

SONO
LUMINUS
SL Editions

The Orphans & Poe

Bryan Doherty



A transformation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when the world shut down and many lives were lost or changed forever, I experienced a serious transformation. A commitment to sobriety unleashed new creative forces. The world's new normal of quiet and introspection led me to return to a more formal branch of my musical upbringing: fully-inked acoustic music. Untethered from the backbeats and lead sheets of my career in jazz and pop music, I once again immersed myself in scores and music literature. An exciting new sense of freedom filled me with inspiration. I discovered a wellspring of patience and subsequent understanding and became obsessed with form. Hyper-focussed and pencil in hand, I wrote tirelessly from dawn until dusk. When I spoke about this newfound passion with one of the biggest supporters of my lifetime, my Dad, he told me it sounded like I had "seen the light" – a remarkable turn of events during an otherwise difficult time for us all.

About the music...

String Quartet No. 1 "The Orphans" (2023)

The idea of writing a string quartet began to haunt me as this hallowed format can be intimidating. After what initially seemed like fruitless labor, I sidelined this ambition to work on some other music. Then one day while walking in a forest preserve in Chicago, a tune popped into my head which later developed into a promising base movement for a string quartet. Despite a failed attempt at a second movement, my confidence grew, and again inspired by nature, movements I, II and III were written with the base movement now as IV. Just when I thought the whole piece was done, the inspiration for another, shorter, livelier, and more cohesive movement came to me, and outdoors no less! Following my intuition I completely abandoned the germ of it all, the mother of this string quartet, for four of her offspring. It was an unpredictable process.

Three Poe Excerpts (2022)

While writing my first opera, *The Bells of Fortunato*, adapted from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Cask of Amontillado*, I became transfixed by Poe's writing. I discovered more stories of his with moments full of life and beauty that seemed to be wonderful opportunities for songs. I ended up taking a break from *Fortunato* to work on the songs that became *Three Poe Excerpts*. "Even as it Was" came first followed by "A Feeling for Which I Have No Name." These both came fairly easily and with much joy, but I wasn't satisfied with just the two. Although initially skeptical of the music that became "To the Right and Left," something told me to stay the course, and I am happy with the result. I thought the three songs could use some sort of set up, and the image of a hand opening an oversized book like in the beginning of old fairytale movies came to mind. This inspired the "Foreword" and "Afterword".

The Bells of Fortunato (2023)

A section of one of my prior works, a fantasie called *Outside Motion in Stillness*, gave me the idea to try my hand at an opera. I read through many plays, poems, and stories until landing on the right one. I believe there have been at least a couple of operas based on *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allan Poe, but that didn't stop me from writing my own adaptation, *The Bells of Fortunato*. The Carnival scene was the perfect fit for the music I had brewing. Poe's writing is wonderfully succinct and illustrative, and I found myself so intrigued that the rest of the music came without much hesitation. After a musical introduction which includes a chorus singing "nemo me impune lacesset" ("no one attacks me with impunity"), we meet our protagonist Montresor, played by a soprano, who sings the only aria from the opera. "The Thousand Injuries" informs us of her contempt for the entitled Fortunato.

The musicians and the studio...

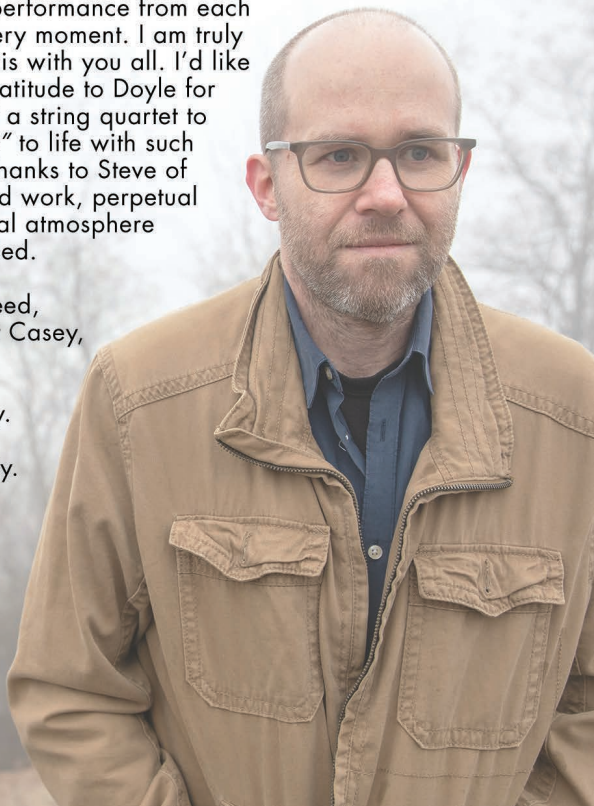
I can't speak highly enough of the musicians on this album.

The dedication to great performance from each individual is heard in every moment. I am truly honored to have made this with you all. I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to Doyle for assembling this dream of a string quartet to help bring "*The Orphans*" to life with such finesse and conviction. Thanks to Steve of SHIRK studios for the hard work, perpetual coolness, and professional atmosphere that is consistently provided.

Special thanks to Matt Reed,
Stu Mindeman, Margaret Casey,
and Tom Palmer.

All my love to Al and Ray.

In memory of Tom Doherty.
Rest easy Thos.



Bryan Doherty is a Chicago-based composer, songwriter, bassist, and producer who contributes his efforts to a multitude of varied projects.

His music has been featured in an array of spheres from American Songwriter to the popular video game *Watch Dogs*. Doherty has composed three operas, a ballet, a string quartet, various vocal and symphonic music, and a piano suite. His *Chamber Symphony in D Minor* received its world premiere in Chicago in 2024. In 2025 he was commissioned to write a solo cantata for the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra, setting text by Marianne Moore.

As a bassist, Bryan has performed all over the world while also being an in-demand studio musician appearing on albums by Marquis Hill, Stu Mindeman, and Matt Gold, to name a few. He is also the founder of Hood Smoke which the *Chicago Sun-Times* called a "must-see act!", a group that released numerous albums of Doherty's original music and toured America.

Doherty attended Milwaukee High School of the Arts and Chicago College of Performing Arts.

Recorded at SHIRK studios - Chicago, IL - October 16 & 17, 2023.

Recorded, Mixed, & Mastered by Stephen Shirk

Edited by Bryan Doherty & Stephen Shirk

Produced by Bryan Doherty

Photography by Adam Miszewski

String Quartet No. 1 "The Orphans" is dedicated to Mike & Lipi.

Three Poe Excerpts is dedicated to my Mom.

The Bells of Fortunato is dedicated to Andrei.



Carrie Shaw - soprano
Jennifer Clippert - flute
Erica Anderson - oboe
Barbara Drapcho - Bb clarinet
Jeremiah Frederick - F horn
Collin Anderson - bassoon
MingHuan Xu - violin
Theo Espy - violin
Doyle Armbrust - viola
Nick Photinos - violincello
Christian Dillingham - double bass

"To the Right and Left"
taken from *A Descent into the Maelström*

"A Feeling for Which I Have No Name"
taken from *Ms. Found in a Bottle*

"Even as it Was" taken from
The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfall

Three Poe Excerpts & The Thousand Injuries
conducted by Ben Bolter

Stories by Edgar Allen Poe

All music composed by Bryan Doherty
bryandohertymusic.com

The Orphans & Poe

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1-4|

String Quartet No. 1 "The Orphans"

I. Allegro	6:09
II. Adagio	7:55
III. Intermezzo	4:44
IV. Moderato	3:52

5-9|

Three Poe Excerpts

Foreword	1:52
I. To the Right and Left	4:08
II. A Feeling for Which I Have No Name	4:47
III. Even as it Was	4:13
Afterword	2:45

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from The Bells of Fortunato

The Thousand Injuries	6:18
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Total Time: 46:43



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