THE BENNINGTON VOCAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

SACRED AND PROFANE
a concert of twentieth century a cappella music

HYMN TO ST. CECILIA
Benjamin Britten

THE COOLIN (from Reincarnations)
Samuel Barber

SING MY SOUL HIS WOUNDROUS LOVE
Ned Rorem

NOW IS THE COOL OF THE DAY
Jean Ritchie

WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE
Doo Wop

THE WIND
Doo Wop

I MET HIM ON A SUNDAY
Doo Wop

The Bennington Vocal Chamber Ensemble
Tom Bogdan, Director

Catherine Baldassari-Lichtman
Sara Baumgartel
Andrea Boothby
John Brauer
Barbara Browne
Matthew Follette
Camille Hartman
Elizabeth Kessler
Michael Metivier

Dan Mohr
Shana Onigman
Amanda Parla
Matthew Pillischer
Geremy Schulick
Narayani Sharpe
Hannah Strom-Martin
Anna Zimmer

Thursday, June 1, 2000
Crossett Library Garden
4:30 p.m.
Song for St. Cecilia's Day

I
In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.
Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Transfigured Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

II
I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play

I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.

I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.

All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

I shall never be
Different. Love me.

III
O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.

O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.

O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of our intellectual will.
That what has been may never be again.
O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.
O bless the freedom that you never chose.
O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.
O wear your tribulation like a rose.

July 1940

W. H. AUDEN