



Presents

This is My Song: Ruminations on the Ephemeral

A Doctoral Conducting Recital

Kari Francis, *conductor*

Ellis Anderson, *piano*

I Am Music

Dale Trumbore
(b.1987)

Jaani laulud (St. John's Day Songs)

Veljo Tormis
(1930–2017)

No. 1 Kutse jaanitulele I (Call to the Midsummer Bonfire I)

Lauren Lundy, *alto*

Loren Masánqué, *alto*

No. 2 Kutse jaanitulele II (Call to the Midsummer Bonfire II)

No. 4 Miks Jaani oodatakse (Why We Look Forward to St. John's Arrival)

No. 5 Jaani hobu (St. John's Steed)

No. 7 Jaani laul (St. John's Song)

Jessica Roberts, *soprano*

Sous Bois

Marie-Juliette Olga "Lili" Boulanger
(1893–1918)

Nänie (Op. 82)

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Jennet Ingle, *Oboe*

Martha Barth, *Secundo Piano*

Domine tu mihi lavas pedes

José Maurício Nunes Garcia
(1767–1830)

Finlandia

Jean Sibelius, arr. Blake Morgan
(1865–1957; b. 1991)

Sounak "Raj" Das, *tenor*

LaBar Performance Hall, O'Neill Hall of Music

Thursday, December 9, 2021, 8 PM

This is a degree recital for the Doctor of Musical Arts.

Kari Francis is a student of Dr. Mark Doerries.

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Personnel

Kari Francis, *conductor*

Ellis Anderson, *piano*

Concordia Choir

Soprano

Kristie Kummerer
Jessica Mattiace
Lorelei McDermott
Jessica Roberts
Maggie Werth

Tenor

Ellis Anderson
Sounak "Raj" Das
Peter Ivie
Tucker Moore

Alto

Brittney Hale
Grace Jackson
Lauren Lundy
Loren Masánqué
Eleni Taluzek

Bass

Preston Harrell
Emmanuel de Leon, Jr.
David Stultz
Daniel Tucker
Adrian Volovets

*Ms. Ingle's and Ms. Barth's appearances this evening have been underwritten by the
Nanovic Institute for European Studies at the University of Notre Dame.*

Texts and Translations

***I Am Music* (anonymous, circa 1919; excerpted by Dale Trumbore)**

*Through me spirits immortal speak the message that makes the world weep,
And laugh, and wonder, and worship.*

I tell the story of love, the story of hate,
the story that saves, and damns.

I am the incense upon which prayers float to heaven.

I am the smoke which palls over the field of battle where men lie dying with me on their lips.

I am close to the marriage altar,
and when the graves open, I stand nearby.

I call the wanderer home,

I rescue the soul from the depths.

I open the lips of lovers and through me the dead whisper to the living.

I speak through the birds of the air,

The insects of the field, the crash of the waters on rock-ribbed shores,

The sighing of wind in the trees,

and I am even heard [...]

In the clatter of wheels on city streets.

I know no brother, yet all men are my brothers;

I am of them and they are of me, for I am the instrument of God.

I am music.

***Jaanilaulud* (St. John's Day Songs), translated by Kristin Kuutma**

No. 1 Kutse jaanitulele I (Call to the Midsummer Bonfire I) from Peetri parish

Tulge jaanista tulele, jaanike, jaaniste
jaanitulda oidemaie!
tuluk ulgub oonetesse,
säde kargab katuksesse,
kübemed küla vahele.

*Come to the midsummer bonfire, jaanike jaaniste
come and guard the fire!
The flame wanders into houses,
the spark leaps up onto roots,
burning scraps fall into village streets.*

No. 2 Kutse jaanitulele II (Call to the Midsummer Bonfire II) from Kolga-Jaani

Tulge jaaniku tulele, jaaniku, jaaniku
tulge tulda oidemaie,
karga kirge kaitsemaie!
Kes ei tule jaaniku tulele,
saagu mardini magama,
ristipäini ringutama!
Tulge jaaniku tulele,
tooge puida tulesagi!
Kes ei tule jaaniku tulele,

*Come to the midsummer bonfire, jaaniku jaaniku
come and guard the fire,
come and watch the flames!
Those who do not come to the bonfire
may they sleep till Martinmas,
stretch their limbs till Ascension Day!
Come to the midsummer bonfire,
and bring some wood when you come!
Those who do not come to the bonfire,*

jõuluss püürgu teise külje,
teisess jõuluss teise külje!

*may they roll over at Christmas,
and onto their other side the next Christmas.*

No. 4 Miks Jaani oodatakse (Why We Look Forward to St. John's Arrival) from Karksi parish

Mistes Jaani oodetesse,
jaanika, jaani,
Jaanil kahja kannetesse?
Sestep Jaani oodetesse,
Et oo nii ärjä ädätse,
Piimälehmä pindejennä.
Tule, Jaani, päästä neidä,
Päästä nii ärjä ädästä,
Piimalehmä pindejestä!
Sestep Jaani oodetesse.
Jaani, jaanika.

*Why do we look forward to Saint John's Eve,
jaanika, jaani,
Why is libation brought to John?
This is why we look forward to John's arrival:
The oxen are sick,
the milk cows in distress.
Come John, and save them,
Cure the oxen of their sickness,
save the milk cows from their distress!
That's why we look forward to John's arrival,
jaani, jaanika.*

No. 5 Jaani hobu (St. John's Steed) from Kolga-Jaani parish

Jaan oli tarka poisikene, jaaniko, jaaniko,
tegi tulesta obese,
tulesöest silmakese,
õlekõrrest kõrvakese,
linaluiest leeris laka,
kasteinast väanis kabjad.
Jaanikene, poisikene,
kui läed sõitu sõitemaie,
(Nõõ! Nõõ! Sõitu, sõitu!)
ehita oma obene,
pea tal pane pandelisse,
silmad siidituttidesse!
(Sõitu, sõitu, sõitu, sõitu!)
Jaanikene, poisikene,
tule siis jaaniku tulele,
siidineidu süle'essa,
kallis neidu kandelassa!

*John was a clever boy, jaaniko jaaniko
made himself a steed of fire,
made eyes of coals of fire,
ears from stalks of straw,
twisted a mane from boon of flax,
fashioned hooves out of bent-grass.
Little John, little boy
if you go out riding
(Gee up! Gee up! Ride away, ride away)
then fashion your horse,
put its head through a wooden bridle,
silk tassels over its eyes!
(Ride away, ride away, ride away, ride away!)
Little John, little boy
then come along to the midsummer bonfire with a
silk-clad maiden on your knee
a dear maiden in your arms!*

No. 7 Jaanilaul (St. John's Song) from Hargla parish

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima, jaani, jaani,
kas om Jaanil kahhar pää, jaani,
sis omma kesvä keerulidse, kaara
katsõkandilidse, jaani.

*Let's go out and look at John, jaani jaani
and see if he has bushy hair – jaani
then the barley will curl
and the oats be octagonal – jaani.*

Sous-Bois by Philippe Gille (1831 - 1901)

Marchons devant nous, bien douce est la pente,
Le rossignol chante dans l'ombre des bois.
Nos cœurs sont d'accord et la nuit est belle,
Elle nous appelle, écoutons sa voix.

*Let us go in front of us, quite gentle is the slope,
The nightingale sings in the shaded woods,
Our hearts concur that the night is beautiful,
It calls us, hear its voice!*

Pourquoi faut-il que tout s'efface,
Que ces rameaux sur nous penchés
A d'autres demain aient fait place
Par le temps flétris et séchés?

*Why it is necessary that everything is erased,
That these branches bending over us
Will soon be, at another time and place,
Faded and dried by time!*

Ces bois verront une autre aurore
Et d'autres nuits et d'autres jours.
Des oiseaux y viendront encore
Pour y chanter d'autres amours.

*These trees will see another dawn
And other nights and other days,
Birds will still come there
To sing new love songs!*

Et ce doux sentier qui nous charme
En l'absence d'un cœur glacé
Recevra peut-être une larme,
Où tant de bonheur a passé.

*And this soft path which charms us,
In the absence of a frozen heart,
Perhaps elicits a tear
Where such happiness passed!*

Domine tu mihi lavas pedes (John 13:6-8)

Domine tu mihi lavas pedes?
Respondit Iesus et dixit ei:
Si non laverò tibi pedes, non habebis partem
mecum.

*Lord, dost thou wash my feet?
Jesus answered and said to him:
If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with
me.*

Nänie (Elegy) by Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805), poetic translation by Vance George

Auch das Schöne muß sterben!
Das Menschen und Götter bezwinget
Nicht die eherne Brust rührt es des stygischen
Zeus.

*All must die, even beauty must die!
What conquers both men's and god's hearts
Could not soften the steely heart of Zeus, the dark
lord.*

Einmal nur erweichte die Liebe den
Schattenbeherrscher,
und an der Schwelle noch, streng, rief er zurück
sein Geschenk.

*Only once did love melt the heart of the
Ruler of Shadows,
yet at the threshold he sternly call'd back
his gift.*

Nicht stillt Aphrodite dem schönen Knaben die
Wunde,
die in den zierlichen Leib grausam der Eber
geritzt.
Nicht errettet den göttlichen Held die unsterbliche
Mutter,
Wenn er, am skäischen Tor fallend sein Schicksal
erfüllt.

*Nor could Aphrodite heal the wounds of Adonis
into whose beautiful flesh, cruel, the wild boar
had ripp'd.
Nor could Thetis, the goddess immortal, save her
son Achilles,
When, at the gates of Troy falling, his fate was
fulfill'd.*

Aber sie steigt aus dem Meer mit allen Töchtern
des Nereus,
Und die Klage hebt an um den verherrlichten
Sohn.

*Now, with the daughters of Nereus, she rises from
the water,
Cries ascend, full of sorrow, for her illustrious
son.*

Siehe! Da weinen die Götter, es weinen die
Göttinnen alle.

*See, the gods are weeping; behold ev'ry goddess
is mourning; the gods weep together;*

Daß das Schöne vergeht, daß das Vollkommenne
stirbt.
Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten,
ist herrlich,
Denn das Gemeine geht Klanglos zum Orkus
hinab.

*For all beauty must fade, all perfection must die.
For a song of lament from lips of the lov'd one is
glorious.
Thus, all things thoughtless sink, soundless, into
the abyss.*

Finlandia (Lloyd Stone, verses 1 & 2; Blake Morgan, verse 3)

1. This is my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for lands afar and mine;
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine:
But other hearts in other lands are beating,
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

2. My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
And sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine;
But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine;
This is my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for their land and for mine.

3. So let us raise this melody together,
Beneath the stars that guide us through the night;
If we choose love, each storm we'll learn to weather,
Until true peace and harmony we find;
This is our song, a hymn we raise together,
A dream of peace uniting humankind.

Program Notes

Music is a potent illustration of the ephemeral through its power to move us for even the briefest of moments. Like the fading memory of a beloved song, music is a metaphor for our own impermanence. Similarly, each of the works included on this program contemplate the passage of time and, ultimately, the transience of human life. By helping us to recognize the brevity of the present, music becomes a vehicle through which to reflect on the ways in which we connect to the past and future.

Dale Trumbore's *I Am Music* welcomes the listener with an array of tableaux that juxtapose the ordinary and extraordinary. The lush harmony of Trumbore's setting of this anonymous text from the turn of the twentieth century paints stirring pictures of Music's universality. "Through me spirits immortal speak" is interpolated between scenes of a battlefield, a wedding, a funeral, murmuring lovers, whispering spirits, and the cacophonies of nature and human civilization, finally cresting at the intrinsic realization of the speaker's purpose at "I am the instrument of God." Music is a metaphor for living: *you* are music; life is *your* song that you sing.

The folklore of ancient Estonia echoes through Veljo Tormis' *Jaanilaud*, a set of folk songs that celebrate the pagan midsommar festival (later rebranded as the feast day of St. John the Baptist, or *Jaanipäev*) and center upon the spectacle of the raging bonfire that symbolizes the changing harvest season and Estonian independence. After studying composition in Moscow, Tormis returned to Estonia to teach at the conservatory in Tallinn and remained there for the remainder of the Cold War. At the suggestion of Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály, Tormis began to explore folk songs to further his own artistic development, to preserve and expand the corpus of Estonian Balto-Finnic folk traditions, and as a discrete form of protest during over forty years of Soviet rule.

The songs of *Jaanilaud*, collected by Tormis as part of a larger set of arrangements marking different holidays throughout the Estonian calendar year, begin by vividly portraying the rising

sun and call to the bonfire. This is followed by supplications to St. John to heal ailing farm animals, recounting stories of St. John's vivacious youth, and of setting out in hopes of meeting the saint upon his arrival. Each movement depends upon the underlying structure of the *regilaul*: a simple, monophonic line spanning eight syllables that is interrupted by a repeated verse (in this case, "Jaani," "Jaaniku," or "Jaanika," referring to St. John). Tormis refreshingly varies melodically repetitive verses with striking dynamic changes and antiphonal alternations between treble and low voices conclusively building to compelling, polychordal harmonies as St. John's name is invoked for the final time. Kodály's musical influence can be heard in the opening drones, ethereal sustains, and displaced melodic echoes (lovers of choral music may specifically recall Kodály's well-known *Esti Dal* in these moments). The rustic nature of the source material gives way to uniquely robust arrangements that at once convey motion and stasis, tying present celebration with the lore of Estonia's pre-Christian past.

If *Jaanilaul* lives at once in the past and present, *Sous Bois* elides the present with the future in a bittersweet expression of longing to preserve a single moment. This poem by Phillippe Gille—who is better known for opera librettos that include Jules Massenet's *Manon* and Léo Delibes' *Lakmé*—was a popular practice prompt for composers preparing to enter the Prix de Rome competition, from which Marie-Juliette Olga ("Lili") Boulanger would emerge triumphant in 1913 at the age of nineteen. Although the fully orchestrated version of this work has been lost, we can tease out from the piano reduction flitting woodwind bird calls, saccharine strings, and smoothly syncopated, low ostinati that may have been double bass or timpani. Lasting just under six minutes, Boulanger transforms what could have easily been a perfunctory étude into a tender meditation on fragility. Boulanger's own life was tragically cut short by complications from tuberculosis just five years after her Prix de Rome win. She was survived by her older sister and noted pedagogue, Nadia, who committed herself to preserving her sister's legacy while also mentoring musical greats ranging from Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein to Philip Glass and Quincy Jones.

The influence of Hadyn and Mozart can be heard in Brazilian composer José Maurício Nunes Garcia's setting of this notable text from the Gospel of John. Brief but emphatic, *Domine tu mihi lavas pedes* is rife with inner turmoil that manifests in Peter's misinterpretation of the profundity of Jesus cleansing his feet. The clarity and elegance of Garcia's harmony draws our ear to the changing speakers: first Peter, then an omniscient narrator, and lastly, Jesus. The final moment seems to dangle, suspended between past and present in a prickling harmonic minor tonality as Peter struggles to accept such a self-abasing act of service from his teacher.

From this moment of crisis, we arrive at *Nänie*—from "nenia," Latin for a funeral elegy—which forces us to contend not only with our impermanence, but also grief and loss. *Nänie* may be more easily approached in the context of Brahms' other works for chorus and orchestra, the most famous of which, the *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Op. 45), looms large in the Western canon of choral masterworks. Following the *Requiem* are three shorter compositions containing poignant reflections on grief, conveyed in the form of Greek tragedies related through the poetry of Hölderlin, Schiller, and Goethe, respectively: *Schicksalslied* (Song of Destiny), *Nänie* (Elegy), and *Gesang der Parzen* (Song of the Fates). Goethe and Schiller, central figures in the Weimar Classicism movement that sparked a century of interest in Neoclassical Hellenism in artists of

every discipline across the European continent, feature prominently in this genre of Brahms' oeuvre.

Schiller was particularly fascinated by Greek antiquity, and through its myths he found the potential for viewing oneself in relation to certain classical ideals. In the case of *Nänie*, we witness the conflict that arises from infinity and perfection (embodied in the Gods) meeting with the finiteness of reality (in the loss of Eurydice, Adonis, and Achilles). The attempt to reconcile these contradictions motivates the poet's search for solace, which arrives in the phrase "Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten ist herrlich" (*For a song of lament from lips of the lov'd one is glorious*). Of this particular line, choral conductor Dr. James John offers: "A consoling metaphor conveying the message that human and divine can achieve union through art, it synthesizes the two realms that have stood in opposition to one another throughout the rest of the poem." The significance of this sentiment was not lost on Brahms, who opted to repeat this line, whole and in fragments, to close the work. One result of this choice is that the listener is spared from the abyss; instead, we are left with a sense of appreciation for having witnessed even the briefest glimmers of light amidst bitter darkness. *Nänie* is a funereal ode to the artist Anselm Feuerbach, another Neoclassical Hellenist, who was a contemporary of Brahms in Vienna and who was famed for his professional dedication to the old Italian masters of painting.

We return, finally, to where we started: with life as song. Blake Morgan's arrangement of the timeless *Finlandia* tune evokes where we have been, blending the extended verticalities of Tormis, the wistfulness of Boulanger, the mythic proportions of Brahms, the refinement of Garcia, and the musical metaphor of Trumbore. Decadent harmonization meets with Lloyd Stone's earnest lyrics, which are accompanied by an original verse written by Morgan that pivots from nationalism toward a more utopian tone: *This is our song, a hymn we raise together, a dream of peace uniting humankind.*

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