

Concert Program for October 22 and 23, 2009

David Robertson, conductor
Measha Brueggergosman, soprano
Kate Lindsey, mezzo-soprano
Paul Groves, tenor
Jubilant Sykes, baritone
Saint Louis Symphony Chorus
Amy Kaiser, director
Saint Louis Symphony IN UNISON® Chorus
Robert Ray, director

IVES *The Unanswered Question* (c. 1908)
(1874-1954)

BARBER *Adagio for Strings* (1936)
(1910-1981)

ROLLO DILWORTH *Freedom's Plow* (2009) World Premiere
(b. 1970)
Saint Louis Symphony IN UNISON® Chorus
Robert Ray, director

Intermission

TIPPETT *A Child of Our Time* (1939-41)
(1905-1998)

Part I
Chorus: The world turns on its dark side
The Argument: Man has measured the heavens
Scena: Is evil then good?
Now in each nation
Chorus of the Oppressed:
 When shall the usurers' city cease
I have no money for my bread
How can I cherish my man in such days
A Spiritual: Steal away

Part II

Chorus: A star rises in mid-winter

And a time came

Double Chorus of Persecutors and Persecuted:

Away with them!

Where they could, they fled

Chorus of the Self-righteous:

We cannot have them in our Empire

And the boy's mother wrote a letter

Scena: O my son!

A Spiritual: Nobody knows the trouble I see

Scena: The boy becomes desperate in his agony

They took a terrible vengeance.

The Terror: Burn down their houses!

Men were ashamed of what was done

A Spiritual of Anger: Go down, Moses

The Boy sings in his Prison:

My dreams are all shattered

What have I done to you, my son?

The dark forces rise like a flood

A Spiritual: O, by and by

Part III

Chorus: The cold deepens

The soul of man

Scena: The words of wisdom are these

General Ensemble:

I would know my shadow and my light

A Spiritual: Deep river

Measha Brueggergosman, soprano

Kate Lindsey, mezzo-soprano

Paul Groves, tenor

Jubilant Sykes, baritone

Saint Louis Symphony Chorus

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Robert Ray, director

David Robertson is the Beofor Music Director and Conductor.

Amy Kaiser is the AT&T Foundation Chair.

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Virginia V. Weldon, M.D.



Michael T. Williams

David Robertson Beofor Music Director and Conductor

American conductor David Robertson is a compelling and passionate communicator whose stimulating ideas and exhilarating music-making produce riveting performances, captivating and inspiring international audiences and musicians alike. Hailed by the press as a brilliant artist and master programmer, he is considered one of today's most important conductors. His consummate musicianship, fresh stylistic instincts, and extensive mastery of orchestral as well as operatic repertoire have secured strong relationships for him with major orchestras worldwide. In fall 2009, Robertson began his fifth season as Music Director of the 130-year-old Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, while continuing as Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since 2005.

Highlights of Robertson's 2009-10 season with the SLSO include a fall tour to Carnegie Hall and a four-city California spring tour. Guest engagements in the U.S. include performances with the San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony, and New York Philharmonic, where Robertson is a regular guest conductor, as well as the Cleveland Orchestra. Internationally, he returns to conduct the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the Edinburgh Festival, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Berlin Philharmonic, Bayerischer Rundfunk Symphonieorchester, Israel Philharmonic, and Sydney Symphony among others.

Robertson has made numerous recordings, including, with the SLSO, the first-ever recording of *Doctor Atomic* Symphony for Nonesuch. Robertson's and the SLSO's download-only "Live from Powell Hall" releases include works by John Adams, Scriabin, and Szymanowski.

Born in Santa Monica, California, Robertson was educated at London's Royal Academy of Music, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to orchestral conducting. Robertson received Columbia University's 2006 Ditson Conductor's Award, and he and the SLSO are recipients of two major awards from ASCAP and the League of American Orchestras: the 2008-09 Award for Programming of Contemporary Music, and the 2005-06 Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. *Musical America* named Robertson Conductor of the Year for 2000. In 1997, he received the Seaver/National Endowment for the Arts Conductors Award, the premier prize of its kind, given to exceptionally gifted American conductors. He is the recipient of honorary doctorates from Webster University (2009) and Maryville University (2007). David Robertson and his wife, pianist Orli Shaham, are parents of twin boys. Robertson also has two teenage sons.



Measha Brueggergosman

Canadian soprano Measha Brueggergosman has emerged as one of the most magnificent performers and vibrant personalities of the day. She is critically acclaimed by the international press as much for her innate musicianship and voluptuous voice as for a sovereign stage presence far beyond her years. Her extraordinary versatility, intuitive musicality, and radiant star quality are reflected by an exclusive recording relationship with Deutsche

Grammophon. Her first recording on the label, *Surprise*, was released in 2007 and garnered a Juno Award for Classical Album of the Year. Her second solo recording for the label, *Night and Dreams*, is to be released in the present season.

A dynamic scope of repertoire coupled with a profound depth of artistic commitment bring Brueggergosman together with many of the finest international orchestras and most esteemed conductors of our day. During the 2009-10 season appearances include performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 under Gustavo Dudamel for his inaugural concert as Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, as well as with Manfred Hönck and the Pittsburgh Symphony; Ravel's *Shéhérazade* with Peter Oundjian and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, with James Gaffigan and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic at the Concertgebouw, and with Ludovic Morlot and the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra; Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra (to be recorded for future Deutsche Grammophon release); Berg's *Sieben Frühe Lieder* with Mark Wigglesworth and the New World Symphony Orchestra; and Berlioz' *Les Nuits d'été* with Paavo Järvi and the Cincinnati Symphony. She makes her debut with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra in concert performances of *Carmen*, singing Micaëla, under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle, and she presents a recital tour of England, France, and Germany with pianist Justus Zeyen.

Beyond the great concert halls of the world, Brueggergosman lends her voice, passion, and energy to social and environmental causes as a Canadian goodwill ambassador for three international organizations: African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF); Learning Through the Arts; and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Measha Brueggergosman appears by arrangement with IMG Artists. Through an exclusive relationship, Brueggergosman's jewelry generously is provided by Myles Mindham Jewelry Limited: www.mindham.com. Comprehensive performance and career information may be found at www.measha.com as well as at www2.deutschegrammophon.com. She debuts with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra in these concerts.



Kate Lindsey

This season, rising star mezzo-soprano Kate Lindsey returns to the Metropolitan Opera as Nicklausse in the new production of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and makes her debut at the Bayerische Staatsoper as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*. She also creates the title role in the world premiere of Daron Aric Hagen's *Amelia* at the Seattle Opera. She recently made her debuts at the Santa Fe Opera as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, the Lille Opera

as Cherubino in performances conducted by Emmanuelle Haïm, and the New York Philharmonic in a concert performance of Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, conducted by Lorin Maazel.

A recent graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, she made her debut there as Javotte in *Manon*, and has since appeared as Cherubino, the Kitchen Boy in *Rusalka*, Wellgunde in *The Ring Cycle*, Second Lady in *The Magic Flute* (which was broadcast in HD in movie theaters around the world), Stéphano in *Roméo et Juliette*, the Madrigal Singer in *Manon Lescaut*, Tebaldo in *Don Carlos*, and Siebel in *Faust*. Other recent engagements have included her debuts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in a new commission by John Harbison, his Symphony No. 5, conducted by James Levine; the Tanglewood Festival in a concert performance of *Les Troyens* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra; the Mostly Mozart Festival in the festival's closing concerts; and the Cleveland Orchestra in performances of Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* conducted by Franz Welser-Möst. She also appeared as Cherubino at the Boston Lyric Opera; Stéphano, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, and Mercedes in *Carmen* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (where she was a Gerdine Young Artist); and Angelina in *La Cenerentola* at the Wolf Trap Opera. In concert she has appeared in Zankel Hall with James Levine and the Met Chamber Orchestra and in recital at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

A native of Richmond, Virginia, Lindsey holds a Bachelor of Music Degree with Distinction from Indiana University. Her many awards include the 2007 Richard F. Gold Career Grant, the 2007 George London Award in memory of Lloyd Rigler, the 2007 Lincoln Center Martin E. Segal Award, and a 2006 Sullivan Foundation Grant.

Kate Lindsey debuts with the SLSO this week.



Paul Groves

Paul Groves begins the 2009-10 season with a return to the Teatro Real and a role debut as Alwa in Alban Berg's *Lulu*. American audiences see the tenor as Romeo in New Orleans and as the title role in Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Other Operatic highlights include performances of the title role in *Idomeneo* at the Canadian Opera Company and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Santa Fe Opera, also as the title role. Groves can be heard extensively in concert this season. Performances include *Dream of Gerontius* both at the Edinburgh International Festival and in the Dresden Staatskapelle, the Berlioz Requiem at the Beethoven Easter Festival and Britten's *War Requiem* with the Orchestre de Paris.

Groves appeared with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis very early in his career, singing Lenski in Colin Graham's production of *Eugene Onegin* in 1991, with Dwayne Croft in the title role, before joining the Young Artist Program at the Metropolitan Opera. Groves made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1992 as the Steuermann in *The Flying Dutchman*. Groves returned to the Met for performances as Camille de Rosillon in their new production of *The Merry Widow*, opposite Placido Domingo and Frederica von Stade; Ferrando in a new production of *Così fan tutte*; Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress*; Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*; Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff*; and Don Ottavio in nationally-televised season-opening performances of *Don Giovanni* opposite Bryn Terfel and Renée Fleming. In 2006, he created the role of Jianli in the world premiere of Tan Dun's *The First Emperor*, opposite Placido Domingo, and he returned to the Met in 2008 for further performances of this role.

His debut with Lyric Opera of Chicago was in 1998 as Nadir in a new production of *The Pearl Fishers*. Los Angeles Opera audiences first saw him in season-opening performances of the title role in *La Damnation de Faust*, opposite Samuel Ramey and Denyce Graves. His company debut with The Washington Opera was in 2006 as Nemorino in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*, and he recently appeared in his home state of Louisiana for his first performances of the title roles in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Gounod's *Faust* with New Orleans Opera.

Paul Groves most recently performed with the SLSO in March 2008.



THOMAS MCCLURE

Jubilant Sykes

Jubilant Sykes brings a new dimension to the traditional career of the classically trained baritone by drawing on gospel and jazz influences. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* proclaimed “Jubilant Sykes’s voice is extraordinary. He isn’t merely an outstanding singer; his voice is art at its highest expression.” Sykes has won the attention and respect of the world’s finest conductors, symphonies, and opera companies, including Kurt Masur, the New York

Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Metropolitan Opera, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and hundreds of other major venues around the world. The *Los Angeles Times* raves that the California-born Sykes brings “mesmerizing conviction and remarkable agility of both character and technique” to a wide-range of repertoire.

Career highlights include performances with such noted conductors as Christoph Eschenbach, Marvin Hamlisch, Andrew Litton, Keith Lockhart, Lorin Maazel, John Nelson, John Williams, and David Zinman. Sykes’s concert repertoire includes classical, jazz, and folk songs; he has created diverse programs for audiences of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Lincoln Center Chamber Ensemble, and the London Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, he has appeared in prestigious festivals across America including the Grant Park Music Festival, the Chautauqua Festival, Ravinia, and Tanglewood.

The scope of Sykes’s repertoire spans from Copland’s *Old American Songs* to Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Brahms’s *A German Requiem*, to Mozart’s Requiem. He has performed concert versions of Bizet’s *Carmen* (Escamillo) with the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra and Cavalli’s *Calisto* with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Additionally, he was a featured soloist for the premiere of Torke’s *Four Seasons* with the New York Philharmonic; and for the premiere of Libby Larsons’ *Coming Forth into Day* for baritone and orchestra (set to a text by Jehen El Sadat, widow of Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat). Sykes’s dynamic talents led him to be a featured soloist in Julie Andrews’s *The Gift of Music*, which he performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.

Sykes currently lives in California with his wife and three young sons. He appears through arrangement with IMG Artists, New York, and records for Sony Classical. Jubilant Sykes most recently performed with the SLSO in February 2004.



Amy Kaiser AT&T Foundation Chair

Director of the Saint Louis Symphony Chorus since 1995, Amy Kaiser has prepared the chorus for performances with music directors David Robertson, Hans Vonk, and Leonard Slatkin, and for many international guest conductors. She has also conducted performances with the chorus and the Saint Louis Symphony at Powell Hall and the St. Louis Cathedral Basilica in repertoire including Handel's *Messiah* and works by Vivaldi, Haydn,

Mozart, and Schubert.

Guest conductor with Chicago's Grant Park Festival and the Berkshire Choral Festival, Kaiser conducted over fifty performances with the Metropolitan Opera Guild and worked with many regional orchestras. Formerly Music Director of the Dessoff Choirs and conductor at New York's 92nd St Y, Kaiser was Director of Choral Music at the Mannes College of Music and taught conducting at Manhattan School of Music. Kaiser is a graduate of Smith College and recipient of the Smith College Medal for professional achievement. She was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford University and holds a master's degree in musicology from Columbia University.

In addition to her work with the chorus, Amy Kaiser presents PreConcert Perspectives for SLSO concerts and leads the St. Louis Opera Club and Symphony Lecture Series, a sold-out series of illustrated musical talks.



Robert Ray

Dr. Robert Ray is a graduate of St. Louis Public Schools. He attended Northwestern University, where he received his Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance. For 12 years he served as accompanist-coach for the string department at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. While there, he also organized the Black Student Chorus and prepared them for performances with such artists as Ossie Davis, Max Roach, James Cleveland, and

Edwin Hawkins.

Ray has appeared as piano soloist with the Kirkwood Symphony, the Northwestern University Orchestra, the Champaign-Urbana Symphony, and the Seoul (Korea) Philharmonic. He is currently Associate Professor of Music at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He also directs the University Community Chorus.

As director of the Saint Louis Symphony IN UNISON® Chorus, Ray prepares and leads the ensemble in numerous programs each year, including A Gospel Christmas and the annual Black History Month concert.

In constant demand as a clinician, Ray has given workshops for the American Choral Directors Association, the Music Educators National Convention, the National Association of Jazz Educators, and the Music Teachers National Association. He also frequently travels to Europe, having presented workshops in Barcelona, Linz, Venice, and Zurich, among other venues.

Ray is the composer of *Gospel Mass*, *Gospel Magnificat*, *He Never Failed Me Yet*, and other works published by Hal Leonard. A commission from the SLSO resulted in the composition *Psalms*, for chorus and brass quintet. He is married to Sylvia Ray and has a daughter, Nia.

Saint Louis Symphony Chorus 2009-2010

Amy Kaiser

Director

Leon Burke III

Assistant Director

Gail Hintz

Accompanist

Richard Ashburner

Manager

Nancy Allison

Joseph Argus

Richard Ashburner

Nick Beary

Rudi J. Bertrand

Paula N. Bittle

Michael Bouman

Richard F. Boyd

Keith Boyer

Eric A. Brandhorst

Pamela A. Branson

Bonnie Brayshaw

Marella Briones

Daniel Brodsky

Buron F. Buffkin, Jr.

Leon Burke, III

Cherstin Byers

Renee Carey

Christopher Catlin

Mark P. Cereghino

Rhonda Collins Coates

Derek Dahlke

Samantha Dane

Elizabeth Davlantes

Deborah Dawson

Sebastian Deken

Susan F. Donahue

Mary Donald

Brent Durland

Stephanie Engelmeyer

Stanley Estrin

Chris Eubank

Ladd Faszold

Jasmine Fazzari

Amanda Finley

Robin Fish

Derrick Fox

Mark Freiman

Amy Telford Garces

Susan Goris

Susan Greene

Susan H. Hagen

Nancy Helmich

Brendan Hemmerle

Ellen Henschen

Gretchen Hewitt

Jeffrey E. Heyl

Brad Hofeditz

Matthew S. Holt

Mary Huebner

Gregory Inman

Kerry Jenkins

Janice Simmons Johnson

Warren Keller

Elena Korpalski

Brett Kostrzewski

Paul Kunnath

Alexander J. Laurie

Diane Lee

Debby Lennon

Lawrence E. Lewis

Sharon Lightfoot

Robert J. Lober, Jr.

Gregory C. Lundberg

Gina Malone

Kellen Markovich

Jan Marra

Lee Martin

Carolyn McCauley

Marie McManama

Scott Meidroth

Jamie Meyerholz

Caroline Miller

Elsa Toby Newburger

Duane L. Olson

Nicole Orr

Susan D. Patterson

Tafra Perryman

Brian Pezza

Shelly Ragan Pickard

Dr. Stephen F. R. Piotrowski

James Ranson

Robert Reed

Valerie Christy Reichert

Kate Reimann

Dave Ressler

Greg J. Riddle

Patti Ruff Riggie

Stephanie Robertson

John Michael M. Rotello

Terree Rowbottom

Marushka Royses

Jennifer Ryrie

Susan Sampson

Patricia Scanlon

Mark V. Scharff

Elizabeth Schleicher

Paula K. Schweitzer

Holley Sherwood

Lisa Sienkiewicz

John William Simon

Steven Slusher

Roger Smalley

Charles G. Smith

Rachel Smith

Shirley Bynum Smith

David Stephens

Benna D. Stokes

Denise M. Stookesberry

Justin Thomas

Pamela M. Triplett

David R. Truman

Greg Upchurch

Larry Wahlers

Nancy Maxwell Walther

Donna R. Westervelt

Sarah Weisner

Nicole C. Weiss

Paul A. Williams

Mary Murphy Wissinger

Young Ok Woo

Young Ran Woo

Pamela Wright L.

Carl Scott Zimmerman

Daniel Zipperer

Saint Louis Symphony IN UNISON® Chorus 2009-2010

Robert Ray

Director

Henry Palkes

Pianist and Music Coach

Brian Owens

Manager

Carlotta Algee-Stancil

Damon Ambus

Eric Anthony*

Willetta S. Atkinson

Gregory Bailey

Herron Beckley

Sean Betts

Juanita Blackshear

Elizabeth Blanton

Pamela Bolden

Amelia B. Boler

L. R. Bracy

Lynette G. Brunson

Marvin C. Brunson

Leon Burke*

Deborah Caserotti

Beverly Charisse

Mauriel Clay

Doris M. Coleman

Vernetta P. Cox

Gerald Cozart*

Lynn Daniel

Cynthia Davis

Janet Dickerson

Janet M. Dunn

Maggie Dorsey

Elaine Dowdle

Jacqueline G. Dyer

Willa Easley

Deborah Edwards

Isaac A. Edwards

Nelda Floyd

Duane Foster

Grace Lee Fulford

James N. Gallagher III

Ruth A. Gilliam

Cassandra Gilyard

Rose Goodrum

Orville H. Gordon

Gregory Green

Denise Brunson Harris

TeresaHarvey

Timothy T. Hearn

Dorothy T. Heyward

Joyce S. Hicks

Natalie Hill

Robert Holston

Carole Hughes

Don Hutcherson

Karen E. Hylton

Annie Jackson

Pearline Jamison

Alicia Jefferson

Sylvia Johnson

Arthur E. Jones

Barrie C. Jones

Tericida L. Jones

Janet M. Love

Louis Marion

Margaret Ann McCabe

Wilberline McCall

Curtis McGruder

Harry Moppins

Mary A. Morgan

Barbara Mullins

Brian Owens*

Calvin Parker

Diane J. Peal

Harry Alexander Penelton

Patricia Penelton

Eric Pitts

Deborah Price

Sylvia Ray

Jackie W. Richardson

Linda S. Richie

Christopher Scott

Alethea Shelton

Teresia A. Simmons

Denise Sleet

Diane Smoot

Karen E. Thomas Stuart

Dorothy C. Taylor

Althelia P. Thomas

Bertrian Thomas

Sharon Thurman

Albert X. Vaughn

Kwamina D. Walker-Williams

Laura Washington

James Webb*

Gwendolyn J. Wesley

Elsa Whitfield

Betty L. Williams

Jeanette White

Missi White-Luster

Glen E. Williams

Kip Williams

Aileen Wynne

*Additional vocalists for
Freedom's Plow

Mindful Sounds

BY PAUL SCHIAVO

Ideas at Play

Music's possible connection to moral and existential philosophy has attracted speculation among thinkers throughout the ages. Among the ancient Greeks, Plato regarded music with suspicion and urged that it be strictly regulated, while Aristotle saw it as ethically beneficial. Medieval philosophers regarded music not only as a suitable vehicle for prayer but as a means of better understanding God's creation.

Music also has served as a vehicle for the humanistic philosophy of more recent times. The dramas of spiritual crisis and triumph embodied in many of Beethoven's compositions allowed many listeners to hear his works as morally edifying. But while Beethoven and many composers who have followed his example generally just implied ethical or existential outlooks in their music, a number of modern musicians have addressed philosophical concerns explicitly. Just how explicitly, and how eloquently, is demonstrated by the music that comprises this evening's concert.

Charles Ives *The Unanswered Question*

Born: Danbury, Connecticut, on October 20, 1874 **Died:** New York, on May 19, 1954 **First performance:** May 11, 1946, in New York **SLSO premiere:** January 2, 1959, Aaron Copland conducting **Most recent SLSO performance:** April 14, 2005, David Robertson conducting **Scoring:** Four flutes, trumpet, and strings **Performance time:** Approximately six minutes

Samuel Barber Adagio for Strings, op. 11

Born: West Chester, Pennsylvania, March 9, 1910 **Died:** New York, January 23, 1981 **First performance:** November 5, 1938, in New York and broadcast nationally; Arturo Toscanini conducted the NBC Symphony Orchestra **SLSO premiere:** December 8, 1939, Vladimir Golschmann conducting **Most recent SLSO performance:** September 22, 2001, Hans Vonk conducting **Scoring:** String orchestra **Performance time:** Approximately eight minutes

In Context: 1908 *First Model T rolls off assembly line*; Jack Johnson defeats Tommy Burns to become first African-American to win World Heavyweight Championship; Anne of Green Gables published 1936 President Franklin Roosevelt re-elected by landslide; Life magazine first published; Dorothea Lange takes photo "Migrant Mother" while working for Farm Security Administration

Can music truly be a vehicle for philosophical inquiry? If any composition serves that purpose, it is surely Charles Ives's *The Unanswered Question*. Composed "sometime before June 1908," as Ives recollected, this brief tone poem is a musical allegory of existential questioning, and the social stress that activity can cause.

The actors in the little drama presented by this composition are the instruments of the unusual ensemble for which Ives scored it. A string orchestra softly intones spacious chords representing the unfathomable mystery of the universe. Against this background a trumpet poses an eternal question: "Why do we exist?" Four flutes attempt to respond but cannot agree among themselves. Their growing agitation finally becomes intolerable, and they turn on the trumpet in a raucously mocking or berating fashion. In the end, we are left only with the harmonies of the strings, impassive and inscrutable as before.

It is striking that Ives asks the great existential question but declines to provide an answer. His reticence forces us to wonder whether it is possible for music to articulate a response, and if so, what it might be? It would be presumptuous to make a definitive statement about this. Still, our concert offers one reply to the problem posed by Ives. It comes in the form of another famous American composition from the first half of the last century, Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*.

Barber originally wrote the music of the *Adagio* in 1936 as the slow movement of his *String Quartet*, op. 11. He then transcribed it for string orchestra, and in this form it was first heard in 1938. Although it stands prominently among 20th-century works for string orchestra, a field boasting contributions from many important composers, this piece is distinct from most such compositions for its disinterest in exploring novel string sonorities. Instead, Barber exploits the capacities of the string instruments for lyrical expression, as well as the opportunity a choir of such instruments offers for creating a rich musical fabric from long melodic lines woven together in counterpoint and forming a beautifully wrought arch of sound.

What answer does Barber's *Adagio* give to the existential question posed by Ives's trumpet? This we cannot say in concrete terms. Notwithstanding such patently narrative compositions as *The Unanswered Question*, music speaks to us mostly in an abstract language of its own, one that lacks the specificity of words but can touch us deeply in ways that words cannot. Barber's music intimates great poignancy and tenderness. If that does not tell us why we exist, perhaps those qualities convey something about how we might regard our brief time on this earth.

Rollo Dilworth *Freedom's Plow*

Born: St. Louis, 1970 **First performance:** This week is the world premiere
Scoring: Mixed chorus, with an orchestra of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, three trumpets, two trombones, percussion, piano, and strings **Performance time:** Approximately 10 minutes



In addition to pondering the question of why we exist, philosophers have long addressed the matter of how we should live, what principles and values properly should guide our actions. Our next two compositions offer, in their different ways, perspectives on that question. The first of these works, *Freedom's Plow*, by the distinguished American composer and choral conductor Rollo Dilworth, is a tribute to liberty, perseverance, and brotherhood.

This work was commissioned by the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra to commemorate the 15th anniversary season of its IN UNISON® Chorus. Rollo Dilworth describes the piece as “a song of freedom, hope, and inspiration that celebrates the contributions of African-Americans to the American musical landscape.”

Freedom's Plow is a setting for chorus and orchestra of the last 14 lines of a Langston Hughes poem of the same title. That poem, in turn, references a still earlier work, the spiritual “Keep Your Hand on the Plow.” The initial measures of the piece quote this song, and its melody recurs throughout the work.

In the central part of the composition, elements of ragtime, blues, and early jazz come into play. Lively rhythmic activity also enlivens the music here, and a brief quotation of “America, the Beautiful” makes a timely appearance. The piece concludes with a salute to the African-American gospel tradition.

Sir Michael Tippett *A Child of Our Time*

Born: London, January 2, 1905 **Died:** London, January 8, 1998 **First Performance:** March 19, 1944, in London, conducted by Walter Goehr **SLSO premiere:** December 4, 1975, Walter Susskind conducted the only previous performance, with soprano Veronica Tyler, mezzo-soprano Sheila Nadler, tenor John McCollum, bass John West, the Ronald Arnatt Chorale and the University Chorus and University singers of the University of Missouri-St. Louis **Scoring:** Four solo voices (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and baritone), chorus, and an orchestra of two flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, timpani, cymbal, and strings **Performance time:** Approximately 65 minutes



Herschel Grynszpan at the time of his arrest

In Context: 1939-41 *World War II begins with German Blitzkrieg of Poland; British forces repel German Luftwaffe in Battle of Britain; Japanese forces attack Pearl Harbor, drawing the United States into World War II*

Freedom's Plow takes a moral stance by extolling liberty as a right and boon to all people. Our concluding composition grapples with moral issues in a more complex manner. The English composer Michael Tippett prefaced the score of his oratorio *A Child of Our Time* with the words "...the darkness declares the glory of the light." That phrase is more than just a motto for this composition. It provides a key to understanding its central message, a message conveyed through both drama and symbols, and whose relevance is at once specific and universal.

Tippett's life and music were strongly guided by his social outlook, one of deep sympathy to the ideals of peace, justice, and human brotherhood. During the period preceding World War II, Tippett was horrified at the rise of fascism and the persecution of Jews and other minorities in Europe. But at the same time, he rejected violence as a matter of principle and opposed the re-arming of England.

Awareness of the Nazi injustices coupled with his belief in non-violence posed a profound dilemma for Tippett. Although strongly opposed to Hitler's policies, he remained convinced that violence in response to violence would only perpetuate a cycle of inhumanity. As war grew increasingly imminent, Tippett felt an urgent need to express this belief. He was searching for a way to do this when an incident occurred that perfectly dramatized his point.

In November, 1938, a 17-year-old Jewish boy, Herschel Grynszpan, whose mother had been a victim of the Nazi terror, shot a German diplomat in Paris. This act brought disaster not only on the young assailant but on his co-religionists as well, for it touched off a new wave of anti-Jewish violence in Europe. Here again was the age-old cycle, and Tippett seized this sad drama, writing a text for an oratorio around it. He began setting his words to music as the War erupted across Europe. Shortly after finishing the composition, Tippett began serving a prison sentence, the price of remaining faithful to his pacifist convictions. *A Child of Our Time* was not performed until well after his release and the war nearly over, but it quickly became Tippett's most famous work.

Although he placed the tragedy of the young Jewish assassin at the center of his oratorio, the composer wished to consider injustice and violence in a general way as well. "I knew from the start that the work... had to be anonymous and general," he said, "in order to reach down to the deeper levels of our common humanity." And so we find that its perspective moves from the universal to the particular and finally back to the universal again.

Tippett further broadened his frame of reference through allusions to the birth and sacrifice of Christ, and by introducing Black American spirituals at key points in the piece. The latter interpolations serve as a modern updating of Bach's use, in his oratorios, of chorales, the Lutheran hymns so familiar to his listeners; but its real significance is the sympathy it implies for victims of oppression everywhere.

Tippett establishes a global perspective in the opening chorus: "The world turns on its dark side. It is winter." That perspective continues through the ensuing numbers for alto soloist and chorus. But beginning with the narration by the solo bass, we start to perceive a sense of specific time and place: "Pogroms in the east, lynching in the west;/ Europe brooding on a war of starvation." In the solos for tenor and soprano that follow, Tippett focuses for the first time on individual suffering.

The second part of the oratorio relates the story of the ill-fated Jewish youth in a drama of mounting tension. But Tippett prefaces this tale with a reference to "a star [that] rises in midwinter." It is the star of Bethlehem, bringing mankind a victim: "Behold the man! The scapegoat!"

The composer implies that, like Jesus, the young Jew will suffer not for his own sins but for those of humanity as a whole. Yet at the same time he is part of humanity and cannot divorce himself even from his oppressor. For when he shoots the German official, we find that he has slain not some alien creature but "his dark brother," and that his action only adds to the misery of his people.

In the third part, the text again turns to symbolism: "The world descends into the icy waters where lies the jewel of great price.... Winter cold means inner warmth, the secret nursery of the seed."

These and other lines suggest a hopeful solution to the problems of oppression and violence, and Tippett confirms this suggestion in the closing solos for Soprano and Alto: "Here is no final grieving but abiding hope./ The moving waters renew the earth. It is spring."

Before mankind can reach a state of grace, however, it must come to terms with the destructive side of its nature, to know its shadow as well as its light and thereby become whole. This involves a "grave passage" and requires courage. But its reward is peace and harmony, the "jewel of great price," the "garden... beyond the desert." The final spiritual envisions that passage.

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