.

Soon I will done...

Rock a my soul – Traditional Spiritual, arr. Joseph H. Jennings

*Rock a my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
Rock a my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
Rock a my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
Oh, rock a my soul!*

My soul is glad,
From sin set free,
I'm going home to live with Thee!

Rock a my soul...

I may be weak,
But Thou are strong,
I'm leaning on His mighty arm!

Rock a my soul...

I'll fly away – Albert E. Brumley, Dean Webb, Mitch Jayne, arr. Tim Keeler

Some glad morning when this life is o'er
I'll fly away
To a home on God's celestial shore
I'll fly away

*I'll fly away, oh, Glory
I'll fly away
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by
I'll fly away*

Just a few more weary days and then
I'll fly away
To a land where joy shall never end
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh, Glory...

It's been ten long years since I left my home
In the hollow where I was born
Where the cool fall nights make the wood smoke rise
And the foxhunter blows his horn

I fell in love with a girl from the town
I thought that she would be true
I ran away to Charlottesville
And worked in a sawmill or two

*What have they done to the old home place
Why did they tear it down
And why did I leave the plow in the field
And look for a job in the town*

Well my girl she ran off with somebody else
The taverns took all my pay
And here I stand where the old home stood
Before they took it away

Now the geese fly south and the cold wind blows
As I stand here and hang my head
I've lost my love I've lost my home
And now I wish that I was dead

About Chanticleer

The GRAMMY Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer is known around the world as “an orchestra of voices” for its wide-ranging repertoire and dazzling virtuosity. Founded in San Francisco in 1978 by singer and musicologist Louis Botto, Chanticleer quickly took its place as one of the most prolific recording and touring ensembles in the world, selling more than one million recordings and performing thousands of live concerts to audiences around the globe.

Rooted in the Renaissance, Chanticleer’s repertoire has been expanded to include a wide range of classical, gospel, jazz and popular music and to reflect a deep commitment to the commissioning of new compositions and arrangements. The ensemble has dedicated much of its vast recording catalogue to these commissions, garnering GRAMMY Awards for its recordings of Sir John Tavener’s *Lamentations and Praises* and the ambitious collection of commissioned works entitled *Colors of Love*. Chanticleer is the recipient of Chorus America’s Dale Warland Commissioning Award and the Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming. During his tenure with Chanticleer, its Music Director Emeritus Joseph H. Jennings received the Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award for his contribution to the African American choral tradition.

Named for the “clear-singing” rooster in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Chanticleer continues to maintain ambitious programming in its hometown of San Francisco, including a large education and outreach program, and an annual concert series that includes its legendary holiday tradition “A Chanticleer Christmas.”

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