



William
BOLCOM

**Canciones
de Lorca**

Prometheus

René Barbera, Tenor

Jeffrey Biegel, Piano

Pacific Chorale

John Alexander

Pacific Symphony

Carl St.Clair



William
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(b. 1938)

Canciones de Lorca (2006)

Poems by Federico García Lorca (1898-1936)

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(Director: John Alexander)

Pacific Symphony

Carl St.Clair

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William Bolcom (b. 1938)

Canciones de Lorca (2006)

William Bolcom supplied the following note for the 2006 première performance by Pacific Symphony, with Plácido Domingo as the tenor soloist, to celebrate the opening of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa, California:

Canciones de Lorca explores a different Lorca from *Blood Wedding* or *Yerma*, the bleak and tragic side of Federico García Lorca, which is all most playgoers know of him in our country. The Lorca that Spanish scholars – and people in the street and throughout the Spanish-speaking world – know and love is far more varied: full of surrealist humor, passion, wisdom, mystery, and mostly the Andalusian flamenco tradition, which lurks behind almost every lyric he wrote.

When I discussed with Plácido Domingo which Lorca poems to set for his cycle with the Pacific Symphony, I mentioned *La casada infiel*, or “The unfaithful housewife.” (I understand that Lorca was so often besieged to recite that poem that it became a counterpart to Rachmaninoff’s *C# minor Prelude* for him: a chore.) Immediately Maestro Domingo began to recite *La casada* by heart, then submitted a list of his other favorites, four of which I set (I added three of my own selections; his choices are *La casada infiel*, *Alba*, *Árboles*, and *Soneto de la dulce queja*).

The more I delved into flamenco through poetry, film, dance, and story, the more it appeared that each Lorca poem selected had at least one implicit melody or song behind it. (Lorca was a trained musician and could well have become a composer; there are several songs of his extant, and the recordings we have of him playing show a fine, sensitive pianist.) I don’t pretend to have discovered either Lorca’s hidden tunes, and sometimes, as in *Alba*, I used a style – an Argentine ballad of the sort Carlos Gardel might have sung – that Lorca might not have had in mind. But I tried to approach the Andalusian popular-song-lyric atmosphere I felt latent in all of these poems.

Balanza introduces us to the conflict between the night and the day so prevalent in Lorca. Following a short orchestral interlude comes *La casada infiel*, a ruefully humorous telling of a short affair between (possibly) a policeman and a woman who pretends to be unmarried; this is possibly the poet’s most famous lyric. There are two poems at least named *Alba* in Lorca’s output; this one from 1919 recalls to me the hopeless passion of Carlos Gardel’s singing. *Danza da lúa en Santiago* is a *jota*, a fast, whirling Galician dance. The mysticism of *Árboles* calls up a less vernacular, more angular musical language, followed by *Soneto de la dulce queja*, an attempt at authentic *cante jondo*, the central musical style of Andalusia. The tragic and dramatic *Poet in New York* group of poems, written during Lorca’s 1929 sojourn in New York City, is depicted in super-speed in *Harlem 1929: Montage*. *Canciones* closes with Lorca’s dancing off in relief from New York to Cuba in *El poeta llega a la Habana*.

Prometheus (2009)

It is undeniable that our century and millennium have not gotten off to an auspicious start, with September 11, 2001, our worldwide economic crisis, and all the ills the 20th century has foisted on the 21st. The ancient legend of Prometheus is a perfect metaphor for our time; in it the god is chained to a rock with a huge bird gnawing at his vitals, which are eternally renewed and eternally destroyed each day.

To much of the rest of the world the West is Prometheus, whose fire has fueled the technological expansion of the last 500 years – electricity, steam, oil, the atom, and the computer. The sense of power we’ve all gained thereby has simultaneously pulled us away from religion, and freed of its restraint we in the West have brought ourselves to a level of technical sophistication unknown to any other era. We’ve wedged our way into almost-divine capability, unlike Prometheus who as a god was born with it – but at a price. We are now all

Prometheus, chained to our rock of technological dependency; there is no question that our unprecedented advance has given the world enormous benefits we have no desire of relinquishing – nor should we – but we are enjoined to see the dark side of this bounty.

George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824) is, with Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Blake, among the first poets to speak of the new interest in science of his era. His poem *Prometheus*, coming as it does from the early industrial revolution, examines the antipodes we are haplessly hurled between constantly as well as the West's altruism that has fueled so much of the modern world's predicament. When I was requested to write the present work for the same forces as Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*, I felt the piano part would be ideal in portraying Prometheus' eternal agony; my Prometheus is perhaps the antithesis of the joyous mood of the Beethoven but is not devoid of hope, particularly if it points us to begin to understand our situation. This piece is dedicated to that hope.

Prometheus's eternal struggle – the opening piano solo evoking his chains – precedes the first stanza of Byron's poem, in a contoured, unpitched recitation by the chorus with the piano. This is followed by an apocalyptic fanfare from the orchestra and the first statement, in falling brass triads, of the central motive of the piece; the

piano returns, gently this time, with the rest of the orchestra, moving toward a climax. The subsequent solo piano passage depicting the giant bird's attacks points toward the first movement's quiet closing.

Movement II, marked in the score "lively; like sparks," involves for the first time the entire ensemble of piano, chorus, and orchestra; in it Prometheus's inescapable fate is shown. A short piano interlude derived from the work's opening ensues, followed by the chorus and orchestra lamenting both Prometheus's fate and Zeus's regretful meting of his dire punishment by lightning bolts, portrayed by the piano. The movement ends on a tragic note, employing the earlier triadic motive in a quiet ending, which flows attacca into the final section.

The chorus, alone for the first time, intones "Thy Godlike crime was to be kind," in antiphony with the brass. Here, again with piano and the rest of the orchestra, follows the meditation at the core of the poem: "Like thee, Man is in part divine, / A troubled stream from a pure source." After the strife of the rest of *Prometheus* comes a peace derived from a greater understanding that I feel we will someday acquire and for which I pray fervently.

William Bolcom

William Bolcom



Photo: Katryn Conlin

Born in Seattle, Washington in 1938, William Bolcom now resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he taught at the University of Michigan for 35 years until his retirement in 2008. At age 11 he entered the University of Washington to study composition privately with John Verrall; later studies were with Darius Milhaud at Mills College and the Paris Conservatoire. He received a Master's Degree from Mills College and the first Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from Stanford University. Recent honors include the 1988 Pulitzer Prize in Music; four GRAMMY® awards (2005); the 2006 National Medal of Arts; two Guggenheim fellowships; six honorary doctorates; "2007 Composer of the Year" designation by *Musical America* and others. Bolcom has received commissions from, among many others, the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Saint Louis Symphony, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, the National Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Pacific Symphony, and the MET Orchestra. He has written for Plácido Domingo, Isaac Stern, James Galway, Marilyn Horne, Joyce Castle, and Ursula Oppens, among many others. His extensive chamber commissions include works for Yo-Yo Ma and Emanuel Ax, the Emerson and Guarneri Quartets, Pro Arte Quartet, and other groups. Bolcom has composed nine symphonies, eleven string quartets, three operas, three theater operas, and one zarzuela. As a highly acclaimed solo pianist and concert artist with his wife, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris, Bolcom has recorded and performed widely. William Bolcom's publisher is Edward B. Marks Music Company.

René Barbera



René Barbera is a graduate of The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center program at Lyric Opera of Chicago and has swiftly established himself as one of the leading singers of his generation. At Plácido Domingo's Operalia 2011 in Moscow he was awarded first prize in both the Opera and Zarzuela categories as well as the Audience Prize, the first artist to be the sole recipient of all three awards since the competition began in 1993. He performed Don Ramiro (*La Cenerentola*) for his débuts with Seattle Opera and Los Angeles Opera, Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*) with Lyric Opera Chicago, Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) with Opéra National de Paris, Los Angeles Opera, Michigan Opera and the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theatre, Moscow, Ramiro and Iopas (*Les Troyens*) for San Francisco Opera, Rodrigo (*La donna del lago*) for Santa Fe Opera, and Tonio (*La fille du Régiment*) with Greensboro Opera.

Photo: Glen Campbell

Jeffrey Biegel



In 2015 Moravian College conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters upon Jeffrey Biegel for his achievements as a world-renowned pianist, recording artist, chamber music collaborator, champion of new piano music, composer, arranger and educator. As a pioneer of projects joining large numbers of orchestras as a model for commissioning new music in the 21st century, he brought together 27 orchestras for Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Millennium Fantasy*, premiered by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 2000. Other commissioned projects include the premiere of Charles Strouse's *Concerto America* with the Boston Pops in 2002, Lowell Liebermann's *Concerto No. 3* with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in 2006 and Richard Danielpour's *Concerto 'In Truth'* with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. His

recordings include the complete piano sonatas by Mozart, Lucas Richman's *Concerto 'In Truth'* with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Steve Barta's 'Symphonic Arrangement' of Claude Bolling's *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano* with jazz flutist Hubert Laws, Kenneth Fuchs's *Falling Trio*, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* (Biegel's solo piano version), César Cui's *25 Preludes*, and Carolyne Taylor's *Classical Carols, Life According to Chopin, Bach On a Steinway, A Steinway Christmas Album* and *A Grand Romance*.
www.jeffreybiegel.com

Pacific Chorale



Founded in 1968, Pacific Chorale is internationally recognized for exceptional artistic expression, stimulating American-focused programming, and influential education programs. Pacific Chorale presents a substantial performance season of its own at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Orange County, California, and is sought regularly to perform with the nation's leading symphonies. Under the inspired guidance of Artistic Director John Alexander since 1972, Pacific Chorale has infused an Old World art form with California's hallmark innovation and cultural independence, developing innovative new concepts in programming, and expanding the traditional concepts of choral repertoire and performance. Pacific Chorale is comprised of 140 professional and volunteer singers. In

addition to its long-standing partnership with Pacific Symphony, the Chorale has performed with such renowned American ensembles as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the National Symphony, the San Diego Symphony, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and Musica Angelica. John Alexander and the Chorale have toured extensively throughout Europe, South America and Asia.

John Alexander



Artistic Director of Pacific Chorale since 1972, John Alexander is one of America's most respected choral conductors. His inspired leadership both on the podium and as an advocate for the advancement of choral art has garnered national and international admiration and acclaim. Alexander's long and distinguished career has encompassed conducting hundreds of choral and orchestral performances throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, the former Soviet Union and South America. Equally versatile whether on the podium or behind the scenes, Alexander has prepared choruses for many of the world's outstanding orchestral conductors. He is nationally recognized as a proponent of contemporary American music, a leader in the development of the performing arts, a lifelong educator, and a composer.

Pacific Symphony



Pacific Symphony, led by Music Director Carl St.Clair, is the largest orchestra formed in the United States in the last fifty years, and is recognized as an outstanding ensemble making strides on both the national and international scene as well as in its own community of Orange County, Calif. Pacific Symphony offers moving musical experiences with repertoire ranging from the great orchestral masterworks to music from today's most prominent composers, highlighted by the annual American Composers Festival, a series of multi-media concerts called Music Unwound and the highly successful opera and vocal initiative, Symphonic Voices. Pacific Symphony is dedicated to developing and promoting today's composers and expanding the orchestral repertoire – illustrated through its many commissions and recordings, in-depth explorations of American artists and themes. In 2010, Pacific Symphony was named one of five orchestras profiled by the League of American Orchestras in a study on innovation. The Symphony's innovative approaches to new works received the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming in 2005 and 2010. In 2006, the Symphony moved into the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, designed by Cesar Pelli with acoustics by Russell Johnson, and embarked on its first European tour, receiving an unprecedented 22 rave reviews.

Carl St.Clair



As Pacific Symphony's Music Director since 1990-91, Carl St.Clair has become widely recognized for his musically distinguished performances, commitment to outstanding educational programmes and innovative approaches to programming. St.Clair is known for the critically acclaimed annual American Composers Festivals, which began in 2000. In 2011-12, he inaugurated a vocal initiative that led to semi-staged productions of *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata* and *Carmen*. In 2009 he launched *Music Unwound*, featuring concerts highlighted by multimedia and innovative formats. In 2006-07, he led the orchestra's move into its acoustic home of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Orange County, Calif. In March 2006, St.Clair took the Symphony on its first highly successful European tour. St.Clair has served as General Music Director of the Komische Oper in Berlin, and as General Music Director and Chief Conductor of the German National Theater and Staatskapelle (GNNTS) in Weimar, Germany. He was also Principal Guest Conductor of the Radio Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart. He has appeared with orchestras in Israel, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South America, and summer festivals worldwide. In North America, St.Clair has led many major orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, where he served as Assistant Conductor.

Canciones de Lorca

Poems by Federico García Lorca (1898-1936)

1 Balanza

La noche quieta siempre.
El día va y viene.
La noche muerta y alta.
El día con un ala.
La noche sobre espejos
y el día bajo el viento.

3 La casada infiel

A Lydia Cabrera y a su negrita

Y que yo me la llevé al río
creyendo que era mozuela,
pero tenía marido.

Fue la noche de Santiago
y casi por compromiso.
Se apagaron los faroles
y se encendieron los grillos.
En las últimas esquinas
toqué sus pechos dormidos,
y se me abrieron de pronto
como ramos de jacintos.
El almidón de su enagua
me sonaba en el oído,
como una pieza de seda
rasgada por diez cuchillos.
Sin luz de plata en sus copas
los árboles han crecido
y un horizonte de perros
ladra muy lejos del río.

Pasadas las zarzamoras,
los juncos y los espinos,
bajo su mata de pelo
hice un hoyo sobre el limo.
Yo me quité la corbata.

1 Balance

Night always peaceful.
Day comes and goes.
Night dead and soaring.
Day with a wing.
Night above mirrors
and day below the wind.

3 The unfaithful housewife

To Lydia Cabrera and her black girl

I took her down to the river,
thinking she was free,
but she had a husband.

It was the night of St James's,
and I went almost out of duty.
The street lamps went out,
and the crickets lit up.
In hidden-away corners
I touched her sleeping breasts
and they soon opened up to me
like sprays of hyacinths.
Her starched petticoats
sounded to my ear
like a piece of silk
being sliced by ten knives.
No silvery light shines through
the tops of the looming trees
and a horizon of dogs
is barking far away from the river.

Past the brambles,
the rushes and the hawthorns,
beneath her flowing hair
I made a hollow in the ground.
I took off my tie.

Ella se quitó el vestido.
Yo el cinturón con revólver.
Ella sus cuatro corpiños.
Ni nardos ni caracolas
tienen el cutis tan fino,
ni los cristales con luna
relumbran con ese brillo.
Sus muslos se me escapaban
como peces sorprendidos,
la mitad llenos de lumbre,
la mitad llenos de frío.
Aquella noche corrí
el mejor de los caminos,
montado en potra de nácar
sin bridas y sin estribos.
No quiero decir, por hombre,
las cosas que ella me dijo.
La luz del entendimiento
me hace ser muy comedido.
Sucia de besos y arena
yo me la llevé del río.
Con el aire se batían
las espadas de los lirios.

Me porté como quien soy.
Como un gitano legítimo.
Le regalé un costurero
grande, de raso pajizo,
y no quise enamorarme
porque, teniendo marido,
me dijo que era mozuela
cuando la llevaba al río.

She took off her dress.
I my gunbelt.
She her four bodices.
Neither nard-flowers nor sea-shells
have skin so fine,
nor does moonlit glass
shine so brightly.
Her thighs slipped through my hands
like startled fish,
half full of fire,
half full of ice.
That night I rode
the best of paths,
mounted on a mother-of-pearl steed
without bridle or stirrups.
As a man, I shan't repeat
the things she said to me.
The light of understanding
makes me more reticent.
I took her, dirty with kisses
and sand, away with me from the river.
The swords of the lilies
were fighting with the air.

I behaved as the man I am.
As a true-blooded gypsy.
I gave her a large sewing box
of straw-yellow satin,
and refused to fall in love
because she told me she was free,
even though she had a husband,
when I took her down to the river.

4 Alba

*Abril de 1919
(Granada)*

Mi corazón oprimido
siente junto a la alborada
el dolor de sus amores
y el sueño de las distancias.
La luz de la aurora lleva
semilleros de nostalgias
y la tristeza sin ojos
de la médula del alma.
La gran tumba de la noche
su negro velo levanta
para ocultar con el día
la inmensa cumbre estrellada.

¡Qué haré yo sobre estos campos
cogiendo nidos y ramas,
rodeado de la aurora
y llena de noche el alma!
¡Qué haré si tienes tus ojos
muertos a las luces claras
y no ha de sentir mi carne
el calor de tus miradas!
¿Por qué te perdí por siempre
en aquella tarde clara?
hoy mi pecho está reseco
como una estrella apagada.

5 Danza da lúa en Santiago

¡Fita aquel branco galán,
fita seu transido corpo!
É a lúa que baila
na Quintana dos mortos.
Fita seu corpo transido,
negro de somas e lobos.
Nai: A lúa está bailando
na Quintana dos mortos.
¿Quién fire poldro de pedra

4 Dawn

*April 1919
(Granada)*

As a new day breaks,
my troubled heart aches
with the sorrow of its loves
and its dreams of distance.
The light of dawn brings
seedbeds of nostalgia
and the unseeing sadness
of the innermost soul.
The great tomb of night
lifts its black veil
to hide with daylight
the immense and starry heights.

What shall I do as I gather
nests and branches on this land,
surrounded by the dawn
but with my soul full of night!
What shall I do if your eyes
are dead to bright lights
and my flesh cannot feel
the heat of your gaze!
Why did I lose you for ever
on that bright afternoon?
Now my chest is parched,
like an extinguished star.

5 Dance of the moon in Santiago

Look at that handsome white man,
look at his body racked with pain!
It's the moon that's dancing
in the dead men's square.
Look at his body racked with pain,
black with shadows and wolves.
Mother: The moon is dancing
in the dead men's square.
Who is wounding a foal of stone

na mesma porta do sono?
¡É a lúa! ¡É a lúa
na Quintana dos mortos!
¿Quién fita meus grises vidros
cheos de nubens seus ollos?
É a lúa, é a lúa
na Quintana dos mortos.
Déixame morrer no leito
soñando na frol d'ouro.
Nai: A lúa está bailando
na Quintana dos mortos.
¡Ai filla, c'o ar do ceo
vólvome branca de pronto!
Non é o ar, é a triste lúa
na Quintana dos mortos.
¿Quién xime co-este xemido
d'inmenso boi malencónico?
Nai: É a lúa, é a lúa
na Quintana dos mortos.
¡Sí, a lúa, a lúa
coroada de toxo,
que baila, e baila, e baila
na Quintana dos mortos!

6 Árboles

1919

¡Árboles!
¿Habéis sido flechas
caídas del azul?
¿Qué terribles guerreros os
lanzaron?
¿Han sido las estrellas?
Vuestras músicas vienen del
alma de los pájaros,
de los ojos de Dios,
de la pasión perfecta.
¡Árboles!
¿Conocerán vuestras raíces toscas
mi corazón en tierra?

at the very gates of sleep?
It's the moon! It's the moon
in the dead men's square.
Who is looking at my grey windows
with eyes full of clouds?
It's the moon! It's the moon
in the dead men's square.
Let me die in my bed,
dreaming of a golden flower.
Mother: The moon is dancing
in the dead men's square.
Ah, daughter, the air from the sky
has turned me white all of a sudden!
It's not the air, it's the sad moon
in the dead men's square.
Who is moaning with the moan
of a huge, melancholy ox?
Mother: It's the moon, it's the moon
in the dead men's square.
Yes, the moon, the moon,
wearing a crown of gorse,
who's dancing, dancing, dancing
in the dead men's square!

6 Trees

1919

Trees!
Are you former arrows,
fallen from the sky?
What terrible warriors
fired you?
Was it the stars?
Your songs come from
the souls of the birds,
from the eyes of God,
from perfect passion.
Trees!
Will your gnarled roots meet
my heart within the earth?

7 **Soneto de la dulce queja**

No me dejes perder la maravilla
de tus ojos de estatua, ni el acento
que de noche me pone en la mejilla
la solitaria rosa de tu aliento.
Tengo miedo de ser en esta orilla
tronco sin ramas; y lo que más siento
es no tener la flor, pulpa o arcilla
para el gusano de mi sufrimiento.

Si tú eres el tesoro oculto mío,
si eres mi cruz y mi dolor mojado,
si soy el perro de tu señorío,
no me dejes perder lo que he ganado
y decora las ramas de tu río
con hojas de mi otoño enajenado.

9 **El poeta llega a La Habana**

*A don Fernando Ortiz
Son de negros en Cuba*

Cuando llegue la luna llena iré a
Santiago de Cuba,
iré a Santiago
en un coche de agua negra.
Iré a Santiago.
Cantarán los techos de palmera.
Iré a Santiago.
Cuando la palma quiere ser cigüeña,
iré a Santiago.
Y cuando quiere ser medusa el plátano,
iré a Santiago.
Iré a Santiago
con la rubia cabeza de Fonseca.
Iré a Santiago.
Y con el rosa de Romeo y Julieta
iré a Santiago.
Mar de papel y plata de moneda.
Iré a Santiago.

7 **Sonnet of a sweet lament**

Do not let me lose the marvel
of your statue-like eyes, or the word
with which by night the solitary rose
of your breath caresses my cheek.
I am afraid of being a trunk without branches
on this shore; and what I most regret
is not having the flower, flesh or clay
for the worm of my suffering.

If you are my hidden treasure,
if you are my cross and my drenched sorrow,
if I am a dog for you to command,
do not let me lose what I have won,
and decorate the branches of your river
with leaves of my enraptured autumn.

9 **The poet arrives in Havana**

*To Don Fernando Ortiz
A "son" of the Cuban blacks*

At the next full moon I'll go to
Santiago, Cuba,
I'll go to Santiago
in a coach of black water.
I'll go to Santiago.
The palm-frond roofs will sing.
I'll go to Santiago.
When the palm tree wants to be a stork,
I'll go to Santiago.
And when the banana tree wants to be a jellyfish,
I'll go to Santiago.
I'll go to Santiago
with the blond head of Fonseca.
I'll go to Santiago.
And with the rose of Romeo and Juliet
I'll go to Santiago.
Paper sea and silver coins.
I'll go to Santiago.

¡Oh Cuba! ¡Oh ritmo de semillas secas!
Iré a Santiago.
¡Oh cintura caliente y gota de madera!
Iré a Santiago.
Arpa de troncos vivos. Caimán.
Flor de tabaco.
Iré a Santiago.
Siempre he dicho que yo iría a Santiago
en un coche de agua negra.
Iré a Santiago.
Brisa y alcohol en las ruedas,
iré a Santiago.
Mi coral en la tiniebla,
iré a Santiago.
El mar ahogado en la arena,
iré a Santiago.
Calor blanco, fruta muerta,
iré a Santiago.
¡Oh bovino frescor de cañavera!
¡Oh Cuba! ¡Oh curva de suspiro
y barro!
Iré a Santiago.

Oh, Cuba! Oh, rhythm of dried seeds!
I'll go to Santiago.
Oh, burning waist and drop of wood!
I'll go to Santiago.
Harp of living tree-trunks. Alligator.
Tobacco flower.
I'll go to Santiago.
I've always said that I'd go to Santiago
in a coach of black water.
I'll go to Santiago.
Breeze and alcohol in its wheels,
I'll go to Santiago.
My coral in the darkness,
I'll go to Santiago.
The sea drowned upon the sand,
I'll go to Santiago.
White heat, dead fruit,
I'll go to Santiago.
Oh, bovine coolness of sugar cane!
Oh, Cuba! Oh, curve of yearning
and mud!
I'll go to Santiago.

English translations: Susannah Howe

10 Prometheus

Poem by Lord Byron (George Gordon) (1788-1824)

Titan! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refus'd thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift Eternity
Was thine – and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself – and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concenter'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

William
BOLCOM
(b. 1938)

1-9 **Canciones de Lorca (2006)** **31:54**

10 **Prometheus (2009)** **22:58**

René Barbera, Tenor **1 3-7 9**

Jeffrey Biegel, Piano **10**

Pacific Chorale **10**

John Alexander, Artistic Director

Pacific Symphony

Carl St.Clair,

Music Director and Conductor

A detailed track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet.

The sung texts and translations can be found inside the booklet, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/559788.htm

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Special thanks to Jeffrey Biegel, pianist and progenitor of the work *Prometheus*. Mr. Biegel instituted and secured funding for its commission and arranged the series of its multiple premières in which he performed. Without him the work would not have existed.

Recorded live in concert at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Costa Mesa, California, USA, from 24th to 26th October, 2013 (tracks 1-9), and from 18th to 20th November, 2010 (track 10) • Producer and editor: Blanton Alspaugh
Engineers: Ted Ancona and John Newton • Mixing and mastering: Mark Donahue • Publisher: Edward B. Marks Co. • Booklet notes: William Bolcom • Cover by Cosmin4000 (iStockphoto.com)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Winner of a Pulitzer Prize and multiple GRAMMY® awards, William Bolcom is one of America's leading composers with a prolific and widely performed catalog. Written for tenor Plácido Domingo, *Canciones de Lorca* explores the full variety of that Spanish poet's surrealistic humor, passion and mystery, as well as invoking the Andalusian flamenco and popular song-lyric atmosphere the composer feels is latent in each poem. Bolcom interprets the legend of *Prometheus* as a metaphor for our turbulent times, starkly examining how we are chained to a rock of technological dependency but dedicating his work to hope and a peace derived from greater universal understanding.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
54:52