

SALT
CREEK
SONG
FESTIVAL



SALT CREEK SONG FESTIVAL

2023 SEASON

May 21-27

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A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDERS

Greetings Salt Creekers –

It's wild to think about what a difference a year has made for the Salt Creek Song Festival. Since we saw you last we have expanded our festival week events, started the Salt Creek Social Club, gained a board of directors and so much more. I, for one, cannot wait for you to see what's in store. In everything we do at SCSF, we always aim to create warm, inviting and curated experiences that bring folks together. As musicians ourselves, the best way Jared and I can do that is through our shared love of art song, this fascinating little niche genre in classical music that is both intimate and informal.

Jared and I knew back in 2021 when we started dreaming up this project that it would be something special, but what continues to astound me is the network of supporters and cheerleaders that have emerged right here in the Ashland community. It's likely that if you're reading this right now, you either are a supporter yourself, or someone sitting next to you is as you wait for tonight's show to begin. Either way, I'm really glad you're here.

As we step into our second annual festival week, it's hard to imagine this week happening without the amazing friends we've made over the past two years. This was top of mind as we planned our 2023 festival, so it seemed only fitting to let the theme of the ties that bind guide our vision of this week's festival. There are so many ways you can connect to this music, the lyrics, and those sharing this experience with you today. Thank you for being a part of Salt Creek Song Festival 2023.

Cheers!

Gretchen Pille & Jared Hiscock
Co-founders

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.

SUNDAY

4 PM

Americana

Ashland Historical Society

207 N 15th St, Ashland, NE

Grace Manley, soprano

Stacey Barelos, toy piano

Program

Americana (2023) (World Premiere)

Stacey Barelos

- I. In the shade of the old apple tree
- II. Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do
- III. If I Had Hammer
- IV. Freight Train
- V. I ain't got nobody
- VI. Get Along Little Doggies
- VII. Dodger

MONDAY

Dark Day

A day with no performances is known as a Dark Day.

10 AM

Open Rehearsal

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

12 PM

Open Rehearsal

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

2 PM

Open Rehearsal

St. Stephen's Episcopal

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

3:45 PM

Middle School Club

Featuring Aric Vyhmeister, piano

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, 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

St. Stephen's Episcopal

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

3 PM

Pop-up

Sponsored by The Beanery

Featuring Genaro Méndez, Jr., tenor, and Aleia González, guitar

Oxbow Living Center

1617 Bills Dr, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Let Evening Come

Hosted by The Ashland Arts Council

St. Stephen's Episcopal

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

Brandon Bell, baritone

Naomi Brigell, mezzo-soprano

Alejandro Avila, piano

Program

Five Songs of Laurence Hope (1915)

1. Worth While
2. The Jungle Flower
3. Kashmiri Song
4. Among the Fuchsias
5. Till I Wake

Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949)

Late Afternoon (2000)

- I. Otherwise
- II. Willi, Home
- III. "X"
- IV. Just Now
- V. What the Living Do
- vi. Let Evening Come

Ricky Ian Gordon (b. 1956)

8 PM

Art Song After Hours

Hosted by Willow Point Gallery

Timothy Madden, bass baritone, and Aric Vyhmeister, piano

Willow Point Gallery

1431 Silver 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

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Mr. Tambourine Man

Ashland Public Library

1324 Silver St, Ashland, NE

Alyssa Toepfer, soprano

Aric Vyhmeister, piano

Program

Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven poems of Bob Dylan (2000)

John Corigliano (b. 1938)

Prelude: Mr. Tambourine Man

1. Clothes Line
2. Blowin' in the Wind
3. Masters of War
4. All Along the Watchtower
5. Chimes of Freedom

Postlude: Forever Young

8 PM

After Party

Sponsored by Postscript

Postscript

1434 Silver 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

St. Stephen's Episcopal

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

7 PM

Here & Gone

Sponsored by The Ashland Arts Council

St. Stephen's Episcopal

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

Genaro Méndez, Jr., tenor

Jared Hiscock, baritone

Alejandro Avila, piano

Jenna Ferdon, violin

Clark Potter, viola

Elizabeth Grunin, cello

Program

Here & Gone (2005)

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

- I. The Farms of Home
- II. In Praise of Songs That Die
- III. Stars
- IV. The Factory Window Song
- V. In the Morning
- VI. Because I Liked You Better
- VII. The Half-Moon Westers Low

8 PM

Art Song After Hours

Hosted by Willow Point Gallery

Willow Point Gallery

1431 Silver St, Ashland, NE

Brandon Bell, baritone

Aric Vyhmeister, piano

FRIDAY

10 AM

Coffee Chat with the Artists

Hosted by The Beanery

The Beanery

604 US-6, Ashland, NE

1 PM

Open Dress Rehearsal

Ashland United Methodist

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

3 PM

Pop-up

Sponsored by The Beanery

Featuring Genaro Mendez, Jr., tenor and Aleia Gonzalez, guitar

Fariner Bakery

120 N 14th St, Ashland, NE

7 PM

Home Again

Sponsored by Sidrony Jewelers

Ashland United Methodist

1442 Adams St, Ashland, NE

Naomi Brigell, mezzo-soprano

Timothy Madden, bass-baritone

Kurt Knecht, piano

David von Kampen, piano

Program

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

Kurt Knecht (b. 1971)

Under the Silver and Home Again (2015)

David von Kampen (b. 1986)

1. The Old Stone House
2. The Buckle
3. The Ride-by-Nights
4. Bunches of Grapes
5. Mistletoe

8 PM

After Party

Sponsored by Fariner Bakery

Fariner Bakery

120 N 14th 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

St. Mary's Catholic Church

1625 Adams St, Ashland, NE

4 PM

Pop-up

Sponsored by The Beanery

Featuring Genaro Méndez, Jr., tenor, and Aleia González, guitar

Cellar 426 Winery

1402 Dennis Dean Rd, Ashland, NE

7 PM

In the Dark Times

Sponsored by CMG Financial

St. Mary's Catholic Church

1625 Adams St, Ashland, NE

Gretchen Pille, soprano

Jenna Ferdon, violin

Clark Potter, viola

Elizabeth Grunin, cello

Program

In the Dark Times (2023) (World Premiere)

Charlie Leftridge (b. 1988)

1. Where They Lived
2. Inhibitions
3. Diction
4. A Waltz for My Mother
5. In the Dark Times, Will There Be Singing?
6. The Early Bird

The Living Joy (2022)

Comissioned in memory of Cindy Pille by St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Papillion, Nebraska

8 PM

After Party

Sponsored by Omaha Marriott Regency

St. Mary's Catholic Church

1625 Adams St, Ashland, NE

AMERICANA

In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree

Harry Hiram Williams (1879–1922)

As set by the composer

*In the shade of the old apple tree
When the love in your eyes I could see
When the voice that I heard, like the song of the bird
Seemed to whisper sweet music to me
I could hear the dull buzz of the bee
In the blossoms as you said to me
With a heart that is true, I'll be waiting for you
In the shade of the old apple tree
In the shade of old apple tree
When the love in your eyes I could see
Mama, when the voice that I heard, like the song of the bird
Seemed to whisper sweet music to me
I could hear the dull buzz of the bee
In the blossoms as you said to me
Mama, with a heart that is true, I'll be waiting for you
Yes, shade of the old apple tree*

Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do

Porter Grainger (1891–1948) & Everett Robbins (1898–1926)

As set by the composer

*There ain't nothing I can do, or nothing I can say
That folks don't criticize me
But I'm goin' to do just as I want to anyway
And don't care if they all despise me
If I should take a notion
To jump into the ocean
'Tain't nobody's business if I do, do, do do
If I go to church on Sunday
Sing the shimmy down on Monday*

*Ain't nobody's business if I do, if I do
If my friend ain't got no money
And I say "Take all mine, honey"
'Tain't nobody's business if I do, do, do do
If I give him my last nickel
'Tain't nobody's business if I do, if I do
There are a lot of men, that would hit me
Since I've arrived up and quit me
'Tain't nobody's business if I do, do, do do
I swear I won't call no copper
If I'm beat up by my poppa
'Tain't nobody's business if I do, if I do*

If I Had a Hammer

Pete Seeger (1919–2014) & Lee Hays (1914–1981)

As set by the composer

*If I had hammer
I'd hammer in the morning
I'd hammer in the evening
All over this land
I'd hammer out danger
I'd hammer out a warning
I'd hammer out love between
My brothers and my sisters, ah-ah All over this land
If I had a bell
I'd ring it in the morning
I'd ring it in the evening
All over this land
I'd ring out danger
I'd ring out a warning
I'd ring out love between
My brothers and my sisters, ah-ah All over this land
If I had a song
I'd sing it in the morning
I'd sing it in the evening
All over this world*

*I'd sing out danger
I'd sing out a warning
I'd sing out love between
My brothers and my sisters ah-ah All over this land
I got a hammer
And I've got a bell
And I've got a song to sing
All over this land
It's the hammer of justice
It's the bell of freedom
It's the song about love between My brothers and my sisters
All over this land*

Freight Train

Elizabeth Cotton (1893–1987)

As set by the composer

*Freight train, freight train, run so fast
Freight train, freight train, run so fast
Please don't tell what train I'm on
They won't know what route I'm going
When I'm dead and in my grave
No more good times here I crave
Place the stones at my head and feet
And tell them all I've gone to sleep
When I die, oh bury me deep
Down at the end of old Chestnut Street
So I can hear old Number Nine
As she comes rolling by
When I die, oh bury me deep
Down at the end of old Chestnut Street
Place the stones at my head and feet
And tell them all I've gone to sleep
Freight train, freight train, run so fast
Freight train, freight train, run so fast
Please don't tell what train I'm on
They won't know what route I'm going*

I ain't got nobody

Lee Hays (1914–1981)

As set by the composer

*There's been a sayin' goin' 'round
And I begin to think it's true
It's awful hard to love someone
When they don't care about you
Once I had a lovin' gal
The sweetest little thing in town
But now she's gone and left me
She done turn me down
Now I ain't got nobody, and nobody cares for me
That's why I'm sad and lonely
Won't somebody come and take a chance with me?
I'll sing you love songs, honey, all the time
If you'll only say you'll be sweet gal of mine
Oh, I ain't got nobody, nobody cares for me
I'll sing you love songs, honey, all the time
If you'll only say you'll be sweet gal of mine
Oh, I ain't got nobody, nobody cares for me*

Get Along Little Doggies

Traditional

As set by the composer

*As I was a walkin'
one morning for pleasure,
I spied a cow puncher
a riding alone.
His hat was throwed back
and his spurs was a jingling
and as he approached
he was singing this song.

Whoopee ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,
it's your misfortune*

*and none of my own.
Whoopie ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,
you know that Wyoming
will be your new home.*

*Early in springtime
we round up the doggies.
We tag 'em and brand 'em
and bob off their tails.
We round up the horses
and load up the chuck wagon,
then throw the doggies out onto the trail.*

*Whoopee ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,
it's your misfortune
and none of my own.
Whoopie ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,
you know that Wyoming
will be your new home.*

*Night is a comin'
and the doggies are strayin'.
They're farther from home
then they've ever been 'fore.
Come on little doggies
it's time to be rollin'.
When we get home,
we'll roll no more.*

*Whoopee ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,
it's your misfortune
and none of my own.
Whoopie ti-yi-yo
get along little doggies,*

*you know that Wyoming
will be your new home.*

Dodger

Traditional

As set by the composer

*Yes the candidate's a dodger,
Yes a well-known dodger.
Yes the candidate's a dodger,
Yes and I'm a dodger too.
He'll meet you and treat you,
And ask you for your vote.
But look out boys,
He's a-dodgin' for your note.
Yes we're all dodgin'
A-dodgin', dodgin', dodgin'.
Yes we're all dodgin'
Out away through the world.*

*Yes the preacher he's a dodger,
Yes a well-known dodger.
Yes the preacher he's a dodger,
Yes and I'm a dodger too.
He'll preach you a gospel,
And tell you of your crimes.
But look out boys,
He's a-dodgin' for your dimes.
Yes we're all dodgin' . . . etc.
Yes the lover he's a dodger,
Yes a well-known dodger.
Yes the lover he's a dodger,
Yes and I'm a dodger too.
He'll hug you and kiss you,
And call you his bride,
But look out girls,
He's a-tellin' you a lie.
Yes we're all dodgin'*

LET EVENING COME

FIVE SONGS OF LAURENCE HOPE

Worth While

by Laurence Hope (1865–1904)

I asked of my desolate shipwrecked soul
“Wouldst thou rather never have met
The one whom thou lovedst beyond control
And whom thou adorest yet?”
Back from the senses, the heart, the brain,
Came the answer swiftly thrown,
“What matter the price? We would pay it again,
We have had, we have loved, we have known!”

Adela Florence Cory, as Laurence Hope, “Worth While,”
songofamerica.net/song/worth-while/# (accessed March 19, 2023).

The Jungle Flower

Thou art one of the jungle flowers, strange and fierce and fair,
Palest amber, perfect lines, and scented with champa flower.
Lie back and frame thy face in the gloom of thy loosened hair;
Sweet thou art and loved — ay, loved — for an hour.

But thought flies far, ah, far, to another breast,
Whose whiteness breaks to the rose of a twin pink flower,
Where wind the azure veins that my lips caressed
When Fate was gentle to me for a too-brief hour.

Adela Florence Cory, as Laurence Hope, “The Jungle Flower,”
songofamerica.net/song/the-jungle-flower/ (accessed March 19, 2023).

Kashmiri Song

Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar,
Where are you now? [Who lies beneath your spell?]
Whom do you lead on Rapture’s roadway, far,

Before you agonise them in farewell?
Oh, pale dispensers of my Joys and Pains,
Holding the doors of Heaven and of Hell,
How the hot blood rushed wildly through the veins
Beneath your touch, until you waved farewell.
Pale hands, pink tipped, like Lotus buds that float
On those cool waters where we used to dwell,
I would have rather felt you round my throat,
Crushing out life, than waving me farewell!

Adela Florence Cory, as Laurence Hope, "Kashmiri Song,"
songofamerica.net/song/kashmiri-song/ (accessed March 19, 2023).

Among the Fuchsias

Call me not to a secret place
When daylight dies away,
Tempt me not with thine eager face
And words thou shouldst not say.
Entice me not with a child of thine,
Ah, God, if such might be,
For surely a man is half divine
Who adds another link to the line
Whose last link none may see.
Call me not to the Lotus lake
That drooping fuchsias hide,
What if my latent youth awakes
And will not be denied?
Ah, tempt me not for I am not strong
(Thy mouth is a budded kiss)
My days are empty, my nights are long.
Ah, why is a thing so sweet so wrong,
As thy temptation is?

Adela Florence Cory, as Laurence Hope, "Among the Fuchsias,"
songofamerica.net/song/among-the-fuchsias/
(accessed March 19, 2023).

Till I Wake

When I am dying, lean over me tenderly, softly...
Stoop, as the yellow roses droop
In the wind from the south;
So I may when I wake – if there be an awakening –
Keep what lulled me to sleep –
The touch of your lips on my mouth.

Adela Florence Cory, as Laurence Hope, "Till I Wake,"
songofamerica.net/son/till-i-wake/ (accessed March 19, 2023).

LATE AFTERNOON

Otherwise

by Jane Kenyon (1947–1995)

I got out of bed
on two strong legs.
It might have been
otherwise. I ate
cereal, sweet
milk, ripe, flawless
peach. It might
have been otherwise.
I took the dog uphill
to the birch wood.
All morning I did
the work I love.
At noon I lay down
with my mate. It might
have been otherwise.
We ate dinner together
at a table with silver
candlesticks. It might
have been otherwise.
I slept in a bed
in a room with paintings
on the walls, and

planned another day
just like this day.
But one day, I know,
it will be otherwise.

Jane Kenyon, "Otherwise," from *Collected Poems*. Copyright 2005 by
the Estate of Jane Kenyon.

Willi, Home

by Jean Valentine (1934–1920)

In memory
Last night, just before sleep, this: a bright
daffodil
lying in bed, with the sheet pulled up to its chin.
Willi, did I ever know you? The shine
in the lamplight! of your intelligent glasses,
round and humorous.
Did I ever know myself? When I
start bullshitting I see your eyebrows fly . . . This book
is dedicated to Willi,
whom I do not know,

whom I know. The words in my head
this morning
(these words came from an angel):
"It's too late to say goodbye.
And there are never enough goodbyes."
I know: the daffodil
is me. Brave. Willi's an iris. Brave.
Brave. Tall. Home. Deep. Blue.

Jean Valentine, "Willi, home," from *Door in the Mountain: New and
Collected Poems, 1965–2003*. Copyright Jean Valentine, 2004.

X

I have decorated this banner to honor my brother. Our parents did not want his name used publicly.
—from an unnamed child’s banner in the AIDS Memorial Quilt

The boatpond, broken off, looks back at the sky.
I remember looking at you, X, this way,
taking in your red hair, your eyes’ light, and I miss you
so. I know,
you are you, and real, standing there in the doorway,
whether dead or whether living, real.—Then Y
said, “Who will remember me three years after I die?
What is there for my eye
to read then?”
The lamb should not have given
his wool.
He was so small. At the end, X, you were so small.
Playing with a stone
on your bedspread at the edge of the ocean.

Just Now

by Marie Howe (b. 1950)
As set by the composer

*My brother opens his eyes when he hears the door click
open downstairs and Joe’s steps walking up past the meowing cat
and the second click of the upstairs door, and then he lifts
his face so that Joe can kiss him. Joe has brought armfuls
Of broken magnolia branches in full blossom, and he putters
in the kitchen looking for a big jar to put them in and finds it.
And now they tower in the living room, white and sweet, where
John can see them if he leans out from his bed which
he can’t do just now, and now Joe is cleaning, What a mess
you’ve left me, he says, and John is smiling, almost asleep again*

What the Living Do

Johnny, the kitchen sink has been clogged for days, some utensil
probably fell down there.

And the Drano won't work but smells dangerous,
dishes have piled up

waiting for the plumber I still haven't called. This is the everyday we
spoke of.

It's winter again: the sky's a deep, headstrong blue, and the sunlight
pours through

the open living-room windows because the heat's on too high in here
and I can't turn it off.

For weeks now, driving, or dropping a bag of groceries in the street,
The bag breaking,

I've been thinking: This is what the living do. And yesterday,
hurrying along those

wobbly bricks in the Cambridge sidewalk, spilling my coffee down
my wrist and sleeve,

I thought it again, and again later, when buying a hairbrush: This is
it.

Parking. Slamming the car door shut in the cold. What you called
that yearning.

What you finally gave up. We want the spring to come and the
winter to pass. We want
whoever to call or not call, a letter, a kiss—we want more and more
and then more of it.

But there are moments, walking, when I catch a glimpse of myself in
the window glass,

say, the window of the corner video store, and I'm gripped by a
cherishing so deep

for my own blowing hair, chapped face, and unbuttoned coat that
I'm speechless:
I am living. I remember you.

Marie Howe, "What the Living Do," from *What the Living Do*. Copyright
1998 by Marie Howe.

Let Evening Come

by Jane Kenyon (1947-1995)

Let the light of late afternoon
Shine through chinks in the barn, moving
Up the bales as the sun moves down.

Let the cricket take up chafing
as a woman takes up her needles
and her yarn. Let evening come.

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned
in long grass. Let the stars appear
and the moon disclose her silver horn.

Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop
in the oats, to air in the lung
let evening come.

Let it come, as it will, and don't
be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

Jane Kenyon, "Let Evening Come" from *Collected Poems*.
Copyright 2005 by the Estate of Jane Kenyon.

MR. TAMBOURINE MAN

Mr. Tambourine Man

by Bob Dylan (b. 1941)

As set by the composer

*Though I know that evenin's empire has returned into sand,
Vanished from my hand,
Left me blindly here to stand but still not sleeping.
My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet,
I have no one to meet
And the ancient empty street's too dead for dreaming.*

*Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.*

*Take me on a trip upon your magic swirlin' ship,
My senses have been stripped, my hands can't feel the grip,
My toes too numb to step, wait only for my boot heels
To be wanderin'.
I'm ready to go anywhere, I'm ready for to fade
Into my own parade, cast your dancing spell my way,
I promise to go under it.*

*Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.*

*Though you might hear laughin', spinnin', swingin' madly across the sun,
It's not aimed at anyone, it's just escapin' on the run.
And if you hear vague traces of skippin' reels of rhyme
To your tambourine in time, it's just a ragged clown behind,
I wouldn't pay it any mind, it's just a shadow you're*

Seein' that he's chasing.

*To dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free,
Silhouetted by the sea, circled by the circus sands,
With all memory and fate driven deep beneath the waves,
Let me forget about today until tomorrow. Tomorrow.*

**(Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
(Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come followin' you.)*

Clothes Lines

As set by the composer

*After a while we took in the clothes,
Nobody said very much.
Just some old wild shirts and a couple pairs of pants
Which nobody really wanted to touch.
Mama come in and picked up a book
An' Papa asked her what it was.
Someone else asked, "What do you care?"
Papa said, "Well, just because."
Then they started to take back their clothes,
Hang 'em on the line.
It was January the thirtieth
And everybody was feelin' fine.*

*The next day everybody got up
Seein' if the clothes were dry.
The dogs were barking, a neighbor passed,
Mama, of course, she said, "Hi!"
"Have you heard the news?" He said, with a grin,
"The Vice-President's gone mad!"
"Where?" "Downtown" "When?" "Last night."
"Hmm, say, that's too bad!"*

*“Well, there’s nothin’ we can do about it, “ said the neighbor,
“It’s just somethin’ we’re gonna have to forget.”
“Yes, I guess so, “ said Ma,
Then she asked me if the clothes was still wet.*

*I reached up, touched my shirt,
And the neighbor said, “Are those clothes yours?”
I said, “Some of ‘em, not all of ‘em.”
He said, “Ya always help out around here with the chores?”
I said, “Sometime, not all the time.”
Then my neighbor, he blew his nose
Just as papa yelled outside,
“Mama wants you to come back in the house and bring them clothes”
Well, I just do what I’m told,
So, I did it, of course.
I went back in the house and Mama met me
And then I shut all the doors.*

Blowin’ in the Wind As set by the composer

*How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, ‘n how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, ‘n how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they’re forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind,
The answer is blowin’ in the wind.*

*How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, ‘n how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, ‘n how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?*

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind.

How many years must a mountain exist

Before it's washed to the sea?

The answer is blowin' in the wind.

Yes, 'n how many years can some people exist

Before they're allowed to be free? "blowin' in the wind."

Yes, 'n how many times can a man turn his head,

Pretending he just doesn't see?

(The answer, my friend, is) blowin' (in the wind,

The answer is) blowin' (in the wind).

Masters of War

As set by the composer

Come, come, you masters of war

You that build all the guns

You that build the death planes

You that build the big bombs

You that hide behind walls

You that hide behind desks

Come, come, you masters of war

I just want you to know

I can see through your masks

You that never done nothin'

But build to destroy

You play with my world

Like it's your little toy

You put a gun in my hand

And you hide from my eyes

And you turn and run father

When the fast bullets fly

You fasten the triggers

For the others to fire

All Along the Watchtower

As set by the composer

*“There must be some way out of here,” said the joker to the thief,
“There’s too much confusion, I can’t get no relief.
Businessmen, they drink my wine, plowmen dig my earth,
None of them along the line know what any of it is worth.”*

*“No reason to get excited,” the thief, he kindly spoke,
“There are many here among us who feel that life is but a joke.
But you and I, we’ve been through that, and this is not our fate,
So let us not talk falsely now, the hour is getting late.”*

*All along the watchtower, princes kept the view
While all the women came and went, barefoot servants, too.*

*Outside in the distance a wildcat did growl,
Two riders were approaching, the wind began to howl.*

Chimes of Freedom

As set by the composer

*Far between sundown’s finish an’ midnight’s broken toll
We ducked inside the doorway, thunder crashing
As majestic bells of bolts stuck shadows in the sounds
Seeming to be the chimes of freedom flashing
Flashing for the warriors whose strength is not to fight
Flashing for the refugees on the unarmed road of flight
An’ for each an’ ev’ry underdog soldier in the night
An’ we gazed upon the chimes of freedom flashing.*

*In the city’s melted furnace, unexpectedly we watched
With faces hidden while the walls were tightening
As the echo of the wedding bells before the blowin’ rain
Dissolved into the bells of the lightening.
Striking for the gentle, striking for the kind*

*Then you set back and watch
When the death count gets higher
You hide in your mansion
As young people's blood
Flows out of their bodies
And is buried in the mud*

*You've thrown the worst fear
That can ever be hurled
Fear to bring children
Into the world
For threatening my baby
Unborn and unnamed
You ain't worth the blood
That runs in your veins*

*Let me ask you one question
Is your money that good
Will it buy you forgiveness
Do you think that it could
I think you will find
When your death takes its toll
All the money you made
Will never buy back your soul.*

*And I hope that you die
And your death will come soon
I will follow your casket
In the pale afternoon
And I'll watch while you're lowered
Down to your deathbed
And I'll stand o'er your grave
'Til I'm sure that you're dead*

Forever Young

As set by the composer

*May God bless and keep you always,
May your wishes all come true,
May you always do for others
And let others do for you.
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*

*May you grow up to be righteous,
May you grow up to be true,
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you.
May you always be courageous,
Stand upright and be strong,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*

*May your hands always be busy,
May your feet always be swift,
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift.
May your heart always be joyful,
May your song always be sung,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*

Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven poems of Bob Dylan, Copyright 2000 by G. Schirmer, Inc.

HERE AND GONE

The farms of home lie lost in even

A.E. Houseman (1859-1936)

The farms of home lie lost in even,
I see far off the steeple stand;
West and away from here to heaven
Still is the land.

There if I go no girl will greet me,
No comrade hollo from the hill,
No dog run down the yard to meet me:
The land is still.

The land is still by farm and steeple,
And still for me the land may stay:
There I was friends with perished people,
And there lie they.

A.E. Houseman, no title, appears in *More Poems*, first published 1936.

In Praise of Songs That Die

Vachel Lindsay (1879-1931)

Ah, they are passing, passing by,
Wonderful songs, but born to die!
Cries from the infinite human seas,
Waves thrice-winged with harmonies.
Here I stand on a pier in the foam
Seeing the songs to the beach go home,
Dying in sand while the tide flows back,
As it flowed of old in its fated track.
Oh, hurrying tide that will not hear
Your own foam children dying near
Is there no refuge-house of song,
No home, no haven where songs belong?

Oh, precious hymns that come and go!
You perish, and I love you so!

Vachel Lindsay, "In Praise of Songs That Die,"
songofamerica.net/song/in-praise-of-songs-that-die/
(accessed March 20, 2023).

Stars, I have seen them fall

A.E. Houseman (1859-1936)

But when they drop and die
No star is lost at all
From all the star-sown sky.
The toil of all that be
Helps not the primal fault;
It rains into the sea,
And still the sea is salt.

A.E. Houseman, no title, appears in *More Poems*, first published 1936.

The Factory Window Song

Vachel Lindsay (1879-1931)

Factory windows are always broken.
Somebody's always throwing bricks,
Somebody's always heaving cinders,
Playing ugly Yahoo tricks.

Factory windows are always broken.
Other windows are let alone.
No one throws through the chapel-window
The bitter, snarling, derisive stone.
Factory windows are always broken.
Something or other is going wrong.
Something is rotten — I think, in Denmark.

End of the factory-window song.

Vachel Lindsay, "Factory windows are always broken,"
songofamerica.net/song/factory-window-song/
(accessed March 20, 2023).

In the Mornings

A.E. Houseman (1859–1936)

In the morning, in the morning,
In the happy field of hay,
Oh they looked at one another
By the light of day.

In the blue and silver morning
On the haycock as they lay,
Oh they looked at one another
And they looked away.

A.E. Houseman, no title, appears in *Last Poems*, first published 1922.

Because I Liked You Better

Because I liked you better
Than suits a man to say,
It irked you, and I promised
To throw the thought away.

To put the world between us
We parted, stiff and dry;
“Good-bye,” said you, “forget me.”
“I will, no fear,” said I.

If here, where clover whitens
The dead man’s knoll, you pass,
And no tall flower to meet you
Starts in the trefoiled grass,

Halt by the headstone naming
The heart no longer stirred,
And say the lad that loved you
Was one that kept his word.

A.E. Housman, no title, appears in *More Poems*, first published 1936.

The half-moon westers low, my love

The half-moon westers low, my love,
And the wind brings up the rain;
And wide apart we lie, my love,
And seas between the twain.

I know not if it rains, my love,
In the land where you do lie;
And oh, so sound you sleep, my love.
You know no more than I.

A.E. Housman, "The half-moon wester low, my love," appears in *Last Poems*, first published 1922.

HOME AGAIN

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*. Copyright 1954 by Wallace Stevens.

UNDER THE SILVER AND HOME AGAIN

The Old Stone House

Walter de la Mare (1873–1956)

Nothing on the grey roof, nothing on the brown,
Only a little greening where the rain drips down;
Nobody at the window, nobody at the door,
Only a little hollow which a foot once wore;
But still I tread on tiptoe, still tiptoe on I go,
Past nettles, porch, and weedy well, for oh, I know
A friendless face is peering, and a still clear eye

Peeps closely through the casement
as my step goes by.

Walter de la Mare, "The Old Stone House," appears in *Peacock Pie: A Book of Rhymes*, in *Witches and Fairies*, first published in 1913.

The Buckle

I had a silver buckle,
I sewed it on my shoe,
And 'neath a sprig of mistletoe
I danced the evening through!

I had a bunch of cowslips,
I hid 'em in a grot,
In case the elves should come by night
And me remember not.

I had a yellow riband,
I tied it in my hair,
That, walking in the garden,
The birds might see it there.

I had a secret laughter,
I laughed it near the wall:
Only the ivy and the wind
May tell of it at all.

Walter de la Mare, as Walter Ramal, "The Buckle," from *Songs of Childhood*. Published 1902.

The Ride-by-Nights

Up on their brooms the Witches stream,
Crooked and black in the crescent's gleam,
One foot high, and one foot low,
Bearded, cloaked, and cowled, they go.
'Neath Charlie's Wane they twitter and tweet,
And away they swarm 'neath the Dragon's feet,

With a whoop and a flutter they swing and sway,
And surge pell-mell down the Milky Way.
Between the legs of the glittering Chair
They hover and squeak in the empty air.
Then round they swoop past the glimmering Lion
To where Sirius barks behind huge Orion;
Up, then, and over to wheel amain
Under the silver, and home again.

Walter de la Mare, "The ride-by-nights," appears in *Peacock Pie: A Book of Rhymes*, in *Witches and Fairies*, first published in 1913.

Bunches of Grapes

"Bunches of grapes," says Timothy;
"Pomegranates pink," says Elaine;
"A junket of cream and a cranberry tart
For me," says Jane.

"Love-in-a-mist," says Timothy;
"Primroses pale," says Elaine;
"A nosegay of pinks and mignonette
For me," says Jane.

"Chariots of gold," says Timothy;
"Silvery wings," says Elaine;
"A bumpity ride in a wagon of hay
For me," says Jane.

Walter de la Mare, as Walter Ramal, "Bunches of Grapes," from *Songs of Childhood*. Published 1902.

Mistletoe

Sitting under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
One last candle burning low,
All the sleepy dancers gone,
Just one candle burning on,

Shadows lurking everywhere:
Some one came, and kissed me there.

Tired I was; my head would go
Nodding under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
No footsteps came, no voice, but only,
Just as I sat there, sleepy, lonely,
Stooped in the still and shadowy air
Lips unseen—and kissed me there.

Walter de la Mare, "Mistletoe," Published in Poem-a-Day on December
25, 2021 by the Academy of American Poets, first published 1913.

IN THE DARK TIMES

Where They Lived

Marjorie Saiser

One last time I unlock
the house where they lived

and fought and tried again:
the air of the place,

carpet with its unchanging green,
chair with its back to me.

On the TV set, the Christmas cactus
has bloomed, has spilled its pink flowers

down its scraggly arms
and died, drying into paper.

At the round oak table,
ghosts lean toward one another,

almost a bow, before rising,
before ambling away.

Marjorie Saiser, "Where They Lived," from the Poetry Foundation.
Copyright 2006 by Marjorie Saiser.

Inhibitions

Clarissa Bucklin (1904–1980)

I want to snatch the corner of my blue shirt
And hold it out against the wind and dance;
But my father was a Puritan,
And his father's father's father,
And—the world might look askance!

I want to make a song of love and passion
And sing it loud beneath an echoing sky;
But my mother was a Puritan,

And her mother's mother's mother.
And—how the world might cry!

I want to talk to wicked me and women;
Have someone think my mouth is fire to kiss;
But my father and my mother,
And my mother's father's mother,
And my father's mother's father,
Were Puritan, you see,
And—What a lot I miss!

Clarissa Bucklin, "Inhibitions," from *Nebraska poetry: a sesquicentennial anthology 1867-2017*, 2017.

Diction

Hilda Raz (b. 1938)

"God is in the details,"
I tell the kids
In the public school
At Milligan, Nebraska.
They wonder what I mean.
I tell them to look
out the window
at the spring fields
the mud coming up
just to the knee
of the small pig
in the far pasture.
They tell me
It's not a knee
but a hock
and I hadn't ought
to say things I know
nothing about. I say
the light on the mud
in pure chalcedony.
They say the mud

killed two cows
over the weekend.
I tell them the pig
is alive and the spring
trees are standing in a green haze.

Hilda Raz, "Diction," from *Nebraska poetry: a sesquicentennial anthology 1867-2017*, 2017.

A Waltz for My Mother

Mary K. Stillwell (b. 1944)

Wish I could lift that old gold and white Lira
from the plush red velvet of its case one more time,

guide the wide straps over my shoulder, right, then left,
adjust the bellows over my chest, unsnap the latches

that hold them closed, send the fingers of my left hand
in search of the rhinestone that marks the button C,

and those of my right to the keys to play,
one, two, three, what I called The Bernice Waltz,

to honor my mother on the anniversary of her birth.
Words and chords, notes and rests, all of them lost.

But not the honeysuckle, sounding its golden trumpets
Even as the dew clings like tears to the spider's web.

Tonight, lightning bugs blink their songs onto staffs
Strung like badminton nets across the lawn;

Overhead and within, stars and chromosomes bow
To one another, dance my mother's ghost notes, one, two, three.

Mary K. Stillwell, "A Waltz for My Mother," from *Nebraska poetry: a sesquicentennial anthology 1867-2017*, 2017.

In the Dark Times, Will There Be Singing?

Marjorie Saiser

In the dark times

Will there also be singing?

-Bertolt Brecht

Desert morning, the stars
have wheeled in their arcs
to stand in their appointed doorways,

the coyotes return to their cubbyholes.
The great horned owl on the light pole
Sees the neighborhood, sees, if he wants to,

how I stand shoeless on the cool sand,
lucky cuss, wingless bird that I am.

In the dark times there will be singing
and I, in a forgotten crevice in the universe,
will spread my arms and inhale deep, enormous.

Marjorie Saiser, "In the Dark Times, Will There Be Singing?" from the Prairie Citizen. Copyright April 2018 by Marjorie Saiser.

The Early Bird

Ted Kooser

Still dark, and raining hard
on a cold May morning

and yet the early bird
is out there chirping,

chirping its sweet-sour
wooden-pulley notes,

please, it would seem,
to be given work,

hauling the heavy
bucket of dawn

up from the darkness,
note over note
and letting us drink.

Ted Kooser, "The Early Bird," from Poetry (May 2003).

The Gardener 85

As set by the composer for "The Living Joy"

Who are you, reader, reading my poems an hundred years hence?

*I cannot send you one single flower from this wealth of the spring, one single streak of
gold from yonder clouds.*

Open your doors and look abroad.

*From your blossoming garden gather fragrant memories of the vanished flowers of an
hundred years before.*

*In the joy of your heart may you feel the living joy that sang one spring morning,
sending its glad voice across an hundred years.*

Rabindranath Tagore, "The Gardener 85,"

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45667/the-gardener-85>
(accessed April 28, 2023).

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