

Albion

Henry Purcell, Matthew Locke, and Nicholas Lanier

Songs and Incidental Music

Nicholas Phan, tenor

Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

Overture and Air from *King Arthur*

Sweeter Than Roses

She Loves and She Confesses Too (arr. René Schiffer)

Matthew Locke (1621–1677)

Lilk and Curtain Tune from *The Tempest*

Nicholas Lanier (1588–1666)

No More Shall Meads be Deck'd With Flowers (arr. René Schiffer)

Matthew Locke (1621–1677)

Prelude to Act V from *The Fairy Queen*

Evening Hymn (arr. René Schiffer)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Concerto Grosso

Intrada

Burlesca Ostinata

Sarabande

Scherzo

March and Reprise

INTERMISSION

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Serenade for tenor, horn, and strings, Op. 31

Nicholas Phan, tenor

Hazel Dean Davis, horn

Prologue

Pastoral

Nocturne

Elegy

Dirge

Hymn

Sonnet

Epilogue

Join us following the performance for a Q & A from the stage.

VIOLIN

Annie Rabbat
Gabriela Diaz
Gergana Haralampieva
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VIOLA

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CELLO

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Michael Unterman
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BASS

Evan Premo
Karl Doty

HORN

Hazel Dean Davis

THEORBO

Catherine Liddell



In its 10 years, the Grammy-nominated string orchestra A FAR CRY has taken an omnivorous approach to its music-making. Known for high energy, according to the New York Times, A Far Cry “brims with personality or, better, personalities, many and varied.” A Far Cry was founded in 2007 by a tightly-knit collective of young professional musicians, and since the beginning has fostered those personalities. The self-conducted orchestra has developed an innovative process where decisions are made collectively and leadership rotates among the Criers. This democratic structure has helped generate consistently thoughtful, innovative, and unpredictable programming leading to collaborations with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Jake Shimabukuro, Gabriel Kahane, and Urbanity Dance. Whether playing a new commission from composers such as Ted Hearne, Caroline Shaw, or Andrew Norman, or a work by Mozart, Haydn, or Piazzolla—A Far Cry takes audiences on a unique ride.

The 18 Criers are proud to call Boston home, rehearsing at their storefront music center in Jamaica Plain and presenting a nine-concert series, with performances at both New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall and St. John’s Episcopal Church in Jamaica Plain. A Far Cry has also been Chamber Orchestra in Residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum since 2011. A Far Cry’s innovative hometown programming has garnered the group a national reputation. An insightful perspective, along with a propensity for engaging collaboration, are the group’s hallmarks.

In 2014, A Far Cry launched its in-house label, Crier Records, with the album *Dreams and Prayers*, which met with critical acclaim and a Grammy nomination. The second release, *Law of Mosaics*, was included on many 2014 Top-10 lists, notably from New Yorker music critic Alex Ross and WQXR's Q2 Music, which named A Far Cry as one of the "Imagination-Grabbing, Trailblazing Artists of 2014."

In 2016-17, A Far Cry celebrated its tenth anniversary by, as the Boston Globe says, "moving ever forward." Energetic and insightful programs were on display in the group's ambitious subscription series in Boston, residency concerts at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and increased tour activity (with concerts at the National Gallery of Art, University of Michigan's University Musical Society, and the Celebrity Series of Boston). The season also featured an impressive list of collaborators, including the adventurous vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, the Silk Road Ensemble, jazz pianist and composer Vijay Iyer, and clarinetist David Krakauer.

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Named one of NPR's "Favorite New Artists of 2011," American tenor NICHOLAS PHAN is increasingly recognized as an artist of distinction. Praised for his keen intelligence, captivating stage presence and natural musicianship, he performs regularly with the world's leading orchestras and opera companies. Also an avid recitalist, in 2010 he co-founded the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago (CAIC) to promote art song and vocal chamber music.

In the summer of 2017, he returns to the San Francisco Symphony for Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette* with Michael Tilson Thomas, to the Oregon Bach Festival, to the Thüringer Bachwochen's Weimar Bach Academy, and to Wolf Trap for Carmina Burana with the National Symphony Orchestra and Gianandrea Noseda. Highlights of his upcoming 2017/2018 season include his debuts with the Minnesota Orchestra for Bach's Christmas Oratorio, and the Orquestra Sinfônica de São Paulo for Britten's War Requiem with Marin Alsop; and returns to the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Philharmonia Baroque, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony for Schubert's Mass in E-flat with Riccardo Muti, and the Toronto Symphony for performances as the title role in Bernstein's *Candide*. He also serves as artistic director of two festivals next season: Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago's sixth annual Collaborative Works Festival, and as the first singer to be guest Artistic Director of the Laguna Beach Music Festival.

Mr. Phan has appeared with many of the leading orchestras in the North America and Europe, including the Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Philharmonia Baroque, Boston Baroque, Les Violons du Roy, BBC Symphony, English Chamber Orchestra, Strasbourg Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra of London, and the Lucerne Symphony. He has also toured extensively throughout the major concert halls of Europe with Il Complesso Barocco, and appeared with the Oregon Bach, Ravinia, Marlboro, Edinburgh, Rheingau, Saint-Denis, and Tanglewood festivals, as well as the BBC Proms. Among the conductors he has worked with are Marin Alsop, Harry Bicket, Pierre Boulez, James Conlon, Alan Curtis, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Charles Dutoit, Jane Glover, Manfred Honeck, Bernard Labadie, Louis Langrée, Nicholas McGegan, Zubin Mehta, John Nelson, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Helmuth Rilling, David Robertson, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Masaaki Suzuki, Michael Tilson Thomas and Franz Welser-Möst.

An avid proponent of vocal chamber music, he has collaborated with many chamber musicians, including pianists Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode, Jeremy Denk, Graham Johnson, Roger Vignoles, Myra Huang and Alessio Bax; violinist James Ehnes; guitarist Eliot Fisk; harpist Sivan Magen; and horn players Jennifer Montone, Radovan Vlatkovic and Gail Williams. In both recital and chamber concerts, he has been presented by Carnegie Hall, London's Wigmore Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Atlanta's Spivey Hall, Boston's Celebrity Series, and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. In 2010, he co-founded the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago, an organization that promotes the art song and vocal chamber music repertoire of which he is Artistic Director.

Mr. Phan's many opera credits include appearances with the Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Chicago Opera Theater, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, Maggio Musicale in Florence, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and Frankfurt Opera. His growing repertoire includes the title roles in Bernstein's *Candide*, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, and Lurcanio in *Ariodante*.

Phan's most recent solo album, *Gods and Monsters*, was released on Avie Records in January. His first three solo albums, *A Painted Tale*, *Still Fall the Rain* and *Winter Words*, made many "best of" lists, including those of the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Boston Globe*. Phan's growing discography also includes a Grammy-nominated recording of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony, the opera *L'Olimpiade* with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, Scarlatti's *La gloria di Primavera* with Philharmonia Baroque, Bach's *St. John Passion* (in which he sings both the Evangelist as well as the tenor arias) with Apollo's Fire, and the world premiere recordings of two orchestral song cycles: *The Old Burying Ground* by Evan Chambers and Elliott Carter's *A Sunbeam's Architecture*.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Mr. Phan is the 2012 recipient of the Paul C Boylan Distinguished Alumni Award. He also studied at the Manhattan School of Music and the Aspen Music Festival and School, and is an alumnus of the Houston Grand Opera Studio. He was the recipient of a 2006 Sullivan Foundation Award and 2004 Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation.

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Song Texts

“Sweeter than roses” (Henry Purcell)

Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze
On a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss,
First trembling made me freeze,
Then shot like fire all o'er.
What magic has victorious love!
For all I touch or see since that dear kiss,
I hourly prove, all is love to me.

—*Anonymous*

“She loves and she confesses too” (Henry Purcell)

She loves and she confesses too,
There's then at last no more to do;
The happy work's entirely done,
Enter the town which thou hast won;
The fruits of conquest now begin,
Lo, triumph, enter in.
What's this, ye Gods? What can it be?
Remains there still an enemy?
Bold Honour stands up in the gate,
And would yet capitulate.
Have I o'ercome all real foes,
And shall this phantom me oppose?
Noisy nothing, stalking shade,
By what witchcraft wert thou made,
Thou empty cause of solid harms?
But I shall find out counter charms,
Thy airy devilship to remove
From this circle here of love
Sure I shall rid myself of thee
By the night's obscurity,
And obscurer secrecy;
Unlike to ev'ry other spright
Thou attempt'st not men to affright
Nor appear'st but in the light.

—*Abraham Cowley (1618–1667)*

“No more shall meads be deck’d with flow’rs” (Nicholas Lanier)

No more shall meads be deck’d with flow’rs,
Nor sweetness live in rosy bow’rs,
Nor greenest buds on branches spring,
Nor warbling birds delight to sing,
Nor April violets paint the grove,
When once I leave my Celia’s love.

The fish shall in the ocean burn,
And fountains sweet shall bitter turn;
The humble vale no floods shall know,
When floods shall highest hills o’erflow:
Black Lethe shall oblivion leave,
Before my Celia I deceive.

Love shall his bow and shafts lay by,
And Venus’ doves want wings to fly:
The sun refuse to show his light,
And day shall then be turned to night;
And in that night no star appear,
Whene’er I leave my Celia dear.

Love shall no more inhabit Earth,
Nor lovers more shall love for worth;
Nor joy above in Heaven dwell,
Nor pain torment poor souls in hell:
Grim Death no more shall horrid prove,
Whene’er I leave bright Celia’s love.

—*Thomas Carew (1595–1640)*

Evening Hymn (Henry Purcell)

Now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world goodnight;
To the soft bed my body I dispose,
But where shall my soul repose?

Dear, dear God, even in Thy arms,
And can there be any so sweet security!
Then to thy rest, O my soul!
And singing, praise the mercy
That prolongs thy days.

Hallelujah!

—*William Fuller (1608–1675)*

Serenade for tenor, horn, and strings, Op. 31 (Benjamin Britten)

Pastoral

The day's grown old; the fainting sun
Has but a little way to run,
And yet his steeds, with all his skill,
Scarce lug the chariot down the hill.

The shadows now so long do grow,
That brambles like tall cedars show;
Mole hills seem mountains, and the ant
Appears a monstrous elephant.

A very little, little flock
Shades thrice the ground that it would stock;
Whilst the small stripling following them
Appears a mighty Polypheme.

And now on benches all are sat,
In the cool air to sit and chat,
Till Phoebus, dipping in the West,
Shall lead the world the way to rest.

—*Charles Cotton (1630–1687)*

Nocturne

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Bugle blow; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

—*Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)*

Elegy

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

—*William Blake (1757–1827)*

Dirge

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle,
Fire and fleete and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art past,
Every nighte and alle,
To Whinnymuir thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st hos'n and shoon,
Every nighte and alle,
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hos'n and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,
Every nighte and alle,
The winnies shall prick thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinnymuir when thou may'st pass,
Every nighte and alle,
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,
Every nighte and alle,
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st meat or drink,
Every nighte and alle,
The fire shall never make thee shrink;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,
Every nighte and alle,
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle,
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

—*Lyke Wake Dirge, Anonymous (15th century)*

Hymn

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heav'n to clear when day did close;
 Bless us then with wishèd sight,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short so-ever:
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright.

—*Ben Jonson (1572–1637)*

Sonnet

O soft embalmer of the still midnight!
Shutting with careful fingers and benign
Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine;
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close
In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,
Or wait the "Amen" ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities.
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, -
Save me from curious Conscience, that still lords
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,
And seal the hushèd Casket of my Soul.

—John Keats (1795–1821)

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Program Notes

MATTHEW LOCKE (1621–1677), HENRY PURCELL (1659–1695) SONGS AND INCIDENTAL MUSIC

Opera as a genre is often said to have arrived at the first full expression of its creative and artistic potential in Italy with Claudio Monteverdi's 1607 production of *L'Orfeo*. It was soon all the rage in court entertainment for the European continent, but it took a while to take hold across the channel in England. Two reasons that are sometimes noted for this slow embrace were the English love of the spoken word in the form of plays and dramas (Shakespeare died in 1616), and the national turmoil of the Civil Wars that resulted in the Puritan influence of closing the Theaters.

So what were the English doing for court entertainment? A genre called the masque was immensely popular, as were semi-operas. The masque was a precursor of the opera, and the semi-opera landed somewhere between. Both relied on stage machinery, songs, and dances, and included spoken dialogue, whereas opera nixed the spoken dialogue in favor of recitative in order to have the entire production sung.

Two of the great composers of the English royal court who were responsible for such entertainments were Matthew Locke, and his successor, Henry Purcell. Locke studied with members of the Gibbons family (their most famous son being Orlando), and Purcell came from a family of musicians all associated with the chapel royal. Though Locke has, unfortunately, faded from the public eye, during his lifetime he reached the pinnacle of success writing the coronation music for Charles II, and as master of the King's 24 violins. Purcell gained wider, and more permanent, fame, and is still heralded as one of the greatest English composers to ever live—particularly for his talent in setting the language to song (Benjamin Britten was a life-long fan). Dr. Charles Burney, the English musicologist who penned his massive history of music just as the American colonies were declaring independence, wrote that Purcell was "...as much the pride of an Englishman in Music as Shakespeare in productions for the stage, Milton in epic poetry, [John] Locke in metaphysics, or Sir Isaac Newton in philosophy and mathematics."

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872–1958) CONCERTO GROSSO

Vaughan Williams came from a prestigious line of English families, particularly on his mother's side. Margaret Vaughan Williams' maiden name was Wedgwood. She was the daughter of Josiah Wedgwood III, grandson of the famous English potter Josiah Wedgwood, and Caroline Darwin, older sister of Charles. Unlike some young composers who were pressured to go into the family profession (in this case, law), Ralph was encouraged to indulge in his love for music. He studied piano, organ, violin, and viola, but it became increasingly clear that what he liked to do was compose. In addition to eventual studies at Cambridge University, he spent some time at the Royal College of Music, and also went abroad to study with Max Bruch and Maurice Ravel. It was his dissatisfaction with mimicking the style of others, as well as his love for English folk songs and interest in the history of English music stretching back to the Renaissance that would help him find his own musical voice—a quest he pursued alongside his friend and fellow Englishman, Gustav Holst. The result would be some of the most beautiful, lush, music ever written (*Fantasia on Greensleeves*, *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, *The Lark Ascending*, etc.)

In addition to his prolific life as a composer, Vaughan Williams was also an enthusiastic educator. The Concerto Grosso was written for the Rural Schools Music Association, and was premiered in 1950. In this work, the ensemble is divided into sections playing at varying difficulty levels that are integrated within the traditional concerto grosso structure of a smaller group called the “concertino” performing against the backdrop of the whole ensemble called the “ripieno” or in this case, “tutti.” Vaughan Williams pairs the “advanced” music with the concertino, the “intermediate” with the tutti and adds another grouping, “ad lib,” for the “novice.”

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913–1976) SERENADE FOR TENOR, HORN, AND STRINGS, OP. 31

In 1929 E.M. Forster, the English author best known for *A Room with a View*, *Howard's End*, and *A Passage to India*, sat down in a BBC studio to begin recording what would be a series of broadcasts about the craft of writing. Over five thousand miles away under the golden southern

California sun, Benjamin Britten and his life partner, the vocalist Peter Pears, read an essay entitled *George Crabbe: the Poet and the Man* that Forster had published in the BBC magazine, *The Listener*. That was May 29, 1941.

Britten was extraordinarily musically gifted from an early age (he began composing at age five) and had a keen interest in the world of literature and poetry that would find an outlet through his many vocal works. Discovering the life and work of Crabbe, a fellow Englishman from Suffolk, piqued his interest. By a stroke of fortune Pears happened to come across a collection of Crabbe's in a bookshop. It was the author's vision of a small seaside town portrayed in his long poem, *The Borough*, which captured the composer's imagination. Britten and Pears had come to the United States as pacifists distancing themselves from impending war in Europe. They lived in New York, and then California, but it was Crabbe's hometown of Aldeburgh, and the echoes of seaside life Britten read in the poems that "gave such a feeling of nostalgia for Suffolk" that called them home to England. Eager to start on the new project, Britten began writing out sketches for an opera about one of the poem's characters, Peter Grimes, as they packed and started on their journey across the Atlantic.

While busy with *Peter Grimes*, Britten wrote a handful of works for voice including *A Ceremony of Carols*, the *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, and the *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings*. The *Serenade* was written for the talented young horn player Dennis Brain, whom Britten had met and become acquainted with soon after returning to England. Brain and Pears would give the premiere in London's renowned Wigmore Hall on October 15, 1943. As if displaying an overwhelming gratefulness to be back home, the *Serenade's* lyrics were selected exclusively from British poets and folk songs. That each text reflects on the evening and night (or metaphorical night of death) indicates Britten's acknowledgement of the *serenade* genre's historical context as music to be performed at sunset.

—Kathryn J Allwine Bacasmot

Kathryn J Allwine Bacasmot is a pianist/harpsichordist, musicologist, music and cultural critic, and freelance writer. A graduate of New England Conservatory, she writes program annotations for ensembles nationwide.



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Community Partnerships and Education with A Far Cry

A Far Cry is passionate about music education and works with students to develop skills in musicianship and entrepreneurship, emphasizing deep listening and critical thinking. A Far Cry fosters relationships with community groups and educational institutions across the country and has developed the following partnerships in the city of Boston.

PROJECT STEP

A Far Cry is honored to be participating in its second year of residency activities at Project STEP, a comprehensive string training program for children from underrepresented communities. The residency includes weekly coaching and mentoring sessions as well as performance demonstrations and masterclasses for the entire Project STEP community.

Criers also coach the Project STEP Honors Quartet, which will give a pre-concert performance in Jordan Hall before A Far Cry's May 18th concert, *Next Generation*.



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Open to string students at the New England Conservatory, this fellowship provides a 360-degree view of A Far Cry, including all aspects of administration, rehearsal, and performance. Fellows rehearse and perform in a subscription concert with the ensemble, attend group meetings, work directly with AFC's Executive Director, and participate in musician-run committees. Through this intensive immersion, AFC Fellows are exposed to all aspects of managing and performing in a collaboratively-empowered ensemble.

NEC PREP/A FAR CRY COLLABORATIVE COMPETITION

A Far Cry's competition through New England Conservatory's Preparatory Division offers students ages 13-20 the opportunity to perform with A Far Cry on a chosen piece each season. The competition seeks to recognize talented young chamber musicians and inspire deeper communication through musicianship. The winner is invited to rehearse and perform as a member of the ensemble, experiencing first-hand the sensitivity and discipline necessary to work as part of a self-conducted chamber orchestra.

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