The Kennedy Center

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

JAMES D. WOLFENSOHN, ***Chairman***
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CONCERT HALL

Thursday Evening, April 28, 1994, at 8:30

Lydia Micheaux Marshall, *President* Douglas H. Wheeler, *Managing Director*
Patrick Hayes, *Managing Director Emeritus*

presents

Thomas Hampson
Baritone

Craig Rutenberg
Pianist

CHARLES GRIFFES (1884-1920)	Auf dem geheimem Waldespfade (Nikolaus Lenau) An den Wind (Nikolaus Lenau) Des müden Abendlied (Emanuel Geibel) Zwei Könige sassen auf Orkadal (Emanuel Geibel)
SAMUEL BARBER (1910-1981)	The Daisies (James Stephens) Night Wanderers (W. H. Davies) Rain has fallen (James Joyce) With rue my heart is laden (A.E. Housman) Sure on this Shining Night (James Agee)

Songs to Texts by Walt Whitman

FRANK BRIDGE (1879-1941)	The Last Invocation
R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)	A Clear Midnight
W.H. NEIDLINGER (1863-1924)	Memories of Lincoln
CHARLES NAGINSKI (1909-1940)	Look Down Fair Moon
LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)	To What You Said

Intermission

CHARLES IVES (1874-1954)	Housatonic at Stockbridge (Robert U. Johnson) Thoreau (Ives after Henry David Thoreau) Children's Hour (Henry W. Longfellow) Memories A & B (Ives)

(continued)

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in this auditorium.
The Filene Memorial Organ in the Concert Hall contributed by Mrs. Jouett Shouse.
Baldwin is the official piano and electronic organ of the Kennedy Center.

Blue Mountain Ballads

PAUL BOWLES (1910-)	Poems by Tennessee Williams Heavenly Grass Lonesome Man Cabin Sugar in the Cane

Some Old Songs Re-sung

SIDNEY HOMER (1864-1953)	General William Booth Enters into Heaven (Vachel Lindsay)
AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)	Long Time Ago (Traditional)
WALTER DAMROSCH (1862-1950)	Danny Deever (Rudyard Kipling)

This concert is sponsored, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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The audience is respectfully requested to withhold its applause until the conclusion of each group.

Notes on the Program

By THOMAS HAMPSON and
CARLA MARIA VERDINO-SÜLLWOLD

"I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear . . . singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs." So wrote democracy's bard, Walt Whitman, in 1860. In that turbulent year, the nation at mid-century poised on the brink of division, Whitman's hymn was a cosmic cry for unity in diversity, for a joining of the eclectic, sometimes opposing forces that gave the fledgling nation—half innocent, half rough-hewn and brutal—its very vitality. For Whitman the new nation, whose pluralistic voices he sought to synthesize in singular song, was more than mere wilderness waiting for exploration; it was a spiritual frontier that could be tamed as much by pioneers as by poets and songmakers.

"I say no land or people or circumstances ever existed so needing a race of singers and poems differing from all others." Again the words are Whitman's, but the *cri de coeur* was echoed in the minds and pens of America's musicians as they, like the poet, struggled to achieve a unique fusion of thought, word, and sound—to create an emerging voice and repertory of songs that would precisely capture the spirit of a new country and speak to the multiplicity of audiences for which they were written.

American song is by definition eclectic, but that eclecticism does not imply superficiality. Rather, it bespeaks the rich polycultural heritage in which the repertoire is rooted. Just as the bard heard music everywhere around him—"in the woodcutter's song, in the duet of the bridegroom and bride, in the measured sea surf, and in the odes and symphonies and operas" of which he was so fond—and transformed those rhythms and melodies into verse, so, too, have America's songwriters turned to a rich range of impulses and influences for inspiration. In American song one inevitably hears the echoes of jazz and blues, the resonance of spirituals and slave rhythms, the pulses of Protestant hymns and revival meetings, the melodies of minstrelsy and vaudeville, and lately the "belt" of Broadway. But American song, as all American art forms, has also been profoundly influenced from abroad. The entire art song tradition in America was born of European parentage, from the so-called "serious" genres of opera, operetta, *Lieder, Balladen*, and *mélodies*, and for much of the nineteenth century these compositions were seen as "high-brow" alternatives to the populist American song tradition. Indeed, the American art song was often viewed as a bastard child—a transplanted medium that reflected the sentiments of only a small elite segment of cosmopolitan America. Only

through the advent of numerous philosophical, economic, and socio-cultural changes did the art song slowly gain both in popularity and in critical esteem and establish its idiomatic individuality.

The history of American song becomes, in this sense, a diary of the American consciousness. As did our writers and visual artists, American songmakers struggled to create a voice that would articulate the changing psychology of an emerging nation. Tonight's program traces the development of that musico-poetic language in spiritual rather than chronological terms, as it charts the course of growing artistic confidence on the part of the composers and poets to turn their glance increasingly away from Europe and to feel proud of and comfortable with sources distinctly American. While masterpieces of the genre of German lieder, Charles Griffes's early songs, with which the program begins, are classic examples of the American belief that the models for "high art" could only be assimilated through an immersion in European forms and culture. Samuel Barber's songs, with their deep respect for classic form juxtaposed with overt Romanticism (together with their reliance on an Anglo-Irish poetic heritage) form a bridge from the Old World to the New, where, feet firmly planted on frontier soil, poets like Walt Whitman and the Transcendentalists not only created an American artistic renaissance, but boldly reforged the rhythm of our speech and song. Charles Ives's lifelong fascination with the Transcendentalists derived from his proud Yankee roots and his family's associations with icons of the movement such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller; in his unique musical idiom he strove to recreate not only the idealism and spirituality of their message, but to graft that spirituality onto the earthy inspiration of indigenous American forms. From Ives, with his interest in folk tunes, Stephen Foster, and American melody, it is a very easy transition into the unabashedly native images and music of the Paul Bowles songs and the ballads that conclude the program. And when one considers that the jazz poetry of Vachel Lindsay's "General Booth" is reflective of an age and a sound that America exported to Europe, the cycle is somehow completed.

Within this cyclical history one finds a fascinating interplay of tension and balance, of contraries—as William Blake would have called them—which resolve themselves in the variety and freshness of expressions on this program. In thematic terms the 25 songs explore the contrasting states of requited and unrequited love; of romantic angst, existential malaise, and transcendent faith; of Nature in its divine and demonic manisfestations. In doing so they run the gamut from the willful melancholy of Geibel's "Des müden Abendlied" to the light banter of Ives's "Memories A," from the chaste sweetness of Barber's "The Daisies" to the lusty accents of Bowles's "Sugar in the Cane," from the mystic agnosticism of the Vaughan Williams and Bridge settings of Walt Whitman to the revivalist faith of Homer's "General William Booth." In fact, it is the subtle relationship between doubt and faith that forms the connecting thread throughout the series, blossoming most vividly in the potent images of spiritual voyage of the Whitman and Ives/Transcendentalist groups, but latent also in the more worldly expressions of the Irish poets and Tennessee Williams.

In historical terms, the program's pivotal point rests at the American Renaissance, that mid-nineteenth century period of golden achievement in poetry, literature, painting, philosophy, and social experiment where the cross-current of European and American exchange reached its pinnacle. From 1830 to 1860 thinkers like Emerson, influenced by Carlyle, were reshaping the lessons of Goethe, Schiller, and Hegel for a fledgling land, at the same time that Whitman was reading Heinrich Heine and absorbing the the sounds of Italian opera as well as the melodies of Stephen Foster and filtering them all into a new freedom of democratic speech.

The American Renaissance represented the nation's coming of age in terms of its cultural identity. At last American artists felt self-reliant enough to accept what they would from their European forebears and reject—or rather reshape—what they wished. The legacy of this brilliant period in our nation's cultural history bequeathed to American songmakers the courage to look back to the nineteenth-century genres of the *Balladen* and *Lieder* and to affirm their Romantic inspiration while experimenting with their structure and form; to revel in the images and themes of the pan-Romantic movement while daring to respond to the dissonances and syncopations of a new musico-poetic language. But more important than any other inheritance, the thinkers of the American Renaissance—Whitman foremost among them—imparted to the American consciousness the permission to accept the eclecticism of our psyche and to delight in the multi-faceted expression this inspired. After a century of cultural insecurity, Americans began to enjoy the fusion of so-called "high art" and folk art that inevitably shaped our national thought.

It is this fusion that lies at the heart of today's program—and indeed at the very fulcrum of all American song. The *raison d'être* for the American song repertoire rests precisely in this musical balance of classic form and Romantic freedom, in the poetic juxtaposition of ver-

nacular and elevated speech, and in the emotional contraries of naive and sophisticated sentiments. Griffes's lush lieder stand in eloquent counterpoint to Barber's blend of insistent formalism and reticent Romanticism; Neidlinger's Victorian expansiveness counterbalances the shimmering impressionistic hand of Naginski, while through the veil of Ives's nascent modernism, one espies the folk idioms that inspire Bowles, Homer, Copland, and Damrosch.

Then, too, there is one other juxtaposition that proves very central to the program concept, and that is the contrasting dynamic of propulsive narrative and lyric stasis, between the storyteller's drama of the ballad and the psychological drama of the *Lied*. But here, too, as with all the other tensions of the program, contrast resolves itself into co-existence. Each song—be it narrative or lyric—becomes a transcendent suspension of life's successive moments or pulses to the expanded reflection of a greater present. In this dynamic suspension all barriers are removed; composer and poet dare, as Whitman wrote, to explore "that unknown region where all waits undream'd of." Designations such as "art song" or "popular folksong" become irrelevant, as art, in its truest sense, becomes the transformer, the active ingredient of expression, and is not belittled to usage as a qualitative adjective. In American song that active ingredient is as multifarious as the peoples from whom it came.

CHARLES GRIFFES
(1860-1920)

Born in Elmira, New York, where he first studied music with Mary Selena Boughton, Charles Tomlinson Griffes took advantage of his teacher's generous offer to finance his studies and went abroad to Berlin in 1903. By the time he returned to the United States in 1907, he had steeped himself in the vocabulary of late German Romanticism and had already composed a number of songs, as well as his *Symphonische Phantasie*. For the remainder of his active and all-too-short career, he taught music at the Hackley School in Tarrytown, New York, while composing a significant body of stage, chamber, piano, and orchestral works, as well as experimenting with a variety of song styles that ranged from his early German Romanticism to Impressionism, Orientalism, and a kind of stark modernism. The two settings to Lenau poems and Geibel's "Des müden Abendlied" employ the Romantic device of pathetic fallacy; Nature reflects the sorrow and joys of mankind, whispering his longings and exhaling with him his very soul. "Zwei Könige sassen auf Orkadal" takes its inspiration from the German Romantic impulse to revive ballads from their folk roots. The starkness of Geibel's tale of kingly jealousy and rage is reinforced by the spare rhyming couplets and the potent images of snow and blood.

SAMUEL BARBER
(1910-1981)

Music-making was always a part of Samuel Barber's life. The nephew of contralto Louise Homer and her husband, the prolific song writer Sidney Homer, Barber studied piano at six, began composing at seven, served as a church organist while still in his teens, and developed his attractive baritone voice to the point where he entertained the thought of becoming a professional singer. Trained at the Curtis Institute and in Rome, where he formed a lifelong friendship with Gian Carlo Menotti, Barber composed a wide range of stage, orchestral, chamber, piano, choral, and vocal works in what he unassumingly insisted was a personal style born of "what I feel.... I am not a self-conscious composer." His discipline and use of traditional forms earned him the reputation of a classicist. Virgil Thomson once wrote that he was laying to rest the ghost of Romanticism without violence, though in light of Barber's lush lyricism, deft dramatic sense, and inclination toward Romantic poetic sources, especially in his vocal writing, this comment ultimately proved to be off the mark.

In his choice of song texts Barber was drawn to a wide variety of contemporary poets, prominent among them the Georgian School, the Irish bards, and the French Symbolists, who were, in fact, intimately connected with the linguistic experiments of the twentieth-century Irish master James Joyce. The Dublin-born Joyce rocked the literary world in 1914 with his confessional autobiography, *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, in which he iconoclastically rejected the Catholicism and Irish nationalism of his youth, only to create from the ashes of his intellectual past a new personal mythology that was to flower in his epic novels, *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegan's Wake* (1939). But if Joyce's master novels were to revolutionize the structure of literary form and language, his early poems, published as *Chamber Music* in 1907, revealed an inherent respect for and knowledge of conventional form and an insistence on melody as the basic premise for poetic diction. Joyce, who was himself a connoisseur of classical music and an accomplished tenor, conceived his strophic lyrics to be sung and imbued them with the melancholy and Romantic yearning of a self-made exile.

Equally singable are the poems of the so-called Georgians, among them the self-taught wanderer/tramp W.H. Davies and the tacitly acknowledged leader of the group, Robert Graves. The consortium of Bloomsbury-based poets who published the *Georgian Review* from

1911 to 1922 also included John Masefield, Walter de la Mare, D. H. Lawrence, Rupert Brooke, and James Stephens (close friend of W. B. Yeats and passionate partisan of the Celtic revival movement). With their interest in nature, their ironic bent, and their distinctive strain of twentieth-century pessimism, counterbalanced by the simplicity and directness of their diction and the ecomony of their image and line, these poets afforded Barber the dual literary inspiration that corresponded so perfectly to his twin musical impulses. Like Joyce, the Georgians were latter-day Romantics, struggling to accommodate the rush of nineteenth-century feeling to the realities of twentieth-century life. In that they were not at all unlike Samuel Barber, whose musical idiom throughout his long and disinguished career hovered between the poles of romanticism and classicism, ultimately establishing a fulcrum between feeling and form, tradition and modernity that won for him a pivotal position in modern music.

The Last Invocation

FRANK BRIDGE
(1879-1941)

Composed in 1918-19, Frank Bridge's *The Last Invocation* reflects the influence of the entire British tradition of Whitman aficionados. A pupil of Charles Villiers Stanford at the Royal College of Music, Bridge was inspired by his teacher not only to attempt this Whitman setting, but also to search for other parallel texts among the English and German Romantics. A professional viola player and author of some sixty songs, Bridge owes much of his approach to the poem not only to Stanford, but also to Holst. The composition sustains a blend of tender and mystical in the *tranquillo* markings for voice and in the first wistful, then increasingly lyric ecstasy of the piano, which erupts into a radiance on the final word "Love" and continues with the effusive singing of the unaccompanied instrument.

A Clear Midnight

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
(1872-1958)

Whitman was a looming presence in the creative thought of Vaughan Williams, who, according to his widow Ursula, carried a copy of Whitman's poetry with him as a constant companion from 1903 onward. In a sense the spiritual kinship of the two artists was predestined. The composer, who was born one year before Whitman, the victim of a stroke, was remanded to Camden, had naturally encountered the Good Gray Poet at university, but he had also found his interest awakened by his composition teacher, Charles Wood, who had previously set some Whitman texts. The prime motivating factor for the identification, however, was Vaughan Williams's serious inquiry into folk song, which began in 1904. "A compositional style must be ultimately personal, but an individual is a member of a nation, and the greatest and most widely known artists have been the most strongly national—Bach, Shakespeare, Verdi, Reynolds, Whitman," the composer was later to explain; shortly before his death, in a letter to Michael Kennedy, he went on to list Whitman together with Brahms and General Booth as three of the greatest men of his lifetime. In 1905 Vaughan Williams set his first Whitman texts from "Whispers of Heavenly Death" and began sketching his *Sea Symphony*, and the composer returned to Whitman as the inspiration for his 1936 *Dona Nobis Pacem*, in which (foreshadowing Britten) he interspersed Whitman poems with the text of the Latin Mass, and in 1945 he set *When Lilacs Last* as an elegy for Bartók.

Three Songs by Walt Whitman, of which "A Clear Midnight" is the second, was written in 1925 and premiered by John Elwes in 1927. Vaughan Williams was attracted to these texts, taken from the poet's 1871 *Songs of Parting* and 1881 *From Noon to Starry Night*, not only because of their unstructured meters, which permitted the composer to free himself of a rigid piano accompaniment, but also because of the combination of veiled spirituality and earthly tangibility in the verse. The composer shared with the poet a love of nature and a Romantic agnosticism that make their merged voices especially compelling.

"Away from books, away from art, the day erased," Whitman declares in "A Clear Midnight," recalling Heine's words as he tosses the casket of his past experience and art into the Rhine. Once again the poet is chanting his familiar theme of nature as a teacher and guide on the voyage of discovery that embraces all experiences, even the midnight-clear hour of death upon which the traveler embarks into life. Vaughan Williams conveys exquisitely the feeling of spiritual release as the song's last phrase fades gently into a breathtakingly soft, sustained syllable that conveys the painless bliss of the passing.

Memories of Lincoln

WILLIAM NEIDLINGER
(1863-1924)

Born and raised in Brooklyn, where he worked as an organist until his thirty-third year, when he departed for London and Paris on a traditional *Bildungsreise* and then ultimately returned to Chicago and New Jersey to teach voice and compose secular and religious music, William Neidlinger was well acquainted with the Whitman legend and legacy. Com-

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prising portions of three poems from Whitman's cycle of the same name, Neidlinger's *Memories of Lincoln* is a cantata in miniature with powerfully contrasting sections that chronicle the composer and poet's shock and despair at the loss of Abraham Lincoln. "He has the face of a Hoosier Michelangelo," wrote Whitman, then working in Washington, DC, of Lincoln. "He has shown an almost supernatural tact in keeping the ship afloat . . . with head steady . . . with proud resolute spirit. I say never captain had such a perplexing dangerous task." The crystallization of the ship imagery in this letter to his brother Tom no doubt recurred to Whitman in 1865 when, suffering the aftershocks of the national assassination trauma, he composed his four-poem sequence.

Neidlinger's expansive, Romantic idiom is well suited to the heroic and elevated sentiments of the texts, while his proficiency as an organist can be heard in the majestic vocal and piano lines and in the combination of solemnity and impassioned drama that shape the song. "Beat Drums, Beat" begins with an eerie hush in both the voice and ominous martial bass ostinato of the accompaniment, then rises to a hammering heartbeat of sound that suggests the cacophony of brass and percussion. The emotional explosiveness of the first section modulates into the slower tempo and soothing legato of "When Lilacs Last," which finishes in a moment of reverential silence before launching into the culminating poem of this extended elegy "O Captain, My Captain"—ironically the poet's most popular and, in its strophic form, his least representative work. Annoyed by repeated requests to recite it or anthologize it separately from the rest of the opus, Whitman once exploded, saying he wished he had never written the poem. Nonetheless, the haunting melancholy and cold brutality of the images make a poignant requiem for the president that Whitman idolized.

Look Down Fair Moon

CHARLES NAGINSKI
(1909-1940)

Cairo-born and American-naturalized Charles Naginski's connection to Tanglewood and the Berkshires was, in fact, a tragically ironic one, for it was in Lenox, after attending a performance of one of his works at the Berkshire Symphony Festival in 1940, that he drowned at the age of 31. Naginski, who had studied composition with Rubin Goldmark and Roger Sessions, was the creator of two symphonies and was the Walter Damrosch Fellow at the American Academy in Rome at the time of his death. Naginski's Whitman settings were among his very last works, published posthumously in 1942.

Look Down Fair Moon takes its text from Whitman's 1865 *Drum Taps*, a collection of poignant memories of the years when the poet witnessed firsthand the horrors of the Civil War as a nurse in the hospitals of the nation's capital. The eerie light of the moon invoked by the poet rains down in ghastly pallor, captured in the delicate impressionistic palette, the minor key, and the serenading effect of the piano—all of which combine to create the impression of a ghostly aubade that echoes in the hills where Naginski composed it as a very personal requiem.

To What You Said

LEONARD BERNSTEIN
(1918-1990)

Throughout his career as a composer, conductor, and teacher, Bernstein sought not only to serve as an exponent and champion of the late Romantic composers but also to incorporate into his own work the emotional intensity and melodic-harmonic lessons of their legacy; at the same time he strove to create, especially in his vocal and theatrical music, an uniquely American idiom—to absorb from the democratic melting pot an eclecticism that he could transform into a truly personal voice. In this he was very like Walt Whitman, who, unfettered by categories, labels, or conventions in his poetry, did not fear to combine with breathtaking audacity an astonishing array of thematic and stylistic contrasts. Drawn to the exquisitely humble, touchingly exposed honesty of Whitman's love lyrics, Bernstein chose an unpublished poem found among the bard's posthumous papers to include in *Songfest*, composed for the American Bicentennial and premiered at the Kennedy Center in 1977. The twelve-song cycle set to texts by Americans takes Bernstein's familiar humanistic and politically liberal perspective on the themes of love, marriage, personal aspiration, and social justice in the multi-cultural framework of America's melting pot. In its original incarnation the purposefully and exuberantly eclectic score called for six singers and an orchestra of traditional and electronic instruments, while the subsequent version was arranged in the more intimate piano-vocal format.

"To What You Said" is one of those rare poems that Whitman himself abandoned in its initial stages. Scribbled on the verso of page 30 of the ink faircopy of the 1871 *Democratic Vistas*, the text shows signs of being composed quickly and spontaneously with revisions made on the spur of the moment. Any attempt to date the manuscript conclusively poses a great many problems, though affinities in the themes, images, and hints at autobiographical substance point to the years between 1871-1878. A strong probablility exists that it was addressed to

Anne Gilchrist, the plucky, intelligent, literary Englishwoman and widow of Blake's biographer who fell in love with the poet via his poems, published the first feminist defense of his writings in 1870, declared her passion in 1871, and followed him to Philadelphia in 1876 in the hopes of marrying him. Whitman gently fended off her romantic advances; calling her his "best-woman-friend," he cherished their platonic bond long after her return to England, and following her death he remained close to her son Herbert. That Whitman never considered the poem worthy of publication may have been in part due to its personal nature, but was more likely a function of his feeling that he had uttered its message in far more sweepingly significant metaphoric terms elsewhere. For beyond any possible autobiographical implications, "To What You Said" is a poem of universal import—a text ideologically linked to the bold social vision of *Democratic Vistas* on which it was inscribed—one in which Whitman lashes out against the restrictions and repressions imposed by convention ("Behold the customary loves and friendships—the cold guards")—and one in which he offers his message of salvation: that new American salute, a love that is supremely human, that goes beyond the parameters of the merely sexual and beyond the confines of the exclusive, that expresses the poet's belief that he could never belong to one because as Bard he must belong to all.

"To What You Said" offers one of those quintessential moments in contemporary song: a collaboration of America's foremost poet with one of her late, great musical souls. In a voice wrenched from the heart, in a language daring to speak the unspeakable, Walt Whitman and Leonard Bernstein invite the listener to embark on a metaphysical journey in which matter is transformed into fleshy spirit, experience into art, and stasis into flux. "If you want me again, look for me under your boot soles," writes Whitman at the end of "Song of Myself." "Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged/ Missing me in one place search another/I stop somewhere waiting for you."

CHARLES IVES
(1874-1954)

When Ives published his *114 Songs* at his own expense in 1922, he frankly admitted that "some of the songs in this book . . . cannot be sung." For the Danbury-born, Yale-educated, confirmed New Englander, whose family history included his father's service to the Union cause as a Civil War bandmaster, his grandparents's intimacy with Emerson and Margaret Fuller, and his in-laws' friendship with Mark Twain, writing songs was his way of keeping a diary. Each of the diverse compositions in Ives's vocal catalogue represents a spiritual jotting, an almost impressionistic attempt to transfix a moment, a memory, an echo from the depths of his wholly American subconscious. Essentially a melodist, whose innovations in polytonality, polyrhythm, and polytexture gave his work a dissonant modern cast, he incorporated many native folk tunes (more than 150 have been identified) into his compositions. These tunes, drawn from hymns, psalms, camp meetings, spirituals, and band music as well as from earlier American composers such as Stephen Foster, form the particularly rich texture of the art song tapestries he wove.

The Housatonic at Stockbridge not only has an especially apt geographical connection to the Berkshires, but the poem manages, as does Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey on the River Wye,* to convey immortality on the the sleepy Connecticut river that courses through the composer's primal memories. The song, lushly Romantic both poetically and musically, is one of Ives's masterpieces of tone painting. Originally composed as a movement in a series of pieces for orchestra, the piano accompaniment in its eventual format retains vestiges of orchestral coloring.

The group of three short American portraits, *Thoreau, Whitman,* and *Emerson's Duty A,* speak of Ives's profound, life-long sympathy for the Transcendental movement. A fervent admirer of Thoreau's prose, Ives once said that few poems could capture the spontaneity and wildness that *Walden* had. The theme used in this short setting comes from Ives's own *Concord Sonata.* Ives does not permit the interpreter to sing in the opening measures, creating instead a quietly sublime dialogue between spoken voice and hushed piano that accentuates the serenity of Thoreau's prose, which then organically flowers into song at the climactic moment. The entire tone is one of rapt reverie that creates a microcosm of the sounds and sensations of Thoreau's epic experiment.

In his setting of Longfellow's *Children's Hour,* Ives turned to one of the most metrical and accessibly musical of the New England poets. The rhyming line and nostalgic sentiments of the poem evoke a father's tender amusement at the intrusion into his study of his three daughters, each given her own music. The same juxtaposition of wistful humor and melancholy appears in the two-part contrasting piece, *Memories A & B.* The *allegro* first section, in which the composer recalls the naïve excitement of a young boy just before curtain-rise at the opera, is a tongue-in-cheek parody of a Gilbert and Sullivan patter song, while the second half, with its recalled snatch of a sad tune, speaks of Ives's assimilation of the nostalgic melancholy of Stephen Foster.

PAUL BOWLES
(Born 1910)

The exquisitely shaped collection of gritty Tennessee Williams miniatures that composer-author Paul Bowles set in *Blue Mountain Ballads* shares much the same sensibility as the Duke-Robinson songs. With their jazzy blues idiom, crisp irony, and bitter-sweet melancholy, they etch lucid portraits of the decadent, small-town South that shaped the Mississippi-born Williams's mindscape. As in the Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist's better-known plays such as *The Glass Menagerie* or *A Streetcar Named Desire*, each of the songs employs a distinctive narrator whose voice echoes with nostalgia for elusive dreams and a sultriness born of closeted passion and frustrated gentility.

Expatriate Paul Bowles shared with Williams the kind of restlessness that animates a song like "Lonesome Man." Born in New York, the young composer gravitated to Paris at the height of the Jazz Age, where he studied with Copland, Boulanger, and Thomson and cultivated the friendships of literary figures like Williams, Welles, and Saroyan. Traveling extensively throughout Europe in the decades preceding World War II, he eventually settled in Tangiers in 1946, where, after the publication of his successful novel *The Sheltering Sky* in 1949, he has devoted himself increasingly to literature.

"Heavenly Grass," the most Romantically melodic of the four songs, describes the metaphysical voyage from pre-existence through birth and back through death in images that recall Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality* or Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. "Lonesome Man," with its syncopated ragtime rhythms, conjures up the perennial outcast—streetwise and yet secretly vulnerable. "Cabin" recapitulates this feeling of loneliness in the central image, while the tender melody masks the bitter irony of lost innocence. "Sugar in the Cane" is the most overtly jazzy of the four; its raunchy innuendo almost cries out for a dusky, throaty blues sound. Bowles, who often experimented with combining native American rhythms with European idioms in other works like his opera *Yerma* (written for blues singer Libby Holman), manages in *Blue Mountain Ballads* to strike an effective balance between Romantic ethereality and steamy eroticism that has all the summer and smoke of the poems themselves.

General William Booth Enters into Heaven
SIDNEY HOMER
(1864-1953)

Long Time Ago
AARON COPLAND
(1900-1990)

Danny Deever
WALTER DAMROSCH
(1862-1950)

This group of American concert songs evokes a time when American musical life was rich in radio broadcasts of "serious" song programs and when the song recital performed by well-known personalities was a major and much appreciated event in every small city in the nation. Today these nostalgic compositions are often relegated to encore material or—even worse—neglected altogether, despite that fact that they speak eloquently for an era and an ethos that are neither forgotten nor irrelevant. Drawn from the folk roots of an eclectic American culture and set or arranged by serious composers, these three compositions have an emotional spontaneity that strikes an immediate response: they are direct, unforced, sometimes simple, obvious, heart-on-sleeve, yes, even naïve, but they are also always eminently singable and entertaining.

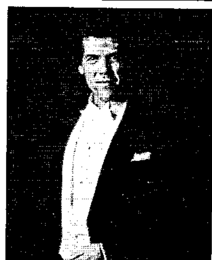
Sidney Homer, husband of the contralto Louise Homer (for whom he wrote many of his vocal compositions) and uncle of composer Samuel Barber, was a prolific songwriter whose works are all but unknown today. Like Ives, he turned frequently to American texts, inspired in this instance by Vachel Lindsay's jazz poetry. With its rousing cadences and meaty, characterful depiction of the evangelical founder of the Salvation Army, *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* is a fascinating musical-poetic portrait of the revivalist movement.

Born in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn to Russian-Jewish immigrants, Aaron Copland, like Griffes, was lured to Europe to pursue his musical studies. In his years in Paris, Copland, now regarded as a quintessential American composer, absorbed a myriad of artistic impulses that would later color his own composition—from the teachings of Goldmark and Boulanger to the sights and sounds of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. Returning to America in the 1920s, he built an energetic career as a composer, educator at Harvard and Tanglewood, and mentor to an entire generation of native musicians. Remembered primarily for his symphonic works, ballets, musical portraits, and his opera *The Tender Land*, Copland did, never-

theless, occasionally write songs. The two sets of *Old American Songs*, from which "Long Time Ago" comes, reflect the composer's interest in American folk tunes—a passion he shared with contemporaries such as Charles Ives. His orchestral and piano arrangements for these traditional melodies were created in 1950 for Peter Pears at the Adelburgh Festival.

Son of the famous German conductor-composer Leopold Damrosch, Walter Damrosch was born in Breslau but spent his adulthood in New York, where his father conducted German seasons at the Metropolitan Opera. Active himself, first as Leopold's assistant, then Seidl's, he eventually went on to conduct the New York Philharmonic, the NBC Symphony, and his own Damrosch Opera Company, while always maintaining an active hand at composition. His operas, incidental music for the theater, and songs are all motivated by an unerring dramatic instinct. Perhaps it was Damrosch's years as an American regimental bandmaster during World War I that drew him to Rudyard Kipling's popular ballad "Danny Deever." The Bombay-born, British-educated Kipling had served as a journalist in the late nineteenth-century Raj and achieved instant celebrity in 1889 with the publication of his dramatic poems and ballads of common men caught in the last throes of the Empire. Drawing on the oral ballad tradition, with its colloquial speech rhythms, and combining this with his affinity for the English music-hall tradition, Kipling produced verse of startling persuasive metrical and psychologically powerful appeal. Damrosch's gripping account of rank-and-file Irish soldiers in India witnessing the hanging of a comrade captures brilliantly Kipling's compulsive beat and unmistakable local color, at the same time that he grafts onto the folksy ballad style an operatic instinct for moving melodrama—reasons, no doubt, for the Rough-Rider himself, Teddy Roosevelt, to declare this composition his favorite song!

Meet the Artists



Internationally acclaimed baritone **Thomas Hampson** divides his time among the worlds of opera, concert, lieder, and recording while maintaining an active interest in teaching and musical research. The thirty-eight-year-old singer, who hails from Spokane, Washington, studied with Sr. Marietta Coyle, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Martial Singher, and Horst Günther before making his operatic debut in Düsseldorf in 1981 and then moving on to Zurich, where he participated in the Harnoncourt/Jean-Pierre Ponnelle Mozart cycle, performing the title role in *Don Giovanni* and the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro*. In addition to these signature parts, which Mr. Hampson has sung in such places as Salzburg, Vienna, Munich, Florence, and New York, the baritone's opera repertory on stage and on disc includes Guglielmo and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Valentin in *Faust*, Roland in Schubert's *Fierrabras*, the Dark Fiddler in Delius' *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, Posa in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, and the title roles in Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno di Ulisse in Patria*, Hans Werner Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg*, Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*, and Britten's *Billy Budd*. Mr. Hampson has appeared in concert as soloist under the baton of conductors such as Leonard Bernstein, James Levine, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Seiji Ozawa, Klaus Tennstedt, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Daniel Barenboim in a wide range of repertory from Monteverdi to Mahler that includes Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, Mendelssohn's *Die erste Walpurgis Nacht*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and Brahms's *German Requiem*. A committed song recitalist, the baritone has devoted special attention to the works of Mahler and Schumann, as well as to American composers such as Copland, Griffes, Ives, MacDowell, and Bernstein. Accompanied by Geoffrey Parsons, his 1989 recital debut recording for Teldec, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, received four major international awards, and subsequent song recordings have focused on Schumann's *Kerner* and *Andersen Lieder*, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* and *Kindertotenlieder*, Rossini and Meyerbeer songs, and Cole Porter and Stephen Foster melodies. Mr. Hampson is also featured in a series of important revival recordings of musicals such as *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and *On the Town*. In addition to giving master classes in St. Paul, Minnesota; Liberty, Missouri; and at Tanglewood and pursuing research projects such as co-editing the new critical edition of Mahler songs (Universal 1993), re-examining Schumann's *20 Lieder und Gesänge aus dem Lyrischen Intermezzo* of Heine, collecting settings of Walt Whitman, or unearthing neglected gems of American song, the baritone spent the closing months of 1993 giving 14 recitals and concerts throughout the United States and Canada, prior to debuting as Chorbe in *Les Troyens* and reprising Rossini's *Figaro* at

the Metropolitan Opera in December. After ringing in the New Year 1994 in New York with *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and making his Houston Symphony debut in January with Copland's *Old American Songs* and Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, the baritone appeared on the operatic stage in Munich as Don Giovanni and Vienna as Figaro and then returned to the recital platform, touring 14 European cities in February and March and 13 North American ones in the spring. He will head west in September to create the leading role of Valmont in the San Francisco Opera's world premiere of Conrad Susa's opera *Les Liaisons Dangèreuses*. Ever active before the studio microphones, Mr. Hampson's recent recording projects have included a recital of Berlioz, Liszt. and Wagner songs as well as the complete Mahler piano lieder from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (both with Geoffrey Parsons), Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe*, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* with Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles* under Michael Tilsson Thomas, the choral works of Elinor Remick Warren with Bruce Ferden conducting, a recital of songs set to Walt Whitman texts, an album of German arias, and Mozart's *Idomeneo*. Among the most recent honors accorded Mr. Hampson have been an honorary Doctorate of Music from Whitworth College and the recognition as Classical Singer of the Year 1993.

Pianist **Craig Rutenberg** studied with Pierre Bernac and Geoffrey Parsons before working at the San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, and l'Opéra-Comique de Paris. He has been accompanist for Erie Mills, Sumi Jo, Olaf Br, Stanford Olsen, and Régine Crespin and has often worked with his partner of tonight. Mr. Rutenberg can be heard on the fortepiano on the Deutsche Grammophon recording of *Le nozze di Figaro* featuring Thomas Hampson as the Count, James Levine conducting. Mr. Rutenberg has served as head of the music staff of the Metropolitan Opera and is currently on the faculty of Yale University as associate professor of music; he regularly gives master classes at the Chautauqua Institute, the Santa Fe Opera, the Wolf Trap Opera, and l'Ecole d'Art Lyrique de la Bastille, Paris.

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