

# Nashoba Valley Chorale

## Far Past War

21 April 2024

Groton Hill Music Center, 122 Old Ayer Road, Groton, MA 01450

**Anne Watson Born, Conductor**

Brianna J. Robinson, *soprano*

Fred C. VanNess, Jr., *tenor*

Christòpheren Nomura, *baritone*

### I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)

*Mr. VanNess*

1. I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes
2. How Long?
3. The Lord Is My Shepherd, Alleluia

### Far Past War

Augusta Read Thomas (b. 1964)

### Dona Nobis Pacem

R. Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

- I. Dona Nobis Pacem

*Ms. Robinson*

- II. Beat! Beat! Drums!
- III. Reconciliation

*Ms. Robinson, Mr. Nomura*

- IV. Dirge For Two Veterans
- V. The Angel of Death

*Ms. Robinson, Mr. Nomura*

- VI. O Man Greatly Beloved

*Ms. Robinson, Mr. Nomura*

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Our Full-length  
On-line  
Program



O strong dead-march you please me!  
 O moon immense with your silvery face you soothe me!  
 O my soldiers twain! O my veterans passing to burial!  
 What I have I also give you.

The moon gives you light,  
 And the bugles and the drums give you music,  
 And my heart, O my soldiers, my veterans,  
 My heart gives you love.

—Walt Whitman

## V

The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the beating of his wings. There is no one as of old..... to sprinkle with blood the lintel and the two side-posts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on.

—John Bright

*Dona nobis pacem* Grant us peace.  
 We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!  
 The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan; the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land..... and those that dwell therein.....  
 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved....  
 Is there no balm in Gilead?; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

—Jeremiah VIII. 15-22

## VI

‘O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.’  
 —Daniel X. 19  
 ‘The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former.... and in this place will I give peace.’

—Haggai II. 9

‘Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.  
 And none shall make them afraid, neither the sword go through their land.  
 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.  
 Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.  
 Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them.  
 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled; and let them hear, and say, it is the truth.  
 And it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues.  
 And they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and they shall declare my glory among the nations.  
 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain for ever.’  
 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men.

—(Adapted from Micah iv. 3, Leviticus xxvi. 6, Psalms lxxv. 10, and cxviii. 19, Isaiah xliii. 9, and lxvi. 18-22, and Luke ii. 14)

*Dona nobis pacem* Grant us peace.

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## Texts

### I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

#### 1. I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help.  
 My help cometh from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth.  
 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep.  
 The sun will not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.  
 The Lord shall preserve thee from evil: the Lord shall preserve thy soul.

#### 2. How Long? Psalm 13

How long, O Lord? How long?  
 How long, O Lord, will Thou forget me? How long will Thou hide Thy face from me?  
 How long? How long must I suffer anguish in my soul and grief in my heart?  
 How long, O Lord? Look now and answer me, O Lord.  
 Give light, O Lord, give light to my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.  
 I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.

#### 3. The Lord Is My Shepherd, Alleluia Psalm 23

Alleluia.  
 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters.  
 He restoreth my soul:  
 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.  
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.  
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.  
 Alleluia.

## Far Past War

### 1. In Love with the Sun

I'm in love with the sun  
ave ave  
early and late  
I fly at the sky  
the sun's rays  
in my eye  
ave ave  
I can't stare  
straight at my desire  
only sideways  
I go round and round  
the source of all  
the brightest way  
ave ave

### 2. Far Past War

ah sun  
oh moon  
we crave peace  
heron standing in the lake  
say to the moon  
no more war  
no war  
we crave  
great blue heron  
wide her veil of wings  
glide down night  
sail over sun  
drop far  
past war  
take us  
take us too

—Cammy Thomas

## Dona Nobis Pacem

### I

*Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi  
Dona nobis pacem*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
Grant us peace.

### II

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Through the windows – through the doors – burst like a ruthless force,  
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,  
Into the school where the scholar is studying;  
Leave not the bridegroom quiet – no happiness must he have now with his bride,  
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field, or gathering in his grain  
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums – so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Over the traffic of cities – over the rumble of wheels in the streets;  
Are beds prepared for the sleepers at night in the houses? No sleepers must sleep in those beds,  
No bargainers' bargains by day – would they continue?  
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?  
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums – you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Make no parley – stop for no expostulation,  
Mind not the timid – mind not the weeper or prayer;  
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man;  
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties;  
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting the hearses,  
So strong you thump O terrible drums – so loud you bugles blow.

—Walt Whitman

### III Reconciliation

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,  
Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost,  
That the hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly, softly, wash again and ever  
again this soiled world;

For my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead,  
I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin – I draw near,  
Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin.

—Walt Whitman

### IV Dirge for Two Veterans

The last sunbeam  
Lightly falls from the finished Sabbath,  
On the pavement here, and there beyond it is looking  
Down a new-made double grave.

Lo, the moon ascending,  
Up from the east the silvery round moon,  
Beautiful over the house-tops, ghastly, phantom moon,  
Immense and silent moon.

I see a sad procession,  
And I hear the sound of coming full-keyed bugles,  
All the channels of the city streets they're flooding  
As with voices and with tears.

I hear the great drums pounding,  
And the small drums steady whirring,  
And every blow of the great convulsive drums  
Strikes me through and through.

For the son is brought with the father,  
In the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they fell,  
Two veterans, son and father, dropped together,  
And the double grave awaits them.

Now nearer blow the bugles,  
And the drums strike more convulsive,  
And the daylight o'er the pavement quite has faded,  
And the strong dead-march enwraps me.

In the eastern sky up-buoying,  
The sorrowful vast phantom moves illumined,  
'Tis some mother's large transparent face,  
In heaven brighter growing.