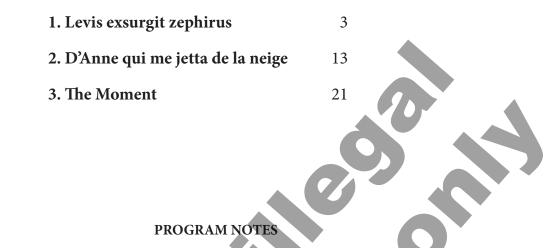
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CONTENTS



The three songs gathered herein were composed over a long period of time. The first, *Levis exsurgit zephirus*, was originally composed in 1993 for male chorus and piano four-hands as the second movement of my *Carmina Juventutis* (4906). I adapted it for solo voice, violoncello, and piano for several singers in 1999 and 2007, including soprano Sylvia Anderson, mezzo-soprano Catherine Cook, and countertenor Ian Howell. *D'Anne qui me jetta de la neige* and *The Moment* were composed in August, 2016, especially for tenor Brian Thorsett, and cellist Emil Miland, and were premiered on October 11, 2016, at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. I have collaborated extensively with both artists; with Mr. Thorsett in my *Yeats Songs* for Tenor and String Quartet (8500, 8500A), and my *American Death Ballads* (8454), and with Mr. Miland in my *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano* (8052). For a specific concert, I decided to build a set of three love poems in three different languages; Latin, French, and English. In all three pieces, the violoncello, that most expressive and soulful instrument, represents the very soul of the speaker of these three texts, as it moves through many emotions, including passion, suffering, vulnerability, and joy.

Levis exsurgit zephirus is taken from the eleventh century volume titled *Cambridge Songs*. This love song is in rhymed couplets written in Ambrosian quatrains—the most common of all forms used for Latin hymns. The music has a gentle undulating quality, as the speaker is "possessed by deep sighs in the midst of all this beauty," for his soul languishes. After several climaxes, the opening music returns in the minor mode, accompanied by "sighs" in the piano and violoncello.

Even though I have spent many years in France, *D'Anne qui me jetta de la neige* is my first setting in French. The text is by the sixteenth-century French poet, Clément Marot. The narrative describes a young man suddenly hit by what Italians poetically call the "Thunderbolt," a burning moment where one falls suddenly and passionately in love. The poem is remarkable in that the speaker's passion is also tempered by a touching vulnerability, as he asks the beloved to show him kindness, even taking pity upon his newfound passion.

Theodore Roethke is one of my favorite American poets, whom I first set in my choral piece *The Waking* (4182) in 1985. His poem, *The Moment*, is both subtly and unabashedly erotic, and indeed "ends in joy."

-David Conte

AVAILABLE EDITIONS

Full/Vocal Score8548Violoncello Part8548A

TEXTS

Levis exsurgit zephirus

Levis exsurgit zephirus, Et sol procedit tepidus, Jam terra sinus aperit, Dulcore suo diffluit.

Ver purpuratum exiit, Ornatus suos induit, Aspergit terram floribus, Ligna silvarum frondibus.

Quod oculis dum video Et auribus dum audio, Heu pro tantis gaudiis Tantis inflor suspiriis.

Cum mihi sola sedeo Et hæc revolvens palleo, Si porte caput sublevo, Nec audio nec video.

Tu saltim, veris gratia, Exaudi et considera Frondes, flores et gramina, Nam mea laguet anima.

> Cambridge Songs (11h century)

The West Wind Rises Softly

The west wind rises softly, the warm sun rides on its course, the earth bares its bosom and overflows with its sweetness.

The purple spring comes forth and girds on its apparel. It sprinkles the earth with flowers and the trees in the forests with leaves

While I see all this with my eyes and hear it with my ears I am possessed, alas! by deep sighs in the midst of all this rejoicing.

While I sit all by myself with a pale face, turning all this over in my mind, if by chance I raise my head I neither hear nor see.

Do thou at least, for the sake of spring hear and consider the leaves, the flowers, and the grass, for my soul languishes.

> Translation that appears in Carmina Juventutis

D'Anne qui me jetta de la neige

Anne par jeu me jeta de la neige, Que je cuidois froide certainement:

Mais cétait feu, l'expérience en ai-je, Car embrasé je fus soudainement.

Puisque le feu loge secrètement Dedans la neige, où trouverais-je place Pour n'ardre point?

Anne, ta seule grâce Eteindre peut le feu, que je sens bien, Non point par eau, par neige, ni par glace, Mais par sentir un feu pareil au mien.

> —Clément Marot (1496–1544)

Anne Who Threw Snow at Me

Anne playfully threw snow at me, That I certainly found cold:

But it was fire, the experience I had, For I suddenly felt aflame.

Since fire secretly lodges In the snow, where can I find a place That is not burning?

Anne, only your grace Can extinguish the fire that consumes me, Not by water, snow, or ice, But by feeling a fire like mine.

Translation by the Editor

The Moment

We passed the ice of pain And came to a dark ravine, And there we sang with the sea: The wide, the bleak abyss Shifted with our slow kiss.

Space struggled with time; The gong of midnight struck The naked absolute. Sound, silence sang as one.

All flowed: without, within; Body met body, we Created what's to be.

What else to say? We end in joy.

> —Theodore Roethke (1908–1963)

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Love Songs

for Tenor, Violoncello, and Piano

for Brian Thorsett and Emil Miland

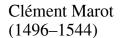


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2. D'Anne qui me jetta de la neige



David Conte



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