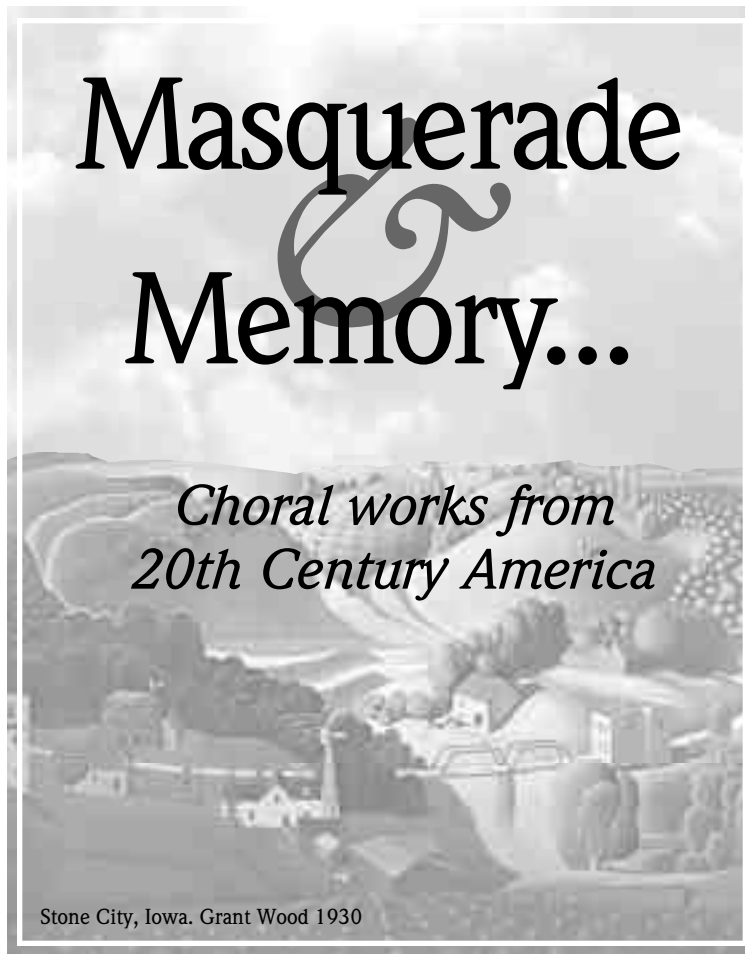




John W. Ehrlich, *Music Director*



Saturday, February 28, 2004 at 8:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Church
15 Newbury Street, Boston

Please join The Spectrum Singers at a post-concert reception in the Parish Hall, located through the right door at the front of the sanctuary.

Kindly turn off all cell phones, pagers, and wristwatch prompters.

Please see an usher if you would like a large-print program.



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The Spectrum Singers
John W. Ehrlich, *Music Director*

Masquerade & Memory...

Mists (1997)

Charles Fussell (*b. 1938*)
Verse: Hart Crane (1899–1932)

March

Roberta Chase-Borgatti, *soprano*

Postscript

October–November

The Last Train (1942)

Ernst Bacon (1898–1990)

(from *A Tree on the Plains*)

Verse: Paul Horgan (1903–1995)

Karen Harvey and James Barkovic, *piano*

Geographical Fugue

Ernst Toch (1887–1964)

(1930, English version 1950)

Old American Songs

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

arr. Irving Fine (1914–1962)

I Bought Me a Cat

Richard W. Drost, *tenor* • Kathi Tighe, *soprano*

Simple Gifts

The Dodger

Gael Ulrich, David Kilroy and John Schumacher, *baritones*

Long Time Ago

Ching-A-Ring Chaw

James Barkovic, *piano*

≈ *Intermission* ≈

The Mask (1990)

1. We Wear the Mask
2. Heritage
3. Shadow
4. Worn Faces
5. Interlude for Natalie
6. Portrait

William Bolcom (*b.* 1938)

Verse: See text pages

Karen Harvey, *piano*

The Robe (1953)

Ernst Bacon

Kevin Woller, David Kilroy and James E. Frens, *baritone soloists*
Jennifer Angel, *alto*

James Barkovic, *piano*

Aunt Dinah has Blowed de Horn
(from *Treemonisha*, 1911)

Scott Joplin (1868–1917)

James Barkovic, *piano*

A Real Slow Drag (from *Treemonisha*)

Joplin

Laura Serafino Harbert, *Treemonisha*
Kathi Tighe, *Lucy*

James Barkovic, *piano*

Three Choruses from *Alice in Wonderland* Irving Fine (1914–1962)
Verse: Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

- I. The Lobster Quadrille
- II. Lullaby of the Duchess

Sara D. Kunz and Kathi Tighe, *soloists*

- III. Father William

James Barkovic, *piano*

Acrostic Song from *Final Alice*

David Del Tredici (*b.* 1937)

Verse: Lewis Carroll

Roberta Chase-Borgatti, *soprano*

John W. Ehrlich, *Founder and Music Director of The Spectrum Singers*, has been active as a singer and conductor in the Boston and Cambridge areas for more than thirty years. Son of a concert pianist and a microbiologist, Mr. Ehrlich was born in Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan, and prepared for higher education at Grosse Pointe University School and the New Hampton School. He studied music and conducting while attending the Hartt School of Music, Trinity College, and both Harvard and Boston Universities. His teachers were Robert Shaw, Gregg Smith, G. Wallace Woodworth, Vytautas Marijousius, Iva Dee Hiatt, and Margaret Hillis. Also a singer, Mr. Ehrlich has sung with the Hartford Chamber Choir, Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Cambridge Society for Early Music, John Oliver Chorale, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chorus, Boston Baroque, and the Emmanuel Church Choir. For eight seasons he was Music Director of The Master Singers of Worcester. This is Mr. Ehrlich's 24th season as Music Director of The Spectrum Singers.

Karen Harvey, *guest pianist*, is well-known to New England audiences as a solo artist and collaborative performer. A two-time recipient of Tanglewood Music Center fellowships, Ms. Harvey has been a featured soloist with the Lowell, Salem, and Merrimack Valley Philharmonic Orchestras, among others, and frequently appears with groups such as *Boston Musica Viva*, the *Cantata Singers*, and *Collage New Music*. For her solo recital of twentieth century piano music at the Wang Center, she was hailed as a "pianist with an infinite supply of fingers" (*Josiah Fiske, Boston Herald*). Ms. Harvey was a founding member of the *Vivace Chamber Players* and *Griffin* (Contemporary Music Ensemble), has served on the staffs of the New England Conservatory, UMass Dartmouth, and the Boston University Opera Institute, and was formerly a faculty member at the North Shore Conservatory of Music and Endicott College.

Currently an Affiliate Artist at M.I.T. and pianist for the Boston Pops Holiday Chorus, Ms. Harvey is Music Director of the *SRO Players* in Lowell and the *Holiday Classics* at Faneuil Hall Marketplace. This past October marked the beginning of her tenth season as Minister of Music at the United Church of Christ in Norwell.

James R. Barkovic, *pianist*, has been the regular accompanist for The Spectrum Singers since 1992. He has been active in the greater Boston area since 1985 as a choral, instrumental, and vocal accompanist. Currently he serves as Minister of Music at West Concord Union Church and Director of Music at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, both of Concord, Massachusetts. Mr. Barkovic is on the faculty at Middlesex School (Concord, Mass.) as chapel organist. He is also on the faculty (accompanist, vocal coach) at the Indian Hill Music Center (Littleton, Mass.). A Minnesota native, he did his undergraduate work at St. Olaf College, with a concentration in music theory and music history. He received a Master's Degree in Piano Performance from the New England Conservatory as a student of Stephen Drury.

The Spectrum Singers gave their first concert under Music Director John W. Ehrlich in December of 1980. Mr. Ehrlich chose the group's name to highlight what he hoped would be the chorus's primary mission: to perform works from all periods of music history – pre-Renaissance through the present day – at a high level of historically-informed professionalism.

From its beginnings, the chorus has embraced “amateur singers” – gifted vocalists who willingly perform without pay. Today, people from all walks of life sing with The Spectrum Singers, many bringing to the chorus significant experience and skills as choral and solo vocal artists. As a result, the chorus has prospered artistically, and today is widely regarded as one of the finest choral ensembles in the region. In addition to its own annual subscription concert series, the 40-voice chorus has been called upon by composers and other musical ensembles to collaborate in premiere performances of significant choral works and in concerts of other ensembles. Recent joint ventures have included appearances with the Cantata Singers, the Indian Hill Symphony Orchestra, and Emmanuel Music's widely acclaimed presentation of Schubert's opera *Alfonso und Estrella* in February 2003.

The Spectrum Singers are admired for their nimble flexibility in performance of the entire choral spectrum. While renowned for the special skills they bring to very demanding *a cappella* repertoire, the chorus is also praised for the rich and robust tone and fleet virtuosity it brings to works accompanied by orchestra. Equally of interest is the chorus's breadth of repertoire. Music Director John W. Ehrlich is widely admired for his intriguing and adventuresome programming.

Now in their 24th season, The Spectrum Singers and Music Director John W. Ehrlich continue their mission of performing familiar and less-well-known works in programs of compelling depth and professional execution to a broad audience of appreciative listeners.



PROGRAM NOTES

Cultural diversity has been a hallmark of the United States since its beginnings. And the broad range of the music our country has produced from its earliest days reflects this rich palette of ethnic and cultural influences. The program we offer tonight merely tastes this “melting pot,” yet it affords a glimpse into a number of stylistic divergences and resonances.

Charles Fussell - composer, performer, teacher - divides his busy schedule between professorships in composition at Boston and Rutgers Universities, advising and occasionally conducting Collage New Music. His works include six symphonies; *Julian* (after Flaubert) for chorus, soloists, and orchestra; *Cymbeline*, a chamber drama after Shakespeare; and *Specimen Days* for baritone solo, chorus, and orchestra. His chamber opera, *The Astronaut's Tale*, was premiered in 1997. Mr. Fussell has received Fulbright, Ford, Copland Foundation, and Massachusetts Cultural

Foundation grants, and numerous commissions. *Mists*, for a *cappella* mixed chorus with soprano solo and set to the poetry of Hart Crane, was premiered by The New Amsterdam Singers in 1997. Each of *Mists*' three brief movements is as an elegant miniature, reflecting the color, sound, and meaning of the verse it illuminates. Fussell's care in crafting these superb vignettes is evident in his canny use of rhythm as an expressive device and his gift for rich, tonal portraiture, evident, for example, in his setting of Crane's lines in "October-November," when the moon's "... mad orange flare/Floods the grape-hung night."

Ernst Bacon is best known today for his some 250 solo songs, most of which are set to American poets, Whitman and Dickinson in particular. But his several works for chorus are equally well crafted. Their virtual disappearance from the choral stage - a situation undoubtedly abetted by the fact that most of Bacon's choral scores are no longer available from his publishers - is disappointing and undeserved. The Spectrum Singers regularly attempt to remedy this unfortunate paucity of performance. *The Last Train* artfully and musically depicts the whistled departure and disappearance in the distance of an old steam locomotive-hauled train, and *The Robe* is Bacon's portrait of a contemporary "spiritual," powered by a deep, inexorable rhythmic pulse. Both works exhibit a keen ear for tangy modal harmony and a truly unique melodic syntax. Bacon's singular and almost haunting musical "voice" is quite unlike that of his peers. This singularity is comparable to that of Charles Ives and Carl Ruggles, two other "rugged individualists" of American musical discourse.

Ernst Toch was born in Austria. He settled in Berlin in 1929 for a four-year stay where he taught composition and enjoyed a successful career as a recital pianist. He fled the oncoming Nazi threat in 1933, and arrived in New York in 1934 with an invitation to teach at the New School for Social Research. He traveled to California in 1936, settled there, and became a U.S. citizen in 1940. His fame peaked in 1956 when his *Third Symphony* won both the Pulitzer and Huntington Hartford prizes and was recorded by The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under William Steinberg. Of his several works for speaking chorus, his most famous is the *Geographical Fugue* from his 1930 *Gesprochene Musik*. Set for rhythmic choral declamation and meticulously marked for dynamics, the work is a spoken fugue set to worldly place names, and ingeniously employs many of the traditional fugal conventions: imitative repeats of the "subject," diminution and augmentation, and dramatic cadential approach.

Aaron Copland wrote two sets of songs based on American folk melodies for solo male voice and piano. The first set appeared in 1950, and was performed throughout Europe that summer by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. Ned Rorem notes that it was shortly thereafter in January, 1951, with Copland at the piano, the American premiere took place - in an undoubtedly lower key - with Leontyne Price's then husband baritone William Warfield. A recording by these performers proved so successful that Copland wrote a second set of five songs, which in 1954 the composer combined with the first set of five and re-scored for medium voice and orchestra.

Irving Fine, with the composer's encouragement, undertook to set several of these songs for chorus, and the art and careful craft which he bestowed on these transformations are nothing short of magical. *Simple Gifts* is offered tonight in Fine's elegant version for women's voices, and recalls the now-familiar Shaker hymn-tune Copland set to great effect in his ballet for Martha Graham, *Appalachian Spring*. *The Dodger*, in its men's voices depiction of three scoundrels, seems particularly appropriate for these times. Fine's piano accompaniment imitates, as did Copland's original, the strumming of a banjo. *Long Time Ago* is set to an extraordinarily rich arrangement for mixed voices and marks a high point of Fine's gifted and glowing artistry in creating the perfect frame for his subject. The minstrel song *Ching-a-ring-Chaw*, ingeniously expanded to four parts from its solo-voice version, "hides its minstrel smile" within a joyful, high-spirited, tambourine-onomatopoeic romp.

William Bolcom, one of our country's most gifted pianists, first gained attention with the recitals of American "popular" song he and his wife Joan Morris have given to great acclaim throughout the U.S. and Europe. His development as a major composer ultimately took root with a sprawling setting for orchestra, vocal soloists, and multiple choruses of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, written between 1956 and 1981. Since then, Bolcom has embraced virtually all of the musical forms, and has exhibited a special affinity for opera – *MacTeague* and *A View from the Bridge* were both written for the Chicago Lyric Opera and given widely noted performances there and later in several other cities. Clearly, an interest in the human voice and an intrigue for history pervade his consciousness.

The more one studies William Bolcom's fascinating and challenging 1990 work for chorus and piano soloist, *The Mask*, the more complex and deeply layered it reveals itself to be.

First, there is the composer's note printed opposite the last page of the music:

Several years ago, Natalie Hinderas¹ asked me for a group of pieces for The Philadelphia Singers with an important piano part for herself. Upon returning to the United States from Europe the following year, I learned Natalie had died. I hope this cycle is close to what she had in mind, even though there are texts.²

I asked T. J. Anderson III (son of the famous composer, and a prize-winning poet himself) to select the texts, with the stipulation that he contribute a poem himself.

Then there are the poems, five in all, written by black Americans. All of the poems offer glimpses into their people's often-troubled circumstances. Paul Laurence

1. A pianist (1927-1987) and noted advocate of music composed by Black Americans.

2. Hinderas had asked Bolcom for a concertlike work for piano and wordless chorus.

Dunbar, born of slave parents in Dayton, Ohio in 1872, achieved a modicum of fame from his 12 published books of poetry and from his friendships with the family of aviation pioneers the Wright brothers, and the renowned abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

Gwendolyn B. Bennett (1902-1981) an early participant in the heady 1919-1939 Harlem Renaissance, was born in Texas. At age seven she was kidnapped from her mother by her father and taken, after stays throughout Pennsylvania, to New York City where she attended the Pratt Institute and Columbia University. Something of a renaissance woman of the arts, she painted, taught design, studied in Paris, and wrote poetry, her writings appearing in many of the important journals of the day. Her African heritage is a main theme of her writing.

Richard Bruce (1906-1987)-his full name was Richard Bruce Nugent – adopted his two-part *nom de plume* to avoid embarrassing his socially prominent Washington, D.C. parents with his frankly flamboyant lifestyle, very much that of the ultimate bohemian. Embraced and encouraged early on by Langston Hughes, Bruce's artwork and writings were published throughout the Harlem Renaissance. His short story, "Smoke, Lilies, and Jade," was the first literary work on a purely homosexual theme that had been published by a black.

As one can gather from only these three brief biographical sketches, T. J. Anderson III certainly offered Bolcom a rich selection of poets and poetry. Their rich brew of vibrant verse would ultimately inspire the composer to create deeply engaging music.

Dunbar's extraordinarily evocative "We Wear the Mask" begins Bolcom's explorations, and the poetic image of a mask worn to hide life's sorrows is underscored by an almost bluesy melody, interrupted by angry discords, as if depicting reality intruding upon a synthetic, feigned contentment with life's lot.

Bennett's "Heritage" mirrors her African forebears with rich Nubian imagery. Here, Bolcom artfully juxtaposes what might be an imitation of local tribal music with one of its North American descendants: ragtime.

Bruce's "Shadow" is punctuated by violent chromatic arpeggios as his verse tells metaphorically of the umbral existence of dark-skinned people forced to live on life's outer edges.

Charles Cyrus Thomas's "Worn Faces" tells either of an overworked hillside despoiled by years of environmentally insensitive farming – probably by forced labor – or, more likely, and therefore more poignantly, the worn, tear-dampened visage of a work-wearied, impoverished female field hand – or perhaps both of these. Bolcom's music is especially attuned to the heavy burden borne by the verses' protagonist(s).

Finally, in an especially artful conflation of two worlds, Anderson's "Portrait" paints with a palette of vibrant and colorful African images a vivid portrait of a pianist (Bolcom himself?) in recital.

The Mask can be analyzed many ways, and the above is only one person's "take." What ultimately matters is the overall effect the music and verse have on the listener and performer. Bolcom's music and the verse it entwines offer powerful and memorable musical and verbal images not soon forgotten.

Scott Joplin had already mastered many musical genres, most notably the explosively popular rage of ragtime, before he had begun writing, composing, and choreographing *Treemonisha*. Not content to merely imitate European traditions, Joplin worked to create a uniquely American opera, and one that would have broad public appeal. Published at his expense in 1911, Joplin also personally funded a piano-accompanied reading of *Treemonisha* in 1915. Despite these early efforts, *Treemonisha* unfortunately lay dormant until it was revived in Atlanta in 1972 to great acclaim.

Treemonisha is the story of the life of an orphaned little black girl, discovered lying under a tree, just after the Civil War. Named "Tree-Monisha," after both her adopted mother and the aforementioned tree (with which she exhibited a mystical kinship) "Tree" grows up to battle three folk-sorcerers who hold the local black community in their thrall. Victorious over the conjurers, she leads her people forward out of ignorance toward education and helps empower them for self-advancement.

Joplin's present popularity stems from his ragtime compositions, which in the 1970s were "rediscovered" by Hollywood and others, at a time when Bicentennial fervor was sweeping the country. In *Treemonisha*, however, ragtime is rarely heard. It does appear in dance ensemble numbers, though, two of which we offer this evening: the brief but infectious *Aunt Dinah Has Blowed de Horn* and the opera's wonderful finalé in which Treemonisha and her compatriot Lucy lead the opera's entire ensemble of characters in a final sensual yet exuberant celebratory dance entitled *A Real Slow Drag*.

Irving Fine's small but precious legacy of compositions is one of the real treasures of American music. Its shameful neglect for many years now seems to be abating. Few other American composers so felicitously combine an almost Ravel-like delicacy and love of detail and craft with a real "American-sounding" harmonic syntax and gift for melody. A revered teacher at Harvard and later at Brandeis, Fine's life was tragically brief. He died unexpectedly in his 48th year, on the brink of an important breakthrough to the world's symphonic stage with his masterful *Symphony 1962* which had just been premiered by the Boston Symphony.

Fine's *Three Choruses from Alice in Wonderland* date from 1943, and are dedicated to G. Wallace Woodworth, the director of the Harvard Glee Club at the time. Fine

was a superb pianist. He was the accompanist for “Woody’s” Glee Club, and the composer’s accompanied choral works all challenge the pianist and chorus equally. This is especially evident in the second and third *Alice* songs. The piano part calls for huge fistfuls of notes in an almost orchestra blues style in the *Lullaby of the Duchess*, perhaps the **loudest** lullaby ever written! Further wit is at play: at several points, an unmistakable and sly reference from J. S. Bach’s *Cantata 21* can be heard where Bach sets the text “Be now again at peace.” And *Father William*, on its surface a strophic canter for chorus, hides another surprise. Midway, the pianist takes off on a solo spoof of yet more Bach – a parodic two-part invention – becomes tangled up in the counterpoint, vents frustration by banging out a loud discord, and then rejoins the chorus for the final verse.

While the subject matter may seem light, the texts of these so-called “nonsense” verses were actually extremely witty parodies of poems quite familiar to the learned readers of Lewis Carroll’s time. The music clearly follows suit. As with all of Irving Fine’s compositions, these songs are crafted with great attention to detail and a refreshing freedom from cliché.

David Del Tredici first embarked upon what would become an almost overwhelming obsession with Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* with his 1968 *Pop-Pourri* and proceeded through so many subsequent *Alice*-related works that the composer vowed he would end this (po/ob)session with *Final Alice*, which was premiered by the Chicago Symphony and soprano Barbara Hendricks in 1976. The Boston Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and many other orchestras subsequently played the work to great acclaim worldwide. The composer ultimately failed to exorcise the *Alice* spirit, and continues to occasionally submit to its spell to this day.

The epilogue poem from *Through the Looking Glass* is the “Acrostic Song,” which Del Tredici set as the fourth and final “aria” in *Final Alice*. Scored there for large orchestra, soprano solo, and “whisper chorus,” it had such appeal that the composer excerpted and recast it in several versions for chorus. It is the *a cappella* version that is offered tonight. An acrostic is a visual device in which the first letters of each line of verse create a set of words of their own. In this case, the letters spell ALICE PLEASANCE LIDDELL, the name of the little English girl who was Carroll’s inspiration for the *Alice in Wonderland* stories. Del Tredici ingeniously renders this visual device aurally by asking that these initial letters be stage-whispered as they occur in the music. This effect, combined with the relentlessly diatonic harmony and phase-shifting rhythm, recreates the fantastical world from which the young Alice of the story returns. And, as she awakens from Wonderland to the “real” world, which her sister laments as being merely a “dull reality,” the final line of the “Acrostic Song” invokes a powerful question known well to adherents of Eastern religions, philosophers throughout the world, and worthy of contemplation by all of us:

“Life, what is it but a dream?”

~ Program Notes © 2004 by John W. Ehrlich

THE SPECTRUM SINGERS

Soprano

Roberta Chase-Borgatti
Harriet Bridges
Sheri Ann Cheng
Elizabeth Harmell Clements
Jill Fekete*
Ann Ferentz
Valerie Gibson
Laura Serafino Harbert
Leslie Horst
Catherine C. Josman
Carol McKeen**
Anna Andrews Smith
Kathi Tighe

Alto

Jennifer Angel
Christine E. Bishop
Jocelyn Burke
Karen Coffman
Karin Denison
Jane Farber
Sara S. Glidden*
Mara Chaplan Goldberg
Linda Ingram
Sara D. Kunz
Leslie A. Lanagan
Marilyn Marlette
Elizabeth Mattoon Thompson

Tenor

Thomas A. Best*
Richard W. Drost
Ian Fox
John Schumacher
Gael Ulrich
Maurice Wong

Bass

Carl Bewig
James E. Frens*
Edward A. Jacobson
David Kilroy
Laurence J. Krenis
Steven Solomon
Kevin R. Woller

* Section Leader
** Guest Artist

Mists

Charles Fussell

March

Awake to the cold light
of wet wind running
twigs in tremors. Walls
are naked. Twilights raw—
and when the sun taps steeples
their glistenings dwindle
upward...

March
slips along the ground
like a mouse under pussy-
willows, a little hungry.

The vagrant ghost of winter,
is it this that keeps the chimney
busy still? For something still
nudges shingles and windows:

but waveringly,—this ghost,
this slate-eyed saintly wraith
of winter wanes
and knows its waning.

Postscript

Though now but marble are the
marble urns,
Though fountains droop in waning
light and pain
Glitters on the edges of wet ferns,
I should not dare to let you in again.

Mine is a world foregone though not
yet ended,—
An imagined garden grey with
sundered boughs
And broken branches, wistful
and unmended,
And mist that is more constant
than all vows.

October–November

Indian-summer-sun
With crimson feathers whips
away the mists;
Dives through the filter of trellises
And gilds the silver on the blotched
arbor-seats.

Now gold and purple scintillate
On trees that seem dancing
In delirium;
Then the moon
In a mad orange flare
Floods the grape-hung night.

~ *Hart Crane (1899-1932)*

The Last Train

Ernst Bacon

He's taken de las' train,
Halleluia, O my Lord!
He's gone where there's plenty o' rain,
Halleluia, all aboard.

I hear the tracks a-singin',
Halleluia, O my Lord!
For him the bells are ringin',
Halleluia, all aboard.

The engineer is a-fussin',
Halleluia, O my Lord!
And the devil is a-cussin',
Halleluia, all aboard!

The tracks rise to the sky,
Halleluia, O my Lord!
Get to heaven by and by,
Halleluia, all aboard.

The Judgment Day is comin',
Halleluia, O my Lord!
And God's fiery rain is a-fallin',
Halleluia, all aboard.

He's taken de last train,
Halleluia, O my Lord!
He's gone where there's plenty o' rain,
Halleluia, all aboard!

~ *Paul Horgan*
(1903-1995)

Geographical Fugue

Ernst Toch

Trinidad!
and the big Mississippi
and the town Honolulu
and the lake Titicaca,
the Popocatepetl is not in Canada
rather in Mexico Mexico Mexico
Canada Malaga Rimini Brindisi
Yes! Tibet Tibet Tibet Tibet
Nagasaki Yokohama
Trinidad!

Old American Songs

Aaron Copland, arr. Irving Fine

I Bought Me a Cat

I bought me a cat, my cat pleased me.
I fed my cat under yonder tree.
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a duck, my duck
pleased me.
I fed my duck under yonder tree.
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a goose, my goose
pleased me.
I fed my goose under yonder tree.
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a hen, my hen pleased me.
I fed my hen under yonder tree.
My hen says "Shimmy shack,
shimmy shack,"
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a pig, my pig pleased me.
I fed my pig under yonder tree.
My pig says "Griffey, griffey,"
My hen says "Shimmy shack,
shimmy shack,"
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a cow, my cow
pleased me.
I fed my cow under yonder tree.
My cow says "Baw, baw,"
My pig says "Griffey, griffey,"
My hen says "Shimmy shack,
shimmy shack,"
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a horse, my horse
pleased me.
I fed my horse under yonder tree.
My horse says "Neigh, neigh,"
My cow says "Baw, baw,"
My pig says "Griffey, griffey,"
My hen says "Shimmy shack,
shimmy shack,"
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

I bought me a wife, my wife
pleased me.
I fed my wife under yonder tree.
My wife says "Honey, honey,"
My horse says "Neigh, neigh,"
My cow says "Baw, baw,"
My pig says "Griffey, griffey,"
My hen says "Shimmy shack,
shimmy shack,"
My goose says "Quaw, quaw,"
My duck says "Quaa, quaa,"
My cat says fiddle eye fee.

Simple Gifts

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift
to be free,
'Tis the gift to come down where
you ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the
place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love
and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan't
be ashamed.
To turn, turn will be our delight
'Till by turning, turning we come
round right.

The Dodger

Yes the candidate's a dodger, yes a
well-known dodger
Yes the candidate's a dodger, yes and
I'm a dodger too.
He'll meet you and treat you and ask
you for your vote
But look out, boys, he's a-dodgin'
for a note.

*Yes, we're all dodgin'
A-dodgin', dodgin', dodgin'
Yes we're all dodgin' out away
through the world.*

Yes the preacher he's a dodger, yes a
well-known dodger
Yes the preacher he's a dodger, yes
and I'm a dodger too.
He'll preach you a gospel and tell
you of your crimes,
But look out, boys, he's a-dodgin'
for your dimes.

Yes, we're all dodgin'...

Yes the lover he's a dodger, yes a
well-known dodger
Yes the lover he's a dodger, yes and
I'm a dodger too.
He'll hug you and kiss you and call
you his bride,
But look out, girls, he's a-tellin'
you a lie.

Yes, we're all dodgin'...

Long Time Ago

On the lake where droop'd the willow,
Long time ago,
Where the rock threw back the billow,
Brighter than snow,
Dwelt a maid beloved and cherish'd,
By high and low.
But with autumn leaf she perish'd,
Long time ago.

Rock and tree and flowing water,
Long time ago,
Bird and bee and blossom taught her
Love's spell to know.
While to my fond words she listened,
Murmuring low,
Tenderly her blue eyes glisten'd,
Long time ago.

Ching-A-Ring Chaw

*Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,
Ho-a ding-a ding kum larkee,
Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,
Ho-a ding kum larkee.*

Brothers gather round,
Listen to this story,
'Bout the promised land,
An' the promised glory.

You don't need to fear
If you have no money,
You don't need none there,
To buy you milk and honey.

There you'll ride in style,
Coach with four white horses,
There the evenin' meal,
Has one, two, three, four courses.

Nights we all will dance,
To the harp and fiddle,
Waltz and jig and prance,
"Cast off down the middle."

When the morning come,
All in grand and splendor,
Stand out in the sun,
And hear the holy thunder.

Brothers hear me out,
The promised land's a-comin',
Dance and sing and shout,
I hear them harps a-strummin'.

*Ching-a-ring-a ching ching ching,...
Ring ching ching ching
Chaw!*

The Mask

William Bolcom

1. We Wear the Mask

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades
our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts
we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be overwise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ,
our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

~ *Paul Laurence Dunbar*
(1872-1906)

2. Heritage

I want to see the slim palm-trees,
Pulling at the clouds
With little pointed fingers. . .

I want to see lithe Negro girls,
Etched dark against the sky
While sunset lingers.

I want to hear the silent sands,
Singing to the moon
Before the Sphinx-still face. . .

I want to hear the chanting
Around a heathen fire
Of a strange black race.

I want to breathe the Lotus flow'r,
Sighing to the stars
With tendrils drinking at the Nile. . .

I want to feel the surging
Of my sad people's soul
Hidden by a minstrel-smile.

~ Gwendolyn B. Bennett (1902-1981)

3. Shadow

Silhouette on the face of the
moon am I.
A dark shadow in the light,
A silhouette am I on the face
of the moon
lacking colour or vivid brightness
but defined all the clearer because
I am dark, black on the face
of the moon.

A shadow am I growing in the light,
Not understood as in the day,
But more easily seen because
I am a shadow in the light.

~ Richard Bruce (1906-1987)

4. Worn Faces

Hills about the countryside,
Cold and bare, dissatisfied.
From the years of deep regret,
Laboring, paying on her debt,
On through life.

Deep the gullies scar her face
Where the waters run their race;
Once a smooth and sunlit hill
Now she's ragged, worn and still
Dead from strife.

Aged and worn a human's face
Where the tears in steady pace
Cut the youth to ragged forms,
As it faces roughest storms,
Seeking life.

~ Charles Cyrus Thomas

6. Portrait

When woman picked up first stone,
made that rhythmic thud called fire,
Sun shone sheen on mountain.
The eland rubbed its twisted horns
against the black scab of a tree.

Fingers dip in an ivory thicket of keys.
The last ticket holder staggers in.
Black print programs fade to music.
Pastel crescent shadow rippling
on curtain waves of savanna grass.

Sing a song to the rain's cool baptism
seeping through the flash of
ceremonial masks.
The percussive hammer strikes wire
an arpeggio cradled in the arms
of silence.

~ T.J. Anderson III

The Robe

Ernst Bacon

*O de robe, de robe, my Lawd,
de robe all ready now;
O de robe, de robe, my Lawd,
de robe all ready now.*

My father gone an' he lef' me here;
de robe all ready now;
My mother gone an' she lef' me here;
de robe all ready now.

O de robe...

De ferry boat gonna carry us there;
de robe all ready now.
De ferry boat gonna take us there;
de robe all ready now.

O de robe...

Selections from *Treemonisha*

Scott Joplin

Aunt Dinah has Blowed de Horn

Aunt Dinah has blowed de horn,
An' we'll go home to stay until dawn.
Get ready, put yo' sack on yo' back,
I'm so happy I don't know how to act.

Aunt Dinah has blowed de horn,
An' she wants us to come straight home.
We have not much time for delay,
'Cause our work is finished for today.

O yes, Aunt Dinah has blowed de horn,
An' we'll go home to stay until dawn.
Get ready, keep yo' sack on yo' back,
I'm so happy I don't know how to act.

Aunt Dinah has blowed de horn,
An' she wants us to come straight home.
We have not much time for delay,
'Cause our work is finished for today.

A Real Slow Drag

Salute your partner,
do the drag, drag, drag.
Stop and move backward,
do the drag.
All of you stop.

Look to your right and
do the drag, drag, drag.
To your left, to your left,
that's the way.

*Marching onward, marching onward,
marching to that lovely tune;
Marching onward, marching onward,
happy as a bird in June.
Sliding onward, sliding onward,
listen to that rag.
Hop and skip,
now do that slow drag.*

*Dance slowly, prance slowly,
while you hear that pretty rag.
Dance slowly, prance slowly,
Now you do the real "Slow Drag."
Walk slowly, talk lowly,
listen to that rag.
Hop and skip,
now do that slow drag.*

Move along, don't stop,
don't stop dancing,
Drag along, stop.
Move along, don't stop,
don't stop dancing,
Drag along,
doing the real slow drag.

Marching onward, marching onward...

Three Choruses from *Alice in Wonderland* Irving Fine

I. The Lobster Quadrille

“Will you walk a little faster,” said the whiting to the snail.
“There’s a porpoise close behind me and he’s treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance.
They are waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the dance?
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, will you come and join the dance?”

“You can really have no notion how delightful it will be
When they take us up and throw us with the lobsters out to sea.”
But the snail replied, “Too far, too far!” and gave a look askance—
Said he thanked the whiting but he could not join the dance.
Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not,
could not join the dance.

“Oh what matters it how far we go?” his scaly friend replied.
“There’s another shore, you know” he said, “upon the other side.
And the further off from England, yes the nearer ’tis to France.
Then turn not so pale, beloved snail, but come and join the dance.
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, will you come and join the dance?”

II. Lullaby of the Duchess

Speak roughly to your little boy,
And beat him when he sneezes.
He only does it to annoy
Because he knows it teases.

Wow! Wow! Wow!
Cry! cry! You ugly, ugly baby,
You ugly pig baby, cry! cry!
He only does it to annoy
Because he knows it teases.

I speak severely to my boy,
I beat him when he sneezes.
For he can thoroughly enjoy
The pepper when he pleases.

Wow! Wow! . . .

III. Father William

“You are old, Father William,” the young man said,
 “And your hair has become very white.
 And yet you incessantly stand on your head.
 Do you think at your age it is right?”

“In my youth,” Father William replied to his son,
 “I feared it would injure the brain;
 But now that I’m perfectly sure I have none,
 Why, I do it again and again.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “And your jaws are too weak
 For anything tougher than suet.
 Yet, you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak,
 Pray, how did you manage to do it?”

“In my youth,” said his father, “I took to the law,
 And argued each case with my wife;
 And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw
 Has lasted the rest of my life.”

~ Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)

Acrostic Song

David Del Tredici

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
 Lingering onward dreamily
 In an evening of July —

Children three that nestle near,
 Eager eye and willing ear,
 Pleased a simple tale to hear —

Long has faded that sunny sky:
 Echoes fade and memories die:
 Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise,
 Alice moving under skies
 Never seen by waking eyes.

Children yet, the tale to hear,
 Eager eye and willing ear,
 Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
 Dreaming as the days go by,
 Dreaming as the summers die:

Ever drifting down the stream —
 Lingering in the golden gleam —
 Life, what is it but a dream?

~ Lewis Carroll

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