

SALT
CREEK
SONG
FESTIVAL



SALT CREEK SONG FESTIVAL

2022 SEASON

May 23-28

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A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDERS

Hi All,

Gretchen and I became friends almost ten years ago on the set of the opera *O Pioneers!* while students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and have stayed friends ever since. After reconnecting during the Spring of 2021, the idea of creating an art song festival that was a passionate, warm, inclusive, and curated space was born. Like so many other people during this time, we had a longing to bring people together around a shared love of artistic experiences and good fellowship.

We're so glad that you've got our festival program in your hands. If you don't see what you're looking for, or want more information about an event, reach out! We hope to see you at one of our gatherings and throughout the week of our pilot season, coming to Ashland, NE, May 23 through 28. Cheers.

With warmth,
Gretchen & Jared

Mission

The Salt Creek Song Festival is dedicated to being a cultural resource in Saunders County and the surrounding Great Plains region. The first song festival of its kind in Nebraska, SCSF finds its inspiration in world class performances and gatherings featuring Midwest oriented artists, composers, and performers of song. SCSF seeks to be in community and to build relationships with those of all walks of life in Nebraska and beyond and to enrich the region by presenting a diverse program of the full range of art song. SCFS looks to foster an environment that amplifies the voices of artists of a broad range of disciplines who find meaning and connection in the Midwest.

MONDAY

5 PM

Lawn Party

Hosted by Cellar 426

Featuring John Knapp and B&B Music Factory

Cellar 426 Winery

1402 Dennis Dean Rd, Ashland, NE

TUESDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

1 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

In partnership with Autism Family Network

United Methodist Church

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

3 PM

Pop-up

Sponsored by The Beanery

Featuring Aleia González, guitar, and Kaitlin Pearson, mezzo-soprano

Glacial Till

1419 Silver St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Celestial

Sponsored by Arts for the Soul

United Methodist Church

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

Gretchen Pille, soprano

Alejandro Avila, piano

Program

In the Almost Evening (1983)

Dan Locklair (b. 1949)

I. In the Almost Evening

II. Snake Dance

III. Breezes

David Kamran, clarinet

...the moon commands... (1985)

Dan Locklair (b. 1949)

Christine Beard, flute

Hannah Weaver, percussion

Music for The Eclipse: Awaiting (2017)

Ben Justis (b. 1990)

Clark Potter, viola

The Moon Over Nebraska

Todd Almond

Made possible in part by a grant from the American Music Project

8 PM

Reception

Sponsored by Arts for the Soul

United Methodist Church

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

WEDNESDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

1 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

In partnership with Autism Family Network

St. Stephen's Episcopal

Corner of N 16th & Adams St, Ashland, NE

4 PM

Middle School Club

Featuring Aleia González, guitar, and Gretchen Pille, soprano

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Confiding

Hosted by The Ashland Arts Council

St. Stephen's Episcopal

Corner of N 16th & Adams St, Ashland, NE

Gretchen Pille, soprano

Aleia González, guitar

Program

Confiding: a cycle of 10 songs to poems by women

Dan Leisner (b. 1953)

1. Savior! I've no one else to tell
2. Ample makes this Bed
3. Wild Nights
4. Signal
5. Star-Crossed
6. The Lady to her Guitar
7. Love and Friendship
8. To Imagination
9. Faith
10. This is my letter to the World

Made possible in part by a grant from the American Music Project

8 PM

After Party

Sponsored by The Ashland Arts Council

St. Stephen's Episcopal

Corner of N 16th & Adams St, Ashland, NE

THURSDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

1 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

In partnership with Autism Family Network

Community Hall

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

The Andrée Expedition

Hosted by the Ashland Public Library

Community Hall

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

Jared Hiscock, baritone

Aric Vyhmeister, piano

Sarah Hall, projections

Timothy Madden, stage direction

Lora Kaup, costume designer

Program

The Andrée Expedition (Revised March 1983)

Dominick Argento (1927-2019)

Part One: In the Air

- I. Prologue (KNUT FRÆNKEL)
- II. The Balloon Rises (NILS STRINDBERG: Letter to Anna)
- III. Pride and Ambition (SALOMON ANDRÉE: First Journal)
- IV. Dinner Aloft (NILS STRINDBERG: Letter to Anna)
- V. The Unforeseen Problem (KNUT FRÆNKEL)
- VI. The Flight Aborted (SALOMON ANDRÉE: First Journal)

Part Two: On The Ice

- VII. Mishap with a Sledge (NILS STRINDBERG: Letter to Anna)
- VIII. The King's Jubilee (SALOMON ANDRÉE: First Journal)
- IX. Illness and Drugs (KNUT FRÆNKEL)
- X. Hallucinations (SALOMON ANDRÉE: First Journal)
- XI. Anna's Birthday (NILS STRINDBERG: Letter to Anna)
- XII. Epilogue (KNUT FRÆNKEL)
- XIII. Final Words Hallucinations (SALOMON ANDRÉE: First Journal)

Made possible in part by a grant from the American Music Project and the Anna Sosenko Assist Trust

8 PM

Reception

Hosted by Postscript

Postscript

1434 Silver St, Ashland, NE

FRIDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

3 PM

Pop-up

Sponsored by The Beanery

Featuring Aleia González, guitar, and Kaitlin Pearson, mezzo-soprano

Fariner Bakery

120 N 14th St, Ashland, NE

4:30 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

In partnership with Autism Family Network

First Congregational Church

1542 Boyd St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Hold Fast to Dreams

In collaboration with Dance Lab Omaha
and the Heartland Conservatory of Dance

First Congregational Church

1542 Boyd St, Ashland, NE

Jaime Webb, soprano

Naomi Brigell, mezzo-soprano

Alejandro Avila, piano

Katrinka Stayton, choreographer

Program

3 Songs, Op. 2 (1887)

I. Twilight

II. When Far From Her

III. Empress of Night

Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Sympathy (undated)

Hold Fast to Dreams (undated)

Florence Price (1887-1953)

The Astronomers (1959)

Straightway Beauty On Me Waits (1990)

Richard Hundley (1931-2018)

A Clear Midnight (1988)

Evening (1985)

Lee Hoiby (1926-2011)

Eve-Song (2000)

II. Even

IV. Listen

V. Snake

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

Made possible in part by a grant from the American Music Project

8 PM

Reception

Food and Drink available for purchase

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Glacial Till

1419 Silver St, Ashland, NE

SATURDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

1 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

In partnership with Autism Family Network

United Methodist Church

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Black Horizons

Hosted by the Ashland Public Library

United Methodist Church

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

Kurt Knecht, piano

Naomi Brigell, mezzo-soprano

Karina Brazas, soprano

Jared Hiscock, baritone

Program

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Bird (2004 rev. 2022)

Kurt Knecht (b. 1971)

Five Poems by Carl Sandburg (2006))

1. The Hangman at Home
2. Monotone
3. Personality: Musings of a Police Reporter in the Identification Bureau
4. Grieg being dead
5. Black Horizons

Dover Beach/Dover Bitch (2017) (World Premiere)

Made possible in part by a grant from the American Music Project
and with support from Lincoln Friends of Opera

8 PM

After Party

Sponsored by Fariner Bakery

Fariner Bakery

120 N 14th St, Ashland, NE

CELESTIAL

In the Almost Evening

Joy Kogawa (b. 1935)

I. In the Almost Evening

In the almost evening loneliest time of day
I looked out the window and could see sky
and I said "Sky, what can you give me?"
and sky said, "I can give you sunset." So I
looked at sunset with moon and star
and said "Sunset, what can you give me?"
and sunset said, "We can give you skyline."
And I looked at skyline with bright lights
and I said "What can you give me" and
skyline said "We'll give you people" and
I said to people, "People, give me love."
And people said, "Too busy."
So in the almost evening loneliest time of day
I took to listening feverishly.

Originally from *Jericho Road*, 1977,
McClelland and Stewart Limited +

II. Snake Dance

a semantic dance, the
politeness pulses along
scales slippery with speech
from the slow long
dwarf star centre
gravitational pull of
submerged need the
body's coils recoil on

the skin of our lies
we smile the theatrical
smiles that mask our
moving, our minds are
almost mesmerized
into belief

Originally from *Jericho Road* +

III. Breezes

The weeping willow sways low
In the breeze it seems to brush
The tops of those distant bushes
Sensuously in my one dimensional
Perception. Once I imagined
I knew so well the meaning
Of your careful words brushing
My mind gently with a nearness
Now I see how distant
The bushes are I still
Would paint them touching.

Originally from *A Choice of Dreams*, 1974, McClelland and Stewart
Limited +

...the moon commands...

D. R. Fosso (b. 1934)

1. Taken

She among envy of air
came, gentle, a ghost
to settle moonlit hollows.

Easing acres grew relief
from fragrance left to loss.

She made brief composure

and airs forgot to be
unastonished emptiness.

2. Premonitory
rocks hold up to
barren blue
while taunt of wind
rips into granite look

I'm scared again;
my eyes are eagles
holding onto stone

not to fly
the giving way
is, before the drop,
too much and not enough

from *PARABOLA RASA*

Music for The Eclipse: Awaiting

Ben Justis (b. 1990)

Come down, visit we Earthlings wrapped in stone.
Visit us down here alone.

Penumbra, rain darkness on cities drenched in light.
Give us this day your precious night.

Come down, visit our bright and perfect home.
Special darkness, obscuration, take light.

Come down, visit our home floating through space.
Bring us your darkness.

Penumbra, rain darkness on cities drenched in light.
Give us this day your precious night.

Come now darkness.

Moon Over Nebraska

Todd Almond

I miss this old town like I miss life before you: not at all.
When I'm here I get this fear that I won't leave again
And will you know what happened and find me or just move on?
Because I feel you hangin on just like the moon tonight
Over Nebraska yes, and I feel just like the horizon: stretched in all directions
And I'd call you now, but I kinda like this feeling.
So, tonight I'll just call your name.

Things get planted in the ground here,
And, yeah, they grow and, yeah,
They're beautiful.
But even cars get tipped on end so they can't drive away
And I guess I feel like that tonight,
Just tipped on end because I feel you hangin on, just like the moon tonight
Over Nebraska, yes, and I feel just like the horizon,
Stretched in all direction and I'd call you now,
But I kinda like this feeling
So tonight I'll just call your name.

I wish you could see the sky tonight from where I'm standing.
Am I the only one alive?
No, there's you.
I'd come runnin' to you right now,
But I'm planted here tonight but I'll be coming home soon.

CONFIDING

Savior! I've no one else to tell

by Emily Dickinson

Savior! I've no one else to tell—
And so I trouble thee.
I am the one forgot thee so—
Dost thou remember me?
Nor, for myself, I came so far—
That were the little load—
I brought thee the imperial Heart
I had not strength to hold—
The Heart I carried in my own—
Till mine too heavy grew—
Yet—strangest—heavier since it went—
Is it too large for you?

Ample makes this Bed

by Emily Dickinson

Ample makes this Bed—
Make this Bed with Awe—
In it wait till Judgement break
Excellent and Fair.

Be its Mattress straight—
Be its Pillow round—
Let no Sunrise' yellow noise
Interrupt this Ground—

Wild Nights—Wild Nights!

By Emily Dickinson

Wild nights – Wild nights!
Were I with thee

Wild nights should be
Our luxury!

Futile – the winds –
To a Heart in port –
Done with the Compass –
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden –
Ah – the Sea!
Might I but moor – tonight –
In thee!

Signal

by Gene Scaramellino

In my most autistic times,
When verbal thought is drowning,
And silence seems the only choice,
I will motion to you from a raft.

Where am I drifting to?
The past swims up, dreams surface.

A springlit evening, I stood on the shore,
Holding a green balloon by its string.
A sea breeze – careless fingers –
And it slipped from my hand.

Waves swirled around my feet,
And racing, I chased the dancing string.
But it was floating upward
And I was only swimming out.

It's just a smudge of emerald in the sky now.
I wait for waves to lilt me back.
So watch me from the sand.
Watch my hands and watch my eyes.

Star-Crossed

by Elissa Ely

On this far-flung black night, broad with blackness –
each star crawls with thick edges
and rigid worms line the gravel
like gravediggers in the rain, wet and respectful.
my throat calls and calls
a message scratchy from too many playings.
listen.

we beat on against the needle
and the restraining arm, a roll of old notes
stuck in the deluge until someone
separates them long enough to dry
in the white heat that follows
always and eventually,
like a led dog after the night.
You and I, master and mirror
Crazyman and company
we watch the sky shift with our half-hopes
our creations
we rip the linings of one another's pockets
with fingers that

pull away to touch
blood to blood, edge to scarlet edge
under that pouring star.
I slip and you sing under me, crazyman
your teeth small and perfect
until I pass my hand across them
and leave two rows of burnt Indian corn
rotting, and hanging on the night
like bent nails hang on the door of
a condemned house.

The Lady to her Guitar

by Emily Brontë

For him who struck thy foreign string
I ween this heart hath ceased to care;
Then why dost thou such feelings bring
To my sad spirit, old guitar?

It is as if the warm sunlight
In some deep glen should lingering stay,
When clouds of tempest and of night
Had wrapt the parent orb away.

It is as if the glassy brook
Should image still its willows fair,
Though years ago the woodman's stroke
Laid low in dust their gleaming hair.

Even so, guitar thy magic tone
Has moved the tear and waked the sigh,
Has bid the ancient torrent flow
Although its very source is dry!

Love and Friendship

by Emily Brontë

Love is like the wild rose-briar,
Friendship like the holly-tree –
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms
But which will bloom most constantly?

The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring,
Its summer blossoms scent the air;
Yet wait till winter comes again
And who will call the wild-briar fair?

Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now
And deck thee with the holly's sheen,
That when December blights thy brow
He still may leave thy garland green.

To Imagination

by Emily Brontë

When weary with the long day's care,
And earthly change from pain to pain,
And lost, and ready to despair,
Thy kind voice calls me back again –
O my true friend, I am not lone
While thou canst speak with such a tone!

So hopeless is the world without,
The world within I doubly prize;
Thy world where guile and hate and doubt
And cold suspicion never rise;
Where thou and I and Liberty
Have undisputed sovereignty.

What matters it that all around
Danger and grief and darkness lie,
If but within our bosom's bound
We hold a bright unsullied sky,
Warm with ten thousand mingled rays
Of suns that know no winter days?

Reason indeed may oft complain
For Nature's sad reality,
And tell the suffering heart how vain
Its cherished dreams must always be;
And Truth may rudely trample down
The flowers of Fancy newly blown.

But thou art ever there to bring
The hovering visions back and breathe
New glories o'er the blighted spring
And call a lovelier life from death,

And whisper with a voice divine
Of real worlds as bright as thine.

I trust not to thy phantom bliss,
Yet still in evening's quiet hour
With never-failing thankfulness
I welcome thee, benignant power,
Sure solacer of human care
And brighter hope when hope despairs.

Faith

by Emily Brontë

No coward soul is mine
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere
I see Heaven's glories shine
And Faith shines equal arming me from Fear

O God within my breast
Almighty ever-present Deity
Life, that in me hast rest
As I Undying Life, have power in Thee

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably vain,
Worthless as withered weeds
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thy infinity
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of Immortality

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears

Though Earth and moon were gone
And suns and universes ceased to be
And thou wert left alone
Every Existence would exist in thee

There is not room for Death
Nor atom that his might could render void
Since thou art Being and Breath
And what thou art may never be destroyed.

This is my letter to the World

by Emily Dickinson

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me —
The simple News that Nature told —
With tender Majesty

Her Message is committed
To Hands I cannot see —
For love of Her — Sweet — countrymen —
Judge tenderly — of Me

THE ANDRÉE EXPEDITION

1. Prologue (Knut Frænkel)

What was it the Austrian newspaper wrote? “Any man who says he will travel to the North Pole and back in a balloon is either a simpleton, a charlatan or a Swede.” How well we qualified! Young Strindberg, a latter day Don Quixote, risked his life to impress the blue eyed goddess of his dreams. Throughout the journey, he wrote her love letters. But where did he expect to post them, I wonder? Our leader Andrée dreamt only of glory and immortality, already photographed and measured for his waxwork likeness, which would stand in some dusty museum, it’s translucent finger pointing to this journal I now hold in my freezing hands. And I, Frænkel, I measured the winds, and I plotted the stars, and asked myself over and over again: what attracted me to the North, like the trembling needle of a compass?

2. The Balloon Rises (Nils Strindberg: Letter to Anna)

“Dearest Anna, It was grand when at last it was determined that we should start. Andrée asked us: ‘Well shall we try it or not?’ Frænkel at first answered evasively, but then said that he should. I answered, ‘I think we ought to try it.’ Andrée was serious and said nothing. Now my thoughts turned to you and to my parents and friends at home. How would the journey succeed? And how fast my thoughts came. ‘Cut away everywhere!’ comes Andrée’s voice. Three knives cut the three lines and the balloon rises, rises amid the cheers of those below. A peculiar sensation, wonderful, indescribable! We still hear the hurrahs at a distance. And then: silent and still. At seven o’clock mists begin. Andrée goes to his berth to rest. A blackbird circles a moment in the distance then disappears in the fog. The sun has gone. Goodnight.”

3. Pride and Ambition (Salomon Andrée: First Journal)

“It is not a little strange to be floating here, floating here above the Polar Sea. To be the first that have floated here, floated here in a balloon. I cannot deny that all three of us are dominated by a feeling of pride. We think we can well face death having done what we have done. Isn't it all perhaps, the expression of an extremely strong sense of individuality which cannot bear the thought of living and dying like a man in the ranks, forgotten by coming generations? Is this ambition? Dispatch, July eleven, eighteen ninety seven. Four carrier pigeons sent off. We are now in over the ice which is much divided in every direction. Weather magnificent. Best of humor. ANDRÉE STRINDBERG FRÆNKEL.”

4. Dinner Aloft (Nils Strindberg: Letter to Anna)

“Diner du troisième Juillet (for it is I, I who attend to the housekeeping. I.)

Repas pendant le voyage: Potage d'Oseille Hotch Potch, Chateaubriand

The King's Special Ale, Choc'late with biscuits,

Biscuits with raspberry syrup and plus H₂O

A good, invigorating meal! Au r'voir!”

5. The Unforeseen Problem (Knut Frænkel)

Indeed, it was a very good meal, Anna. But your fiancé neglected to mention that it was consumed under what Andrée called: trying circumstances. By the third day of our flight, a steady fine drizzle had deposited more than a ton of ice above our heads. On the webbing that encircled the balloon's equator, thousands and thousands of icicles formed. Ev'ry fifty meters we paid unplanned visits to the surface, stamping it angrily, like some enraged behemoth, then lurching up into the air, again. Strindberg became seasick and vomited that excellent dinner, while Andrée glared at the fog, attempting to will the enshrouded sun to appear and melt away our glistening crown of thorns.

6. The Flight Aborted (Salomon Andrée: First Journal)

“Fog still intense. Ev’rything is dripping. We have not had any sleep or been permitted any rest from the repeated slamming against the ice. We probably cannot stand it much longer. The balloon sways, twists, and rises and sinks incessantly. It wishes to be off but cannot. The rattling of the guidelines and the flapping of the sails are the only sounds heard. No bird is seen or heard and so I suppose there is no land near. Monotonous touch, new touch, another touch... the balloon rose to a great height but we opened both valves and at six twenty nine we were down again. We jumped out of the balloon. Worn out and famished but determined to set out from the point where we now are. On foot.”

7. Mishap with a Sledge (Nils Strindberg: Letter to Anna)

“Well, now your Nils knows what it is to walk on Polar Ice! We had a little mishap at the start: while crossing from one ice floe to the next, the first sledge went crooked and fell in. I jumped down into the water and held fast the sledge so that it should not sink. It was with difficulty it was saved. Andrée was angry that I’d taken such a risk, since we have two more sledges and provisions enough. Of course, he did not know that in the first sledge is my sack with all your letters and your portrait. Yes, they will be my dearest treasure during the winter. Well, my dear, what will you be thinking all winter? That is my only anxiety. There is much I should write about but now I must sleep. Goodnight.”

8. The King’s Jubilee (Salomon Andrée: First Journal)

“September eighteen. A beautiful day. The King’s Jubilee. A lucky day for us. We had the Swedish flag hoisted and finished the day with a ceremonial meal. Then with a fine Port, Antonio de Ferrara, eighteen thirty four, given to us by the King himself, we drank the King’s health with Royal Hurrahs and in unison we sang: Du gamla, du frida, du fjällahöga Nord. The general feeling was one of the greatest good cheer and we lay down satisfied and contented. (Ack, jag vill leva, jag vill dö i Norden! Ack, jag vill leva, jag vill dö i Norden!)”

9. Illness and Drugs (Knut Frænkel)

It is hard to believe that Jubilee Day was scarcely a month ago. An observer might have found our patriotic display pathetic: Strindberg was bandaged all over for cuts and boils; my feet were useless and I could no longer pull by sledge; all three of us suffered from cracked lips, a permanent catarrh, noses running constantly, attacks of diarrhoea and cramps... The good doctor Andrée prescribed morphine and opium tablets. We rested: then marched a few more kilometers. More morphine and opium, a few more kilometers. How long did he think the drugs would last?

10. Hallucinations (Salomon Andrée: First Journal)

“The day has been extremely beautiful. Perhaps the most beautiful day we have had. Magnificent Venetian landscape with canals between lofty hummock edges on both sides, water square with fountains of ice and stairs down to the canals. Divine. The sun touched the horizon at midnight. The landscape caught fire. The snow an ocean of flame. Divine. We have several times seen a bird, quite black and silent as a spirit. We have not seen it fly but only dive. Silent as a spirit. What kind of bird is it?”

11. Anna’s Birthday (Nils Strindberg: Letter to Anna)

“We have just stopped for the day, after drudging and pulling the sledges for ten hours. I am really rather tired but must first chat a little. First and foremost I must congratulate you, for this is your birthday. Oh, how I wish I could tell you now, Anna, that I am in excellent health and that you need not fear for us at all. We are sure to come home by and by. But it is strange to think that not even for your next birthday will it be possible for us to be at home. And perhaps we shall have to winter here for another year more. We do not know yet. Poor little Anna, in what despair you will be if we should not come home next autumn. And you can imagine how I am tortured by the thought of it too, not for my own sake, for now, I do not mind if I have hardships as long as I can come home at last.”

12. Epilogue (Knut Frænkel)

We built our winter house of ice and snow. Andrée christened it: 'home'. A week later, I buried Strindberg and I fashioned a crude black mourning ribbon to adorn my coat. Poor Andrée, unaware that Strindberg had died, that he himself was dying continued to babble on and on about the next expedition and filled a few more pages in his notebooks. Before long, there bloomed a second ribbon. Next will come my turn and then it all will be concluded. It is clear to me now that Andrée knew from the start that our journey was doomed. And I think I understand what made him persevere to the end: in the years to come, when our frozen bodies have been found and returned home to Sweden, the bright, elusive glory he sought will be his after all. Even Strindberg's foolish example will, in time, be transformed as a legend for lovers. But I, Frænkel, who measured the winds, I who plotted the stars and asked myself over and over again, I still will not know what attracted me to the North like the trembling needle of a compass. Was it only for this: to perish here, alone, amid the howling winds of an Arctic night, reading and rereading these undeliverable love letters of a simple soul and this already fading journal of a prideful Swede? Was it only for this?

13. Final Words (Salomon Andrée: Second Journal)

"... the middle of the night... shadows on the glacier... the flaming outside... not of innocent white doves... carrion birds... bad weather, we fear... to escape... out to sea... crash... grating... driftwood..."

HOLD FAST TO DREAMS

Three Songs, Op. 2

Twilight

Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach

No sun to warm
The darkening cloud of mist,
But everywhere
The steamy earth sends up
A veil of gray and damp
To kiss the green and tender leaves
And leave its cool imprint
In limpid pearls of dew

The blackened trunks and boughs
In ghostly silhouette
Mark grimly in the coming eve
The shadows of the past. All sounds are stilled,
The birds have hushed themselves to rest
And night comes fast, to drop her pall
Till morn brings life to all.

When Far From Her

Shine out, shine out, good moon tonight,
And light my darling's home,
And east my shadow in her light
When far from her I roam.

Her lovely eyes with slumber seal,
And dreams of mem'ries dear,
Let happiness her sorrows heal,
O would that I were near.

Empress of Night

Out of the darkness,
Radiant with light,
Shineth her Brightness,
Empress of Night.

As granules of gold,
From her lofty height,
Or cataract bold
(Amazing sight!)

Falleth her jewels
On ev'ry side,
Lighting the joybells,
Of Christmastide.

Piercing the treeboughs
That wave in the breeze,
Painting their shadows
Among dead leaves;

Kissing the sea foam
That flies in the air,
When tossed from its home
In waves so fair;

Silv'ring all clouds
That darken her way,
As she lifts the shrouds,
Of breaking day.

Sympathy

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;

When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals —
I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting —
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings —
I know why the caged bird sings!

Dreams

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

The Astronomers (An Epitaph)

Susan Campbell 1863-1910

Brian Campbell 1862-1909

Astronomers

We have loved the stars too deeply
To be afraid of the night.

Based upon an inscription found in Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

Straightway beauty on me waits

James Purdy (1914-2009)

Straightway beauty on me waits
rain in the morning or sunshine late
when, say the wind the airs can blow
the sun came up and down fell the snow.
The wind blows wet the sleet falls hard
Love waxes great
or dies, like the flower.

From Collected Poems

(Athenaeum-Polack & Van Gennep)

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A Clear Midnight

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

This is thy hour, O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes thou lovest best,
Night, sleep, death, and the stars.

Songs for Leontyne: No. 2.

Evening

Wallace Stevens (1879-1955)

Excerpted from Evening Without Angels
...Evening, when the measure skips a beat
And then another, one by one, and all

To a seething minor swiftly modulate.
Bare night is best. Bare earth is best. Bare, bare,
Except for our own houses, huddled low
Beneath the arches and their spangled air,
Beneath the rhapsodies of fire and fire,
Where the voice that is in us makes a true response,
Where the voice that is great within us rises up,
As we stand gazing at the rounded moon.

EVE-SONG: Nos 2, 4, & 5.

Even

Philip Littell

As set by the composer.

in the evening I am at peace. in the evening I hear everything more clearly everything to the hearer all the world does sing (ah) with a ringing and a quickening overhead the birds wheel and turn overhead the setting sun reddening no longer burns at the water's edge a wind brushes by me with a susurrations: grass and leaves flowers glow against the dark'ning trees eyesight and the light both go ev'ry evening the forest darkens In the evening my senses sharpen I have no peace at night I have no peace at night.

Listen

As set by the composer.

hum (or "oo) Its entire body ripples back and forth like a sentence, fascinating. Do you want to be like God? do you want to be like God? How do you mean? Be old and have a penis? I don't think so. No. Do you want to be like God? Do you want to be like God? You know what I mean. Oo Yes. I do. My entire body ripples up and down like a story. I am list'ning.

Snake

As set by the composer.

Snake, Is it true About the fruit? My intuition Tells me what you say about This fruit Is true. I'd like to find out, snake. I'd love to know. Go ahead in front of me Where I can see you. I will follow you. Oh! The snake is in the tree. Where I cannot see him. He is now the color of Shadows. Very few things are As visible as I am When I'm clean. hum When a thing is visible, It always means that the thing, The tree frog, or that fruit, means to be seen. Visibility's A warning or An invitation And it never tells you Which. What's visible with either Feed you, Mate with you, Or kill you. Either way you gain Experience. Here goes. Sweet. Sour. Salty. Bitter. And the taste of air, Of rottenness, Earth, And water. Now I know.

BLACK HORIZONS

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

Wallace Stevens (1879–1955)

I

Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

II

I was of three minds,
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds.

III

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.
It was a small part of the pantomime.

IV

A man and a woman
Are one.
A man and a woman and a blackbird
Are one.

V

I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendoes,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.

VI

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.

VII

O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

VIII

I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

IX

When the blackbird flew out of sight,
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

X

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light,
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply.

XI

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of his equipage
For blackbirds.

XII

The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.

XIII

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbird sat
In the cedar-limbs.

Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" from *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*.

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The Hangman At Home

Carl Sandburg (1878–1967)

What does a hangman think about
When he goes home at night from work?
When he sits down with his wife and
Children for a cup of coffee and a
Plate of ham and eggs, do they ask
Him if it was a good day's work
And everything went well or do they

Stay off some topics and talk about
The weather, baseball, politics
And the comic strips in the papers
And the movies? Do they look at his
Hands when he reaches for the coffee
Or the ham and eggs? If the little
Ones say, Daddy, play horse, here's
A rope—does he answer like a joke:
I seen enough rope for today?
Or does his face light up like a
Bonfire of joy and does he say:
It's a good and dandy world we live
'In. And if a white face moon looks
In through a window where a baby girl
Sleeps and the moon-gleams mix with
Baby ears and baby hair—the hangman—
How does he act then? It must be easy
For him. Anything is easy for a hangman,
I guess.

Monotone

The monotone of the rain is beautiful,
And the sudden rise and slow relapse
Of the long multitudinous rain.

The sun on the hills is beautiful,
Or a captured sunset sea-flung,
Bannered with fire and gold.

A face I know is beautiful—
With fire and gold of sky and sea,
And the peace of long warm rain.

Personality

Musing of a Police Reporter in the Identification Bureau

You have loved forty women, but you have only one thumb.
You have led a hundred secret lives, but you mark only
one thumb.

You go round the world and fight in a thousand wars and
win all the world's honors, but when you come back
home the print of the one thumb your mother gave
you is the same print of thumb you had in the old
home when your mother kissed you and said good-by.
Out of the whirling womb of time come millions of men
and their feet crowd the earth and they cut one another's
throats for room to stand and among them all
are not two thumbs alike.

Somewhere is a Great God of Thumbs who can tell the
inside story of this.

Grieg Being Dead

GRIEG being dead we may speak of him and his art.
Grieg being dead we can talk about whether he was any good or not.
Grieg being with Ibsen, Björnson, Lief Ericson and the rest,
Grieg being dead does not care a hell's hoot what we say.

Morning, Spring, Anitra's Dance,
He dreams them at the doors of new stars.

Black Horizons

Black horizons, come up.
Black horizons, kiss me.
That is all; so many lies; killing so cheap;
babies so cheap; blood, people so cheap; and
land high, land dear; a speck of the earth
costs; a suck at the tit of Mother Dirt so

clean and strong, it costs; fences, papers,
sheriffs; fences, laws, guns; and so many
stars and so few hours to dream; such a big
song and so little a footing to stand and
sing; take a look; wars to come; red rivers
to cross.

Black horizons, come up.

Black horizons, kiss me.

Dover Beach

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

The sea is calm tonight.

The tide is full, the moon lies fair

Upon the straits; on the French coast the light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!

Only, from the long line of spray

Where the sea meets the moon-blanced land,

Listen! you hear the grating roar

Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,

At their return, up the high strand,

Begin, and cease, and then again begin,

With tremulous cadence slow, and bring

The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago

Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought

Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow

Of human misery; we

Find also in the sound a thought,

Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Dover Bitch

Anthony Hecht (1923-2004)

A Criticism of Life: for Andrews Wanning

So there stood Matthew Arnold and this girl
With the cliffs of England crumbling away behind
them,
And he said to her, 'Try to be true to me,
And I'll do the same for you, for things are bad
All over, etc., etc.'
Well now, I knew this girl. It's true she had read
Sophocles in a fairly good translation
And caught that bitter allusion to the sea,
But all the time he was talking she had in mind
The notion of what his whiskers would feel like
On the back of her neck. She told me later on

That after a while she got to looking out
At the lights across the channel, and really felt sad,
Thinking of all the wine and enormous beds
And blandishments in French and the perfumes.
And then she got really angry. To have been brought
All the way down from London, and then be
addressed
As a sort of mournful cosmic last resort
Is really tough on a girl, and she was pretty.
Anyway, she watched him pace the room
And finger his watch-chain and seem to sweat a bit,
And then she said one or two unprintable things.
But you mustn't judge her by that. What I mean to
say is,
She's really all right. I still see her once in a while
And she always treats me right. We have a drink
And I give her a good time, and perhaps it's a year
Before I see her again, but there she is,
Running to fat, but dependable as they come.
And sometimes I bring her a bottle of Nuit d'
Amour.

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