



THE 18/19 SEASON
THE HEIGHTS OF IMAGINATION

New York Area Premiere!

The Crossing

Donald Nally, conductor

with the strings of International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

the national anthems

Music of David Lang, Caroline Shaw, and Ted Hearne



Photo by Peter Serling

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Alexander Kasser Theater

**Arts + Cultural
Programming**



**MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY**

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Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts

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THE CROSSING

Katy Avery

Nathaniel Barnett

Julie Bishop

Karen Blanchard

Steven Bradshaw

Colin Dill

Micah Dingler

Robert Eisentrout

Ryan Fleming

Joanna Gates

Dimitri German

Steven Hyder

Michael Jones

Heidi Kurtz

Chelsea Lyons

Rebecca Myers

Becky Oehlers

Jack Reeder

Alissa Ruth

Daniel Schwartz

Rebecca Siler

Daniel Spratlan

Elisa Sutherland

Shari Wilson

Donald Nally, conductor

John Grecia, keyboards

**INTERNATIONAL
CONTEMPORARY
ENSEMBLE (ICE)**

Josh Modney, violin

Salley Koo, violin

Wendy Richman, viola

Chris Gross, cello

Lizzie Burns, double bass

Program

Consent (2014)

To the Hands (2016) from *Seven Responses**

What It Might Say (2016) from *Jeff Quartets**

Ted Hearne (b. 1982)

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Hearne

~~Pause~~

the national anthems (2014)

David Lang (b. 1957)

First Impressions: Join composer David Lang, conductor Donald Nally, and Peak Performances' executive director Jedediah Wheeler to share impressions and reactions to the performance.

*written for The Crossing

To the Hands was commissioned by The Crossing for the project *Seven Responses* in 2016. *What It Might Say* was commissioned by The Crossing for the project *Jeff Quartets* in 2016.

This engagement of The Crossing is funded through the Mid Atlantic Tours program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Duration: 60 minutes, with one brief pause.

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.

About the Artists

The Crossing is a professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and dedicated to new music. It is committed to working with creative teams to make and record new, substantial works for choir that explore and expand ways of writing for choir, singing in choir, and listening to music for choir. Many of its more than 70 commissioned premieres address social, environmental, and political issues.

With a commitment to recording its commissions, The Crossing has issued 14 releases, receiving a Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance in 2018, its second nomination in as many years. The Crossing, with Donald Nally, is the American Composers Forum's 2017 Champion of New Music. They are the recipients of the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, three ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, and the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award from Chorus America. crossingchoir.org

The Crossing is represented by Alliance Artist Management.
allianceartistmanagement.com

The **International Contemporary Ensemble** (ICE) is an artist collective that is transforming the way music is created and experienced. As performer, curator, and educator, ICE explores how new music intersects with communities across the world. The ensemble's 35 members are featured as soloists, chamber musicians, commissioners, and collaborators with the foremost musical artists of our time.

A recipient of the American Music Center's Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, ICE was also named the 2014 Musical America Ensemble of the Year. The group currently serves as artists-in-residence at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart Festival and previously led a five-year residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

New initiatives include OpenICE, made possible with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which offers free concerts and related programming wherever ICE performs and enables a working process with composers to unfold in public settings. DigitICE, a free online library of over 350 streaming videos, catalogues the

ensemble's performances. ICE's First Page program is a commissioning consortium that fosters close collaborations between performers, composers, and listeners as new music is developed. EntICE, a side-by-side education program, places ICE musicians within youth orchestras as they premiere new commissioned works together. Yamaha Artist Services New York is the exclusive piano provider for ICE. iceorg.org

Donald Nally (Conductor) is responsible for imagining, programming, commissioning, and conducting at The Crossing. He is also the director of choral organizations at Northwestern University, where he holds the John W. Beattie Chair of Music. Nally has served as chorus master at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and for many seasons at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. With The Crossing, Nally was the American Composers Forum 2017 Champion of New Music; he received the 2017 Michael Korn Founders Award from Chorus America and is the only conductor to have two ensembles receive the Margaret Hillis Award for Excellence in Choral Music. This season, Nally is visiting resident artist at the Park Avenue Armory.

Program Notes

TED HEARNE (b. 1982)

Consent

Text culled by the composer, from the following sources:

Love letters the composer wrote in 2006

Love letters the composer's father wrote in 1962

The Catholic Rite of Marriage

Traditional Jewish Ketubah (Wedding contract)

Text messages by Trent Mays and Lucas Herrington, used as evidence in the Steubenville Rape Trial, 2013

A note from the composer:

“The purpose of these untranslated and mystical utterances was to sidestep the Devil and to reach God directly.”

—Teju Cole, in an essay about *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* and the tradition of “speaking in tongues.”

“There is a gestalt that orders things together, and if you pull back further, there’s another order there; the things are arranged as they are for some reason, it might not be a rational reason, but there is a reason.”

—David Byrne, regarding his album with Talking Heads, *Speaking in Tongues*

I originally wrote *Consent* to be paired with a performance of the remarkably beautiful motet *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* by Thomas Tallis, in which the composer sets the text “the apostles spoke in different tongues.”

The above ideas—that to communicate with the holy spirit one had to bypass language entirely, that the structure and meaning of language is inextricably linked to the power structures and hierarchies that created it—set me on a journey to explore language that might have a duplicitous role in my own life.

The text for *Consent* is a juxtaposition of passages from five different sources: love letters I wrote in 2002, love letters my father wrote in 1962, the Catholic Rite of Marriage, the traditional Jewish Ketubah (wedding contract), and text messages by high-school students Trent Mays and Lucas Herrington that were used as evidence in the infamous Steubenville Rape Trial in 2013. I set these words in order to explore my personal relationship to gender inequality and our connection to language that justifies sexual violence.

Text:

i want you

i want to

i want you

i want to

i want you

i want to

I do.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you

It will be good, we can do it, and we need it.

It can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you

It will be good, we can do it, and we need it

I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—

It can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back.

I do.

I just took care of your daughter.

* * *

Declare your consent

The missing you hurts

You'll be in it soon

What a way to feel

Who gives this woman

* * *

i want you

i want to

All of it shall be mortgageable—

I just took care of your daughter

and bound as security—

she said you could take a picture

i want you

i want to

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe

she was so in love with me that night

I ask you to state your intentions

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—

it can be taken from me, even from the shirt on my back—

during my lifetime and after this lifetime,

this day and forever.

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe
she said you could take a picture
she looks dead lmao

* * *

I do.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you
It will be good, we can do it, and we need it.
I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way
I'm really looking forward to adding to it

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—
it can be taken from me, even from the shirt on my back—
during my lifetime and after this lifetime,
this day and forever.

How have you been holding out on me with that picture for so long?
she said you could take a picture
oh i am looking at all my pictures of you

You don't even want to know what I'm imagining you doing right now
she was so in love with me that night

Declare your consent before God

I just took care of your daughter when she was drunk

* * *

This original amount, I accept upon myself and my heirs after me—
It can be paid from the best part of my property and possessions
that I own under all the heavens.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security—
it can be taken from me—even from the shirt on my back—
during my lifetime and after this lifetime—
from this day and forever.

even from the shirt on my back
she said you could take a picture
I refuse to get excited

Will you accept children lovingly from God?

Declare your consent before God and the church.

I felt knowing what was right

she looks dead lmao
i just took care of your daughter
but i also know we are equal to almost any...
she said you could take a picture
Who gives this woman?

CAROLINE SHAW (b. 1982)

To the Hands

commissioned for The Crossing's *Seven Responses*, 2016

A note from the composer:

How does one respond to an image of another person's pain? And how does one respond to the music of another artist who is trying to ask that same question? These are the two queries that anchored my approach to The Crossing's incredible *Seven Responses* project. *To the Hands* begins and ends with strains of Buxtehude's own *Ad manus*, with small harmonic and melodic references woven occasionally throughout. The division of the piece into six parts reflects the partitioning of *Membra Jesu Nostri*, and I continued the tradition of blending old text with new.

The first movement acts as a prelude and turns the opening tune of *Ad manus* into a wordless plainchant melody. The second movement fragments Buxtehude's setting of the central question, "*quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum*," or "what are these wounds in the midst of your hands?" It settles finally on an inversion of the question, so that we reflect, "What are these wounds in the midst of our hands?" We notice what may have been done to us, but we also question what we have done and what our role has been in these wounds we see before us.

The text that follows in the third movement is a riff on Emma Lazarus's sonnet "The New Colossus," famous for its engraving at the base of the Statue of Liberty. The poem's lines "Give me your tired, your poor,/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and its reference to the statue's "beacon-hand" present a very different image of a hand—one that is open, beckoning, and strong. No wounds are to be found there—only comfort for those caught in a dangerous and complex

environment. While the third movement operates in broad strokes from a distance, the fourth zooms in on the map so far that we see the intimate scene of an old woman in her home, maybe setting the table for dinner alone. Who is she, where has she been, whose lives has she left? This simple image melts into a meditation on the words *in caverna* from the Song of Solomon, found in Buxtehude's fourth section, *Ad latus*.

In the fifth movement the harmony is passed around from one string instrument to another, overlapping only briefly, while numerical figures are spoken by the choir. These are global figures of internally displaced persons, by country, sourced from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data reported in May 2015 (accessed on 03/20/2016 at www.internal-displacement.org). Sometimes data is the cruelest and most honest poetry.

The sixth and final movement unfolds the words *in caverna* into the tumbling and comforting promise of “ever ever”—“ever ever will I hold you, ever ever will I enfold you.” They could be the words of Christ, or of a parent or friend or lover, or even of a nation.

Text:

I.

Prelude: wordless

II.

in medio. in medio.

in medio manuum tuarum

quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum

quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum nostrarum

in the midst. in the midst.

in the midst of your hands

what are those wounds in the midst of your hands

what are those wounds in the midst of our hands

—from Buxtehude's *Ad manus* (Zechariah 13:6, adapted by the composer, with the addition of “*in medio manuum nostrarum*” [“in the midst of our hands”])

III.

Her beacon-hand beckons:

give

give to me

those yearning to breathe free

tempest-tossed they cannot see

what lies beyond the olive tree

whose branch was lost amid the pleas

for mercy, mercy

give

give to me

your tired fighters fleeing flying

from the

from the

from

let them

i will be your refuge

i will be your refuge

i will be

i will be

we will be

we will

—the composer, responding to the 1883 sonnet “The New Colossus”
by Emma Lazarus, which was mounted on the pedestal of the Statue
of Liberty in 1903

IV.

ever ever ever

in the window sills or

the beveled edges

of the aging wooden frames that hold

old photographs

hands folded

folded

gently in her lap
ever ever
in the crevices
the never-ending efforts of
the grandmother's tendons tending
to her bread and empty chairs
left for elijahs
where are they now
in caverna
in caverna

—the composer; the final line, "*in caverna*," is drawn from Buxtehude's *Ad latus*, from the Song of Songs; "in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow of the cliff"

V.

The choir speaks global figures of internally displaced persons, by country. Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data as of May 2015. (Accessed on 03/01/2016 at www.internal-displacement.org/global-figures.)

VI.

i will hold you
i will hold you
ever ever will i hold you
ever ever will i enfold you
in medio in medio

—the composer, with the final line a reprise from the original Zechariah text

HEARNE

What It Might Say

commissioned for The Crossing's *Jeff Quartets*, 2016

Setting an excerpt from "Communication between infant and mother, and mother and infant, compared and contrasted" (1968) by D.W. Winnicott (1896–1971), adapted by the composer

Text:

So in the end we can come down to the fact that the baby communicates creatively and in time becomes able to use what is found. For most people the ultimate compliment is to be found and used, and I suppose, therefore, that these words could represent the communication of the baby with the mother.

I find you;

You survive what I do to you as I come to
recognize you as not-me;

I use you;

I forget you;

But you remember me;

I keep forgetting you;

I lose you;

I am sad.

DAVID LANG (b. 1957)

the national anthems

A note from the composer:

Every country has a history—how it came to be, how its wars were won or lost, how strong its people are, or how proud, or how sad. We group ourselves into nations, but it has never really been clear to me what that means, or what we get out of it. Are we grouped together because we believe something together and are proud of associating with others who believe the same way? Or are we grouped together because our ancestors found themselves pushed onto a piece of land by people who didn't want them on theirs? It seems that all nations have some bright periods and some dark periods in their past. Building a national myth out of our bright memories probably creates a different character than if we build one out of the dark.

I had the idea that if I looked carefully at every national anthem I might be able to identify something that everyone in the world could agree on. If I could take just one hopeful sentence from the national anthem of every nation in the world I might be able to make a kind of meta-anthem of the things that we all share. I started

combing through the anthems, pulling out from each the sentence that seemed to me the most committed. What I found, to my shock and surprise, was that within almost every anthem is a bloody, warlike, tragic core in which we cover up our deep fears of losing our freedoms with waves of aggression and bravado.

At first I didn't know what to do with this text. I didn't want to make a piece that was aggressive, or angry, or ironic. Instead, I read and re-read the meta-anthem I had made until another thought became clear to me. Hiding in every national anthem is the recognition that we are insecure about our freedoms, that freedom is fragile, and delicate, and easy to lose. Maybe an anthem is a memory informing a kind of prayer, a heartfelt plea:

*There was a time when we were forced to live in chains.
Please don't make us live in chains again.*

Text:

I.

our land with peace
our land with swords
all of us are brave
we have one wish
we have one goal
we swear by lightning
and by our fragrant blood
heaven gave us life
and we alone remain
we fight for peace
our country calls us
and we hear her call
we hear the sound of our chains breaking
we crown ourselves in glory and we die
death is the same for everyone
but dying for our land will make us blessed
for we are young and free
land with mountain

land with river
land with field
if you need our death
our blood, our heart, our soul
we are ready
we lift our heads up to the rising sun
our peace
our values
our skies
our hearts
our songs
our tears
our time
our land
our seed
our pride
we have no doubts or fears
our faithful friends
are faithful in the battle
our land, we swear to you
our blood is yours to spill
keep watch, angels
keep watch, stars
keep watch, moon
our parents knew how to fight
the sun will shine on us forever
when the wicked come
let them prepare for death
for we would rather die
than live as slaves
our land, you fill our souls with fire
our blessed land
our parents left this land to us
our hearts defy our deaths

a vivid ray of love and hope descends
upon us and our land
bless us with long life
our land is love and beauty without end
harvest our vows, which ripen underneath your sun
our land, to lead a peaceful life
we give our lives
we were wounded
we were bruised
then we rose up
our past is sleeping in our forests
you are our garden
and our grave

II.
our hearts are glowing
sing brother, sister
our freedom must be sung
we were slaves
we were scorned
but now, our future is ours
our flowers
our fields
our fertile soil
we will die before we let
the wicked step upon them
we are not slaves
we are the seed that sprouts
upon the fields of pain
we are one blood
on our land we were born
our heads were bowed—
now raise them
we are wild with joy
and if we have to die

what does it matter?
our children know
the fight has made our faces glow
sweet shelter
kissed by our sun, our trees, our wind
we don't fear death
die for our land and live
we know our selves
by our terrifying sword
ours is our land
ours is our beautiful land
our land is where
our heroes rest
our earth
our sky
our peace
our blood
these are our gifts
we broke our chains
united, firm, determined
our face is brighter than our sun
we are our loyal guardian
in each of us the hero remembers how to fight
we walk the path of happiness
to our rightful place
with our last breath
we thank ourselves

III.
fame and glory
fame and glory
no valley
no hill
no water

no shore
the bloody flag is raised
the wicked howl
they come to cut our throats
to throw us back in chains
no sorcerers
no poison
no deceivers
no fear
we strive
we work
we pray
our star rises up
and shines between two seas
our heart and hand
are the pledges of our fortune
with mind and strength of arm
we recognize ourselves
by our terrifying sword
with heads, with hearts, with hands
we will die before we are made slaves
our historic past
our sun, our sweat, our sea
our pain, our hope
the flower of our blood
branches of the same trunk
eyes in the same light
the sea, the land, the dawn, the sun are singing
our parents never saw the glory that we see
we turn our faces up
there is a star, the clearest light
bring us happier times and ways
each day is like a thousand years
victory, victory, victory

long live our land, our people, our body, our soul
the light in our eyes is the brilliance of our faith
will we see you?
our woe or our wealth
our eyes turn east
we are awake

IV.
keep us free
be our light
until pebbles turn to boulders
and are covered in moss
our light and our guide
golden sun, golden seed
fill our hearts with thanks
when our hearts beat as one
show us the way
until the mountains wear away
and the seas run dry
be safe and be glorious
build our own fortune
move forward
our sons sing
our daughters bloom
our parents and our children
await our call
our peace
our rain
be green
we are your sacrifice
fortunate and faithful
the sun drives off the clouds
we risk everything
we sing new songs

for you, for you, for ever
our love, our zeal, our loyalty
our land, where our blood spills
our fields will flower with hope
our land gives us our name
and we will never leave
we walk the path we have chosen
we will die while we are on it
our land, sweet is your beauty
a thousand heroes
our full measure of devotion
our language is a burning flame
our flag flies in the wind
our unwavering land
our rocky hills
from where our lights rise up
our name is freedom
our blood waters it
we pray for you
woven from a hundred flowers
we won't let the wicked wash their hands
in this guiltless blood of ours
may our blessings flow
let nothing dim the light
that's shining in our sky
a single leap
into the dazzling sky
obey our call
we are not many
but we are enough
be happy
and may our land be happy
interpret our past
glorify our present

inspire our future
we are coming forth
with strength and power
our seas roar at our feet
shout our name
shout it again
there is no middle ground
between the free man and the slave
may the light be denied us
if we break our solemn vow
the burning of the heart
in our chests is alive
our land will not die
as long as we live
the rays of the sun
are a mother's kiss
we swear by the sky
by the spreading light
now, or never
we will make our fate ourselves
it was, it is, it will always be
at last, our pride is worth our pride

V.
our common fate
our brighter day
our loyalty and love and vow
our crown
our virtuous honor
our sacred hymn of combat
our light, reflecting guidance
our sword with no flaw
our sepulcher of ages
our only land

our voices on high
our noble aspiration
our thunders, wildly beating
our fire in every vein
our tears, flowing down our cheeks
our everlasting mountains
our milk, our honey, our people working hard
our different voices, our one heart
our breath of life
our death, our glory and our land
our fight—there is a fight to fight
our fair land, its hills and rivers
our memories of days long gone
our morning skies, grown red
our sacred home, our suns that never set
our future is the future, our meaning is the meaning
our shields are wisdom, unity and peace
our sacrifice of every drop of blood
our love, our service, our untiring zeal
our prayer for us, unseen
our fires of hope and prayer
our thunderbolts, our fire
our star, and it will shine forever
our light and song and soul
our song forever more
our own dear land
our fate, which smiles once more
our sacrifice, our blood, our souls
our enemies, scattered and confounded
our land, our home, our free, our brave
our land, our grave
our glory, for as long as the world shines
our many ways before and our many ways today
our rock, our beacon

our scream out loud
our steps, resounding on the long and tiring road
our song—echoing over and over again
our brothers and sisters under the sun

may the rains come

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