

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  
Jeremy 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:  
Translated 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