

ALGEBRA OF NIGHT



MUSIC OF EUGENE O'BRIEN ■ 21ST CENTURY CONSORT

Algebra of Night

for voice and piano quartet (2015)

1	Moon / MARK STRAND	6:23	
2	Old Postcard of 42nd Street at Night / CHARLES SIMIC	2:58	
3	New York dark in August / EDWIN DENBY	3:14	
4	Burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night / INTERLUDE	3:58	Deanne Meek, <i>mezzo soprano</i>
5	Avenue A / FRANK O'HARA	3:55	21ST CENTURY CONSORT
6	Lullaby / W. H. AUDEN	9:15	Jeremy Black, <i>violin</i>
7	The Mad Scene / JAMES MERRILL	2:56	Daniel Foster, <i>viola</i>
8	Of sorrow from the moonstruck darkness / INTERLUDE	5:58	Rachel Young, <i>cello</i>
9	A True Account of Talking to the Sun at Fire Island / O'HARA	8:23	Lisa Emenheiser, <i>piano</i> Christopher Kendall, <i>conductor</i>

10 Elegy to the Spanish Republic 9:40

for mixed ensemble of nine instruments (2021)

21ST CENTURY CONSORT

Elizabeth Plunk, <i>flute/piccolo</i>	Alexandra Osborne, <i>violin</i>
Paul Cigan, <i>clarinet/bass clarinet</i>	Daniel Foster, <i>viola</i>
Amy McCabe, <i>trumpet</i>	Rachel Young, <i>cello</i>
Lee Hinkle, <i>vibraphone</i>	Richard Barber, <i>double bass</i>
Lisa Emenheiser, <i>piano</i>	Christopher Kendall, <i>conductor</i>

Total: 56:47



Algebra of Night

for voice and piano quartet (2015)

A CYCLE OF SEVEN SONGS with two instrumental interludes for voice and piano quartet, *Algebra of Night* was commissioned by the Trustees of Indiana University and the Jacobs School of Music to celebrate the School's centenary, and was given its premiere in 2015 by Deanne Meek and the 21st Century Consort at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. The texts are by six poets who lived and wrote in Manhattan at significant periods in their careers or for their entire working lives: W. H. Auden, Edwin Denby, James Merrill, Charles Simic, Mark Strand and—perhaps the quintessential 20th-century New York poet—Frank O'Hara, who is represented by two poems. Although some of the songs might be able to stand separately on their own, the cycle is meant to be performed as an integral whole.

Several movements are dedicated to friends and members of my family, while others memorialize friends who died before their time during the height of the AIDS plague in this country. The cycle pays homage to Frank O'Hara; the final stanza of his "Little Elegy for Antonio Machado," in this context re-addressed to O'Hara himself, is printed in the score as an epigraph:

*we shall continue to correct all classical revisions
of ourselves as trials of ceremonial worth
and purple excess
improving your soul's expansion
in the night and developing our own in salt-like praise*

The title is a phrase from a poem by Willis Barnstone: *...and drop my way / to oblivion and algebra of night*. Here I intend (as perhaps Barnstone also intended) the word *algebra* to suggest a poetry beyond logic and mathematics, and to imply what its Arabic root *al-jabr* connotes, the reassembling and restoration of broken parts. Each song and interlude contributes something of night to this algebra: fragments of sleep, dreams and darkness, of human love and loss, of ultimate things.

1. The setting of Mark Strand's "Moon" (2006) has two ancestors: the piano accompaniment is indebted to Benjamin Britten's *Canticle II*; and although my setting makes no overt reference to it, the calm stasis of one of Gabriel Fauré's last songs, a setting of another poem about the moon ("Diane, Séléné, lune de beau metal"), was at the back of my mind as I composed. The song is dedicated to the memory of my parents.

2. Charles Simic's prose-poem "Old Postcard of 42nd Street at Night" is taken from his *Dime-Store Alchemy* (1992), a collection of poetry and prose inspired by the surrealist art of Joseph Cornell. My setting commemorates Joe Brainard (1942-1994), one of Frank O'Hara's friends and artistic collaborators, many of whose found-object collages and constructions are not unlike Cornell's. For me Simic's poem evokes a dark clockwork universe, perhaps abandoned—*night of the homeless*—with its references to a chess-playing automaton, run-down watches, a mirrored machine, time, eternity, and *the silence inside God's ear*...

3. "New York Dark in August, seaward" is part of a group of sonnets that Frank O'Hara's friend Edwin Denby—poet, librettist and prominent dance critic—wrote in the 1960s. From 1935 until his death at the age of 80 in 1983, Denby lived in a fifth-floor walk-up on W. 21st Street in Manhattan, where his next-door neighbors and close friends were the painters Willem and Elaine de Kooning and photographer/filmmaker Rudy

Burckhardt. In his introduction to Denby's *Complete Poems*, Ron Padgett characterizes him as a "confirmed night person" who "frequently went for walks alone around his (not particularly safe) New York City neighborhood, sometimes quite late at night, returning home alone to his cats." The musical setting is dedicated to my late friend John Reeves White (1924-1984), scholar, conductor, director of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua in the late 1960s, and a Chelsea resident like Denby.

4. Interlude: "Burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night" The title comes from the third strophe of Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" (1955); the interlude memorializes poet, novelist and essayist Steve Abbott (1943-1992), a classmate from my undergraduate years at the University of Nebraska, and a friend of Ginsberg. Steve is aptly described in the Beat poet's 1966 anti-war lament "Wichita Vortex Sutra" as *a long haired saint with eyeglasses*, driving with Ginsberg from Kansas to Nebraska through a black February night.

5. Names and places dominate the surface of Frank O'Hara's "Avenue A" as they do in so many of his poems. The "you" of the poem is Vincent Warren, who danced with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet and other companies in New York during the years he and O'Hara were together in the late 50s and early 60s, and who inspired some of O'Hara's most

beautiful lyric poetry. The musical setting of "Avenue A" is dedicated to him.

The poem's locale is the Lower East Side of Manhattan on or about January 16, 1960, the day it was written. Less than a block from O'Hara's E. 9th Street apartment, Avenue A leads south toward the East River bridges; *Red Grooms' locomotive landscape* refers to Grooms' theatrical construction *The Magic Train Ride* (one of the first "happenings"), performed at the Reuben Gallery on Fourth Avenue the week before January 16 and which O'Hara and Warren attended; *Norman* is the painter Norman Bluhm, one of O'Hara's close friends; and so on. While knowledge of these details is unnecessary for an appreciation of the poem, O'Hara's mention of New York locations, actual events, and the real names of friends lends "Avenue A" the immediacy of his high-octane personality.

6. W. H. Auden's well-known "Lullaby" is more conventional in form than the other poems in the cycle; the trochaic meter is very obvious, almost Elizabethan, but the asymmetrical pattern of rhymes and slant rhymes is subtle and less conventional. Written in 1937 before he emigrated to the United States, revised (and given its title) in New York in 1944, Auden's poem naturally embodies a trans-Atlantic diction somewhat foreign to the cycle's American poetry. The setting is dedicated to my sister Susan.

7. The nightmarish dreamscape of James Merrill's "The Mad Scene" (1962) calls up unsettling images of an opera house, an unnamed but quite identifiable *bel canto* opera, and culminates in the final four lines with the apparent disintegration of a love affair. (The piano interrupts the texture at one point with a very brief but blatant quotation from the opera's best-known aria, in case the clues embedded in the poem fail to reveal its identity.) The musical setting is a memorial to my friend the pianist Frank Wasko (1944-1992), a dedication reflected in the étude-like piano accompaniment. In the ideal, imaginary performance that ran through my head while I composed the song, Frank was the pianist.

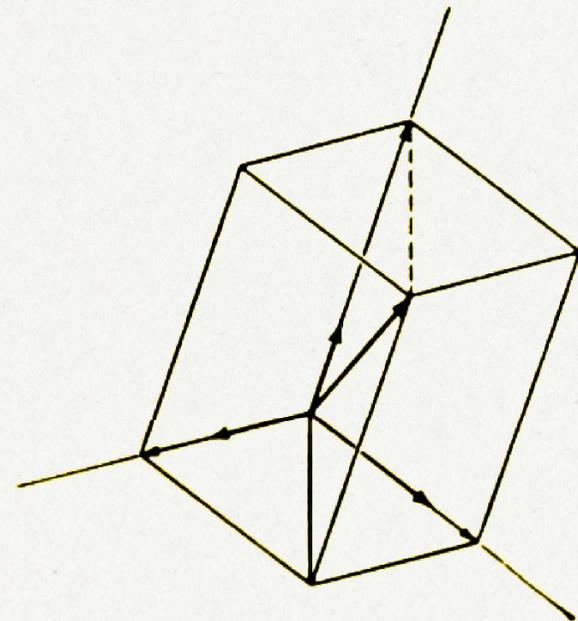
8. Interlude: "Of sorrow from the moonstruck darkness." This interlude concludes the center section of the cycle, three poems (O'Hara, Auden and Merrill) that collectively trace, at least to my mind, the trajectory of a passionate relationship. The title is a phrase from W. H. Auden's 1947 poem "The Duet." The music commemorates my friend John Zeigler (1953-1986), clarinetist in the Omaha and San Francisco Symphony orchestras.

Abandoning the 20th-/21st-century poetry of the songs, the interlude incorporates two quotations from 17th-century musical/literary works that reinforce the sentiment of Auden's words. The brief musical borrowing appears close to the interlude's end: John Dowland's setting of the words *Where nights blacke bird hir sad infamy sings*, quoted (*sans* text) from his famous lute song "Flow My Teares." The literary borrowing, however, is invisible and inaudible to the listener: five lines from John Donne's "Elegie XII," voicelessly intoned by the viola over the course of the interlude. The words are printed beneath the viola staff as though they are being sung:

...come Night,
Environ me with darknesse, whilst I write:
Shadow that Hell unto me, which alone
I am to suffer when my Love is gone.
Alas the darkest Magick cannot do it...

9. Frank O'Hara wrote "A True Account of Talking to the Sun at Fire Island" in July 1958 while staying at the summer beach house of his Harvard classmate and friend Hal Fondren, whom he mentions in the poem. He never published it. In July 1966, eight years (almost to the day) after he wrote "A True Account," O'Hara died in an accident on Fire Island at the age of 40, not very far from the house where he wrote the poem. Friend and fellow poet Kenneth Koch discovered it, along with over 700 other unpublished items of poetry and prose, while going through O'Hara's papers later that summer.

As its title and reference to Mayakovsky—one of O'Hara's great heroes—suggest, "A True Account" can be read as a trope on the Russian poet's "An Extraordinary Adventure Which Happened to Me, Vladimir Mayakovsky, One Summer in the Country," written in 1920. In Mayakovsky's poem, however, it's the irascible poet who badgers the sun into a conversation, not the reverse, as in O'Hara. And unlike the Russian poem's exuberant conclusion, the ending of "A True Account" conjures darkness, sleep, and possibly a mysterious summons to something beyond our mortality. The musical setting is dedicated to my partner Lance Towle, whose enthusiasm for Frank O'Hara's poetry many years ago kindled my own.



Elegy to the Spanish Republic

for mixed ensemble of nine instruments (2021)

The Spanish Civil War erupted in 1936, the consequence of a failed right-wing military coup d'état against the democratically elected republican government, and ended in 1939 with the Spanish Republic's defeat. The war caused more than a half-million deaths, forced many more into exile, and resulted in the 36-year repressive dictatorship of Francisco Franco. In the eight decades that have passed since it ended, the Spanish Civil War has become a universal metaphor for human suffering and injustice.

The conflict and its aftermath had a deep and lasting effect on the American abstract expressionist Robert Motherwell. His response was a monumental series of more than 200 paintings collectively titled *Elegies to the Spanish Republic*, a work he began in 1949 and continued for the rest of his life. The paintings are sentinels, dramatic emblems of the Civil War's tragedies and warnings never to forget them.

The present *Elegy to the Spanish Republic*, a short musical addition to Motherwell's paintings, is also meant to be a warning and sentinel, "barbaric and austere," to borrow Motherwell's description of his work. *Elegy* makes brief references to music written during the Spanish Civil War by composers who experienced it first hand: the Catalan Roberto Gerhard, Silvestre Revueltas of Mexico, and Arkansas-born

Conlon Nancarrow, who fought in Spain for the Republic as a volunteer in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion.

Initially I planned to divide the work into contrasting sections, each with a title in English assembled from poems written during the Civil War by Spanish artists and poets. As the composition unfolded, however, the sections turned into discontinuous shards and fragments that disrupted each other repeatedly; the titles themselves were also broken. But the music of *Elegy* remains in the shadow of their words:

Outraged musics scar the face of every hope
(Miguel Hernández, 1939)

*City of troops and clanging cars:
dusk, dusk, and the beating of the rain*
(José Moreno Villa, 1937)

cries of children cries of women cries of birds
(Pablo Picasso, 1937)

To learn a lament that will cleanse me of earth
(Federico García Lorca, 1936)

A grant from the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard made possible the commissioning of *Elegy to the Spanish Republic* for the 21st Century Consort. — Eugene O'Brien



The recipient of the Rome Prize of the American Academy in Rome, the Academy Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as awards from BMI, ASCAP, and the League of Composers/International Society for Contemporary Music, **EUGENE O'BRIEN** has received Guggenheim, Rockefeller, Fulbright, National Endowment for the Arts and other fellowships. He has been commissioned by the Fromm Foundation at Harvard, the Serge Koussevitzky Foundation in the Library of Congress, by Meet-The-Composer/Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Fund, The Percussive Arts Society, and by performers and ensembles in the US, Europe and Asia. His music has been heard in concerts by the Cleveland Orchestra, the Italian Radio orchestras of Rome and Turin, the Omaha Symphony, as part of the Saint Louis Symphony Discovery series, the Louisville Orchestra New Dimensions series, and in numerous other concerts and festivals throughout this country and abroad. Recorded on the Capstone, CRI, Crystal, Golden Crest, Fontec, Indiana University and New Focus labels, his music is published by Codex Nuovo, Boosey & Hawkes, and G. Schirmer.

O'Brien studied composition with Robert Beadell, Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Iannis Xenakis, John Eaton and Donald Erb. Formerly composer-in-residence at the Cleveland Institute of Music, since 1987 he has been a member of the composition faculty in the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Bloomington, where he is now Professor of Composition Emeritus. *codexnuovo.com*



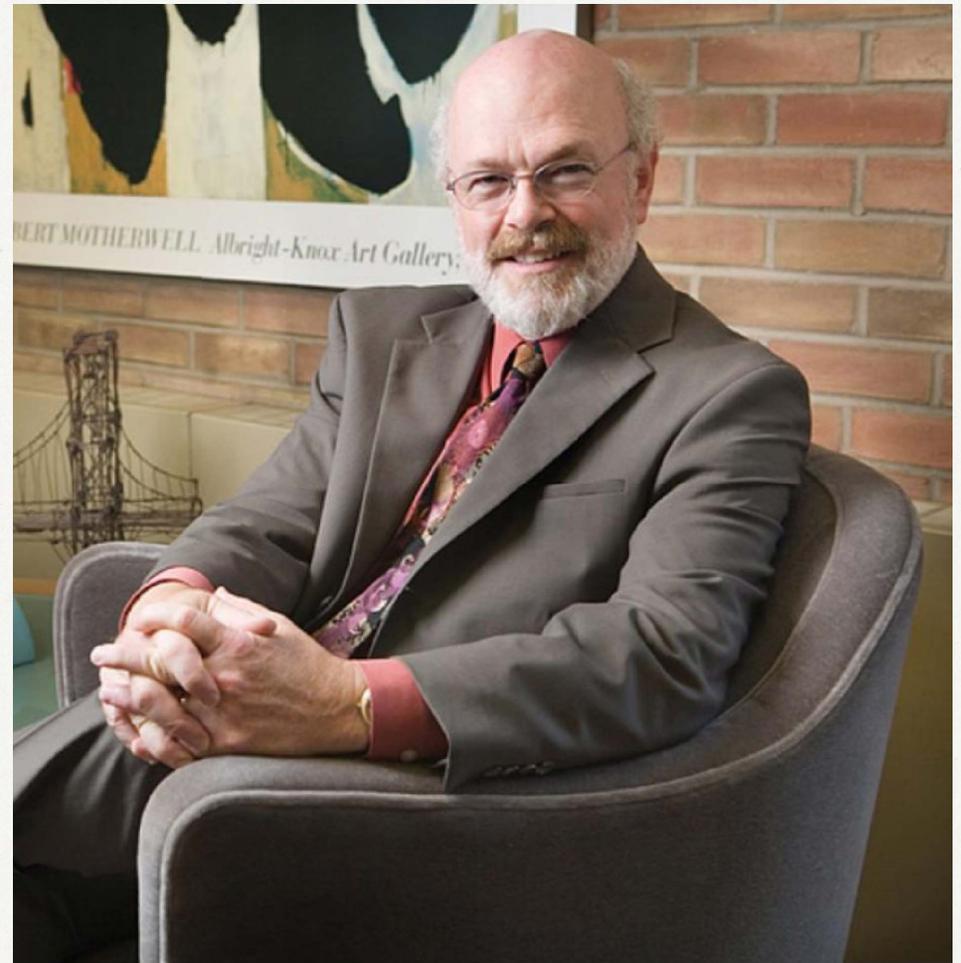
21ST CENTURY CONSORT

Founded in 1975 as the 20th Century Consort, the group became the resident ensemble for contemporary music at the Smithsonian Institution's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in 1978. In its annual series at the Hirshhorn, the Smithsonian American Art Museum and St. Mark's Church Capitol Hill, the Consort has presented dynamically balanced concerts frequently related to the museums' exhibitions, focusing on the music of a diverse array of living composers, including world premieres, along with 20th century classics. In 1990, the Consort was awarded the Smithsonian Institution's Smithsonian Medal in honor of their long, successful association, now approaching 50 years.

At the change of millennium, the Consort updated its name to the 21st Century Consort to reflect its forward progression in the field of new music. In the 2006–2007 season, the Consort launched its partnership with the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM). The Consort served as the New Music ensemble-in-residence at the Museum's newly renovated Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium. With the 2022–2023 season, the Consort has returned to its residency at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Under the direction of its founder and conductor, Christopher Kendall, the 21st Century Consort's artists include principal players from the National Symphony Orchestra, along with other prominent chamber musicians from Washington, D.C. and beyond. The ensemble's recordings can be heard on the New Focus, Bridge, Innova, Delos, Nonesuch, Centaur, ASV, CRI, Smithsonian Collection and other labels.

21consort.org

Along with his ongoing work as founder and conductor of the 21st Century Consort, and prior to his appointment as Dean and Professor of Conducting at the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance from 2005-2015, **CHRISTOPHER KENDALL** had served as Director of the School of Music at the University of Maryland since 1996. Previously he was Director of the Music Division of the Boston University School of the Arts, and Music Director of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. He assumed the Boston post following a five-year term as Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony, where he led that orchestra in annual subscription concerts along with education, chamber orchestra and new music concerts. Kendall is also the founder and former lutenist of the Folger Consort, early-music ensemble-in-residence at the Folger Shakespeare Library. The group has performed extensively in Washington, D.C. and has toured and broadcast nationally and internationally. Kendall has guest conducted widely in North America in concerts of repertoire from the 18th through the 21st centuries.



A native of the Pacific Northwest, **DEANNE MEEK** began her career as a mezzo-soprano soloist with the New York City Opera, and has since sung in many of the great opera houses of the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera, The Dallas Opera, Washington Opera, English National Opera (London), Teatro Real (Madrid), Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie (Brussels), Opéra de Lyon, Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), Théâtre du Châtelet (Paris), Gran Teatre del Liceu (Barcelona) and the Teatro alla Scala (Milan).



Ms. Meek made her European debut as Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Dublin, Ireland, followed by performances throughout the United Kingdom in roles such as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Opera North), Ruggiero in *Alcina* (ENO), and the title role in *La Cenerentola* with Grange Park Opera. Her frequent collaborations with esteemed stage directors such as Sir David MacVicar, Robert Wilson, Krzysztof Warlikowski and Robert Carson have featured her in such roles as Hermia in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Ines in *Il Trovatore* and other roles performed in opera houses throughout Eu-

rope. She also champions contemporary works, creating the role of Ma Joad in Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath* with Minnesota Opera and performing roles such as Jo March in *Little Women*, Mrs. DeRocher in *Dead Man Walking* and Older Woman in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*.

Highlights of Ms. Meek's active concert engagements include appearances with the Seattle, Jacksonville, Alabama, American, Jerusalem and Luxembourg symphony orchestras, with frequent appearances with the 21st^s Century Consort in Washington, D.C. She enjoys

performing the vocal chamber music and recital repertoire, and can be heard on the New Focus, Albany, PS Classics, Opus Arte, Virgin Classics and Telarc labels.

Ms. Meek has taught at Long Island University, Seattle University, the University of Washington, and Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, while also maintaining a private teaching studio both in person and online.

guybarzilayartists.com/Deanne-Meek

Algebra of Night

SONG TEXTS

1.

Moon

MARK STRAND

Open the book of evening to the page
where the moon, always the moon, appears
between two clouds, moving so slowly that hours
will seem to have passed before you reach the next page
where the moon, now brighter, lowers a path
to lead you away from what you have known
into those places where what you had wished for happens,
its lone syllable like a sentence poised
at the edge of sense, waiting for you to say its name once
more as you lift your eyes from the page
and close the book, still feeling what it was like
to dwell in that light, that sudden paradise of sound.

2.

Old Postcard of 42nd Street at Night

CHARLES SIMIC

I'm looking for the mechanical chess player with
a red turban. I hear Pythagoras is there queuing up, and
Monsieur Pascal, who hears the silence inside God's ear.

Eternity and time are the coins it requires,
everybody's portion of it, for a quick glimpse of that
everything which is nothing.

Night of the homeless, the sleepless, night of those
winding the watches of their souls, the stopped watches,
before the machine with mirrors.

Here's a raised hand covered with dime-store jewels,
a hand like "a five-headed Cerberus," and two eyes opened
wide in astonishment.

3.
New York Dark in August

EDWIN DENBY

New York dark in August, seaward
Creeping breeze, building to building
Old poems by Frank O'Hara
At 3 a.m. I sit reading
Like a blue-black surf rider, shark
Nipping at my Charvet tie, toe-tied
Heart in my mouth—or my New York
At dawn smiling I turn out the light
Inside out like a room in gritty
Gale, features moving fierce or void
Intimate, the lunch hour city
One's own heart eating undestroyed
Complicities of New York speech
Embrace me as I fall asleep

5.

Avenue A

FRANK O'HARA

We hardly ever see the moon any more
so no wonder
it's so beautiful when we look up suddenly
and there it is gliding broken-faced over the bridges
brilliantly coursing, soft, and a cool wind fans
your hair over your forehead and your memories
of Red Grooms' locomotive landscape
I want some bourbon/you want some oranges/I love the leather
jacket Norman gave me
and the corduroy coat David
gave you, it is more mysterious than spring, the El Greco
heavens breaking open and then reassembling like lions
in a vast tragic veldt
that is far from our small selves and our temporally united
passions in the cathedral of Januaries
everything is too comprehensible
these are my delicate and caressing poems
I suppose there will be more of those others to come, as in the past
so many!
but for now the moon is revealing itself like a pearl
to my equally naked heart

6.

Lullaby

W. H. AUDEN

Lay your sleeping head, my love,
Human on my faithless arm;
Time and fevers burn away
Individual beauty from
Thoughtful children, and the grave
Proves the child ephemeral:
But in my arms till break of day
Let the living creature lie,
Mortal, guilty, but to me
The entirely beautiful.

Soul and body have no bounds:
To lovers as they lie upon
Her tolerant enchanted slope
In their ordinary swoon,
Grave the vision Venus sends
Of supernatural sympathy,
Universal love and hope;
While an abstract insight wakes
Among the glaciers and the rocks
The hermit's carnal ecstasy.

Certainty, fidelity
On the stroke of midnight pass
Like vibrations of a bell
And fashionable madmen raise
Their pedantic boring cry:
Every farthing of the cost,
All the dreaded cards foretell,
Shall be paid, but from this night
Not a whisper, not a thought,
Not a kiss nor look be lost.

Beauty, midnight, vision dies:
Let the winds of dawn that blow
Softly round your dreaming head
Such a day of welcome show
Eye and knocking heart may bless,
Find the mortal world enough;
Noons of dryness find you fed
By the involuntary powers,
Nights of insult let you pass
Watched by every human love.

7.

The Mad Scene

JAMES MERRILL

Again last night I dreamed the dream called Laundry.
In it, the sheets and towels of a life we were going to share,
The milk-stiff bibs, the shroud, each rag to be ever
Trampled or soiled, bled on or groped for blindly,
Came swooning out of an enormous willow hamper
Onto moon-marbly boards. We had just met. I watched
From outer darkness. I had dressed myself in clothes
Of a new fiber that never stains or wrinkles, never
Wears thin. The opera house sparkled with tiers
And tiers of eyes, like mine enlarged by belladonna,
Trained inward. There I saw the cloud-clot, gust by gust,
Form, and the lightning bite, and the roan mane unloosen.
Fingers were running in panic over the flute's nine gates.
Why did I flinch? I loved you. And in the downpour laughed
To have us wrung white, gnarled together, one
Topmost mordent of wisteria,
As the lean tree burst into grief.

9.

A True Account of Talking to the Sun at Fire Island

FRANK O'HARA

The Sun woke me this morning loud
and clear, saying "Hey! I've been
trying to wake you up for fifteen
minutes. Don't be so rude, you are
only the second poet I've ever chosen
to speak to personally

so why
aren't you more attentive? If I could
burn you through the window I would
to wake you up. I can't hang around
here all day."

"Sorry, Sun, I stayed
up late last night talking to Hal."
"When I woke up Mayakovsky he was
a lot more prompt" the Sun said
petulantly. "Most people are up
already waiting to see if I'm going
to put in an appearance."

I tried
to apologize "I missed you yesterday."
"That's better" he said. "I didn't

know you'd come out." "You may be
wondering why I've come so close?"
"Yes" I said beginning to feel hot
wondering if maybe he wasn't burning me
anyway.

"Frankly I wanted to tell you
I like your poetry. I see a lot
on my rounds and you're okay. You may
not be the greatest thing on earth, but
you're different. Now, I've heard some
say you're crazy, they being excessively
calm themselves to my mind, and other
crazy poets think that you're a boring
reactionary. Not me.

Just keep on
like I do and pay no attention. You'll
find that people always will complain
about the atmosphere, either too hot
or too cold too bright or too dark, days
too short or too long.

If you don't appear
at all one day they think you're lazy
or dead. Just keep right on, I like it.
And don't worry about your lineage
poetic or natural. The Sun shines on
the jungle, you know, on the tundra
the sea, the ghetto. Wherever you were
I knew it and saw you moving. I was waiting
for you to get to work.

And now that you
are making your own days, so to speak,
even if no one reads you but me
you won't be depressed. Not
everyone can look up, even at me. It
hurts their eyes."

"Oh Sun, I'm so grateful to you!
"Thanks and remember I'm watching. It's
easier for me to speak to you out
here. I don't have to slide down
between buildings to get your ear.
I know you love Manhattan, but
you ought to look up more often.

And
always embrace things, people earth
sky stars, as I do, freely and with
the appropriate sense of space. That
is your inclination, known in the heavens
and you should follow it to hell, if
necessary, which I doubt.

Maybe we'll
speak again in Africa, of which I too
am specially fond. Go back to sleep now
Frank, and I may leave a tiny poem
in that brain of yours as my farewell."

"Sun, don't go!" I was awake
at last. "No, go I must, they're calling
me."

"Who are they?"

Rising he said, "Some
day you'll know. They're calling to you
too." Darkly he rose, and then I slept.

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“The Mad Scene” by James Merrill, currently collected in *James Merrill: Collected Poems* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001). Copyright © 2001 by The Literary Estate of James Merrill at Washington University. Used by arrangement with The Wylie Agency LLC.

The title of the first instrumental interlude, “Burning for the ancient heavenly connection...,” is a phrase from the third strophe of Allen Ginsberg’s poem “Howl” (1955).

The title of the second instrumental interlude, “Of sorrow from the moonstruck darkness,” is a phrase from W. H. Auden’s poem “The Duet” (1947).

Algebra of Night Recorded February 22-23, 2015,
Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

Manager: Boyd Sarratt
Recording engineer: Mark Huffman
Producer/editor: Joseph Gascho
Post-production mixing/mastering: D. James Tagg (Stagg Sound Studio),
Mastering: Antonino d'Urzo (Opusrite Audio Productions)

Elegy to the Spanish Republic Recorded October 10, 2021,
St. Mark's Episcopal Church Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

Manager: Boyd Sarratt
Recording engineer/editing/mixing/mastering: Antonino d'Urzo (Opusrite Audio Productions)
Co-Producers: Eugene O'Brien and Christopher Kendall

Design, layout & typography: Marc Wolf, marcjwolf.com

Cover image

Robert Motherwell, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic XXXIV*, 1953-54.
Collection Buffalo AKG Art Museum. Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1957 (K1957:6).
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21st Century Consort Photo, p. 10: © Tony Powell

