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Programme

Nascia la Gioia Mia	Nigel Westlake
We Welcome Summer	Clare Maclean
How Shall we Sing in a Strange Land? <i>Bronwyn Mitchell & Katherine Chan (soprano)</i>	Joseph Twist
Candor est Lucis <i>Katherine Chan (soprano), Alisen McLeod (mezzo-soprano), Gerardo Dirié (bandoneón)</i>	Gerardo Dirié
Lux Aeterna	Paul Stanhope
In Paradisum <i>Katherine Chan (soprano)</i>	Megan Nelson
Come Sleep	Daniel Brinsmead
Shore	Iain Grandage
Waltzing Matilda	arr. Ruth McCall
– Interval (5 minutes) –	
De Clavibus Memorie	Gerardo Dirié
There Will Come Soft Rains	Ivo Antognini
He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven	Daniel Brinsmead
Nearer My God to Thee <i>Chris Bradley (tenor)</i>	Lowell Mason arr. James Stevens
On the Banks of the Condamine <i>Bronwyn Mitchell (soprano), James Fox (bass)</i>	Iain Grandage
Bound for South Australia	arr. Ruth McCall

In just over a week from today, Fusion will give its first ever performance on an international stage at the 10th World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul, South Korea. Our invitation to the Symposium was to present two programmes of music (45 mins and 25 mins) on the theme of healing. This afternoon's concert includes our full touring repertoire.

There are several different paths one could take with regard to healing as a means of understanding through choral music. To heal, one must start by acknowledging the wound and the affliction. Music makers often build their reflective spaces as music utterances through which they can make the fundamental decision to take ownership of the brokenness of their humanity. Acceptance of this fragile condition, within the powerful entity of song, poetry, and sound, allows humans to transcend the boundaries of their bodies. The pieces in today's programme have a comforting and enriching sense about them that nourish the soul.

We begin with *Nasce la Gioia Mia*, an adaptation of Nigel Westlake's larger work *Missa Solis: Requiem for Eli*, a requiem mass for his son Eli, whose life was tragically taken at the age of 22. Westlake went through an outpouring of emotion as he transformed his original manuscript for an IMAX film soundtrack into a requiem, allowing the play on the word "sun" (son) to be the centre point of this work. The healing rays of the sun continues this thread, as we move to the rejuvenation of the strong light of the Australian summer in *We Welcome Summer*, set to a poem by Michael Leunig.

On 13 February 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gave his address in parliament apologising to the Stolen Generations. Using the words from Oodgeroo's *Song of Hope*, Joseph Twist looks through the eyes of the Australian indigenous people into their "new Dream Time", juxtaposing the poetry with a line from Psalm 137, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" The piece draws a parallel between the Jews exiled from their homeland, and Aboriginal people also losing their spiritual connection with the land since European colonisation.

Dirié's *Candor est Lucis*, Stanhope's *Lux Aeterna*, Nelson's *In Paradisum*, and Brinsmead's *Come Sleep* offer healing through the exposure to sonorous sound sensations. The first combines the celestial qualities of singing voices with the Argentinian bandoneón, the middle pieces transport us to the end of the Requiem mass with a symbolic prayer for light and the journey to paradise, while the last embraces us within the soothing arms of sleep.

As a country surrounded by water, Australians are always aware of their relationship with oceans, lakes and rivers. The healing properties of water have been recognised by ancient Egyptians since 2000BC. Whether we are submerged in it or drinking it, water acts as a healing element. Iain Grandage's *Shore* brings these aspects to light.

Gerardo Dirié's *De Clavibus Memoriae* uses a text by 12th-century Florentine scholar Boncompagno da Signa which addresses three key components that open the doors of memory: the natural power to generate images, exercising such a talent, and the workings of the soul. These words combined with the sounds of the Bolivian *tarkas* create a sonic illustration on the research of the powerful workings of memory and the mind.

The contemporaries Sara Teasdale and William Butler Yeats provide us with words that paint their own pictures in Antognini's *There Will Come Soft Rains* and Brinsmead's *He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*, respectively. In Antognini's piece the words shimmer within their vocal setting as Teasdale leads us through a series of nature vignettes. The turning point of this piece comes at the mention of war and the potential perishing of mankind. The soft rains are a healing offering to the earth, set to the colourful sounds of Antognini's musical language. Just as colourful in his compositional palette, Brinsmead weaves the threads of the "cloths of heaven" into his piece - the golden and silver light, blue and dim, cloths of night and light and the half-light. These colours come through in Brinsmead's vocal writing and his delicate writing when treading softly on these cloths is beautifully created.

James Stevens' setting of *Nearer My God to Thee* takes the United Methodist 19th-century hymn and, after a conventional introduction, injects it with a rhythmic drive lifting us to a climactic end. And our programme closes with Grandage's *On the Banks of the Condamine*, which relays a dialogue between a man eager to go shearing and his beloved Nancy who wants to go with him. Grandage sets a haunting melody against this traditional Australian song, which portrays the sounds of the music of the indigenous Australian culture.

Programme notes by Debra Shearer-Dirié

Nascia la Gioia Mia (My Joy is Born)

Music: Nigel Westlake (Australian, born 1958), adapted from two movements of Missa Solis: Requiem for Eli
Text: Giovan Leonardo Primavera (c. 1540-1585); Hannie Rayson and Michael Cathcart (adapted from John Weiley's narration to the Imax documentary Solarmax)

Nasce la gioia mia
Ogni volta ch'io miro il mio bel sole,
E la mia vita è via
Qualor nol miro,
Perché il sguardo tale
Ch'ogni volta beato farmi suole.
O Sol, o Sol almo immortale.

*My joy is born
every time I gaze at my beautiful sun:
but my life dies
when I cannot look at it,
for the very sight
is bliss to me.
O Sun, immortal life-giver.*

Glowing...

Aurora Borealis, Aurora Australis
The whole planet glowing
in the infra red warmth of a star we call sun.

The sun is singing a song to itself,
too deep to be heard, too secret to know.
The whole planet glowing
at the edge of a spiral with the song of a star called Sun.

A song of tides and currents,
of secret tides and currents, revealing tides and currents.

Die Sonne, Soleil, Illios, Guwing,
Surya, Eki, Ilanga, Yaraaay,
Inti, Suvar, Solntsa, Khama, Taiyo, Solis.

(the word for 'sun' in different languages)

We Welcome Summer

Music: Clare MacLean (New Zealand, born 1958)
Text: Michael Leunig (born 1945)

We welcome summer
And the glorious blessing of light.
We are rich with light;
We are loved by the sun.
Let us empty our hearts
Into the brilliance.

Let us pour our darkness
Into the glorious forgiving light.
For this loving abundance
Let us give thanks
And offer our joy. Amen.

How Shall we Sing in a Strange Land?

Music: Joseph Twist (Australian, born 1982)

Text: A Song of Hope by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920-1993), and Psalm 137:4

Look up my people, the dawn is breaking, the world is waking to a bright new day.
When none defame us, no restriction tame us, nor sneer dismay.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?
Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini intera aliena?

Now brood no more on the years behind you,
The hope assigned you shall the past replace,
When a juster justice grown wise and stronger
Points the bone no longer at a darker race.

So long we waited bound and frustrated,
Till hate we hated and caste disposed,
Now the light shall guide us, no goal denied us,
And all doors open that long were closed.

See plain the promise, dark freedom lover,
Night's nearly over, and though long the climb,
New rights will greet us, new mateship meet us,
And joy complete us, in our new Dream Time.

To our fathers' fathers, the pain, the sorrow,
To our children's children, the glad tomorrow.

Candor est lucis

Music: Gerardo Dirié (Argentinian-Australian, born 1958)

Text: Liber Usualis, Festa Augusti, 6.

Alleluia. Candor est lucis aeternae, speculum sine macula, et imago bonitatis illius.

Alleluia. Wisdom is eternal light, a mirror with no blemishes, and the semblant of His kindness.

Lux Aeterna

Music: Paul Stanhope (Australian, born 1969)

Text: From the Latin Requiem Mass

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

Let eternal light shine upon them, O Lord, with thy saints forever, because thou art gracious.

In Paradisum

Music: Megan Nelson (Australian, born 1990)

Text: From the Latin Requiem Mass

In paradisum deducant te Angeli;
in tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Ierusalem.

Chorus angelorum te suscipiat,
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere aeternam habeas requiem.

*May angels lead you into paradise;
upon your arrival, may the martyrs receive you and lead you to the holy city of Jerusalem.*

*May the ranks of angels receive you,
and with Lazarus, once a poor man, may you have eternal rest.*

Come Sleep

Music: Daniel Brinsmead (Australian, born 1988)

Text: John Fletcher (1579-1625)

Come, sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies; that from thence
I may feel an influence
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought:
O let my joys have some abiding!

Shore

Music: *Iain Grandage (Australian, born 1970)*

Text: *Melanie Robinson*

Surely as I stand, the sand beneath my feet is shifting.
I know that day is dawning.
Surely as light weaves through waves, old cliffs are moving.

We are water, swimming in the sea,
Searching through the darkest hour,
Conjuring the depths of night
Like rays of light that asked to know the shade.
In that darkness blindness prevailed.

Yet surely as I stand, I know that day is dawned,
Because this day has followed darkest night.

Waltzing Matilda

Music: *Ruth McCall (Australian)*

Text: *A.B. "Banjo" Paterson (1864-1941)*

*Kallara, marlee, patanga, yanagin,
carawatha, yarrabee, tyalla,
maroong, yallaroo, tumbeeluwa.*

(These are Aboriginal words relating to trees: kallara – tea tree; marlee – elder tree; patanga – place of gum trees; yanagin – green trees growing; carawatha – place of pine trees; yarrabee – many gum trees; tyalla – eucalyptus; maroong – cypress pine; yallaroo – beautiful flowers; tumbeeluwa – evergreen; gulabaa – coolibah, or 'blue ghost' gum.)

Under the shade of the coolibah tree
Who'll come a waltzing Matilda with me?
You'll come a waltzing Matilda with me.

Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
You'll come a waltzing Matilda with me.

Down came the troopers, one, two, three,
You'll come a waltzing Matilda with me.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
"You'll never catch me alive," said he.
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a waltzing Matilda with me!"

De clavibus memorie (The keys of memory)

Music: Gerardo Dirie (Argentinian-Australian, born 1958)

Text: Boncompagno da Signa, 12th century

The three keys that open the doors of memory

The First Key is a natural power to generate images.

The Second one is exercising such talent.

The Third one the workings of the soul.

In the first one Nature operates the outmost.

In the second one, progress is done to some extent.

In the third one, throughout completion is achieved.

Indeed, the soul drives to [inner] contemplation, and how it returns to it from far confines, in the middle the parts integrate as long as it endures everything.

At this point the natural memory and the artificial effort, through laborious exercise, join together [bond, unite].

There will come soft rains

Music: Ivo Antognini (Swiss, born 1963)

Text: Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,
Whistling their whims on a low fence wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done,

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

He Wishes for the Cloths Heaven

Music: Daniel Brinsmead (Australian, born 1988)

Text: William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim,
And the dark cloths of night and the half light.

I would spread the cloths under your feet,
But I being poor have only my dreams,
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly, because you tread on my dreams.

Nearer My God to Thee

Music: Lowell Mason, arrangement with original music by James Stevens

Text: Sarah Flower Adams (1805-1848)

In articulo mortis
caelitus mihi vires.
Deo adjuvante,
non timendum in perpetuum,
Dirige, nos Domine,
ad augusta per angusta,
Sic itur ad astra
Excelsior!

At the moment of death
my strength is from heaven.
God helping,
Nothing should ever be feared,
Direct us, O Lord,
to high places by narrow roads,
Such is the path to the stars,
ever upward!

Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee,
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me.

There let the way appear, steps unto heav'n,
All that Thou sendest me, in mercy giv'n.

Still shall all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

Though like the wanderer the sun gone down,
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone.

Angels to beckon me, nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

Or if, on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly!

On the Banks of the Condamine

Music: Iain Grandage (Australian, born 1970)

Text: Excerpts from *My Country* by Dorothea McKellar, and traditional Australian bush ballad *On the Banks of the Condamine* (author unknown)

The stark white ring-barked forests,
All tragic to the moon,
The sapphire misted mountains,
The hot gold hush of noon.

Oh hark the dogs are barking, love, I can no longer stay,
The men are all gone mustering and it is nearly day,
I must be off by morning light before the sun doth shine,
To meet the Sydney shearers on the banks of the Condamine.

Lagaga nu paipa kunia Wanana Maia mai ulaipa.

O Willie, dearest Willie, I'll go along with you.
I'll cut off all my auburn fringe and be a shearer too,
I'll cook and count your tally, love, while ringero you shine,
And I'll wash your greasy moleskins on the banks of the Condamine.

Oh Nancy, dearest Nancy, with me you cannot go,
The squatters have given orders, love, no woman should do so,
Your delicate constitution is not equal unto mine,
To stand the constant tig'ring on the banks of the Condamine.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky
When sick at heart around us
We see the cattle die.

Oh Willie, dearest Willie, then stay back home with me,
We'll take up a selection and a farmer's wife I'll be,
I'll help you husk the corn, love, and I'll cook your meals so fine,
You'll forget the ramstag mutton on the banks of the Condamine.

Oh Nancy, dearest Nancy, please so not hold me back,
Down there all the boys are waiting and I must be on the track,
So here is a goodbye kiss, love, for back home here I'll incline,
When we've shore the last of the jumbucks on the banks of the Condamine.

An opal hearted country,
A wilful lavish land
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand.

Though Earth holds many splendours
Wherever I may die
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly!

Bound for South Australia

Music: Traditional arr. Ruth McCall (Australian)

Text: Traditional sea shanty

In South Australia I was born,
In South Australia 'round Cape Horn.

*Heave away, you ruler kings,
Heave away, haul away!
Heave away, you'll hear 'em sing,
We're bound for South Australia.*

As I was walking 'long the square,
'Twas there I met Miss Nancy Blair.

I chased her up, I chased her down,
I chased her all around the town.

And now we're galloping 'round Cape Horn,
You'll wish to God you never was born.

And now we're bound for a foreign land,
With a bottle o' whisky in one hand.

I'll raise my glass to the foreign shore,
And another to the girl that I adore.

*Fusion thanks the parish of St Andrew's Anglican Church
for kindly allowing us to use their beautiful space this afternoon.*

*You are warmly invited to join us for refreshments following the concert –
come and sample Fusion's wine before you buy!*