

Program Notes

The songs *Homecoming* and *Quilt* were commissioned by the West Chester University Poetry Conference, West Chester, Pennsylvania, and were premiered by baritone Robert Barefield and pianist Carl Cranmer on June 7, 2003. *Entrance* was written in July, 2003 for inclusion in this set of songs. The song *Everyone Sang* was premiered by Maris Vipulis and pianist Marc Shapiro on April 16, 1998. The four songs are each dedicated to four singer-friends of the composer.

1. Homecoming

It was as if she pulled a thread,
Each time he saw her, that unraveled
All the distance he had traveled
To sleep at home in his own bed,
Or sit together in a room
Spinning yarns of monsters, wars,
The hours counted by the chores.
He loved to watch her at the loom:
The fluent wrists, the liquid motion
Of small tasks not thought about,
The shuttle leaping in and out,
Dolphins sewing the torn ocean.

A. E. Stallings

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“Homecoming” first appeared in *Poetry*.

2. Entrance

Whoever you are: step out of doors tonight,
Out of the room that lets you feel secure,
Infinity is open to your sight.
Whoever you are.
With eyes that have forgotten how to see
From viewing things already too well-known,
Lift up into the dark a huge, black tree
And put it in the heavens: tall, alone.
And you have made the world and all you see.
It ripens like the words still in your mouth.
And when at last you comprehend its truth,
Then close your eyes and gently set it free.

Original words in German by Rainer Maria Rilke.

Translation by Dana Gioia.

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3. Quilt

At night this quiet covers me,
grown ragged on the center seam,
dividing all this history.

I touch the patches always known,
the ones they wrapped me in, passed down
for far too long for anyone

to still remember what was cut,
that it was once a blouse, a skirt
she wore the night he took her heart.

I touch the fields I thought I knew
and smooth the places healed into
each other, at the ridges sewn

with careful secrets mouthed for all
the years she couldn't tell a soul.

Diane Thiel

A version of “Quilt” appeared in Diane Thiel's
Echolocations (Story Line Press, 2000).

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4. Everyone Sang

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields; on- on- and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun:
My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
Drifted away...O, but Everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless;
the singing will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)

David Conte

David Conte has received commissions from many of America's leading performing ensembles, including Chanticleer, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, and the Oakland-East Bay Symphony. He is composer of three operas: *The Dreamers* (Catalog No. 5219) with librettist Philip Littell, *The Gift of the Magi* (Catalog No. 5248) with librettist Nicholas Giardini and *Firebird Motel* (Catalog No. 6269) with librettist David Yezzi. Conte is Professor of Composition at the San Francisco Conservatory.

Commissioned by the West Chester University Poetry Conference West Chester, Pennsylvania

Everyone Sang

Four Songs for Baritone and Piano

David Conte

1. Homecoming

to Robert Barefield

A.E. Stallings

Moderately fast, buoyant $\text{♩} = 144$

Piano

mf

Red. *

sim.

6

9

12

f

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14

mf

It was as if she

l.h.

18

pulled a thread, — Each — time he saw her, — that un - rav - eled

mf

23

— All the dis - tance he had trav - eled — To

f *mf*

27

sleep at home in his own bed, — Or

30

sit to - geth - er in a room

33

Spin - ning yarns of mon - sters, wars,

36

The hours

38

count - ed by the chores.

41

mf

He loved to watch her _____ at the loom:

44

mp dolce

The flu - ent wrists, _____ the

47

Relaxing very slightly ♩ = 132

Tempo I ♩ = 144

liq - uid mo - tion Of small tasks _____

Relaxing very slightly ♩ = 132

Tempo I ♩ = 144

mp dolce

50

_____ not _____ thought a - bout, _____

53 **In tempo**

poco rit. *p*

56 *mp cresc. poco a poco*

The shut - tle _____ leap - ing in and out,

cresc. poco a poco

59 *(cresc. poco a poco)*

_____ in and out,

(cresc. poco a poco)

62 *ff*

_____ Dol - phins

ff

65 *menof* *pp*

sew - ing, dol - phins

68

sew - ing the torn

71 *mf*

o - cean.

mf *mp*

Ped. * Ped. *

75

p

Ped. *

78

p

Ped. *8^{ub}* *

2. Entrance

9

to Tim Krol

Rainer Maria Rilke

Dana Gioia, tr.

Like a recitative ♩ = 60 *f* *Moderately* ♩ = 76 *mf*

Baritone

Who - ev - er you are: step

Like a recitative ♩ = 60 *f* *Moderately* ♩ = 76 *mp*

Piano

4

out of doors to - night, — Out of the room that lets you — feel se - cure, —

8 *poco allarg.* *f*

In - fin - i - ty — is o - pen — to your

Original words in German by Rainer Maria Rilke.

Translation by Dana Gioia.

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In tempo ♩ = 76

sight Who - ev - er you are.

l.h. *r.h.* *mf*

mf

With eyes that have for - got - ten how to see From view - ing things al -

mp

Slightly slower, bluesy ♩ = 63

read - y ___ too well - known, Lift up in - to the dark a huge, black tree And put it ___ in the

Slightly slower, bluesy ♩ = 63

mf *p* *r.h.*

mf *mp*

heav'ns tall, a - lone.

crystalline *p* *8va*

31

poco rall.

Like a recitative ♩ = 60

mf

Like a recitative ♩ = 60 And you have made the

poco rall. *mp* *l.h.*

35

poco rall.

Moderately ♩ = 76

world and all you see.

Moderately ♩ = 76

poco rall. *mf*

39

mf

pressing forward

It rip-ens like the words still in your mouth.

pressing forward

mp

44

Animated, triumphant ♩ = 84

f

And when at last

you com - pre -

Animated, triumphant ♩ = 84

f *l.h.*

47 *ff* *riten.*

hend its truth,

ff *riten*

50 *Slower* ♩ = 63 *poco rall.*

Then close your eyes and gently set it

mf *mp* *poco rall.*

55 *In tempo* (♩ = 63) *rit. al fine*

free.

rit. al fine *p*

3. Quilt
to Ryan Villaverde

Diane Thiel

Moderately slow, with great calm ♩ = 52

Piano

mp always smooth and sustained

6

In tempo (♩ = 52)

rall. *p*

11

mp

At night this qui-et — cov-ers me, — grown rag-ged — on the cen-ter seam,

16

rall. **In tempo** (♩ = 52)

mp

di-vid-ing all this his-to-ry — I touch the patch-es al-ways known,

In tempo (♩ = 52)

mp *rall.* *p*

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21

the ones they wrapped me in, _____ passed down for far too long for an-y-one_ to still re -

24

mem-ber what was cut, *cresc. poco a poco* that it was once a blouse, a skirt she wore the night he took her

cresc. poco a poco

28

heart. _____

ff = molto espressivo *meno f*

32

rall.

In tempo (♩ = 52)

37

mp

I touch the fields — I thought I knew — and smooth the plac-es healed in-to each

41

oth-er, at the ridg-es sewn with care - ful se - crets mouthed

gently pulsating

A bit slower than Tempo I

♩ = 48

44

riten.

— for all the years she could - n't tell a soul. —

A bit slower than Tempo I

♩ = 48

riten.
p

47

51

rit. al fine
pp

4. Everyone Sang

to James Schwabacher

Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)

Allegro moderato, appassionato ♩ = 120

Piano

f

4

sub. mp

7

crése

f

11

f

Ev - 'ry-one sud - den-ly burst out sing-ing; —

ff

8va

15 *meno f*

And I was filled with such de - light _____ As

19

pris - oned birds must find in free - dom, _____ Wing - ing wild - ly _____

23 *molto legato*

_____ a cross the white Or - chards and dark green

26

fields; on

mf

mp

8va

29

on and out of sight.

f

32

f

A bit slower than Tempo I ♩ = 112

35

poco rall. *mf* *p*

40

mf *mp*

45

molto legato e espr. *mp* *molto legato e espr.*

50

set - ting sun: My heart was

55

shak-en with tears; and hor - ror Drift - ed a -

59

way... O,

p *molto riten.* *mf accel. poco a poco*

molto riten. *p accel. poco a poco*

Tempo I ♩ = 120

64

O, but Ev - 'ry - one _____ Was a bird, _____ a

acc.

acc.

Allegro brillante ♩ = 126

68

bird; _____ and the song was

sub. mp *acc.* *f* like pealing bells

Allegro brillante ♩ = 126

71

word - less, the sing - ing will nev - er, _____ will

(8^{va})

74 *p.v.* *poco allarg.* *ff* *A tempo* ♩ = 120

nev - er - be done.

(8^{va}) *A tempo* ♩ = 120

poco allarg. *ff*

77

March 3-19, 1998
San Francisco, California
2'30"
Total: 13'00"

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