



**Soundstreams presents *RBC Bridges Showcase*
Premieres October 14, 2021 at 8 PM**

2021 Participants and Program

Jenny Beck – *Sown by Hand*
Tyler Eschendal – *to sever and to splat*
Rebecca Gray – *SO sorry for your loss*
Francisco del Pino – *I Will*
Akshaya Avril Tucker – *Zoodle*
Steven Webb – *Δώρα (Doria)*
Sarah Kirkland Snider – *Scenes from 'Unremembered'*
1. 'The Guest'
2. 'The River'
3. 'The Girl'
4. 'The Song'
5. 'The Orchard'

Program Note

Jenny Beck – *Sown by Hand*

I started writing this piece in early 2020, and then, because of the pandemic I didn't work it for a year or so. By the time I circled back to the project, for which I had written a long poem I intended to set, I was in a difficult state mentally and emotionally, and didn't have the bandwidth to deal with setting a large amount of text. I decided to hone in - intimately, obsessively - on the three words "sown by hand" and build the piece out of the sounds they provided. It's like zooming in on an image until it's an indecipherable blur, but the indecipherable blur is still connected to the original image and retains some quality from it. So this piece is a small impression of the larger text. Maybe I will set the whole thing someday.

Text

sown by hand.

Tyler Eschendal – *to sever and to splat*

to sever and to splat describes the procedures and actions taken upon Carlo Gesualdo's late 16th-century vocal music to create a strange and often abrupt acid trip through his Italian madrigals. Quotation and reference of Gesualdo's work is constantly be distorted, pulled apart, and stretched anew, forming textures that seemly exist in two worlds: the past and the dysfunctional present.

Text

Del mio languire = *For my frailty*
Mercè!, gridi piangendo, ma chi m'ascolta? = *Mercy! I cry, weeping, but who hears me?*
Ardo per te ancor io = *I also burn with love for you*
Resta di darmi noia, pensier crudo e fallace = *Cease giving me trouble, cruel and deceitful thought*
Ch'esser non può già mai quel che a te piace! = *For what you desire can never be!*



Rebecca Gray – *SO sorry for your loss*

SO sorry for your loss is a musical exploration of the impact of social media on grieving, particularly when the death is sudden. Through interviews with individuals impacted by loss, and from found texts online, I have assembled a piece which seeks to chronicle the overwhelming impact social media can have on an individual close to a loss.

I do not seek to vilify any particular social media platform, or any of the individuals from whose messages I took inspiration for this piece. But I wanted to put at the forefront the emotions of a person most impacted by these messages, and how the ambiguity of tone inherent to messaging and the intangible support of a like or an emoji can reverberate endlessly in a person's mind. A common theme in my interviews was the lack of space in our society for complicated reactions to loss, and a frustration with how easy our technological tools enable another person to broadcast their own narrative about a dead person. I wanted to explore how the process of grieving creates a split self, one that must continue life and gracefully accept the well-wishes of others, and one self overwhelmed with inexpressible sadness. I wanted to create a musical space where a person's outer and inner world could exist simultaneously, and depict how social media can bar us from accessing the inner world of grief.

One chorister, an alto, is assigned to be the protagonist in this piece, the person who has experienced a loss. The other choristers move from depicting the outer world (social media onslaught) to amplifying the inner emotions of the protagonist. This transition is signaled by a hands to temples gesture. The piece follows a 6-day news cycle, with each day bring different phases of reactions to death. Throughout, the protagonist is searching for space to express genuine grief, but is constantly interrupted by the other choristers whose inconsiderate questions or tributes often spark body-shaking anger. As the news wanes down, the protagonist vocalises more fully, amplified by the other choristers. With facebook's final interjection, the protagonist finally lets out the full-body scream they have been suppressing the whole piece.

Text

Monday

What happened?

What happened?

He's dead?!

What happened?

When's the funeral?

Why aren't you answering my messages?

Why didn't I know about this?

What are you going to do about rent?

She killed herself? Well Jesus, my neighbour's brother-in-laws niece tried to kill herself. This must have been in 08. 09... No it must have been in 2010 because Jenny told me about it at Frank's wedding. Anyway, So the niece shot herself in the face, only she didn't die and now she is permanently disfigured and lives on disability. ANYWAY, I am so sorry for your loss

- Thank you

Tuesday

So sorry for your loss.

I am so sorry for your loss

Sorry for your loss!



So sorry for your loss. ♡
SO sorry for your loss
@ so sorry for your loss 🙏 ♡
SO sorry for your loss! 🙏 ♡ 🙏 ♡
Sorry for your loss! 🙏
How'd she do it?

Wednesday

We here at Facebook hope people who love Daniel/Taylor/Becca/Caleb/Joseph/Helen will find comfort in visiting their profile to remember and celebrate their life.

RIP

I never knew he was in so much pain 🙏

She was so happy whenever I saw her ♡

@ Shit man I feel badly I didn't stay in touch since undergrad

I would have never known you were fighting such a dark battle within yourself

@ a beautiful candle extinguished far too soon

I never knew they were in so much pain



FRIENDS mental health is REAL. Always comfort and listen for those silent cries for help. You WILL save someone's life.

Thursday



Friday

Saturday

Sunday

We here at facebook have noticed you haven't posted in a while. Why don't you tell your friends what you're up to!

Francisco del Pino – *I Will*

I wanted to write an optimistic piece—one that would be pleasant to sing and to listen to, and that could express both happiness and hope.

As in my other recent works *Un pez dorado*, for four clarinets, and *Luz* for choir, I used a structural model in which a fundamentally descending element is subjected to a pattern of continuous ascent. All these works have a certain 'meditative' quality to them, and I suspect there may be an unconscious connection between such quality and the musical material itself: the idea of descending in order to ascend—of going deep into the self in order to evolve.

The text is a rewriting of Matthew 22: 37-39, which was set by William Byrd in his 8-voice canon *Diliges Dominum*: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: love your neighbor as you love yourself". For my piece, I tried to leave aside the specifically religious aspect of those words and underline the idea of an intimate, personal statement of love between peers:

*I will love you
with all my strength,
with all my soul,
with all my mind,*



*I will love you
with all my might,
with all my light,
with all my life,*

*I will love you
with all my heart,
with all my flaws,
with all my dreams,*

*and most of all:
I will love you as I love myself.*

I sought to musically convey the sense of connection and community that is so strong in the original text by setting the lyrics in the manner of a continuous hocket—there is thus basically one single line for the whole piece, in whose building everyone is involved. Completed during the difficult isolation days of the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, the composition process took on added meaning: to express longing for the experience of sharing music and collaborating with others.

Diliges Dominum is also known for being a musical palindrome, in which four voices sing the same music as the other four, but exactly in retrograde motion. Continuing with the reference to Byrd's piece, *I will* reflects itself backwards in the second half, ascending where it had previously descended and vice versa.

Akshaya Avril Tucker – *Zoodle*

This piece was inspired by comic book noises like "blam" and "zappy". Reading comics like Calvin and Hobbes, Tintin, Asterix and Amar Chitra Katha was always my place of comfort as a kid (and heck, it still is, sometimes). This piece, *Zoodle* is my excuse to be silly for no reason whatsoever. Many thanks to my partner, Nick, for helping me feel like a kid again by singing these kinds of noises with me at any time of day or night – and during a pandemic, no less. And thanks to our downstairs neighbor, Rachelle.

Steven Webb – *Δώρα (Doria)*

Based on a poem by Ezra Pound, *Δώρα* [Doria] seeks to examine the management of emotion during a battle with depression. Contrary to popular belief, depression often yields an absence of emotion rather than an intense sadness — and when experiencing this emotional numbness, one often wishes for a return of intense emotion, unobtainable whilst depressed. The piece seeks to convey these emotional rushes through an interplay between the chorus and the live electronics.

Pound's dark imagery in his text perfectly captures the bleakness and numbness of depression, and his use of phrases such as 'gray waters' or 'sunless cliffs' allowed for frequent text painting. Sounds of nature connect to the desire to return to a balance inside one's mind, and a reconnection with the simple pleasures of life: The feel of wind or water upon your skin, or the warmth of the sun on your face.

*Be in me as the eternal moods of the bleak wind, and not As transient things are —
Have me in the strong loneliness of sunless cliffs
And of gray waters.
Let the gods speak softly of us In days hereafter,
the shadowy flowers of Orcus Remember thee.*



Sarah Kirkland Snider – *Scenes from Unremembered*

Scenes from Unremembered is a choral arrangement of five songs from *Unremembered*, a 13-song cycle for three voices and chamber orchestra that I wrote in 2013. A meditation on memory, innocence, and the haunted grandeur of the natural world, *Scenes from Unremembered* recalls strange and beautiful happenings experienced during a childhood in rural Massachusetts: a houseguest takes sudden leave in the middle of the night; a boy makes a shocking discovery on a riverbank; a girl disappears in woods behind a ranging farm; ghosts appear with messages for the living. The cycle explores the ways in which beguiling events in early life can resonate in—and prepare us for—the subtler horrors that lie beyond the realm of childhood.

Text

1. *'The Guest'*

She left out house in the dead of night
My sister went out to find her
We didn't know why she left
She'd fled as fast as fire

All this time I was asleep
While my sister chased her down
I picture them out in the woods
On the other side of town

It turns out she was lost and caught
Deep within her dreams
Which guided her out of our house
Like Joan called from her wheel

But no glory there awaited her
No god where she was found
On a patch of snow in a lonely copse
On the frozen moonlit ground

2. *'The River'*

On the banks
The wash so brown
The shadows blue
They're black

I saw the form
Astride the loam
Splayed out upon its back
A bear, a dog
A bed, a log
A child's eyes
Are pure

Until the hands
Of the missing man
Were clear against
The dew



The river's flow
A blackened bow
That tied around
Our town

Had sapped his life
Like a lantern's light
Buried
Underground

3. *'The Girl'*

The woods behind that sprawling farm
Above that ranging home
Was somewhere no one ever went
Unless to be alone

The wrens would sing, the grouse would fly
A fox a flash of red
A peaceful place of moss and flowers
In an untouched woven bed

Who was that girl that entered there
Who crossed that thorny turf?
She brought with her just rope and will
To end her time on earth

We didn't know her face or name
Just rendered in our minds
But the birds would sing the strangest song
As we rode by on our bikes

4. *'The Song'*

No Go No
The throat of the bird would sing
Don't you hear it too?
The field was echoing

No So Low
The flying, slicing wing.
It says that there is beauty
Inside your suffering

Go Go Go
The feathered head will turn
And look away, though now the song
Will live inside your room

5. *'The Orchard'*

The trees held bells
The chimes the blooms
Each fruit a tongue
To taste the bruise

The blending bough
Upended how



We'd try to steal
What it allowed

This was our greed
And was its gift
We raised the thing
That died to give