

BMOP
sound

JOHN HARBISON: DIOTIMA

MIŁOSZ SONGS FOR SOPRANO AND ORCHESTRA |
SYMPHONY NO. 6

JOHN HARBISON b. 1938

DIOTIMA WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

MILOSZ SONGS FOR SOPRANO AND ORCHESTRA

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

SYMPHONY NO. 6

DAWN UPSHAW soprano

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

Gil Rose, conductor

[1] **DIOTIMA** (1976) 20:00

**MILOSZ SONGS FOR SOPRANO
AND ORCHESTRA** (2006)

[2] Prologue: from *Lauda* 2:03

[3] 1. A Task 2:48

[4] 2. Encounter 3:33

[5] 3. You Who Wronged 2:15

[6] 4. When the Moon 2:14

[7] 5. O! 2:14

[8] 6. What Once Was Great 3:14

[9] 7. So Little 2:26

[10] 8. On Old Women 3:53

[11] Epilogue: from *Winter* 2:31

[12] Post-Epilogue: *Rays of Dazzling Light* 2:02

Dawn Upshaw, soprano

SYMPHONY NO. 6 (2011)

[13] I. 4:48

Dawn Upshaw, soprano

[14] II. 6:58

[15] III. 5:47

[16] IV. 8:35

TOTAL 75:22

By John Harbison

On this CD, Gil Rose and BMOP include my first and likely last music for orchestra, written over forty years apart.

In the insightful and expansive note that accompanies this CD, Clifton Ingram notices the defining relationship, in both pieces, to texts. He also hears in this music a perhaps paradoxical devotion to both clarity and ambiguity. I am grateful to Mr. Ingram for his consistently accurate hints for the listener.

My orchestral pieces, as is true with all composers fortunate enough to return with some frequency to the orchestra, have benefitted from conductors who have returned often to my music, exemplified by the music director on this CD, Gil Rose. I also remember, at the conclusion of my writing for orchestra, collaborations with Blomstadt, Hoose, Levine, Miller, Previn, Ozawa, Rose, Pitman, Schuller, Silverstein, Smith, Turner, and Zinman.

In the world of orchestra music composer, players and conductor journey together toward something none of them can fully imagine until it happens.

DIOTIMA is scored for full orchestra and was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Joseph Silverstein, on March 10, 1977, at Boston Symphony Hall in Boston, MA.

MIŁOSZ SONGS FOR SOPRANO AND ORCHESTRA received its premiere by the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Robert Spano, on February 23, 2006, in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center in New York, NY.

SYMPHONY NO. 6, scored for mezzo-soprano soloist and full orchestra, was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, David Zinman, conductor, on January 12, 2012, at Boston Symphony Hall.

By Clifton Ingram

Notably, *Diotima* [1] was Harbison's 1976 breakthrough piece, premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation. The composer likens his orchestral work to a tone poem, one whose influence therefore fittingly draws inspiration from German Romanticism, specifically from poet and philosopher Friedrich Hölderlin. Although the name Diotima originates from Plato's *Symposium*—where Socrates and other philosophizing dinner guests discuss Diotima of Mantinea's theory that likens different aspects of Greek *eros* to the rungs in a "ladder of love" ascending from carnal lust to the divinely platonic—for Harbison's *Diotima*, the name is more about Hölderlin.

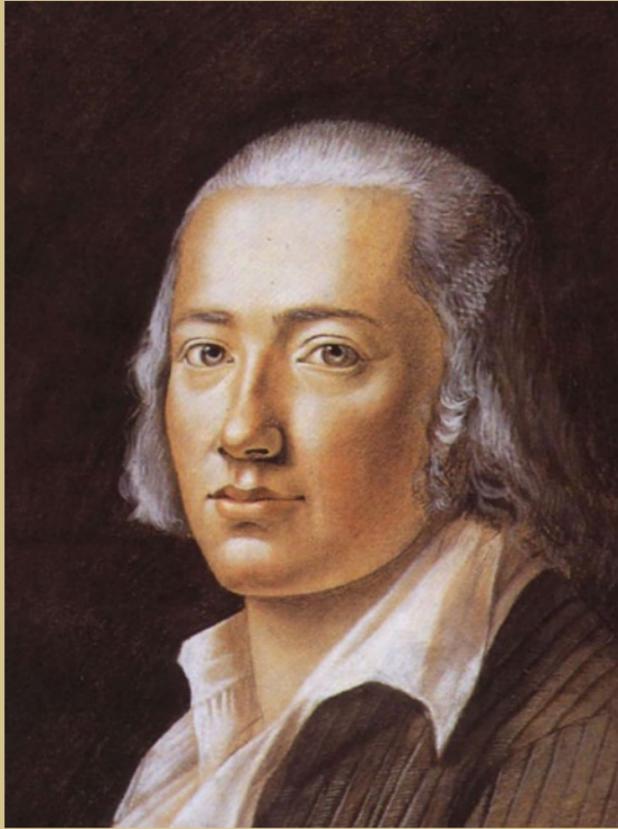
Diotima was the Romantic poet's code-name for Susette Gontard, his banker employer's wife for whom he held a deeply intense, almost hopeless passion. (Tangent: Perhaps unsurprisingly, Plato's Diotima is possibly a pseudonym as well; some scholars claim her to be a stand-in for Aspasia, the highly influential woman praised by many of Athens's Golden Age thinkers for her intellect and eloquence.) Indeed, Susette Gontard's death from

influenza is held to have been a major contributing factor to Hölderlin's mental breakdown in 1802. Having been diagnosed with "hypochondrias" (today's schizophrenia) in the late 1790s, his condition had only worsened since his mandated separation from Gontard in 1798 after the discovery of their affair. Although the two would meet in secret each month until their final meeting in 1800, financial and social pressures would prove too much in the end for the couple. The loss of Gontard to Hölderlin would accompany a time of great doubt, a low in his sense of artistic self-worth, a wavering of his vision in a new and Romantic German Idealism.

Indeed, Hölderlin's poetry would change drastically after this break. The grand and expansive style of his previous work adopted a new kind of pith and formality (which Harbison calls "simpler, more naive, but still eloquent"). The poet's usage of the classical reference to Diotima underlines a desire to meld ancient Greek ideals with his own era's German ones; a fusion of old and new elements that produced a deeply Romantic sentiment of yearning and nostalgia. The resulting expressiveness is of a tragic nature, centering around the *Sturm und Drang* of a consuming desire that is both a source of great joy and sorrow, of blissful love that also cannot help but be closely followed by bitterness.

Harbison uses his orchestral tone poem to translate Hölderlin's fraught emotional *mélange* into musical balancing act, capturing the essence of this fragile equilibrium of love and loss. The music's long, unfurling lyricism is always under a sense of duress, one where failure seems ultimately inevitable, yet meaningful. This stark juxtaposition between light and dark, order and chaos, is evident from the last lines of Hölderlin's poem:

Denn Diotima lebt, wie die zarten Blüten im Winter,
Reich an eigenem Geist sucht sie die Sonne doch auch.
Aber die Sonne des Geists, die schönere Welt ist hinunter
Und in frostiger Nacht zanken Orkane sich nur.



Portrait of Friedrich Hölderlin, circa 1792, by Franz Carl Hiemer.

For Diotima lives as do delicate blossoms in winter,
Blessed with a soul of her own, yet needing and seeking the sun.
But the lovelier world, the sun of the spirit is darkened,
Only the quarrelling gales rage in an icy bleak night.

Translation by Michael Hamburger

The mood of Harbison's brooding sonic interpretation of this poetry is easily grasped, although certain aspects of the music remain elusive. There often seems to be a threat of getting lost in the work's fluid architecture, especially when musical elements become at odds with each other. Yet, while there is always the sense that the work is highly structured and the orchestration well considered by the composer, there is still something difficult to pin down about its amorphous form. There exists a beacon in this storm, however, as through all the music's contrasting "storm and stress" there remains Harbison's fixation on melody. *Diotima* begins almost too suddenly, depositing the listener into a landscape of inward languishing. Much of the piece features long, arching melodies that stretch against the orchestra's increasingly uncooperative accompaniment, which interrupts the lyricism of high violins that seem to wallow in their own ecstatic tension held earth-bound by the relentless tread of dark strings and brass, flittering winds, and chattering percussion. One immediately gets the sense that there is something foreboding or unhinged underneath it all: a simmering volcano ready to erupt, a maelstrom of Hölderlin's quarrelling gales on the horizon.

But Harbison's obsession with his long, sweeping "hymnodic" melodies persists despite the elemental churning of the orchestra that threatens at every turn. In fact, at times these volcanic eruptions seem to emanate from the music's own lyricism in a fatalistic swing of mood. But even if the melody thwarts itself, it is also at the heart of Harbison's work and can never be truly lost. The hymnodic continuity that spans the work manages to hold the music together during its more frantic moments until the bitter end, which

Harbison describes as “a tempest of NOW.” Indeed, even when chaos seems to win the day, one cannot shake the memory of melody that has haunted the entire narrative. To this end, Harbison fashions a sort of cubist orchestration to frame these melodies, relying on juxtaposing materials and adding and subtracting layers in a way that reminds the ear of early 20th-century modernism, of the cross-cutting techniques of Stravinsky—one of Harbison’s big influences along with Bach and Schütz.

The two-faced tone of the orchestra oscillates between being supportive and defiant of Harbison’s persistent lyricism, at times producing music like a foggy daydream, at others a feverish nightmare. The instruments of the orchestra snake and intertwine obsessively around the long unfurling lines of melody, like vines climbing up a tree to vie for resources in their race to the top, toward a sublime light. In terms of Hölderlin, this musical rhetoric can be heard as analogous to a mind fighting itself, tearing itself apart: a descent into madness. Again, what connects these two dream-like states—daydream and nightmare—is the “long line” of Harbison’s melodies: there is always this beacon of hope to weather the storm, which the ear follows like Ariadne’s thread through a labyrinth. In this regard to the “long line,” the composer acknowledges an indebtedness to his teacher, Roger Sessions, with whom he studied during his graduate years at Princeton in the early 1960s.

In the end, *Diotima* is a noteworthy piece for Harbison, and not just for the recognition it achieved in his early career. The writing of this tone poem also proved a personal piece for the composer, facing Harbison with a dilemma: to write a piece that would “do everything” as he had originally planned, or to relent to intuition and seize the “opportunity just to follow an off-center lyrical bent.” In this way, Harbison’s music seems to inhabit the two styles of Hölderlin simultaneously, casting an atemporal bridge between the poet’s earlier expansiveness and his post-break simplicity. Hölderlin is for Harbison in this way an affirmation of the less-taken creative path: in Harbison’s own words, *Diotima* arose out of “a certain cussedness which drives a person to do what isn’t being done.” Despite its tragic

eponymous origins, Harbison infuses *Diotima* with persistent pathos and empathy, forging meaning into life’s seemingly senseless struggle whether in the past, present, or future: a declaration that the “ladder of love” is worth the climb, despite all odds.

* * *

Born in 1911 in Lithuania (his parents having left Poland due to political unrest), Czesław Miłosz spent his early childhood in Czarist Russia, until after World War I when his father moved the family back to Poland. Many years later, as a young man he was in Poland when the Germans invaded. In this way, Miłosz could be said to have survived “the two great totalitarian systems of modern history, national socialism and communism.” Both a revolutionary poet and a poet revolutionary, Miłosz was a politically-minded youth, affiliated with the catastrophist school of the 1930s (a group whose writings in some ways predicted World War II). After the war, he served as cultural attaché at the Polish embassy in Washington, D.C. In 1951 Miłosz, tired of the oppressive constraint on his writing, defected to the west. Eventually he would make Berkeley, California, his new home, one that he would regard with sardonic contentment. When Miłosz won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980, the communist regime in Poland was finally forced to remove the poet from the blacklist and publish his works in his native land. And of course, within a decade, the Berlin Wall had fallen, and much of the Cold War took on the guise of ghosts, part of history. Even after all the atrocities that Miłosz witnessed, his poetry is intentionally infused with a sense of wonder.

Miłosz’s poetic style has been described as “a vivid picture of the forms of concealment, of inner transformation, of the sudden bolt to conversion, of the cleavage of man into two” (Karl Jaspers, *Saturday Review*). According to Harbison, as a composer, Miłosz’s economical poetry-as-witness style is also an attraction: with its “fragmentary short lyrics, [Harbison is] grateful for their elusive melody, their barely reconciled dissonant elements, their embrace of the everyday.” It seems fitting then that Harbison’s score for *Milosz Songs* [2-12] includes

a specialized setup for the ensemble. Here, the soprano soloist is surrounded by a sextet of instruments, creating an instrumental barrier between vocalist and orchestra. In musical terms, this is a concertino, a small solo ensemble that plays with the orchestra and, in this case, supports the soloist. What is interesting here is that the soprano, protected by the concertino, is physically separated from the rest of the orchestra. In terms of Miłosz's aesthetic, this setup implies an external orchestral world in contrast to the intimacy of the concertino as well as the soloist. Note that the soloist is also the only player on stage that can communicate directly through language (as filtered through music through the act of singing, of course). The point here is that in many ways Harbison's *Milosz Songs* mimics the conceptual and aesthetic qualities of the poetry it sets, and the song cycle can be listened to as a "cleavage of [music] into two"—a psychological landscape manifest as a form of sonic-architecture, which can likewise be musically "mapped" onto the external context of the orchestra.

Harbison states that he thought of the concertino players as "satellites revolving around the path of the singer" in imagery that reminds one of utopian diagrams rife with concentric circles and Enlightenment visions. Like an idealized music of the spheres, perhaps this setup speaks to an inner world of language (soprano) and intimate text-painting (concertino), ones that can reflect our desires for ourselves and our world in the face of external pressures that challenge this change. Indeed, perhaps a wise strategy for Harbison's piece would be to listen to how the music played by the soprano and concertino is echoed and transformed into music for orchestra. How does the orchestra's music seem to affect the concertino's musical behavior? Does it stifle it, unleash it, or simply support it? What is the relationship between these two forces, and how do they transfer musical information back and forth? After all, song cycles are often music about connections, about telling a story that reveals its narrative episode-by-episode through text and the building of musical associations with

the language of the text. And finally, if you see patterns in how the soprano/concertino and orchestra interact, can you hear them, too?

"For Miłosz," Helen Vendler writes in *The New Yorker*, "the person is irrevocably a person in history, and the interchange between external event and the individual life is the matrix of poetry." Harbison's music creates a theatrical stage of sound-making that creates its own "matrix of music," akin to Miłosz's work where the drama is the flux between external and inner pressures, between expressions of indifference and intimacy.

With *Milosz Songs*, Harbison has continued the tradition of bearing witness, adding his own musical voice to Miłosz's unique style of poetry, and has updated Miłosz's unique poetic perspective by writing this orchestral song cycle. Commissioned in 2006 by the New York Philharmonic (Lorin Maazel, Music Director), *Milosz Songs* was created just two years after the Polish poet's passing in 2004.

* * *

In the first movement of John Harbison's Symphony No. 6, a leap-laden vocal line delivers a poem by James Wright ("Entering the Temple in Nimes") in a thoughtfully paced expression of steadfast emotional depth, the kind that one senses only comes from lived experience. Poet James Wright was a revitalizing figure in the Midwestern American poetry scene in the mid-twentieth century, a friend and aesthetic colleague of fellow pioneer Robert Bly. Their work serves as a uniquely adjacent voice to the leading poetic trends of their era, namely the Beats and avant garde New York circles. Wright's thematic focus on the American outsider is more felt than read in "Entering the Temple in Nimes." But an unobtainable turning-back of time makes up the core theme of the poem, hinting at a sensitivity to human suffering that underlines a literary life scored by Wright's own personal struggle with depression and alcoholism.

But like Wright's poetry, the creative tumultuousness of Harbison's Symphony No. 6 is a well-balanced affair. Dark themes are tempered by a mature sense of classicism, one where Harbison makes good use of modernist, post-serialist atonality as contextualized by the accessibility of a neoclassical transparency of form and structure. In the music, a plodding *Con moto* accompaniment from the orchestra unravels in waves of cascading imitation, rippling out from the initial impact of the vocal melody. Although the voice only makes an appearance in this opening movement [13], the impact of the text and its musical associations both shape the subsequent three instrumental movements in significant ways. As Harbison notes:

Certain passages from the poem maintain a presence through what follows. "As long as this evening lasts," "I hope to pay my reverence." "This evening, in winter, I pray for the stone-eyed legions of the rain/To put off their armor." The concluding lines of the poem are rendered in terms which define much of the rest of the piece.

But who is the mysterious armored "their" in this third fragment on which Harbison has focused his sixth symphony? Melodic fragments that proliferate like snaking vines crawling across the instrumental lattice of the orchestra throughout the movement hold a key to the proceedings.

The opening music's combination of reedy winds and *espressivo* strings, reverently supported by a delicately *cantabile* plucking of harp, establishes a rich pastoral sound to invoke the natural world, "The Temple of Diana" into which our vocal protagonist has strayed to bear witness. Wright's poem describes an Ovidian metamorphosis of the young women of Gaul, whose hasty disappearance (perhaps culturally conquered by Julius Caesar's Roman legions?) results in their "reappearing/As vines and the pale inner hands of sycamores/In the green places." There is a tragedy in imagining that the greenery will "put off their armor" to reveal a previously lost human element; yet despite the text's melancholic pine for the

impossible, there is a hopeful endurance to the movement's music, which demonstrates a human spirit that rises in the face of suffering. So, while human limb has been replaced by leafy tendril in Wright's poem, similarly the voice's lyricism and thematic imagery will be replaced by ever-transformational counterpoint of winds, brass, percussion, and strings over the course of Harbison's symphony. Neither will ever return to their original states, young women or vocal music. It is for this reason that the end of the movement is mired in a tragically dramatic vocal line that descends into the lowest register upon "And the rain still mounts its guard." Yet the orchestra picks up the rising arpeggiated figure that had previously matched with the line "Though I arrive too late," transforming painful loss into a more optimistic-sounding instrumental landscape of rising sustained textures, however tentative in their quiet *pianissimo*.

Harbison's own process for writing his sixth symphony seems to be based around a sense of loss and recreation as well. Having lost a most promising sketch of music, Harbison created "paraphrases and derivations" of what he could recall of this misplaced music. Harbison: "When [the lost sketch] was found I understood that these recollections could all find place in the piece, the original sketch would not." The message of hope here seems to be that the act of recreation which loss affords can be its own reward, albeit one that comes with struggle. Harbison has forged a work that, albeit tinged with an initial loss (namely, the presence of a vocalist), is also imbued with otherwise inaccessible appreciation of this loss (pathos) and a newfound, fought-for creativity.

In the second movement [14], grand vistas of harmony of brass against winds, tethered together by a swelling string section, collide in a *Con animo* antiphony. Later, a nostalgically American-sounding chorale, led by affectionate sounds of jazzy, muted brass, unfolds before a struck zither interrupts with flurries of *fortissimo* blows of tremolo. We have heard this instrument in the first movement, if but for a fleeting disruptive moment as the words "the stone-eyed legions of the rain" were sung. The cimbalom's sound being used

for text-painted obstinacy from the first movement is still present. Harbison notes that he was drawn to this unique Hungarian dulcimer's sound profile—"a granulated, silvery sound, mysterious, even ominous, a punctuation for the end of large paragraphs"—and credits being exposed to the instrument at a Tanglewood workshop by percussionist Nick Tolle, who performs on the instrument in this recording.

The third movement [15] finds a rousingly acrobatic trumpet solo on full display atop bombastic brass and timpani support. Obsessive motivic interplay across the orchestra eventually becomes fixated on a hypnotic upwards gesture, enhanced by harp and vibraphone arpeggiation, before the music becomes transitional and possessed by homorhythmic unisons of harmony. A *Tranquillo* section brings a sort of fast-motion surface of calm that eventually is brought to another boiling point; here, the chattering of frenetic cimbalom switches the music abruptly to a spidery, office-like musical clattering (think: typewriter pool). Although order eventually prevails, this chattering still seems to flicker in the corners of the room at the end of the movement.

The fourth movement [16] begins with strings that bring a despairing sense of searching for something, unsure if it will ever be found. Violins bring back the vocalist's opening leap-laden theme, as they twist and turn in a *cantabile* counterpoint. Obsession is again at play in this final movement, finding Harbison deftly creating a sense of exhaustion of resources without drawing the creative well dry. At a pivotal point, the bone-rattling cimbalom (this time paired with the wooden hollowness of marimba) again disrupts the orchestra briefly to bring about a desperate sort of excitement and sense of danger. A tender, "rainy day" sort of music concludes this symphonic poem with a hopeful air (yet without conventional resolution), to match Wright's closing line: "And the rain still mounts its guard."

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Clifton Ingram is a composer, performer (Rested Field, guitars/electronics), and writer interested in the fault lines between contemporary and historical traditions. He holds degrees in music (composition) and classics from Skidmore College and The Boston Conservatory.

Milosz Songs

Music by John Harbison

Text by Czesław Miłosz

[2] Prologue: from "Lauda"

And now we are joined in a ritual.

In amber? In crystal? We make music.

Neither what once was nor what ever will be.

Only what persists when the world is over.

[3] A Task

In fear and trembling, I think I would fulfill my life

Only if I brought myself to make a public confession

Revealing a sham, my own and of my epoch:

We were permitted to shriek in the tongue of dwarfs and demons

But pure and generous words were forbidden

Under so stiff a penalty that whoever dared to pronounce one

Considered himself as a lost man.

Berkeley, 1970

[4] Encounter

We were riding through frozen fields in a wagon at dawn.

A red wing rose in the darkness.

And suddenly a hare ran across the road.

One of us pointed to it with his hand.

That was long ago. Today neither of them is alive,

Not the hare, nor the man who made the gesture.



Czesław Miłosz

O my love, where are they, where are they going
The flash of a hand, streak of movement, rustle of pebbles.
I ask not out of sorrow, but in wonder.

Wilno, 1936

[5] **You Who Wronged**

You who wronged a simple man
Bursting into laughter at the crime,
And kept a pack of fools around you
To mix good and evil, to blur the line,
Though everyone bowed down before you,
Saying virtue and wisdom lit your way,
Striking gold medals in your honor,
Glad to have survived another day,

Do not feel safe. The poet remembers.
You can kill one, but another is born.
The words are written down, the deed, the date.

And you'd have done better with a winter dawn,
A rope, and a branch bowed beneath your weight.

Washington, D.C., 1950

[6] **When the Moon**

When the moon rises and women in flowery dresses are strolling,
I am struck by their eyes, eyelashes, and the whole arrangement of the world.
It seems to me that from such a strong mutual attraction
The ultimate truth should issue at last.

Berkeley, 1966

[7] **O!**

O happiness! To see an iris.

The color of indigo, as Ela's dress was once, and the delicate scent like that of her skin.

O what a mumbling to describe an iris that was blooming when Ela did not exist, nor our kingdoms or our countries!

[8] **What Once Was Great**

What once was great, now appeared small.

Kingdoms were fading like snow-covered bronze.

What once could smite, now smites no more.

Celestial earths roll on and shine.

Stretched on the grass by the bank of a river,

As long, long ago, I launch my boats of bark.

Montgeron, 1959

[9] **So Little**

I said so little.

Days were short.

Short days.

Short nights.

Short years.

I said so little.

I couldn't keep up.

My heart grew weary

From joy,

Despair,

Ardor,

Hope.

The jaws of Leviathan
Were closing upon me.

Naked, I lay on the shores
Of desert islands.

The white whale of the world
Hauled me down to its pit.

And now I don't know
What in all that was real.

Berkeley, 1969

[10] **On Old Women**

Invisible, dressed in clothes too big for me,
I take a walk, pretending I am a detached mind.

What country is this? Funereal wreaths, devalued medals,
a general avoidance of remembering what happened.

I think of you, old women, silently fingering past days
of your lives like the beads of your rosaries.

It had to be suffered, endured, managed.
One had to wait and not wait, one had to.

I send my prayers for you to the Highest, helped
by your faces in old photographs.

May the day of your death not be a day of hopelessness,
but of trust in the light that shines through earthly forms.

[11] **Epilogue: from “Winter”**

And now I am ready to keep running
When the sun rises beyond the borderlands of death.

I already see mountain ridges in the heavenly forest
Where, beyond every essence, a new essence waits.

You, music of my late years, I am called
By a sound and a color which are more and more perfect.

Do not die out, fire.
Enter my dreams, love.
Be young forever, seasons of the earth.

[12] **Post-Epilogue: “Rays of Dazzling Light”**

Light off metal shaken,
Lucid dew of heaven,
Bless each and every one
To whom the earth is given.

Its essence was always hidden
Behind a distant curtain.
We chased it all our lives
Bidden and unbidden.

Knowing the hunt would end,
That then what had been rent
Would be at last made whole:
Poor body and the soul.

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Prologue: from *Lauda* translated by Czeslaw Milosz, Leonard Nathan, Robert Hass
A Task and *What Once Was Great* translated by Czeslaw Milosz
Encounter and *So Little* translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Lillian Vallee
You Who Wronged translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Richard Lourie
When the Moon translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Robert Pinsky
O!, On Old Women, and Epilogue: from *Winter* translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Robert Hass
Rays of Dazzling Light translated by Jessica Fisher and Bozena Oilewska

Symphony No. 6

Music by John Harbison

"Entering the Temple in Nimes" by James Wright

[13] I.

As long as this evening lasts,
 I am going to walk all through and around
 The Temple of Diana.
 I hope to pay my reverence to the goddess there
 Whom the young Romans loved.
 Though they learned her name from the dark rock
 Among bearded Greeks,
 It was here in the South of Gaul they found her true
 To her own solitude.
 For here surely the young women of Gaul
 Glanced back thoughtfully over their bare
 White shoulders and hurried away
 Out of sight and then rose, reappearing
 As vines and the pale inner hands of sycamores
 In the green places.
 This evening, in winter,
 I pray for the stone-eyed legions of the rain
 To put off their armor.
 Allow me to walk between the tall pillars
 And find the beginning of one vine leaf there,
 Though I arrive too late for the last spring
 And the rain still mounts its guard.



JULIAN BILLITT

John Harbison's concert music catalog of almost 300 works is anchored by three operas, seven symphonies, twelve concerti, a ballet, six string quartets, numerous song cycles and chamber works, and a large body of sacred music that includes cantatas, motets, and the orchestral-choral works *Four Psalms*, *Requiem*, and *Abraham*. He has also penned a substantial body of jazz compositions and arrangements, and

cadenzas for major violin and piano concertos.

Harbison has received commissions from most of America's premiere musical institutions, including the Metropolitan Opera, Chicago Symphony, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. As one of America's most distinguished artistic figures, he is recipient of numerous awards and honors, among them a MacArthur Fellowship and a Pulitzer Prize.

Harbison's 80th birthday season, 2018–2019, was marked with celebrations throughout the country and around the world, including major city-wide celebrations in his two home-towns of Boston, Massachusetts, and Madison, Wisconsin. The season included first performances of three major works: the monodrama *IF*, the organ symphony *What Do We Make of Bach?*, and the Sonata for Viola and Piano. Summer festival residencies included Songfest, Tanglewood, Aspen, and Santa Fe. Harbison published his first book, *What Do We Make of Bach: Portraits, Essays, Notes* (ARS Nova) in late 2018.

Widely recorded on leading labels, recent CD releases include *Concertos for String Instruments* (BMOP), *Remembering Gatsby* (National Orchestral Institute Philharmonic, Naxos), Violin Sonata No. 1 (Cho-Liang Lin, Naxos), *Late Air* (Kendra Colton, Oberlin), *Simple Daylight* & Piano Sonata No. 2 (Lucy Fitz Gibbon and Ryan McCullough, Albany), String Quartet No. 6 (Lark Quartet, Bridge), *Requiem* (Nashville Symphony, Naxos), *Vocalism* (Mary

Mackenzie, Albany), and his cadenzas to Beethoven's fourth piano concerto (David Deveau, Steinway).

The 2019–20 season saw the consortium premiere of the monodrama *IF* (March, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center) just before the Covid-19 disruption. Premieres postponed due to the pandemic include two new song cycles, *In the Early Evening* and *Four Poems for Robin* (Songfest), *Mark the Date* (Aspen Music Festival), *Sleepers Wake* for the Leipzig BachFest, and *Passage* (Shai Wosner, The Peoples' Symphony). He recently penned a collection of jazz essays, and is working on a new series of composer reminiscences.

Harbison's most recent projects include new choral music (*Hidden Paths*, Frost settings for children's choir) and *Cold or Hot* (on a passage from Revelations). He also completed *Chaconne* (for big band), Piano Sonata No. 3, an evolving suite for solo violin, *Prelude for Organ*, the song cycle *After Long Silence* (Yeats), and numerous short piano works, including his contribution to Min Kwon's America/Beautiful variations project. He is at work on a new piece for Earplay, the 2022 competition piece for the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, a 50th anniversary piece for Collage New Music, a string quintet, and a second volume of pop and jazz songs. His opera *The Great Gatsby* is due for major revival in 2025, an important anniversary year for both Fitzgerald's book and the opera's premiere.

Harbison has been composer-in-residence with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, American Academy in Rome, and numerous festivals. He received degrees from Harvard and Princeton before joining the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he is currently Institute Professor, the highest honor accorded resident faculty. For many summers since 1984 he taught composition at Tanglewood, serving as head of its composition program from 2005 to 2015, often directing its Festival of Contemporary Music. With Rose Mary Harbison, the inspiration for many of his violin works (Violin Concerto, *Four Songs of Solitude*, *Crane Sightings*, Violin Sonata No. 2), he has been co-Artistic Director of the annual Token Creek Chamber Music Festival since its founding in 1989. He continues as principal guest conductor at Emmanuel Music (where for three years he served as Acting Artistic Director), and he is a past music director of Cantata Singers. An accomplished jazz pianist, Harbison

founded MIT's Vocal Jazz Ensemble in 2010, for which he served as coach and arranger, and he is pianist with the faculty jazz group Strength in Numbers (SIN).

Mr. Harbison has been President of the Copland Fund and a trustee of the American Academy in Rome. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and is a Trustee of the Bogliasco Foundation. His music is published exclusively by Associated Music Publishers. A complete works list can be found at WiseMusicClassical.com.



BROOKE IRISH

Dawn Upshaw, joining a rare natural warmth with a fierce commitment to the transforming communicative power of music, has achieved worldwide celebrity as a singer of opera and concert repertoire ranging from the sacred works of Bach to the freshest sounds of today. Her ability to reach to the heart of music and text has earned her both the devotion of an exceptionally diverse audience, and the awards and distinctions accorded to only the most distinguished of artists. In 2007, she was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation, the first vocal artist to be awarded the five-year "genius" prize, and in 2008 she was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Her acclaimed performances on the opera stage comprise the great Mozart roles (Susanna, Ilia, Pamina, Despina, and Zerlina) as well as modern works by Stravinsky, Poulenc, and Messiaen. From Salzburg, Paris, and Glyndebourne, to the Metropolitan Opera, where she began her career in 1984 and has since made nearly 300 appearances, Dawn Upshaw has also championed numerous new works created for her including *The Great Gatsby* by John Harbison; the Grawemeyer Award-winning opera, *L'Amour de Loïen* and oratorio *La Passion de Simone* by Kaija Saariaho; John Adams's Nativity oratorio *El Niño*; and Osvaldo Golijov's chamber opera *Ainadamar* and song cycle *Ayre*.

It says much about Dawn Upshaw's sensibilities as an artist and colleague that she is a favored partner of many leading musicians, including Gilbert Kalish, the Kronos Quartet, James Levine, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. In her work as a recitalist, and particularly in her work with composers, Dawn Upshaw has become a generative force in concert music, having premiered more than 25 works in the past decade. From Carnegie Hall to large and small venues throughout the world she regularly presents specially designed programs composed of lieder, contemporary works in many languages, and folk and popular music. She furthers this work in master classes and workshops with young singers at major music festivals, conservatories, and liberal arts colleges. She is the Head of the Vocal Arts Program at the Tanglewood Music Center and was the founding Artistic Director of the Vocal Arts Program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music.

A five-time GRAMMY® Award winner, Dawn Upshaw is featured on more than 50 recordings, including the million-selling Symphony No. 3 by Henryk Gorecki for Nonesuch Records. Her discography also includes full-length opera recordings of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*; Messiaen's *St. Francois d'Assise*; Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*; John Adams's *El Niño*; two volumes of Canteloube's *Songs of the Auvergne*, a dozen recital recordings, and an acclaimed three-disc series of Osvaldo Golijov's music for Deutsche Grammophon. She received the 2014 Best Classical Vocal Solo GRAMMY® for Maria Schneider's *Winter Morning Walks* on the ArtistShare Label.

Dawn Upshaw holds honorary doctorate degrees from Yale, the Manhattan School of Music, the Juilliard School, Allegheny College, and Illinois Wesleyan University. She began her career as a 1984 winner of the Young Concert Artists Auditions and the 1985 Walter W. Naumburg Competition, and was a member of the Metropolitan Opera Young Artists Development Program.

Ms. Upshaw has recorded extensively for the Nonesuch label. She may also be heard on Angel/EMI, BMG, Deutsche Grammophon, London, Sony Classical, Telarc, and on Erato and Teldec in the Warner Classics Family of labels.



LIZ LINDER

Gil Rose is a musician helping to shape the future of classical music. Acknowledged for his "sense of style and sophistication" by *Opera News*, noted as "an amazingly versatile conductor" by *The Boston Globe*, and praised for conducting with "admiral command" by *The New York Times*, over the past two decades Mr. Rose has built a reputation as one of the country's most inventive and versatile conductors. His dynamic performances on both the symphonic and operatic stages as well as over 75 recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP has won fourteen ASCAP awards for adventurous programming and was selected as Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra to receive this distinction. Mr. Rose serves as the executive producer of the GRAMMY® Award-winning BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsis, Chandos, Cantaloupe, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

In September 2013, he introduced a new company to the Boston opera scene, Odyssey Opera, dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire. Since the company's inaugural performance of Wagner's *Rienzi*, which took the Boston scene by storm, Odyssey Opera has continued to receive universal acclaim for its annual festivals with compelling themes and unique programs, presenting fully staged operatic works and concert performances of overlooked grand opera masterpieces. In its first five years, Mr. Rose has brought 22 operas to Boston, and introduced the city to some important new artists. In 2016 Mr. Rose founded Odyssey Opera's in-house recording label with its first release, Pietro Mascagni's

Zanetto, followed by a double disc of one-act operas by notable American composer Dominick Argento in 2018 and the world premiere recording of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2020.

From 2012 to 2019, he was the Artistic Director of the longstanding Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, New Hampshire. Mr. Rose conducted several premieres as well as cycles of the symphonies of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. He made his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento as well as conducting, directing, and producing a production and world premiere recording of Ned Rorem's opera *Our Town* in the historic Peterborough Townhouse.

Mr. Rose maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms. He made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 he debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and National Orchestra of Porto. In 2015, he made his Japanese debut substituting for Seiji Ozawa at the Matsumoto Festival conducting Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, and in March 2016 made his debut with New York City Opera at the Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has since returned to City Opera in 2017 (as Conductor and Director) in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and 2018 conducting a double bill of Rameau's & Donizetti's settings of *Pigmalione*. In 2019, he made his debut conducting the Juilliard Symphony in works of Ligeti and Tippett.

As an educator, he has served on the faculty of Tufts University and Northeastern University, and has worked with students at a wide range of colleges such as Harvard, MIT, New England Conservatory, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of California at San Diego, among others.



The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Described by *The New York Times* as “one of the most artistically valuable” orchestras in the country, BMOP is a unique institution in today's musical world, disseminating exceptional orchestral music “new or so woefully neglected that it might as well be” via performances and recordings of the highest caliber.

Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span over a century. Each season, Rose brings BMOP's award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the stage of New England Conservatory's historic Jordan Hall, with programming that is “a safe haven for, and champion of, virtually every *ism*, and every genre- and era-mixing hybrid that composers' imaginations have wrought” (*Wall Street Journal*). The musicians of BMOP are consistently lauded for the energy, imagination, and passion with which they infuse the music of the present era.

BMOP's distinguished and adventurous track record includes premieres and recordings of monumental and provocative new works such as John Harbison's ballet *Ulysses*, Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and Lei Liang's *A Thousand Mountains, A Million*

Streams. The composers performed and commissioned by BMOP contain Pulitzer and Rome Prize winners, Grawemeyer Award recipients, and MacArthur grant fellows.

From 1997 to 2013 the orchestra won thirteen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming. BMOP has been featured at festivals including Opera Unlimited, the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA), and the MATA Festival in New York. During its 20th anniversary season, BMOP was named Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra in the organization's history to receive this distinction.

BMOP has actively pursued a role in music education through composer residencies, collaborations with colleges, and an ongoing relationship with the New England Conservatory, where it is Affiliate Orchestra for New Music. The musicians of BMOP are equally at home in Symphony Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in Cambridge's Club Oberon and Boston's Club Café, where they pursued a popular, composer-led Club Concert series from 2004 to 2012.

BMOP/sound, BMOP's independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP's extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today's most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has released over 75 CDs on the label, bringing BMOP's discography to 100 titles. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press; it is the recipient of a 2020 GRAMMY® Award for *Tobias Picker: Fantastic Mr. Fox*, nine GRAMMY® Award nominations, and its releases have appeared on the year-end "Best of" lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Time Out New York*, *American Record Guide*, *Downbeat Magazine*, WBUR, NewMusicBox, and others.

BMOP expands the horizon of a typical "night at the symphony." Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

FLUTE

Ashley Addington
(alto flute) [1-3]
Sarah Brady* [1-3]
Rachel Braude (piccolo) [2-3]
Jessica Lizak (piccolo) [1]

OBOE

Nancy Dimock
(English horn) [1]
Laura Pardee [1, 3]
Jennifer Slowik* [1-3]
Catherine Weinfield (English
horn) [2-3]

CLARINET

Amy Advocat (bass clarinet,
Eb clarinet) [2-3]
Gary Gorczyca
(bass clarinet) [1]
Jan Halloran [3]
Michael Norsworthy* [1-3]

BASSOON

Kevin Grainger
(contrabassoon) [1]
Ronald Haroutunian* [1-3]
Jensen Ling [1]
Adrian Morejon [3]
Gregory Newton
(contrabassoon) [2-3]

HORN

Joseph Cradler [1]
Alyssa Daly [2-3]
Neil Godwin* [1-3]
Alex Stening [1, 3]
Sarah Sutherland [1, 3]

TRUMPET

Michael Dobrinski* [1-3]
Adam Gautille [1]
Richard Kelley [3]
Dana Oakes [2-3]
Andrew Sorg [1]

TROMBONE

Hans Bohn* [1-3]
Alexei Doohovskoy [3]
Victoria Garcia-Daskalova [1]

BASS TROMBONE

Christopher Beaudry [1-3]

TUBA

Kenneth Amis [1]

PERCUSSION

Jonathan Hess [2-3]
Craig McNutt (timpani) [1-3]
Robert Schulz* [1-3]
Nicholas Tolle (cimbalom) [2-3]

PIANO/CELESTA

Linda Osborn [1-2]

HARP

Amanda Romano [1-3]

VIOLIN I

Paola Caballero [2-3]
Natalie Calma [1]
Benjamin Carson [3]
Angelia Cho [1]
Kyra Davies [1]
Colin Davis [3]
Sonia Deng [1-3]
Gabriela Diaz* [1]
Tudor Dornescu [1]
Rose Drucker [1]
Lisa Goddard [2-3]
Susan Jensen [2-3]
Aleksandra Labinska [1]
Sean Larkin [2-3]
Nicole Parks [1-3]
Sarita Uranovsky [2-3]
Alyssa Wang [1]
Katherine Winterstein* [2-3]

VIOLIN II

Colleen Brannen* [2-3]
Lilit Hartunian [2-3]
Susan Jensen [1]
Lizzie Jones [1]
Annegret Klaua [2-3]
Sean Larkin [1]
Mina Lavcheva [1]
Judith Lee [2-3]
Shadwa Mussad [1]
Yumi Okada [2-3]
Amy Rawstron [1]
Ajja Reke [3]
Micah Ringham [2-3]
Kay Rooney Matthews [1-3]
Nivedita Sarnath [1-3]
Klaudia Szlachta* [1]
Edward Wu [1, 3]

VIOLA

Mark Berger [2-3]
Sharon Bielik [1]
Joan Ellersick* [2-3]
Nathaniel Farny [1]
David Feltner [2-3]
Noriko Futagami* [1]
Amelia Hollander Ames [3]
Samuel Kelder [1, 3]
Lauren Nelson [1]
Dimitar Petkov [1-3]
Emily Rideout [1-3]
Emily Rome [1-3]

CELLO

Miriam Bolkosky [1]
Ariana Falk [3]
Ariel Friedman [1]
Katherine Kayaian* [2-3]
Cherry Kim [3]
Seth MacLeod [2-3]
Stephen Marotto [1]
Velleda Miragias [1-3]
Rafael Popper-Keizer* [1]
Amy Wensink [1]
Aron Zerkowicz [2-3]

BASS

Anthony D'Amico* [1-3]
Scot Fitzsimmons [1]
Reginald Lamb [1, 3]
Robert Lynam [3]
Bebo Shiu [1-3]

KEY

[1] Diotima
[2] Milosz Songs
[3] Symphony No. 6

*Principals

John Harbison

Diotima
Milosz Songs
Symphony No. 6

Producer: Gil Rose

Recording and postproduction engineer: Joel Gordon

Assistant engineer: Peter Atkinson

SACD authoring: Brad Michel

All works on this disc are published by Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



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