

# Nightingale Vocal Ensemble

Presents

# WHISPERS

-what Haunts you-

October 16, 2021 @ 8pm  
Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, Cambridge

October 17, 2021 @ 6pm  
All Saints Parish, Brookline

Laura Nevitt & Ben Perry  
Co-Artistic Directors

# PROGRAM

## POETRY AND MUSIC

*(Please hold applause until the asterisks\*)*

*Djinn* - Rae Armantrout

*Double Trouble* - Jaakko Mäntyjärvi

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*Madrigals Book 1: IV, The Devil's Walk* - John Zorn

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*Keen for the Teeming Dead* - Nicholas Ford

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*Whispers of Heavenly Death* - Walt Whitman

*Whispers* - Steven Stucky

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*Danse Macabre* - Camille Saint-Saëns

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*A Mad Girl's Love Song* - Sylvia Plath

*To be Haunted* - Laura Nevitt

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*Eingang (Entrance)* - Rainer Maria Rilke

*Eingang* - John Haukoos

*Ghost* - Cynthia Huntington

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# TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

***Djinn*** - Rae Armantrout (b.1947) - read by Eric Ritter

Haunted, they say, believing  
The soft, shifty  
Dunes are made up  
Of false promises.

Many believe  
Whatever happens  
Is the other half  
Of a conversation.

Many whisper  
White lies  
To the dead.

“The boys are doing really well.”

Some think  
Nothing is so  
Until it has been witnessed.

They believe the bits are iffy;

The forces that bind them,  
absolute.

***Double Trouble*** - Jaakko Mäntyjärvi (b.1963)

Text from *Macbeth*, by William Shakespeare (1564-1616),  
updated by Kelvyn Koning & Laura Nevitt

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd  
Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined  
Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time  
Round about the cauldron go;  
In the poison'd entrails throw  
Toad, that under cold stone  
Days and nights has thirty-one  
Swelter'd venom sleeping got  
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot  
Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble

Fillet of a fenny snake  
In the cauldron boil and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frog  
Wool of bat and tongue of dog  
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting  
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing  
For a charm of powerful trouble  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble

Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf  
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark  
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark  
Liver of a kangaroo  
Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
Silver'd in the moon's eclipse  
Nose of Yak and Weasel's lips  
Pincher of a sun-burned crab,  
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab  
Make the gruel thick and slab:  
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron  
For the ingredients of our cauldron

Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble

By the pricking of my thumbs  
Something wicked this way comes  
Open locks  
Whoever knocks

### ***Madrigals: Book 1 - IV. The Devil's Walk*** - John Zorn (b.1953)

Oh, Priapus  
Devil's walk, all our sorrows,  
Mirrored in a sacred spell,  
Secrets of the angel of darkness.

Fantasies, destinies, evocations, incantations.  
evil wraps itself in song.

### ***Keen for the Teeming Dead*** - Nicholas Ford (b. 1994)

### ***Whispers*** - Steven Stucky (1939-2016)

*Whispers of Heavenly Death* - Walt Whitman (1819-1892) - Read by Juan Suarez

Whispers of heavenly death, murmur'd I hear,  
Labial gossip of night, sibilant chorals,  
Footsteps gently ascending,  
Mystical breezes wafted soft and low,  
Ripples of unseen rivers,  
Tides of a current flowing, forever, flowing,

I see, just see skyward,  
Great cloud-masses.  
Mournfully slowly they roll  
Silently swelling and mixing,

With at times a half-dimm'd  
Sadden'd far-off star  
Appearing and disappearing.

*Ave Verum Corpus* - Latin

Ave verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine,  
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine:  
Cuius latus perforatum unda fluxit sanguine.  
Esto nobis praegustatum, in mortis examine.  
Esto nobis praegustatum, in mortis examine.  
O Dulcis, O Pie, O Jesu fili Mariae; miserere mei. Amen.

*Ave Verum Corpus* - English

Hail true body, born of the Virgin Mary,  
Truly suffering, sacrificed on the cross for all men:  
From whose pierced side flowed blood.  
Be a foretaste for us in the trial of death.  
O Sweet, O Merciful, O Jesus, Son of Mary.  
Have mercy on us. Amen.

## ***Danse Macabre*** - Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Arr. Ben Perry

Kelvyn Koning, piano

Zig and zig and zig, Death rhythmically  
Taps upon a tomb with his heel;  
Death at midnight plays a dance air,  
Zig and zig and zig on his violin.

The winter wind blows and the night is gloomy,

Groaning comes from the lime trees;  
White skeletons move through the shadows,  
Running and jumping under their large shrouds.

Zig and zig and zig, everyone is moving,  
We hear the bones of the dancers banging,  
A lascivious couple sits upon the moss  
As if to taste ancient pleasures again.

Zig and zig and zag, Death continues,  
Scraping without end his harsh-sounding violin.  
A veil has fallen! The dancer is nude!  
Her partner squeezes her amorously.

The lady is said to be a marchioness or baroness,  
And the crude gallant a poor cartwright --  
Horrors! And look, she gives herself to him  
As though the churl were a baron!

Zig and zig and zig, what a saraband!  
What circles of the dead, all holding hands!  
Zig and zig and zag, we see in the crowd  
King frolicking with peasant!

But shh! Suddenly the dance is over,  
one pushes, one takes flight: the rooster has crowed;  
Oh! A beautiful night for the poor world!

And long live Death and Equality!

***A Mad Girl's Love Song*** - Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) - read by  
Madison Spawn

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;  
I lift my lids and all is born again.  
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

The stars go waltzing out in blue and red,  
And arbitrary blackness gallops in:  
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed  
And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite insane.  
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

God topples from the sky, hell's fires fade:  
Exit seraphim and Satan's men:  
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I fancied you'd return the way you said,  
But I grow old and I forget your name.  
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

I should have loved a thunderbird instead;  
At least when spring comes they roar back again.  
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.  
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

### ***To Be Haunted*** - Laura Nevitt (b.1985)

Text by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

One need not be a Chamber - to be Haunted  
One need not be a House -  
The brain has Corridors - surpassing  
Material Place -

Far safer, of a Midnight Meeting  
External Ghost  
Than its interior Confronting -  
That Cooler Host.

Far safer, through an Alley gallop,  
The Stones a'chase -

Than Unarmed, one's a'self encounter -  
In lonesome Place -  
Ourself behind ourself, concealed -  
Should startle most -  
Assassin hid in our Apartment  
Be Horror's least.

The Body - borrows a Revolver -  
He bolts the Door -  
O'er looking a superior spectre -  
Or More -

### ***Eingang (Entrance)*** - John Haukoos (b.1994)

Text by Raine Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

*Eingang* - Raine Maria Rilke (1875-1926) - read by John Haukoos

Wer du auch seist:  
am Abend tritt hinaus  
aus deiner Stube, drin du alles weißt;  
als letztes vor der Ferne liegt dein Haus:  
wer du auch seist.

Mit deinen Augen, welche müde kaum  
von der verbrauchten Schwelle sich befreien,  
hebst du ganz langsam einen schwarzen Baum  
und stellst ihn vor den Himmel: schlank, allein.

Und hast die Welt gemacht. Und sie ist groß  
und wie ein Wort, das noch im Schweigen reift.  
Und wie dein Wille ihren Sinn begreift,  
lassen sie deine Augen zärtlich los...

Entrance (English Translation):

Whoever you are  
In the evening leave

Your room wherein you know everything;  
At the last spot before the far-off is your house:  
Whoever you are.  
With your eyes, which in their weariness  
barely free themselves from the weathered threshold.  
You slowly lift a black branch and place it in the sky, slender, alone  
And you have made the world. And it is large  
And like a word that yet ripens in silence.  
And as your will understands your mind  
Your eyes tenderly let go...

### ***Ghost*** - Cynthia Huntington (b.1951) - read by Angela Yam

At first, you didn't know me.  
I was a shape moving rapidly, nervous  
at the edge of your vision. A flat, high voice,  
dark slash of hair across my cheekbone.

I made myself present, though never distinct.  
Things I said that he repeated, a tone  
you could hear, but never trace, in his voice.  
Silence - followed by talk of other things.

When you would sit at your desk, I would creep  
near you like a question. A thought would scurry  
across the front of your mind. I'd be there,  
ducking out of sight. You must have felt me

watching you, my small eyes fixed on your face,  
the smile you wondered at, on the lips only.  
The voice on the phone, quick and full of business.  
All that you saw and heard and could not find

the center of, those days growing into years,  
growing inside of you, out of reach, now with you  
forever, in your house, in your garden, in corridors  
of dream where I finally tell you my name.

# Nightingale Vocal Ensemble

Laura Nevitt & Benjamin Perry, Co-Artistic Directors

John Haukoos, Emcee

Vocalists participating in *Whispers*:

Madison Spahn  
Angela Yam  
Rose Hegele  
Hannah Carlson  
Rebekah Schwietzer  
Kelvyn Koning  
Emerald Barbour  
Melanie Donnelly  
Kendra Nutting  
Maria Whitcomb  
Will Benoit  
Daniel Lugo  
John Haukoos  
Nicholas Ford  
Juan Suarez  
Eric Ritter  
Kirby Stalley  
Nathan Halbur

# JOIN US FOR THE REST OF OUR SEASON

## MYTHOLOGY OF THE PLANETS

November 20, 2021 @ 8pm

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cambridge

November 21, 2021 @ 6pm

All Saints Parish, Ashmont

## DREAMS

February 12, 2022 @ 8pm

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cambridge

February 13, 2021 @ 6pm

All Saints Parish, Brookline

## OCEANS

April 23, 2022 @ 8pm

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cambridge

April 24, 2021 @ 6pm

Old South Church, Boston

## FUNDRAISING GALE-A

May 15, 2022 @ TBD

Venue TBD