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Our concert series The Glee Club Presents, in which world class choral ensembles visit campus to engage and collaborate with our students and perform for our community, has already made a huge impact on the Glee Club’s life. We rely on donations to the Glee Club Fund to build and sustain this innovative series, and we hope that you will consider supporting our effort to raise $25,000 to cover the costs of our 2019-2020 season.

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• our traditions which are cherished by generations of Princeton alumni, friends, and parents
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• our students as they become exposed to a world of new repertoire, choral techniques and musical cultures

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Glee Club Presents

Conversations

featuring the Antioch Chamber Ensemble

ANTIOCH CHAMBER ENSEMBLE
Joshua Copeland, director

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY GLEE CLUB AND VOCAL CONSORT
Gabriel Crouch, director

Saturday, February 29, 2020 • 7:30pm • Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall • Princeton University
Gabriel Crouch is Director of Choral Activities and Senior Lecturer in Music at Princeton University. He began his musical career as an eight-year-old in the choir of Westminster Abbey, where he performed a solo at the wedding of HRH Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson. After completing a choral scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was offered a place in the renowned a cappella group The King’s Singers in 1996. In the next eight years he made a dozen recordings on the BMG label (including a Grammy nomination), and gave more than 900 performances in almost every major concert venue in the world. Special collaborative projects saw him working and performing with some of the world’s most respected artists, including percussionist Evelyn Glennie, pianists Emmanuel Ax and George Shearing, singer Barbara Hendricks and ‘Beach Boy’ Bruce Johnston.

Since moving to the USA in 2005, first to run the choral program at DePauw University in Indiana, and now at Princeton University, he has built an international profile as a conductor and director, with recent engagements in China and Australia as well as Europe and the United States. In 2008 he was appointed musical director of the British early music ensemble ‘Gallicantus’, with whom he has released four recordings under the Signum label to rapturous reviews, garnering ‘Editor’s Choice’ accolades in Gramophone and Early Music Review, and, for the 2012 release ‘The Word Unspoken’, a place on BBC Radio’s CD Review list of the top nine classical releases of the year. When the academic calendar allows, Mr. Crouch maintains parallel careers in singing and record production, crossing the Atlantic frequently to appear with such ensembles as Tenebrae and The Gabrieli Consort and Tenebrae. As a producer his latest credits have included Winchester Cathedral Choir, The Gabrieli Consort and Tenebrae.

His achievements in the choral world have led to many invitations to adjudicate choral competitions, notably the mixed choir final of ‘Sainsbury’s Choir of the Year’ (televised by the BBC). His work as a singer, coach and musical director has led to his name appearing in the London Times’ list of ‘Great British Hopes’.

Baritone Joshua Copeland has been Artistic Director of the Antioch Chamber Ensemble since its inception in 1997. He holds a Music Education degree from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, where he was a member of the highly-acclaimed Westminster Choir for four years. Joshua has toured as a singer and director both in the United States and abroad throughout Asia, Europe, and South America. Under Mr. Copeland’s direction, Antioch took top honors at the 2008 Tolosa International Choir Competition and has dazzled audiences and critics alike with diverse programming that has included classic choral masterworks as well as championing today’s most exciting contemporary composers. In addition his duties with Antioch, Joshua has created a highly successful choral and handbell program at the Bedminster Township School where he has taught since 2004. An avid gardener, outdoor enthusiast, and historic preservation buff, Joshua splits his time between his residences in Mount Tabor, New Jersey and Northport, Maine.
Matthew Brown  
b. 1978

A red, red rose

The passionate shepherd to his love

Quando son pin lontan

With a lily in your hand

Antioch Chamber Ensemble  
Joshua Copeland, director

Theo Trevisan '21  
b. 1999

Missa Brevisima (world premiere)

Natalie Stein '21  
b. 1999

In a world that misperceives you (world premiere)

Antioch Chamber Ensemble  
Joshua Copeland, director

Joanna Marsh  
b. 1970

An extra day (world premiere)

Spem in alium (450th anniversary performance)

Princeton University Glee Club  
Antioch Chamber Ensemble

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN THE RICHARDSON LOUNGE
Ulysses S. Grant was president, Verd’i’s Requiem was premiered, and the Battle of Little Big Horn was still two years in the future when the Princeton University Glee Club was founded in 1874 by Andrew Fleming West, the first Dean of the Graduate College. In its early years, the group consisted of a few young men and was run entirely by its student members, but in 1907, Charles E. Burnham became the first of a long line of eminent professional musicians to lead the Glee Club. Since that time, the ensemble has established itself as the largest choral body on Princeton’s campus, and has distinguished itself both nationally and overseas.

The Glee Club first achieved national recognition under famed organist Alexander Russell, when it performed the American premiere of Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1931. Further accolades saw performances of Bach’s Mass in B Minor at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1935, and with the Vassar College Choir, the first United States performance of Rameau’s Castor et Pollux in 1937. The custom of joining together with the women’s choirs of Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges continued until the advent of coeducation. In the 1950s, under the direction of its longest-serving conductor, Walter L. Nollner, the Glee Club traveled outside the United States for the first time, establishing a pattern of international concert tours to Europe, Asia, South America, and the South Pacific. Two world tours followed, and most recently, PUGC has toured Hawai’i, Argentina, Paris, Germany, Prague, South Africa, and northern Spain.

Nowadays the Glee Club performs frequently on Princeton’s campus, enjoying the wonderful acoustic and aesthetic of Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall. Perhaps the choir’s most celebrated performing tradition began in 1913, with the annual concerts presented jointly with the Glee Clubs of Harvard and Yale on the eve of the respective football games. A more recent tradition has seen the establishment of annual performances of choral masterworks with professional soloists and orchestra, now supported by an endowment fund to honor Walter Nollner. In the last few years these have included Orff’s Carmina Burana, Mendelssohn’s Elijah, Bach’s St. Matthew and St. John Passions and Mass in B Minor, Mozart’s Requiem, Homneger’s Le Roi David, and Faure’s Requiem.

The choir embraces a vast array of repertoire, from Renaissance motets and madrigals, Romantic part-songs, and 21st century choral commissions to the more traditional Glee Club fare of spirituals, folk music, and college songs. The spectrum of Glee Club members is perhaps even broader: undergraduates and graduate students, scientists and poets, philosophers and economists – all walks of academic life are represented, knit together by their belief in the nobility and joy of singing together.

Princeton Vocal Consort

Madeline Kushan ’20 | soprano
Meredith Hooper ’20 | alto
Charles Hemler ’20 | tenor
Eli Berman ’20 | baritone
Thomas Jankovic’20 | bass

Princeton University’s Vocal Consort Certificate Program, newly instigated last year, allows singers with an interest in one-to-part singing, of unaccompanied vocal music from any era or genre, to pursue their passion together in a supervised setting. Under the general direction of Gabriel Crouch, the students in the program curate their own recitals and rehearse with each other in a variety of configurations, depending on the needs of the repertoire. The Consort’s inaugural performance was last spring and featured repertoire by Ligeti, Tye, Padilla, and more.

Consort’s inaugural performance was last spring and featured repertoire by Ligeti, Tye, Padula, and more.

You charm the lover with sweetness and grace;

You comfort the mourner with serenity and wisdom;

You awake the sleeper from oblivion;

You delight the listener with magic and beauty.

Doni: This piece changes clefs more often than I can tell you. A pop upon these clefs and these fantastical brains that think them up! You should know that there are some who talk well about music but have bad musical inventiveness and were practical skill others have good practical skill but no knowledge; others still have little musical sense for all their practical accomplishments.

Casparus: Our wish is to entertain each other, not to hold school!

You would certainly hear such harmony that it would seem to you either that you had been carried off to Helicon. You would hear...

Doni: The octave and fifth are perfect, the seventh and second imperfect; A pop upon these clefs; this piece has different words you see; the discourse of a good musician, talk well of music.

Natalie Dietterich | Conversations with strangers

it will be four years in May
her addiction’s a quick fix to feeling better, feeling normal every once in awhile she comes back
I took eighteen of them
I don’t know if I was really trying to kill myself these hands, they sleep
I was there for three years off and on she wants everything at some point you have to live

A note from the composer

This text was assembled from fragments of conversations I had with people whom I had never previously met. I was moved by the deeply personal things people were willing to share, despite our lack of a direct relationship toward one another. I have chosen phrases that follow three particular strangers I have met, and their hardship, representing the struggles of many that go unconsidered as we pass by and continue with our lives.
Catherine Sweeney '20
Angel C. Dye
Joanna Zhang '21
Aison Spann '20
Shruti Venkat "13
Jessica Schreiber '20
Kevin Williams '21
Yang Shao '20
Laura Robertson '23
Wilbur Wang '21
Megan Ormsbee '20
Frances Mangina '22
Marley Jacobson '22
Stephen Zheng '22
Tynan Gardner '20
Tajin Rogers '20
Tim Peterson '22
Sloth Words '23
Diana Little GS
Mari Kawakatsu GS
Anna Dong '20
Sopranos I
Hannah Bein '22
Lizelle Curran '22
Alex Gianmatteo '22
Chloe Horner '22
Cecilia Hsu '20
Zoe Kahana '21
Catherine Keim '23
Madeline Kushan '20
Noel Peng '22
Jacqueline Pothier '22
Charlotte Root '22
Anastasia Shmytova GS
Molly Trauman '23
Katie Chou '23
Emily Della Pietra '23
Lucy Dever '22
Lulu Hao '20
Stean Haeber '23
Marley Jacobsson '22
Frances Mangina '22
Megan Pan '22
Laura Robertson '23
Jessica Schreiber '20
Allison Sparr '20
Natalie Stein '21
Catherine Sweeney '20
Shona text
Hakusi kurema
Kwezvidzidzo zvangu
Zvokuzvirova zvavo
Zvino mwana yve
Ndakumpondi zve
Ndini ndakadora
Hupenyu hwake ini
Eugene nhai wo!
Iwavo netisiti
(Rasa mwana)
Oh, the unbearable weight
Of my wrongdoings
Because I saw born with them
That young child
I killed him
I am the one who took
Oh Eugene!
Please, have mercy on me.

We are grateful to the Princeton University Glee Club for commissioning this work and for bringing the two of us together when we were both members; to Antioch Ensemble for joining the Glee Club in performing it; and to all who listen to Eugene with open spirits.

A Note from the Composers

This Epitaph mixes English and Shona, Tanyaradzwa's mother tongue. It involves a collective assumption of responsibility for Eugene's death and a petition for forgiveness from Eugene's spirit. In many ways, that is the extent of our ambition here: to create a space where together we can do the work to lay one spirit to rest. There will be much more work to bring rest to many others.

Epitaph for Eugene Williams began its life as the final movement of A Stone to the Head, a work for choir and chamber ensemble which we wrote to commemorate the centennial of the racial violence of the Red Summer of 1919. In that work, we chose to focus on the 1919 Chicago riots and the event that sparked them: the death of 17-year-old Eugene Williams, who was stoned and drowned when he drifted into the “white” waters of 29th Street Beach. We are a collaborative team of a white Irish-American composer and a black composer originally from Zimbabwe, and both the Epitaph and A Stone to the Head also include text by African-American poet Angel C. Dye. We hope that our varied musical backgrounds and differing lived experiences have allowed us to bring multiple lenses to bear on this deeply difficult chapter of American history.

This Epitaph makes English and Shona, Tanyaradzwa’s mother tongue. It involves a collective assumption of responsibility for Eugene’s death and a petition for forgiveness from Eugene’s spirit. In many ways, that is the extent of our ambition here: to create a space where together we can do the work to lay one spirit to rest. There will be much more work to bring rest to many others.

We are grateful to the Princeton University Glee Club for commissioning this work and for bringing the two of us together when we were both members; to Antioch Ensemble for joining the Glee Club in performing it; and to all who listen to Eugene with open spirits.

Ascription

There is a point within the struggle when a part stands in for the whole, carries its own name and everything moving alongside it into the unknown. Eugene became that symbol and beacon, the inciting innocence igniting the language of the unheard. In his ascension, the prayers and cries of a people rise high as the listening skies.

Sable fury and alabaster fear remain here lamenting the glimpse of hope Eugene has found. We send him on now to that resting place flowered in a peace this earth could not cultivate in time. Rest, Eugene, in the liberty of a new life where you are wreathed and remembered, honored and enshrined. Lest your exodus be in vain, while we remain here, we must keep trying.

Angel C. Dye
Antioch Chamber Ensemble

Joshua Copeland, artistic director
Stephen Sands, executive director
Represented by Sumnerell Arts

Widely regarded as one of the finest professional choral ensembles in the United States, The Antioch Chamber Ensemble is currently celebrating its 21st season of exceptional music-making. Under the leadership of founding Artistic Director Joshua Copeland, the ensemble strives to present as diverse a program as possible of the world’s greatest choral literature, both sacred and secular, and has performed works ranging from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary masterpieces with a core group of ten to twelve of the New York metropolitan area’s finest singers. Antioch has been awarded first-place honors in the highly prestigious Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain, establishing them among the top rank of professional choirs in the world. In recent seasons, Antioch has been called “stellar,” “flawless,” “an exceptional group,” and “a spectacular example of what a classical choir should sound like” by the national press. Of the ensemble’s recent debut for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New York Times wrote: “The Antioch Chamber Ensemble performed … with clarity of tone and intonation so pure that you could hear the buzz of overtones created by some of the close harmonies. The most daring of these often color the sighs and wordless exclamations that punctuate both spiritual and secular texts, and the Antioch singers gave each its expressive register: impassioned, weak-kneed, swooning.” Other past performance highlights include concerts for the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, the American Choral Directors Association Eastern National Conference and the Festival des Chœurs Lauréats in France.

In recent years, Antioch has earned a glowing reputation for its pitch-perfect and expressive interpretation of modern music. The ensemble gave the European premiere of Eric Whitacre’s “The City and the Sea,” as well as the world premiere of Bruce Adolphe’s “Of Art and Onions: Homage to Bronzino” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, the American Choral Directors Association Eastern National Conference and the Festival des Chœurs Lauréats in France.

Matthew Brown | A red, red rose
O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That’s newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That’s sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lae,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a’ the seas gang dry.

Till a’ the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi’ the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o’ life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only luve!
And fare thee well awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns

Jean Belmont | The passionate shepherd to his love
Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
And all the craggy mountain yields.

There will I will make thee beds of Roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and Ivy buds,
With Coral clasps and Amber studs:
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle.

Christopher Marlowe

Morton Lauridsen | Quando son più lontan
Quando son più lontan de’ bei vostri occhi
Che m’han fatto cangiar voglia et costumi,
Cresce la fiamma et mi conduce a morte.
Et voi, che per mia sorte,
Potevate raffrenar la dolce fiamma,
Mi negate la fiamma che mi infiamma.

Yvo Barry

When I am far away from your beautiful eyes,
which have made me alter my will and my ways,
the flame grows and leads me towards death;
and your eyes, who for my future destiny
could save me from that sweet flame,
deny me the very flame that inflames me.

Christopher Marlowe

Eric Whitacre | With a lily in your hand
With a lily in your hand
I leave you, o my night love!
Little widow of my single star
I find you.
Tamer of dark butterflies
I keep along my way.
After a thousand years are gone
you’ll see me,
o my night love!

By the blue footpath,
tamer of dark stars,
I’ll make my way.
Until the universe
can fit inside
my heart.

Frederico García Lorca
translated by Jerome Rothenberg
Theo Trevisan | Missa Brevissima

The words of the 5 sections of the Mass Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) are heard simultaneously.

A note from the composer

Missa Brevissima reflects my experiences singing sacred music with the American Boychoir School from 2009 to 2013. As a non-religious person, I sometimes struggled with singing sacred music at religious functions because I do not believe or partake in them. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, these years were some of the most formative of my life so far. The school—also a secular institution—embraced both sacred and secular music as we toured and performed, and while the school sadly closed in 2017, the lessons I learned there are still highly relevant to me today. I often reflected on my varied experiences at the school while I was writing this piece.

This piece utilizes the 18th century tradition of condensing the text of individual mass movements by singing several lines simultaneously, and applies it with the entire text of the mass (i.e. all movements combine to form the text). The resulting collage of text is set to counterpoint filled with quotes from various mass settings and layered with anachronistic extensions and unorthodox chromaticism. Quotes and paraphrases derived from plainchant, Durufle, Brumel, Martin, Fauré, Rossini, Schütz, Poulenc, Byrd, and Palestrina appear throughout the piece (see the annotated score for more details).

This piece was written for the Antioch Chamber Ensemble and is dedicated to Fernando Malvar-Ruiz, Fred Meads, and Kerry Heimann. Special thanks to the Antioch Chamber Ensemble, Gabriel Crouch, and Pascal Le Boeuf.

Natalie Stein | In a world that misperceives you

A note from the composer

In a World That Misperceives You is a new choral work that explores the complexities of identity. Though the text comes from a personal place, I think it captures the experience of many young adults, particularly of women and LGBT+ people. Lines of sorrow are intertwined with lines of hope and strength, which is reflected in the mix of polyphony and homophony and the suspensions between the voices. The lingering C as a tonal center from the beginning to the end of the piece might be compared to the essence of identity that we carry in our hearts, apart from societal perceptions.

To be who you are in a world that misperceives you, as if the diamonds inside you were merely stones, is to splinter a little every day. To be who you are is to cry with your heart because your eyes are too tired, to sing because you cannot raise your voice in any other way, to wither, but never to fall. More than anything, it is to walk with the very tide in your hands.

Natalie Stein

Natalie Stein '21

In a world that misperceives you

Natalie Stein '21 has enjoyed writing songs since childhood, but it wasn’t until matriculating that she took formal classes in composition. As a music major, Stein’s earliest inclinations to put notes on paper have blossomed. Sometimes, the ideas for composition, as in the case of In a world that misperceives you, come suddenly to Stein.

The four-part choral work rests on the unique unity of text and note when a composer writes her own words and draws out melody from the same place. Stein’s poem asks the listener to consider one’s own internal turmoil, and how—if ever—the listener admits to the outside world who she really is.

A soprano, Stein says that the sopranos share the melody for the most part, sharing the wealth to some extent with the alto. The basses are mostly left in the background, providing harmony and an anchoring foundation. The work invites a conversation, and different voices pull the listener in different places. In that at least, it’s the sonic realization of the splintering diamonds Stein writes about. From our tottering beginnings, we’ve been taught not to judge a book by its cover, nonetheless we do it all the time. First impressions matter, we’re also told. Stein’s poem reminds us that first impressions don’t have to last; it’s worthwhile and possible to open the book and lose our misperceptions.

Theo Trevisan '21

Missa Brevissima

There’s a kind of universal hospitality in music-making, says Theo Trevisan ’21. A graduate of the American Boychoir School and a current University undergraduate, Trevisan has spent much of his life in Princeton. But music has carried him around the world, both in the notes he writes and in the places he has toured with choirs. Missa Brevissima unpacks a tension Trevisan wrestled with early on: Non-religious, Trevisan sometimes struggled with singing sacred music, a choral tradition that was nonetheless formative in his musical education.

"The moment you’re making music it doesn’t matter who you are or what you’re doing outside that moment. You’re all in it together," he said. But in 2017, the American Boychoir School closed and with it, the chance for many young choral students to learn untangle these questions. For Trevisan, the closure inspired him to compose choral music, and Miss was the result. In particular, it was about understanding and loosening the rules—he knew that to break the rules you had to learn them. How do you pick the right wrong notes?

In Missa Brevissima, Trevisan uses the entirety of the mass (a text he first learned singing Joseph Haydn at the American Boychoir). But, in the tradition of the Enlightenment, he doesn’t want us to have to spend too much time in church. The movement is fast, saturated, urgent, and busy. As he described it, the haste to get through what’s demanded during our limited daylight hours is as familiar to University students as it was to Enlightenment church-goers.

Trevisan’s piece pays homage his time at the American Boychoir School and gives us a chance to think about how we might learn the rules and break the rules in order to honor their tradition in our work.
Natalie Dietterich GS

Conversations with strangers

Across the country, deaths from opioid addictions are increasing. Staggering statistics show that nearly 70,000 people died of an overdose during a one year period ending in February 2019. But addiction is not a single-layer story of painkillers. It’s a story of mothers and fathers and alcohol and cigarettes and the mundane. It’s a story of neighborhood conversations and doctor’s prescriptions. Perhaps, addiction is ubiquitous. “Even if not you, what about your neighbor?” asks Natalie Dietterich GS in her piece on addiction, Conversations with strangers.

The piece, which has been performed half a dozen times, is Dietterich’s formal campus debut. Despite not being a lyricist, Dietterich says she takes a “heavy hand” in editing the texts she chooses for her work. In this case, she took a unique approach to research and writing for her chosen texts.

Dietterich went to diners, coffee shops, and other locales, seeking out people who sat alone and striking up conversation. The results are intimate vignettes of addiction, anonymized into snippets and combined to paint a portrait at once individual and universal. At the most poignant moment in the piece, the anguish of addiction is palpable, the score instructing for indistinguishable “wailing” of high voices at the top. Transparently, Dietterich explained that eliminating individual voices at this moment in the piece is part of her effort to bring home the universality of addiction, her central message.

Joanna Marsh | An extra day

An Extra Day was commissioned by Gabriel Crouch and the Princeton University Glee Club, as part of Princeton’s season of events to mark fifty years of co-education. The text is by Jane Hirshfield – a member of the first undergraduate women’s class at the University.

February 29

An extra day —
Like the painting’s fifth crow,
who looks out directly,
straight toward you,
from inside her black and white spots.
An extra day —
Accidental, surely:
the made calendar stumbling over the real
as a drunk tips over a threshold
too low to see.
An extra day —
With a second cup of black coffee.
A friendly but businesslike phone call.
A mailed-back package.
Some extra work, but not too much —
just one day’s worth, exactly.

Thomas Taliss | Spem in Alium

Spem in alium quoniam habui
prater in te, Deus Israel,
qui irascit et propitius eris,
et omnia peccata hominum in tribulatione dimittis.

Spem in alium

I have never put my hope
in any other but in You, God of Israel,
who will be angry and yet become again gracious,
and who forgives all the sins of man in suffering.
Lord God, Creator of heaven and earth,
look upon our turbines.

Natalie Dietterich

Conversations with strangers

Summer/ Composers Tanyaradzwa Tawengwa and Flannery Cunningham sought to capture this moment in their piece A Stone

Kazoradzwa kuEugene (Epitaph for Eugene Williams)

Eugene Williams was in no man’s land—the water between the “black beach” and the “white beach” in Chicago on a hot day in July 1919. Chicago did not have de jure segregation in its public facilities at the time, but de facto segregation was pervasive. Along with his friends, five other African American boys all under age 18, Williams had constructed a raft to navigate the space at 27th street, unofficially demarcated for neither white nor black swimmers. None of the five could swim, but a raft could bear them safely through the cooling Lake Michigan waters. But this respite was broken by a white man standing at 26th street who began to hurl stones at them to drive them from the “white beach.” The white man struck Williams on the forehead, causing him to slip from the raft and drown.

When a black policeman strode toward the “white beach” to identify Eugene’s killer, a white policeman stopped him from making the arrest. The two argued and whites soon provoked violence resulting in a weeklong riot that ended only with the deployment of the Illinois National Guard. The summer of 1919 was filled with 25 similar riots and became known as the “Red Summer.” Composers Tanyaradzwa Tawengwa and Flannery Cunningham sought to capture this moment in their piece A Stone to the Head commissioned by Grace Chorale in Brooklyn, and premiered last year as part of an effort to commemorate the summer of 1919. The two composers spent the year prior deep in primary documents and composing.

The 12-part five-movement piece takes the listener through the story of Eugene Williams, drawing on primary sources and using phrases like “When the mob comes and you must die, take at least one with you!” and “Call the white friends to the door and shut them down” as well as “One million Negroes like a disease” and “You dirty...scabs!” Tensions in cities across the north were rife—millions of European American and African American migrants looking for work in overpopulated cities mixed with a convulsing postwar society; increasingly racist federal policies; and a rising labor movement. Against this backdrop, Cunningham and Tawengwa ask their listeners to reflect on the legacy of summer 1919. The summer of 1919 was filled with 25 similar riots and became known as the “Red Summer.” Composers Tanyaradzwa Tawengwa and Flannery Cunningham sought to capture this moment in their piece A Stone to the Head commissioned by Grace Chorale in Brooklyn, and premiered last year as part of an effort to commemorate the summer of 1919. The two composers spent the year prior deep in primary documents and composing.

In composing the piece, the two centered on Eugene Williams. “The extent of our ambition in this movement is to set one soul to rest,” they explained. Tawengwa, who is from Zimbabwe, incorporates a Madzimbabwe (present-day Zimbabwe) instrument into the piece “whose ritual purpose is to facilitate communication between the human plane and the ancestral realm.” Without this tradition, a spirit will wander aimlessly among the living unable to transition to “the land of the ancestors.”

The Princeton Glee Club is where Cunningham and Tawengwa met. They wrote the piece on three continents, and neither had co-composed with anybody before. Composing collaboratively is uncommon, but “ego is the enemy to creativity,” they say.
Ulysses S. Grant was president, Verditi's Requiem was premiered, and the Battle of Little Big Horn was still two years in the future when the Princeton University Glee Club was founded in 1874 by Andrew Fleming West, the first Dean of the Graduate College. In its early years, the group consisted of a few young men and was run entirely by its student members, but in 1907, Charles E. Burnham became the first of a long time of eminent professional musicians to lead the Glee Club. Since that time, the ensemble has established itself as the largest choral body on Princeton's campus, and has distinguished itself both nationally and overseas.

The Glee Club first achieved national recognition under famed organist Alexander Russell, when it performed the American premiere of Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1931. Further accolades saw performances of Bach's Mass in B Minor at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1935, and with the Vassar College Choir, the first United States performance of Rameau's Castor et Pollux in 1937. The custom of joining together with the women's choirs of Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges continued until the advent of coeducation. In the 1950s, under the direction of its longest-serving conductor, Walter L. Nollner, the Glee Club traveled outside the United States for the first time, establishing a pattern of international concert tours to Europe, Asia, South America, and the South Pacific. Two world tours followed, and most recently, PUGC has toured Hawaii, Argentina, Paris, Germany, Prague, South Africa, and northern Spain.

Nowadays the Glee Club performs frequently on Princeton's campus, enjoying the wonderful acoustic and aesthetic of Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall. Perhaps the choir's most celebrated performing tradition began in 1913, with the annual concerts presented jointly with the Glee Clubs of Harvard and Yale on the eve of the respective football games. A more recent tradition has seen the establishment of annual performances of choral masterworks with professional soloists and orchestra, now supported by an endowed fund to honor Walter Nollner. In the last few years these have included Orff's Carmina Burana, Mendelssohn's Elijah, Bach's St. Matthew and St. John Passions and Mass in B Minor, Mozart's Requiem, Hommer's Le Reoi David, and Faure's Requiem.

The choir embraces a vast array of repertoire, from Renaissance motets and madrigals, Romantic part songs, and 21st century choral commissions to the more traditional Glee Club fare of spirituals, folk music, and college songs. The spectrum of Glee Club members is perhaps even broader: undergraduates and graduate students, scientists and poets, philosophers and economists – all walks of academic life are represented, knit together by their belief in the nobility and joy of singing together.

Princeton Vocal Consort

Madeline Kuehne '20 | soprano
Meredith Hooper '20 | alto
Charles Hemler '20 | tenor
Eli Berman '20 | baritone
Thomas Jankovic '20 | bass

Princeton University's Vocal Consort Certificate Program, newly instigated last year, allows singers with an interest in one-to-part singing, of unaccompanied vocal music from any era or genre, to pursue their passion together in a supervised setting. Under the general direction of Gabriel Crouch, the students in the program curate their own recitals and rehearse with each other in a variety of configurations, depending on the needs of the repertoire. The Consort's inaugural performance was last spring and featured repertoire by Ligeti, Tye, Poulenc, and more.

Dori: This piece changes clefs more often than I can tell you. A box upon these clefs and these fantastical brains that think them up! You should know that there are some who talk well about music but have bad musical inventiveness and worse practical skill others have good practical skill but no knowledge; others still have little musical sense for all their practical accomplishments.

Casanova: Our wish to entertain each other, not to hold school! You would certainly hear such harmony that it would seem to you either that you had been carried off to Helicon. You would hear...

Dori: The octave and fifth are perfect, the seventh and second imperfect; A box upon these clefs; this piece has different words you see; the discourse of a good musician, talk well of music.

Natalie Dietterich | Conversations with strangers

it will be four years in May
her addiction's a quick fix to feeling better, feeling normal every once in awhile she comes back
I took eighteen of them
I don't know if I was really trying to kill myself these hands, they sleep
I was there for three years and on she wants everything at some point you have to live

A note from the composer

This text was assembled from fragments of conversations I had with people whom I had never previously met. I was moved by the deeply personal things people were willing to share, despite our lack of a direct relationship toward one another. I have chosen phrases that follow three particular strangers I have met, and their hardship, representing the struggles of many that go unconsidered as we pass by and continue with our lives.

Robert Kyr | In praise of music

O Music, O Music from sound beginning,
From time unfolding:
Only from silence
Emerging and flowing as tones from the hidden life,
Beyond all senses
Only from stillness arising and flowing
As new light from the unknown, Beyond night and day.

O Music,
O lead me always,
From darkness into light,
From wonder to wonder,
From life into greater life.

Heart of my heart
O soul of my soul:
One Music

Robert Kyr
Epitaph for Eugene Williams began its life as the final movement of A Stone to the Head, a work for choir and chamber ensemble which we wrote to commemorate the centennial of the racial violence of the Red Summer of 1919. In that work, we chose to focus on the 1919 Chicago riots and the event that sparked them: the death of 17-year-old Eugene Williams, who was stoned and drowned when he drifted into the “white” waters of 29th Street Beach. We are a collaborative team of a white Irish-American composer and a black composer originally from Zimbabwe, and both the Epitaph and A Stone to the Head also include text by African-American poet Angel C. Dye. We hope that our varied musical backgrounds and differing lived experiences have allowed us to bring multiple lenses to bear on this deeply difficult chapter of American history.

This Epitaph mixes English and Shona, Tanyaradzwa’s mother tongue. It involves a collective assumption of responsibility for Eugene’s death and a petition for forgiveness from Eugene’s spirit. In many ways, that is the extent of our ambition here: to create a space where together we can do the work to lay one spirit to rest. There will be much more work to bring rest to many others.

We are grateful to the Princeton University Glee Club for commissioning this work and for bringing the two of us together when we were both members; to Antioch Ensemble for joining the Glee Club in performing it; and to all who listen to Eugene with open spirits.

Ascension

There is a point within the struggle when a part stands in for the whole, carries its own name and everything moving alongside it into the unknown. Eugene became that symbol and beacon, the inciting innocence igniting the language of the unheard. In his ascension, the prayers and cries of a people rise high as the listening skies.

Sable fury and alabaster fear remain here lamenting the glimpse of hope Eugene has found.

We send him on now to that resting place flowered in a peace this earth could not cultivate in time. Rest, Eugene, in the liberty of a new life where you are wreathed and remembered, honored and enshrined. Lest your exodus be in vain, and remembered, honored and enshrined. Lest your exodus be in vain, while we remain here, we must keep trying.

Angel C. Dye
Widely regarded as one of the finest professional choral ensembles in the United States, The Antioch Chamber Ensemble is currently celebrating its 21st season of exceptional music-making. Under the leadership of founding Artistic Director Joshua Copeland, the ensemble strives to present as diverse a program as possible of the world’s greatest choral literature, both sacred and secular, and has performed works ranging from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary masterpieces with a core group of ten to twelve of the New York metropolitan area’s finest singers. Antioch has been awarded first-place honors in the highly prestigious Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain, establishing them among the top rank of professional choirs in the world. In recent seasons, Antioch has been called “stellar,” “flawless,” “an exceptional group,” and “a spectacular example of what a classical choir should sound like” by the national press. Of the ensemble’s recent début for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New York Times wrote: “The Antioch Chamber Ensemble performed … with clarity of tone and intonation so pure that you could hear the buzz of overtones created by some of the close harmonies. The most daring of these often color the sighs and wordless exclamations that punctuate both spiritual and secular texts, and the Antioch singers gave each its expressive register; impassioned, weak-kneed, swooning.” Other past performance highlights include concerts for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, the American Choral Directors Association Eastern National Conference and the Festival des Choeurs Laureats in France. In recent years, Antioch has earned a glowing reputation for its pitch-perfect and expressive interpretation of modern music. The ensemble gave the European première of Eric Whitacre’s “The City and the Sea,” as well as the world première of Bruce Adolphe’s “Of Art and Onions: Homage to Bronzino” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, commissioned by the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. The same year, the group’s second recording, The Passionate Shepherd to his Love, was released by MSR Classic to universal acclaim. The ensemble is the recipient of a grant from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music to produce the first recording of choral works by Brown, a talented emerging composer based in Los Angeles.

Matthew Brown I A red, red rose
O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That’s newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That’s sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a’ the seas gang dry.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns

Morten Lauridsen I Quando son più lontan
Quando son più lontan de’ bei vostri occhi
Che m’han fatto cangiar voglia et costumi,
Cresce la fiamma et mi conduce a morte.

Et voi, che per mia sorte,
Potreste raffrenar la dolce fiamma,
Mi negate la fiamma che m’inflamma.

Yvo Barry

Jean Belmont | The passionate shepherd to his love
Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
And all the craggy mountain yields.

There will I will make thee beds of Roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With Coral clasps and Amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then we will all the pleasures prove,
Come live with me, and be my love.

Christopher Marlowe

Eric Whitacre | With a lily in your hand
With a lily in your hand
I leave you, o my night love!
Little widow of my single star
I find you.
Tamer of dark butterflies
I keep along my way.

After a thousand years are gone
you’ll see me,
0 my night love!

By the blue footpath,
tamer of dark stars,
I’ll make my way.
Until the universe
can fit inside
my heart.

Frederico García Lorca
translated by Jerome Rothenberg
Gabriel Crouch is Director of Choral Activities and Senior Lecturer in Music at Princeton University. He began his musical career as an eight-year-old in the choir of Westminster Abbey, where he performed a solo at the wedding of HRH Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson. After completing a choral scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was offered a place in the renowned a cappella group The King’s Singers in 1996. In the next eight years he made a dozen recordings on the BMG label (including a grammy nomination), and gave more than 900 performances in almost every major concert venue in the world. Special collaborative projects saw him working and performing with some of the world’s most respected artists, including percussionist Evelyn Glennie, pianists Emmanuel Ax and George Shearing, singer Barbara Hendricks and ‘Beach Boy’ Bruce Johnston.

Since moving to the USA in 2005, first to run the choral program at DePauw University in Indiana, and now at Princeton University, he has built an international profile as a conductor and director, with recent engagements in China and Australia as well as Europe and the United States. In 2008 he was appointed musical director of the British early music ensemble ‘Gallicantus’, with whom he has released four recordings under the Signum label to rapturous reviews, garnering ‘Editor’s Choice’ accolades in Gramophone and Early Music Review, and, for the 2012 release ‘The Word Unspoken’, a place on BBC Radio’s CD Review list of the top nine classical releases of the year. When the academic calendar allows, Mr. Crouch maintains parallel careers in singing and record production, crossing the Atlantic frequently to appear with such ensembles as Tenebrae and The Gabrieli Consort, and in the US, performing recitals of lutesong with such acclaimed lutenists as Daniel Swenberg and Nigel North. As a producer his latest credits have included Winchester Cathedral Choir, The Gabrieli Consort and Tenebrae.

His achievements in the choral world have led to many invitations to adjudicate choral competitions, notably the mixed choir final of ‘Sainsbury’s Choir of the Year’ (televised by the BBC). His work as a singer, coach and musical director has led to his name appearing in the London Times’ list of ‘Great British Hopes’.

Baritone Joshua Copeland has been Artistic Director of the Antioch Chamber Ensemble since its inception in 1997. He holds a Music Education degree from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, where he was a member of the highly-acclaimed Westminster Choir for four years. Joshua has toured as a singer and director both in the United States and abroad throughout Asia, Europe, and South America. Under Mr.Copeland’s direction, Antioch took top honors at the 2008 Tolosa International Choir Competition and has dazzled audiences and critics alike with diverse programming that has included classic choral masterworks as well as championing today’s most exciting contemporary composers. In addition his duties with Antioch, Joshua has created a highly successful choral and handbell program at the Bedminster Township School where he has taught since 2004. An avid gardener, outdoor enthusiast, and historic preservation buff, Joshua splits his time between his residences in Mount Tabor, New Jersey and Northport, Maine.
Across the country, deaths from opioid addictions are increasing. Staggering statistics show that nearly 70,000 people died of an overdose during a one year period ending in February 2019. But addiction is not a single-layer story of painkillers. It's a story of mothers and fathers and alcohol and cigarettes and the mundane. It's a story of neighborhood conversations and doctor's prescriptions. Perhaps, addiction is ubiquitous. "Even if not you, what about your neighbor?" asks Natalie Dieterich GS in her piece on addiction, Conversations with strangers.

The piece, which has been performed half a dozen times, is Dieterich's formal campus debut. Despite not being a lyricist, Dieterich says she takes a "heavy hand" in editing the texts she chooses for her work. In this case, she took a unique approach to research and writing for her chosen texts.

Dieterich went to diners, coffee shops, and other locales, seeking out people who sat alone and striking up conversation. The results are intimate vignettes of addiction, anonymized into snippets and combined to paint a portrait at once individual and universal. At the most poignant moment in the piece, the anguish of addiction is palpable, the score instructing for inindistinguishable "wailing" of high voices at the top. Transparently, Dieterich explained that eliminating individual voices at this moment in the piece is part of her effort to bring home the universality of addiction, her central message.

An Extra Day was commissioned by Gabriel Crouch and the Princeton University Glee Club, as part of Princeton's season of events to mark fifty years of co-education. The text is by Jane Hirshfield — a member of the first undergraduate women's class at the University.

**February 29**

**An extra day**

Like the painting's fifth crow, who looks out directly, straight toward you, from inside her black and white spots.

An extra day — Accidental, surely: the made calendar stumbling over the real as a drunk trips over a threshold too low to see.

An extra day — With a second cup of black coffee. A friendly but businesslike phone call. A mailed-back package. Some extra work, but not too much — just one day's worth, exactly.

Thomas Tallich | **Sperm in Alium**

Sperm in alium rumpeam habui praeter in te, Deus Israël, qui inrascrit et propitius eris, et omnima pecata hominum in tribulatione dimittis. Domine Deus, Creator caeli et terrae, respice humilitatem nostram.

I have never put my hope in any other but in You, God of Israel, who will be angry and yet become again gracious, and who forgives all the sins of man in suffering. Lord God, Creator of heavens and earth, look upon our intolerance.

**A Stone Composed with Anybody Before**

The Princeton Glee Club is where Cunningham and Tawengwa met. They wrote the piece on three continents, and neither had co-composed with anybody before. Composing collaboratively is uncommon, but "ego is the enemy to creativity," they say.
Theo Trevisan '21  Missa Brevissima

The words of the 5 sections of the Mass Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) are heard simultaneously.

A note from the composer

Missa Brevissima reflects my experiences singing sacred music with the American Boychoir School from 2009 to 2013. As a non-religious person, I sometimes struggled with singing sacred music at religious functions because I do not believe or partake in them. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, these years were some of the most formative of my life so far. The school—also a secular institution—embraced both sacred and secular music as we toured and performed, and while the school sadly closed in 2017, the lessons I learned there are still highly relevant to me today: I often reflected on my varied experiences at the school while I was writing this piece.

This piece utilizes the 18th century tradition of condensing the text of individual mass movements by singing several lines simultaneously, and applies it with the entire text of the mass (i.e. all movements combine to form the text). The resulting collage of text is set to counterpoint filled with quotes from various mass settings and layered with anachronistic extensions and unorthodox chromaticisms. Quotes and paraphrases derived from plainchant, Durufle, Brumel, Martin, Fauré, Rossini, Schnittke, Poulenc, Byrd, and Palestrina appear throughout the piece (see the annotated score for more details).

This piece was written for the Antioch Chamber Ensemble and is dedicated to Fernando Malvar-Ruiz, Fred Meads, and Kerry Heimann. Special thanks to the Antioch Chamber Ensemble, Gabriel Crouch, and Pascal Le Boeuf.

Natalie Stein '21  In a world that misperceives you

A note from the composer

In a World That Misperceives You is a new choral work that explores the complexities of identity. Though the text comes from a personal place, I think it captures the experience of many young adults, particularly of women and LGBTQ+ people. Lines of sorrow are intertwined with lines of hope and strength, which is reflected in the mix of polyphony and homophony and the suspensions between the voices. The lingering C as a tonal center from the beginning to the end of the piece might be compared to the essence of identity that we carry in our hearts, apart from societal perceptions.

To be who you are in a world that misperceives you, as if the diamonds inside you were merely stones, is to splinter a little every day.
To be who you are is to cry with your heart because your eyes are too tired, to sing because you cannot raise your voice in any other way, to wither, but never to fall.
More than anything, it is to walk with the very tide in your hands.

Natalie Stein
Behold the blessed light, 
Behold eternal goodness, 
you strong of the elect, praise God and His Son 
who is equal to the Father; 
praise the splendour of the deity. 
Behold power and majesty are seen everywhere. 
The dazzling splendour of the sun 
is matched by you, the moon; 
and by the stars shining brightly 
in their great glory. 
O how such eternal nourishment feeds holy minds!
Mercy and love are here, and always have been; 
here is the eternal front of life. 
Here the Patriarchs and Prophets, here David, 
King David the bard, 
singing and playing instruments still praise eternal God. 
O honey and sweet nectar, O blessed place! 
This delight, this peace, this goal, this mark 
draw us from here straight to Paradise.

Joanna Marsh | Dialogo and Quodlibet

Soprano and alto text taken from Antonio Francesco Doni’s letters, and Maddalena Casaluna: from dedication of first book of madrigals Teur and Bass text taken and adapted from ‘Dialogo della Monica’ by Antonio Francesco Doni. 1544

Casaluna: You would certainly hear such harmony that it would seem to you either that you had been carried off to Helicon or that Helicon, together with all the chorus of Muses singing and playing, had been transported here.

Doni: You see that one can do with music whatever one wants; I’ll show you that if a person decides against doing things the right way, can simply produce a hodge-podge.

Casaluna: I desire to show the world as much as possible in the profession of music...

Doni: Look – two rests are missing. And here – put six where there are four. This Bass is wrong, or you are singing it wrong! Here you have one piece with the Soprano part completely at odds with the words before. Here is another in which the words once belonged to a different piece. And this piece has different words and you see the pieces go better than they did before.

Of course, the fifth and the octave are perfect, the seventh and second imperfect; it is the forcefulness of a composer’s style that makes imperfect seem perfect, though if he were to have three or four successive fifths, it would make for an ugly composition.

Casaluna: ...the vain error of men that they alone possess the intellectual gifts, and who appear to believe that the same gifts are not possible for women.

Texts and translations

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Felice Visoglia Li 75 P17
Matthew Brown  
b. 1978  
Joan Belmont  
b. 1939  
Morten Lauridsen  
b. 1943  
Eric Whitacre  
b. 1970  

A red, red rose  
The passionate shepherd to his love  
Quando son pin lontan  
With a lily in your hand  

Antioch Chamber Ensemble  
Joshua Copeland, director  

Missa Brevisima (world premiere)  
In a world that misperceives you (world premiere)  
An extra day (world premiere)  
Spem in alium (450th anniversary performance)  

Princeton University Glee Club  
Antioch Chamber Ensemble  

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN THE RICHARDSON LOUNGE
Jane Hirshfield wants to be a broad poet, and to write about many things in the world. “The world is enormous and many-faceted,” she said simply. Indeed, why not write about both the exceptional and the quotidian? Part of the task of the poet, she says, is to reflect the full paropony of what life brings us and what life asks of us. Hirshfield’s general sense of the world, which she attempts to illustrate in her poem “February 29” is “this balance of abundance and the fact that we’re all going to disappear.”

Hirshfield graduated with the first class of women, 1973, she explained. Though she matriculated as class of 1974, she skipped her sophomore year and missed what she calls the “finishing year” when the few women students were all in one dorm. In her second year, the University opened a co-ed dorm in what is now Forbes College. This, she says, was a dramatically different experience. But her time at the University nonetheless helped her on her way to becoming a poet. When she applied to Princeton, she was deciding between it and a liberal arts school known for its writing program. She visited campus the day after the first Earth Day, 50 years ago. “I saw a campus full of signs about Earth Day and boys with ponytails throwing frisbees,” she said.

At the University, she eschewed a classic structured Princeton education as clichéd. Instead, she followed her interests and wound up taking many classes in the East Asian Studies Department—which had been taking transfers of women students for years. (Hirshfield has since translated several volumes of Japanese poetry.) In one seminar, Hirshfield said, there were 13 women, one man, and a woman professor. In another experience, she described what was then the Princeton Inn (now Forbes College) during its first year as a dormitory. “There was still hotel soap and stationary in the desk drawers and the air conditioners didn’t work,” she said. Somehow, that last part still hasn’t changed in many of the dorms! At least one thing has changed, Physics for Poets is now Physics for Future Leaders. “That’s much less fun now,” she said.

Despite being unable to carry a tune herself, Hirshfield says that without music, there is no poetry for her. To write her poems, “some music has to come into the mind,” she says. “Music is a kind of concentration of the psyche.”

In “February 29” Hirshfield draws on the experience of opening a letter from a friend who has died since writing it. Although most of us don’t send many letters these days, we know the feeling a letter has that’s different from an iMessage. Knowing that their hand brushed that page, gently indenting and marking the paper with the tip of a pen. To open and read a letter in this context offers the gentle surprise of a bit more time with a cherished friend, an extra day to share with them on this earth. Hirshfield’s poem is striking in its simplicity, offering comment on something as unremarkable as a cup of black coffee and an extra day’s work or even the extra day in February during a leap year. Yet that’s what makes it so familiar, an experience that Hirshfield describes so accurately we can experience it, too.

Conversations about Conversations
Profiles written by Marcia Brown ’19

February 29

An extra day

Joanna Marsh’s setting of Jane Hirshfield’s poem “February 29” takes on a new depth through Marsh’s melodies and in her renaming. In Marsh’s setting, the text never repeats. (There’s only one extra day, after all.) There was a simplicity to the poem, Marsh said, that appealed to her—something about the every day and yet exceptional. Behind the poem, Marsh knew, was a poignant moment: Hirshfield had discovered a letter from the friend, written before a friend’s recent death. There’s a generosity in that letter, giving her an extra day—slightly imbued with sadness—that’s so familiar, Marsh said. “This extra day, a little glimpse of her friend,” Marsh said. And there’s a generosity to music, Marsh added, and the abundant kindness in Hirshfield’s poem without being extravagant, is realized in Marsh’s piece.

Instead, Marsh leans into the text as straightforward, developing a piece a bit jazzier here and there and with a singer-songwriter quality. Marsh likes the “everydayness” of the things Hirshfield writes about. “That’s the stuff that our days are made up of,” she says.

Describing her process and how she chooses texts, Marsh said she looks for a text that speaks on its own first. “You can choose where you’re taking it, but you can’t shoehorn a text into something that’s already a musical idea,” she said. With the Hirshfield poem, she used her music as a palette to set that text. “When you want to set a text,” she explained, “it has to spark something that makes you connect with it because that generates the ideas of what you might do musically with it.”

Dialogue and Quodlibet
Anton Francesco Doni (1513-1574), the son of scions-maker in Italy was a satirist and amateur “warnera” musician. In ‘Dialogo della Musica’ (1544), Doni recorded conversations and created imagined conversations to analyze and comment on music and its performance. Marsh takes this text (and other Doni letters) and designs her own parody: Dialogue and Quodlibet is divided into 12 parts and two choruses, one of altos and sopranos and one of tenors and basses.

Most early women composers were nuns, and in the very first movement, Marsh quotes one of Doni’s letters about nuns’ singing. Using the bespoken language of the Academy, the two choruses engage each other (the lower voices unknowingly) in observations on music, music theory, and its performance. But the dialogue includes jabs between the groups, with the sopranos and altos reproving the men: “...the vain error of men that they alone possess the intellectual gifts, and who appear to believe that the same gifts are not possible for women.” The sopranos and altos, representing the Muses of Helicon, look down on the tenors and basses, representing characters from the ‘Dialogo’ and who are unaware of the muses but deeply engaged in a quasi-technical discussion of music theory. The theatrics of the piece offer levity to the listener, with the higher voices soaring gracefully above the fray and the lower voices offering an arrogant choppy discussion of the “hodge-podge” that music can be with poor guidance. It’s a delicious result, showing that women have the same, if not better, intellectual gifts as the men, and that perhaps men ought to be a bit more introspective. Then, perhaps, they might avoid the “hodge-podge” they’re so worried about in the first place.
Conversations about Conversations
Profiles written by Marcia Brown '19

Jane Hirshfield '73
February 29 I text of An extra day

Joanna Marsh
An extra day

Jane Hirshfield wants to be a broad poet, and to write about many things in the world. “The world is enormous and many-faceted,” she said simply. Indeed, why not write about both the exceptional and the quotidian? Part of the task of the poet, she says, is to reflect the full panoply of what life brings us and what life asks of us. Hirshfield’s general sense of the world, which she attempts to illustrate in her poem “February 29,” is “this balance of abundance and the fact that we’re all going to disappear.”

Hirshfield graduated with the first class of women, 1973, she explained. Though she matriculated as class of 1974, she skipped her sophomore year and missed what she calls the “frihowl year” when the few women students were all in one dorm. In her second year, the University opened a co-ed dorm in what is now Forbes College. This, she said, was a dramatically different experience. But her time at the University nonetheless helped her on her way to becoming a poet. When she applied to Princeton, she was deciding between it and a liberal arts school known for its writing program. She visited campus the day after the first Earth Day, 50 years ago. “I saw a campus full of signs about Earth Day and boys with ponytails throwing frisbees,” she said.

At the University, she eschewed a classic structured Princeton education as clichéd. Instead, she followed her interests and wound up taking many classes in the East Asian Studies Department—which had been taking transfers of women students for years. (Hirshfield has since translated several volumes of Japanese poetry.) In one seminar, Hirshfield said, there were 13 women, one man, and a woman professor. In another experience, she described what was then the Princeton Inn (now Forbes College) during its first year as a dormitory. “There was still hotel soap and stationary in the desk drawers and the air conditioners didn’t work,” she said. Somehow, that last part still hasn’t changed in many of the dorms! At least one thing has changed, Physics for Poets is now Physics for Future Leaders. “That’s much less fun now,” she said.

Despite being unable to carry a tune herself, Hirshfield says that without music, there is no poetry for her. To write her poems, “some music has to come into the mind,” she says. “Music is a kind of concentration of the psyche.” Hirshfield said writing poetry is like trying to discover an experience and write it in such a way that someone else can have the same experience—and the same goes for music.

In “February 29” Hirshfield draws on the experience of opening a letter from a friend who has died since writing it. Although most of us don’t send many letters these days, we know the feeling a letter has that’s different from an iMessage. Knowing that their hand brushed that page, gently indenting and marking the paper with the tip of a pen. To open and read a letter in this context offers the gentle surprise of a bit more time with a cherished friend, an extra day to share with them on this earth. Hirshfield’s poem is striking in its simplicity, offering comment on something as unremarkable as a cup of black coffee and an extra day’s work or even the extra day in February during a leap year. Yet that’s what makes it so familiar, an experience that Hirshfield describes so accurately we can experience it, too.

Joanna Marsh’s setting of Jane Hirshfield’s poem “February 29” takes on a new depth through Marsh’s melodies and in her renaming. In Marsh’s setting, the text never repeats. (There’s only one extra day, after all.) There was a simplicity to the poem, Marsh said, that appealed to her—something about the every day and yet exceptional. Behind the poem, Marsh knew, was a poignant moment: Hirshfield had discovered a letter from the friend, written before a friend’s recent death. There’s a generosity in that letter, giving her an extra day—slightly imbued with sadness—that’s so familiar, Marsh said. “This extra day, a little glimpse of her friend,” Marsh said. And there’s a generosity to music, Marsh added, and the abundant kindness in Hirshfield’s poem without being extravagant, is realized in Marsh’s piece.

Instead, Marsh leans into the text as straightforward, developing a piece a bit jazzier here and there and with a singer-songwriter quality. Marsh likes the “everydayness” of the things Hirshfield writes about. “That’s the stuff that our days are made up of,” she says.

Describing her process and how she chooses texts, Marsh said she looks for a text that speaks on its own first. “You can choose where you’re taking it, but you can’t shoehorn a text into something that’s already a musical idea,” she said. With the Hirshfield poem, she used her music as a palette to set that text. “When you want to set a text,” she explained, “it has to spark something that makes you connect with it because that generates the ideas of what you might do musically with it.”

Dialogo and Quodlibet

Anton Francesco Doni (1513-1574), the son of scissors-maker in Italy, was a satirist and amateur “wannabe” musician. In ‘Dialogo della Musica’ (1544), Doni recorded conversations and imagined conversations to analyze and comment on music and its performance. Marsh takes this text (and other Doni letters) and designs her musical ideas around it. “Behind the poem, Marsh knew, was a poignant moment: Hirshfield had discovered a letter from the friend, written before a friend’s recent death. There’s a generosity in that letter, giving her an extra day—slightly imbued with sadness—that’s so familiar, Marsh said. “This extra day, a little glimpse of her friend,” Marsh said. And there’s a generosity to music, Marsh added, and the abundant kindness in Hirshfield’s poem without being extravagant, is realized in Marsh’s piece.”