

ROOTS IN THE SKY

ANDREW MAJOR ■ CONDUCTOR



JUST A COLLECTION OF TREES

Saturday, March 27 @ 7 pm

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a concert in the time of the pandemic, filmed & recorded at First Baptist Church of Bozeman

Roots in the Sky

Andrew Major, conductor

Alison Todd, Organ

Natalie Padilla, Violin

Cade Fiddaman, Violin

Mary Landeen, Viola

Julia Cory Slovarp, Cello

Jon Ford, Bass

Isobel Anthony, soprano

Erin Henke, soprano*

Ana Jarrett, soprano

Hannah Anderson, alto

Lauren Kelly, alto*

Natalie Mills, alto

Madison Stone, alto

Dario Amador-Lage, tenor*

Derek Conder, tenor

Pablo Laucericca, tenor*

Kaleb Biladeau, baritone

Michael Juel, baritone

Patrick Fischer, bass

Robbie Nack, bass

John Zirkle, bass*

* Monteverdi ensemble

Thomas Thomas, video design

Luke Scheeler, sound design

PROGRAM

DAVID LANG

(b. 1957)

again (after Ecclesiastes)

LANSING MCLOSKEY

(b. 1964)

Dear World

DON MACDONALD

(b. 1966)

When the Earth Stands Still

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

(1567-1643)

Lagrima d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata

MICHAEL GORDON

(b. 1956)

One day I saw (from Anonymous Man)

ELLIOT COLE

(b. 1984)

I saw you under the fig tree

ERIC FUNK

(b. 1949)

Requiem for a Forest, Op. 168

SAMUEL BARBER

(1910-1981)

To be Sung on the Water

HEINRICH SCHÜTZ

(1585-1672)

Selig sind die Toten, BWV 391

DAVID LANG

(b. 1957)

again (after Ecclesiastes)

PROGRAM NOTE

*I, for you, watch the widowed earth,
deserted woods, and running rivers of tears.*

The silence has been heartbreaking, and yet the challenges faced by Roots in the Sky in the time of the pandemic are just a small manifestation of those faced by artists and arts organizations around the world, as well as our whole global human family – threats to lives and livelihoods.

*they rest from their toil
and their works follow them.*

We've had to accept that things don't always go as planned, especially in COVID time, when it feels like time itself barely passes, and yet it slips away from us each day.

*Now we must learn
How to live Here*

In our 2020-21 season, we confront (and sometimes embrace) the isolation we've experienced during the pandemic through imagery of trees.

*there is a forest which isn't a forest
just a collection of trees,
they call them
"The Trees of the Lonely."*

We continue our season with this meditation on the unfolding of time, not confined to an *evolution* in a linear fashion but as a *revolution*; an equilibrium of hope and futility — a means of waiting — through musical portraits of natural and human cycles.

*what happened before will happen again
I forgot it all before.
I will forget it all again.*

Like you, we long for live performance and miss the dynamic relationships between artists, artwork, and audience. It will be some time before that is possible again, but be assured that when we emerge from this crisis we will welcome you back to a shared space to experience the wonders of this music, together.

*So stay with me, held in my arms
Like branches of a tree
They'll shelter you for many years.*

Until then, keep well and keep heart.
Thank you for being part of this community.
We are truly grateful.

again (after *Ecclesiastes*) – David Lang

people come and people go – the earth goes on and on
the sun rises, the sun sets – it rushes to where it rises again
the wind blows round, round and round – it stops, it blows again
all the rivers run to the sea, but the sea is never full – from where the rivers run they run again
these things make me so tired – I can't speak, I can't see, I can't hear
what happened before will happen again
I forgot it all before.
I will forget it all again.

— David Lang (b. 1957),
after Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

Dear World – Lansing McLoskey

Dear world!
...but no one helps here, dear world.
Each must stand firm in this useless decay.
there is a forest which isn't a forest
just a collection of trees,
they call them
"The Trees of the Lonely."
dear world!
there was so much I should have told you.

— Poul Borum (1934-1996),
trans. Lansing McLoskey

When the Earth Stands Still – Don Macdonald

Come listen in the silence of the moment before rain comes down.
There's a deep sigh in the quiet of the forest and the tall tree's crown.

Now hold me.
Will you take the time to hold me and embrace the chill?
Or miss me,
will you take the time to miss me when the earth stands still?

Cause there's no use running
cause the storm's still coming
and you've been running for too many years.

Come listen in the silence of the moment before shadows fall.
Feel the tremor of your heartbeat matching heartbeat as we both dissolve.

Now hold me.
Will you take the time to hold me and embrace the chill?
Or miss me,
will you take the time to miss me when the earth stands still?

Cause there's no use running
cause the storm's still coming
and you've been running for too many years.

So stay with me, held in my arms
Like branches of a tree
They'll shelter you for many years.

— Don Macdonald (b. 1966)

Lagrima d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata – Claudio Monteverdi

1. *Incenerite spoglie, avara tomba
Fatta del mio bel Sol, terreno Cielo.
Abi lasso! I'vegno ad inchinarvi in terra.
Con voi chius' è il mio cor' amarmi in seno
e notte e giorno vive in pianto,
in foco, in duol' in ira il tormentato Glauco.*

Incinerated remains, avaricious tomb,
made of my beautiful Sun, earthly Heaven.
Alas! I come to bow to earth.
My heart is with you, locked in your marble breast
and night and day in tears,
in fire, in pain, in anger, lives tormented Glauco.

2. *Ditelo, O fiumi, e voi ch'udiste Glauco
l'aria ferir di grida in su la tomba
erme campagne. E'l san le Ninfe e'l Cielo;
a me fu cibo il duol, bevanda il pianto,
poi ch'il mio ben copri gelida terra,
letto, o sasso felice, il tuo bel seno.*

Say it, O rivers, and you who have heard Glauco
the air wounds with screams above the tomb,
solitary fields. And they know, the Nymphs and heavens,
that grief has been my food, and my drink tears,
since my beloved was covered with freezing earth –
my bed, O happy stone, your beautiful breast.

3. *Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra,
splenderà Cintia il dì, prima che Glauco,
di baci, d'honorar, lasci quel seno,
che nido fu d'amor che dura tomba
preme. Nè sol d'alti sospir di pianto
prodighe a lui saran le fere e'l Cielo.*

The night will give the sun's light to the earth,
the shining moon to the day, before Glauco,
kissing, honoring, leaves that breast –
that nest of love that the hard tomb
crushes. Neither for high sighs nor unrestrained tears
will he be pitied by the beasts and the Heavens.

4. *Ma te raccoglie, O Ninfa, in grembo il cielo.
Io per te miro vedova la terra,
deserti i boschi, e correr fiumi il pianto.
E Driade e Napee, del mesto Glauco,
ridicono i lamenti, e su la tomba
cantano i pregi de l'amato seno.*

But you are received, O Nymph, in the lap of heaven.
I, for you, watch the widowed earth,
deserted woods, and running rivers of tears.
And Dryads and Napaeae echo the sadness of Glauco,
repeating the laments, and on the tomb
sing the virtues of the beloved breast.

5. *O chiome d'or, neve gentil del seno,
O gigli de la man ch'invido il cielo,
ne rapì quando chiuse in cieca tomba.
Chi vi nasconde? Ohime, povera terra,
il fior d'ogni bellezza, il sol di Glauco,
Nasconde? Ah muse, qui sgorgate il pianto.*

O golden hair, snowy and gentle breast,
O lily-white hands that are envied by the heavens,
robbed from us when closed in a blind tomb –
Who hides you? Alas, poor earth,
the flower of all beauty, the sun of Glauco –
Who hides you? Ah Muse, pour out your tears.

6. *Dunque, amate reliquie, un mar di pianto
non daran questi lumi al nobil seno
d'un freddo sasso? Ecco l'afflitto Glauco
fa risonar Corinna il mar e'l Cielo
Dicano i venti ogn'hor dica la terra,
Abi Corinna! Abi morte! Abi tomba!
Cedano al pianto i detti, amato seno
A te dia pace il Ciel, pace a te Glauco
prega honorata tomba e sacra terra.*

Therefore, beloved remains, a sea of tears
shall these eyes not shed on the noble breast
of cold stone? Here the afflicted Glauco
makes resound – “Corinna!” – in the sea and heavens.
Let say the winds every hour, let say the earth:
“Alas, Corinna! Alas, death! Alas, tomb!”
Words succumb to tears, beloved breast.
To you grant peace in Heaven, peace to Glauco,
praying, honorable tomb and sacred earth

— Scipione Agnelli (1586-1653),
trans. Andrew Major

One day I saw – Michael Gordon

One day I saw a make-shift memorial where Larry lived.
The alcove he slept in was covered with flowers and candles.
I was surprised the Downtown Express ran an article,
“Downtowners mourn the homeless man they called Larry”
One day, in March 2007, I walked into my studio, and from the window
I saw a make-shift memorial, across the street a sad tableau –
flowers and candles and hand written notes taped up on the wall
by the alcove where Larry slept covered with cardboard.
“I used to bring him coffee and lunch,” said Eve.
“A kindly graceful man,” said Mitchell.
“A comforting familiar face,” said Jordi,
“I have two kids, he would always wave to us.”

— Michael Gordon (b. 1956)

I saw you under the fig tree – Elliot Cole

I saw you under the fig tree.

— John 1:48

Requiem for a Forest, Op. 168 – Eric Funk

In summer heat
And warming world
Storms whip up
Lightning rolls

Sparks run to earth
The wind turns
Through the mountains
forests burn

From walls of flame
Plumes so wide
are seen from space
The west on fire

For pine and spruce
A day of wrath
Ancient ones
Dissolve in ash

Fire ends
Yet fire begins
As mountains die
Cones open

(Mors stupebit
et natura
Cum resurget
Creatura)

Now we must learn
How to live Here
Where fire season
Burns all year

Blackened earth
With green renew
May the fires
wake us too.

— Richard Powers (b. 1957)

To Be Sung on the Water – Samuel Barber

Beautiful, my delight,
Pass, as we pass the wave.
Pass, as the mottled night
Leaves what it cannot save,
Scattering dark and bright.

Beautiful, pass and be
Less than the guiltless shade
To which our vows were said;
Less than the sound of the oar
To which our vows were made, -
Less than the sound of its blade
Dipping the stream once more.

— Louise Bogan (1897-1970)

Selig sind die Toten, SWV 391 – Heinrich Schütz

*Selig sind die Toten,
die in dem Herren sterben,
von nun an.
Ja der Geist spricht:
Sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit
und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.*

Blessed are the dead,
who in the Lord die,
from now on.
Yes, the spirit speaks:
they rest from their toil
and their works follow them.

— Revelation 14:13

again (after *Ecclesiastes*) – David Lang

people come and people go – the earth goes on and on
the sun rises, the sun sets – it rushes to where it rises again
the wind blows round, round and round – it stops, it blows again
all the rivers run to the sea, but the sea is never full – from where the rivers run they run again
these things make me so tired – I can't speak, I can't see, I can't hear
what happened before will happen again
I forgot it all before.
I will forget it all again.

— after Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

ROOTS IN THE SKY

With performances described as “the best choral singing we’ve ever heard in Bozeman (or almost anywhere),” **Roots in the Sky** (formerly the Aoide Chamber Singers) has established itself as Montana’s premier chamber choir through a commitment to presenting thoughtfully programmed performances of historical and contemporary choral works that ask questions about the world in which we are living.

Sought-after for collaborations, Roots in the Sky has appeared in performance with Grammy-Award winning choir The Crossing, Jitro Czech Children’s Choir, and many of the Gallatin Valley’s finest instrumentalists. Roots in the Sky have performed across the state of Montana at venues including at the Tippet Rise Arts Center as part of the Montana State University Honors College Musicale, in Red Lodge as part of Music from the Beartooths, in the Bozeman Public Library as part of the Montana Chamber Music Society’s Noon Notes series for elementary students, as the chorus of a contemporary chamber opera at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center in Big Sky, at First Presbyterian Church of Bozeman as part of their Mainly Music season, at mass in the Cathedral of St. Helena, and in concert in Missoula, Kalispell, and Big Sky.

Most recently, Roots in the Sky presented the Northwest premiere of Joby Talbot’s epic choral odyssey *Path of Miracles* and collaborated with The Crossing for the World Premiere performance of Pulitzer Prize-Winning composer David Lang’s *in nature*, a work specifically designed for the concept of singing together from a distance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Upcoming projects include our inaugural season as Roots in the Sky, *The Trees of the Lonely*, and a collaboration with James Sewell Ballet of Minneapolis that explores a series of juxtapositions – ballet and choir, urban and rural performance settings, and engaging with sacred and secular perspectives on death and grief – to ask questions about the ways in which we view ourselves in relation to others through a counterpoint of ballet and choir.

ANDREW MAJOR

Andrew Major is a Thomas R. Kasdorf scholar in choral music in his second year of doctoral studies in Choral Conducting at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music studying under Grammy-Award winning conductor Donald Nally. At Northwestern, Andrew serves as the assistant conductor of the Bienen Contemporary/Early Vocal Ensemble (BCE) and sings with BCE, University Chorale, and in the Recital Chorus. He has also served as the conductor of NU Camerata, the choral department’s non-major treble choir, and as the assistant conductor of the University Singers. Additionally, Andrew has conducted performances with the Renaissance Singers and the Undergraduate Company of Opera Singers. Most recently, Andrew served as the chorus master for the Northwestern Opera Theatre’s pioneering, remote production of Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*. An active singer in Chicago, Andrew has appeared with the Grant Park Chorus, Stare at the Sun, and the Calyx Ensemble and is the tenor section leader at Glencoe Union Church.

Andrew is the Artistic Director and Conductor of Roots in the Sky (formerly the Aoide Chamber Singers), a Bozeman-based chamber choir he founded in his first year at Montana State University where he earned a B.A. in Music, a B.S. in Cell Biology & Neuroscience, and an Honors College Baccalaureate *Summa cum laude*. In 2016, Andrew was honored with an MSU Award for Excellence, awarded to 40 of MSU’s top seniors for academic excellence, campus leadership, and community service. At this time, Andrew was also awarded the Torleif Asheim Community Involvement Award which recognizes one student from each college for community involvement.

Andrew participated as a conducting fellow at the 2015 Westminster Choir College Choral Institute studying under Simon Carrington and at the Big Sky Choral Initiative in 2015, 2016, and 2017 with Donald Nally. Additionally, Andrew conducted as part of the American Choral Directors Association’s National Conference Masterclass with Ann Howard Jones and Jerry McCoy and in masterclasses with Craig Hella Johnson, Matthew Halls, James Jordan, and Andrew Megill.

DONORS

Roots in the Sky thanks the following donors whose generous support makes our season possible.
(Contributions listed as of March 1, 2020.)

Heartwood

Dawn & Mark Major

Crown

Nicolas Hansard

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Gretel & John Major

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ROOTS IN THE SKY

ANDREW MAJOR • CONDUCTOR

— ROOTS IN THE SKY 2020-21: a season in the time of the pandemic —

THE TREES OF THE LONELY



IN FACT, IN BUD

TBD (late Spring)

*And though I'm poisoned
choking on the small change*

*of human hope,
daily beaten into me*

*look: I am still alive—
in fact, in bud.*

— Kathleen Jamie

an invitation to listen, to accept the wisdom gained
through sorrow