



Elemental

Saturday 5 October 2024, 7.30pm | Pilgrim Uniting Church

Sunday 6 October 2024, 2.30pm | UKARIA Cultural Centre

Carl Crossin, Founder and Conductor Emeritus

Adelaide Chamber Singers

SOPRANOS

Alexandra Bollard*

Emma Borgas

Victoria Coxhill

Imogen Tonkin

Brooke Window

with Cassandra Humble

ALTOS

Rachel Bruerville

Courtney Day*

Sophie Schumacher

Emma Woehle

with Genevieve Spalding

TENORS

Aidan Foyel

Martin Penhale

Kit Tonkin

Graham Yuile

BASSES

Andrew Bettison

Jonathan Bligh

Christopher Gann

Nikolai Leske

Jordan Rose

**With apologies, singers marked * have had to withdraw from this program*

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that we are meeting and making music on Kurna and Peramangk Country, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise and respect First Nations' cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to Kurna and Peramangk people living today. We also extend that respect to other Aboriginal Language Groups and other First Nations people.

Program

Sí, ch'io vorrei morire	Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)
Il bianco e dolce cigno	Jacques Arcadelt (c. 1505–1568)
Water Night	Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)
Madrigali set 1	Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)
<i>from Six 'Fire Songs' on Italian Renaissance poems</i>	
1. Ov'è, lass', il bel viso?	
2. Quando son più lontan	
Earth Song	Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)
Madrigali set 2	Morten Lauridsen
<i>from Six 'Fire Songs' on Italian Renaissance poems</i>	
3. Amor, io sento l'alma	
4. Io piango	
Luci serene e chiare	Carlo Gesualdo (1566–1613)
Madrigali set 3	Morten Lauridsen
<i>from Six 'Fire Songs' on Italian Renaissance poems</i>	
5. Luci serene e chiare	
6. Se per havervi, oime	
Agnus Dei (Do not stand at my grave and weep)	Paul Stanhope (b. 1969)
Fratres	Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
	adapted SATB choir by Carl Crossin
Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?	Traditional Spiritual
	arr. Moses Hogan (1957–2003)

Program Notes

Sherlock Holmes didn't say "Elemental, my dear Watson!" – but he almost did! He used the word 'elementary', which is arguably similar in intent, in that he was talking reductively about the fundamental nature of the evidence – the 'thing' at the centre of it all.

This program explores some of the things that are 'elemental' in our lives. The so-called 'classical elements' of fire, earth, water and air, of course, but the program also guides us into a more deeply emotional or aesthetic world. From the passionate fire of Monteverdi's *Sí, ch'io vorrei morire* or Lauridsen's *Fire Madrigals*, to the profound simplicity of Arvo Part's *Fratres*, this program is (with apologies to Glenn Miller) an *elemental journey*.

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) raised the Madrigal to greater artistic heights than any other composer. In addition to his operas and sacred works, Monteverdi published eight books of madrigals and our opening work, *Sí ch'io vorrei morire*, comes from Book 4. With its impassioned musical phrases continually rising and falling, this madrigal is probably as close to 'pornographic' as the madrigal genre gets. *Sí ch'io vorrei morire* deals with lips, tongues, mouths, kisses, and breasts – the idea of 'dying' refers to that climactic element of sexual activity known colloquially in Renaissance times as 'the little death'.

Published in his first book of madrigals in 1539, **Jacob Arcadelt's** *Il bianco e dolce cigno* also references the joy and desire of 'dying' but encases such meditations within the notion that, while swans sing as they die, this poet (a bishop of the church, no less) enjoys the consolation and pleasure of dying a somewhat more 'blessed death'.

Eric Whitacre is one of the most important and popular choral composers alive today. He has developed a rich, multi-faceted and expressive compositional language that is enjoyed around the world by choirs and audiences alike.

The text of *Water Night* is an English translation of a poem called *Agua Nocturna* by Mexican poet Octavio Paz. One of the recurrent themes in Paz's poetry concerns the "human ability to overcome existential solitude through erotic love and artistic creativity" (Britannica). Perhaps with this in mind, the sheer sensuality of both the music and the words in Whitacre's *Water Night* speak eloquently, yet obliquely, of a deep physical and emotional intimacy.

At the emotional centre of this program is **Morten Lauridsen's** madrigal cycle, *Madrigali: Six 'Fire Songs' on Italian Renaissance poems*. Composed in 1987, Lauridsen acknowledges that these six choral gems incorporate many of the techniques favoured by sixteenth-century Italian madrigalists such as Monteverdi and Gesualdo. In structural terms, *Madrigali* is not dissimilar to Monteverdi's famous six-part madrigal cycle *Sestina: Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata* (Tears of a lover at the tomb of his beloved), an extended work performed by Adelaide Chamber Singers on several occasions in our almost forty-year history to date.

Lauridsen's madrigals speak of yearning and passion, but they are also haunted by darkness and despair. In terms of the classical elements, 'fire' is the predominant metaphor in these madrigals and this is symbolised throughout the music by what Lauridsen calls the 'fire chord'. For those of you with a mind for music theory, Lauridsen's 'fire chord' is a B-flat minor chord with an added note in the tenor part which one commentator once described as a "scorching added C"! You will hear this chord in various guises throughout the work but, notably, it is the very first chord you will hear at the very beginning of the first madrigal *Ov'è, lass', il bel viso?* Musically, we are thrown into the fire from the first note! There are a number of harmonic and thematic links between these six madrigals – especially between numbers one and six and two and five. These musical links lie buried within the music language of the work but, nevertheless, help unify the cycle with an overarching narrative of love, passion, yearning and despair.

Although American composer **Frank Ticheli** is perhaps better known for his compositions for symphonic wind ensembles, ***Earth Song*** has become an absolute favourite of the choral repertoire. *Earth Song* existed originally as *Sanctuary* – a work for wind ensemble. Ticheli himself acknowledges that "this music just begged to be sung by a chorus". Ticheli composed *Earth Song* at a time when the United States was militarily engaged in Iraq, and Ticheli acknowledges that this was a time "when everyone was tired of that war, and so *Earth Song* was written to be very pro-peace." Ticheli describes *Earth Song* as "a cry and a prayer for peace." The Iraq War aside, *Earth Song* is a relevant prayer for our own times!

Carlo Gesualdo (1566–1613) is probably as famous for being the murderer of his first wife and her lover as he is as a composer of intensely rich madrigals and sacred music. ***Luci serene e chiare*** was published in his Fourth Book of Madrigals in 1596 and its comparatively dark and capricious music suggests that, for Gesualdo, love is about wild passion, melancholy, death and fire, not about shepherdesses, fauns or nymphs.

Commissioned by Adelaide Chamber Singers in 2016 as a tribute to ACS baritone Tim Marks (1971–2016), **Paul Stanhope's** setting of ***Agnus Dei (Do not stand at my grave and weep)*** interleaves Mary Elizabeth Frye's well-known poem into a traditional Mass movement. Stanhope explains that he has done this in order to create a 'conversation' between the ritualised nature of the Latin *Agnus Dei* text and the more personal text of Frye's poem. Perhaps this constant interplay between 'the ritual' and 'the personal' is an apt expression of the ongoing relationship between the singer as a thinking, feeling human being and the ritualised nature of public performance itself. The ACS premiere of *Agnus Dei* also won us an AMC/APRA/AMCOS Art Music Award in 2017 for 'Best Performance'.

Arvo Pärt's ***Fratres*** was composed in 1977 and was initially composed as 'three-part music' without fixed instrumentation that could be performed with various instruments. The work was premiered in 1977 by the early music group Hortus Musicus.

Fratres now exists in eight different published versions for ensembles as varied as string quartet, chamber orchestra, cello ensemble and violin and piano. Our version today is my endeavour to re-imagine this structurally simple yet profound music as a work for voices.

For me, *Fratres* inhabits the world of ritual. With its eternal drone, its clear, multi-layered cyclic structure and pure, modal harmonies, *Fratres* can be heard as an expression of our very human, and elemental, need for order, meaning and calm. My interpolation of the famous words 'Hine ma tov' from the Old Testament's Psalm 133 is perhaps a gesture searching for another reference point for the title of the work (*Fratres* = Latin for brothers) within the context of music's healing power in troubled times. Overlooking the historically gendered reference to 'brothers' for a moment, the original text "Hineh ma tov u'ma nayim shevet achim gam ya-chad" translates as "Behold how good and how pleasing for brothers [people] to sit together in unity". A truly noble thought!

Program notes by Carl Crossin – September 2024

Texts and Translations

Sí ch'io vorrei morire

Sí, ch'io vorrei morire,
ora ch'io bacio, amore,
la bella bocca del mio amato core.
Ahi, cara e dolce lingua,
datemi tanto umore,
che di dolcezz'in questo sen' m'estingua!
Ahi, vita mia, a questo bianco seno,
deh, stringetemi fin ch'io venga meno!
Ahi, bocca! Ahi, baci! Ahi, lingua!
Torno a dire:
Sí ch'io vorrei morire.

Poetry by Maurizio Moro (16th century)

*Yes, I want to die,
now that I'm kissing, sweetheart,
the beautiful mouth of my darling beloved.
Ah, dear, sweet tongue,
give me so much of your spirit,
that I die of delight on your breast!
Ah, my life, to this white breast,
ah, crush me until I faint!
Ah, mouth! Ah, kisses! Ah, tongue!
I say again:
Yes, I want to die.*

Il bianco e dolce cigno

Il bianco e dolce cigno
cantando more, ed io,
piangendo, giung' al fin del viver mio.
Stran' e diversa sorte,
ch'ei more sconcolato,
Ed io moro beato.
Morte che nel morire
M'empie di gioia tutt' e di desire;
Se nel morir' altro dolor non sento,
Di mille mort' il di
sarei contendo.

Poetry by Giovanni Guidiccioni (1480–1541)

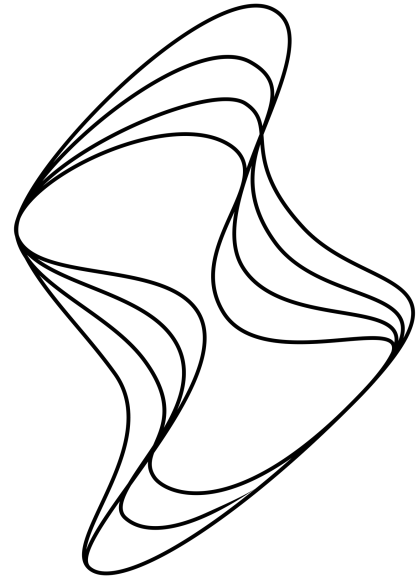
*The white and sweet swan
dies singing, and I,
weeping, reach the end of my life.
Strange and different fate,
that he dies disconsolate
and I die a blessed death,
which in dying fills me
full of joy and desire.
If in dying, were I to feel no other pain,
I would be content to die
a thousand deaths a day.*

Water Night

Poetry by Octavio Paz (1914–1998)

Adapted by Eric Whitacre, translated by Muriel Rukeyser

Night with the eyes of a horse that trembles in the night,
night with eyes of water in the field asleep
is in your eyes, a horse that trembles,
is in your eyes of secret water.
Eyes of shadow-water,
eyes of well-water,
eyes of dream-water.
Silence and solitude,
two little animals moon-led,
drink in your eyes,
drink in those waters.
If you open your eyes,
night opens, doors of musk,
the secret kingdom of the water opens
flowing from the center of night.
And if you close your eyes,
a river, a silent and beautiful current,
fills you from within,
flows forward, darkens you,
night brings its wetness to beaches
in your soul.



1. Ov'è, lass', il bel viso?

Text from a madrigal by Henricus Schaffren

Ov'è, lass', il bel viso?
Ecco, ei s'asconde.
Oimè, dov'il mio sol? Lasso, che velo
S'è post'inanti Te rend'oscur'il cielo?
Oimè ch'io il chiamo et veggio;
ei non risponde.
Deh, se mai sieno a tue vele seconde
Aure, dolce mio ben,
se cangi pelo
Et loco tardi, et se'l signor di Delo
Gratia et valor
nel tuo bel sen'asconde,
Ascolta i miei sospiri et dà lor loco
Di volger in amor l'ingiusto sdegno,
Et vinca tua pietade il duro sempio.
Vedi qual m'arde
et mi consuma fuoco;
Qual fie scusa miglior, qual maggior segno
Ch'io son di viva fede et d'amor tempio!

*Alas, where is the beautiful face?
Behold, it hides.
Woe's me, where is my sun? Alas, what veil
Drapes itself and renders the heavens dark?
Woe's me, that I call and see it;
it doesn't respond.
Oh, if your sails have auspicious winds,
My dearest sweet,
and if you change your hair
And features late, if the Lord of Delos
Hides grace and valour
in your beautiful bosom,
Hear my sighs and give them place
To turn unjust disdain into love,
And may your pity conquer hardships.
See how I burn
and how I am consumed by fire;
What better reason, what greater sign
Than I, a temple of faithful life and love!*

2. Quando son più lontan Text from a madrigal by Ivo De Vento (16th century)

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'infiamma.

*When I am farthest from your beautiful eyes
That made me change my wishes
and my ways,
The flame grows and leads me to my death;
And you, who for my fate
Could restrain the sweet flame,
Deny me the flame that inflames me.*

Earth Song

Poetry by Frank Ticheli

Sing, Be, Live, See...

This dark stormy hour,
The wind, it stirs.
The scorched earth
cries out in vain:

O war and power,
You blind and blur.
The torn heart
cries out in pain.

But music and singing
Have been my refuge,
And music and singing
Shall be my light.

A light of song
Shining strong: Allelulia!
Through darkness, pain, and strife, I'll
Sing, Be, Live, See...

Peace.

3. Amor, io sento l'alma

Text from a Macchiavelli parody
by Jhan Gero (fl. 1540–1555)

Amor, io sento l'alma
Tornar nel foco ov'io
Fui lieto et più che mai d'arder desio.
Io ardo e 'n chiara fiamma
Nutrisco il miser core;
Et quanto più s'infiamma,
Tanto più cresce amore,
Perch'ogni mio dolore
Nasce dal fuoco ov'io
Fui lieto et più che mai d'arder desio.

*Oh love, I feel my soul
Return to the fire where I
Rejoiced and more than ever desire to burn.
I burn and in bright flames
I feed my miserable heart'
The more it flames
The more my loving grows,
For all my sorrows
Are born of the fire where I
Rejoiced and more than ever desire to burn.*

4. Io piango

Text by Ruffo

Io piango, chè'l dolore
Pianger' mi fa, perch'io
Non trov'altro rimedio a l'ardor mio.
Così m'ha concio' Amore
Ch'ognor' viv'in tormento
Ma quanto piango più, men doglia sento.
Sorte fiera e inaudita
Che'l tacer mi dà morte
e'l pianger vita!

*I weep, for the grief
Causes weeping, since I
Can find no other remedy for my fire.
So trapped by Love am I
That ever I lie in torment
But the more I weep the less pain I feel.
What cruel, unheard-of fate
That silence gives me death
and weeping life!*

5. Luci serene e chiare

Text by Ridolfo Arlotti

Luci serene e chiare,
Voi m'incendiate, voi; ma prov'il core
Nell'incendio diletto, non dolore.
Dolci parole e care,
Voi mi ferite, voi; ma prov'il petto
Non dolor né la piaga, ma diletto.
O miracol d'amore!
Alma ch'è tutta foco e tutta sangue,
Si strugge e non si duol,
mor'e non langue.

*Eyes serene and clear,
You inflame me, by my heart must
Find pleasure, not sorrow, in the fire.
Words sweet and dear,
You wound me, but my breast must
Find pleasure, not sorry, in the wound.
O miracle of love!
The soul that is all fire and blood,
Melts yet feels no sorry,
dies yet does not languish.*

6. Se per havervi, oime

Anonymous text

Se per havervi, oimè, donato il core,
Nasce in me quell'ardore,
Donna crudel, che m'arde in ogni loco,
Tal che son tutto foco,
E se per amar voi, l'aspro martire
Mi fa di duol morire,
Miser! Che far debb'io
Privo di voi che siete ogni ben mio?

*If, alas, when I gave you my heart,
There was born in me that passion,
Cruel Lady, which burns me everywhere
So that I am all aflame,
And if, loving you, bitter torment
Makes me die of sorry,
Wretched me! What shall I do
Without you who are my every joy?*

Agnus Dei
(Do not stand at my grave and weep)

Texts from the Requiem Mass
and by Mary Elizabeth Frye (1905–2004)

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

*Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.*

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.

*Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.*

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

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

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight.
I am the soft star-shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

Fratres

Text (set by Carl Crossin) from Psalm 133:1

Hine ma tov u'ma nayim
Shevet achim gam ya-chad

*Behold how good and how pleasing
For brothers [people] to sit together in unity*

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?

Traditional Spiritual

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel,
then why not every man?

I set my foot on the Gospel ship,
and the ship, it begin to sail.
It landed me over on Canaan's shore,
and I'll never come back anymore.

He deliver'd Daniel from the lion's den,
Jonah from the belly of the whale.
And the Hebrew children
from the fiery furnace,
and why not every man?

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel
from the lion's den?
And Jonah from the belly of the whale?
And the Hebrew children
from the fiery furnace?
Oh yes, He did.
Tell me why not every man?

The wind blows east
and the wind blows west.
It blows like the judgement day.
And ev'ry poor soul that never did pray
will be glad to pray that day.

Artist Biographies

Adelaide Chamber Singers (ACS) is widely respected as Australia's finest chamber choir – the embodiment of the art of choral chamber singing. Founded in 1985 by Dr Carl Crossin OAM, ACS has been a passionate and innovative contributor to music-making for almost forty years. In 2022, Carl passed the role of Artistic Director and Conductor to long-time ACS singer and Associate Conductor, Christie Anderson. The ensemble's membership is drawn from amongst Adelaide's best and most experienced ensemble singers, many of whom are also conductors, soloists, teachers and independent artists.

Since the beginning, ACS has existed to showcase the highest order of musical interpretation, to transport our audiences to new heights, and to challenge the very boundaries of what choral music can be. Our combined voices echo the majesty of the great cathedrals and concert halls of the world, but our sound and our soul is proudly grounded in the intimacy and warmth of our home city of Adelaide. Find out more at adelaidechambersingers.com

Conductor – Dr Carl Crossin OAM

Dr Carl Crossin OAM – conductor, educator and composer – is widely respected as one Australia's leading choral conductors. In a career spanning almost fifty years, Carl has worked with choirs professionally and at all levels of music education. He is currently Associate Professor of Music at the Elder Conservatorium of Music where he has served in a variety of leadership positions, including as Director of the Conservatorium between 2009 and 2014.

Carl is Founder and Conductor Emeritus of Adelaide Chamber Singers and, following thirty-six years of service and leadership, stepped down from his position as Artistic Director and Conductor at the end of 2021. Carl's guest conducting appearances include a number of Australia's leading choirs including: Sydney Philharmonia, Melbourne Chorale, Sydney Chamber Choir, Brisbane Chamber Choir, The Giovanni Consort (Perth) and Luminescence Chamber Singers (Canberra). Carl has worked with the National Youth Choir of Australia on many occasions since 1998 and was Artistic Director of the choir between 2008 and 2014. Carl has also been Co-Conductor of the nationally auditioned youth choir Gondwana Chorale since 2011. With his various choirs, he has toured Britain, France, Poland, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Singapore, Japan, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. He has also been a guest teacher, presenter and adjudicator at festivals, masterclasses, symposia and competitions throughout Australia and internationally, including serving as a member of the International Jury for the 13th World Choir Games in New Zealand in 2024.

As a composer, Carl has thus far written almost exclusively for voices, and his compositions and arrangements are increasingly in demand within Australia and internationally.

In 2007, Carl was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his services to music. In 2021, he was inducted into the South Australian Music Hall of Fame, and in 2022 was awarded the degree of Doctor of Music by the University of Adelaide.

Acknowledgements



ABC Classic – Broadcast Partner recording at UKARIA Cultural Centre on Sunday 6 October to be broadcast at a later date.

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Dr Carl Crossin OAM – Founder and Conductor Emeritus

Anne Rundle – General Manager

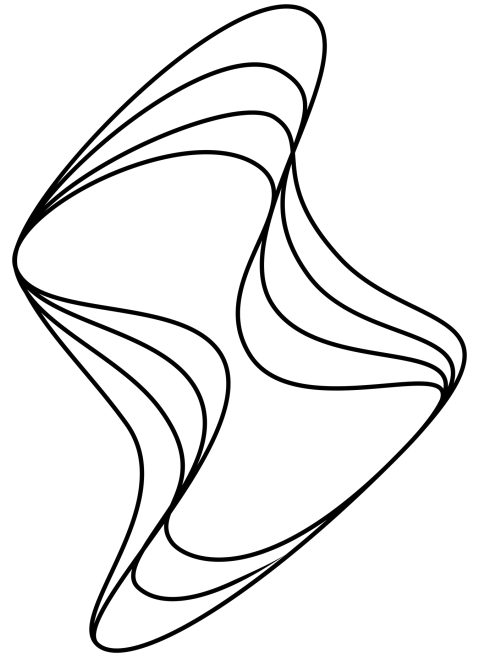
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