

CONCERTS *at* SAINT THOMAS

PRESENTS

THE PLACE OF THE BLEST: MUSIC OF HALLOCK, THOMPSON, AND VAUGHAN WILLIAMS



THE SAINT THOMAS CHOIR OF MEN AND BOYS

MODUS OPERANDI ORCHESTRA

Jeremy Filsell, *conductor*

Justin Bischof, *conductor*

Eiko Kano, *violin*



STC
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Cover image:

View of Oxford

William Turner of Oxford (1789-1862)

CONCERTS *at* SAINT THOMAS

SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE

The Reverend Canon Carl F. Turner, *Rector*

Dr. Jeremy Filsell, *The Nancy B. & John B. Hoffmann Organist and Director of Music*

Mr. Christopher Seeley, *Head of School*

The Saint Thomas Choir School

MAY 16, 2024
7:30 P.M.

KINDLY REMEMBER
TO SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Michael, Archangel, of the King of Kings *Peter Hallock*
(1924-2014)

A Brevity for Baritone *Peter Hallock*
Benjamin Howard, *baritone*

The Lark Ascending *Ralph Vaughan Williams*
(1872-1958)
Eiko Kano, *violin*

The Place of the Blest *Randall Thompson*
(1899-1984)

- i. Carol of the Rose
- ii. The Pelican
- iii. The Place of the Blest
- iv. Alleluia, Amen

INTERVAL
15 minutes

Metamorphosen for 23 Solo Strings *Richard Strauss*
(1864-1949)

Introduction and Andante for Cello and Harp *Peter Hallock*

An Oxford Elegy *Ralph Vaughan Williams*
The Rev. Canon Carl Turner, *narrator*

PROGRAM NOTES

This year marks the centenary of the birth of Peter R. Hallock (1924-2014) who was for many years the Organist and Canon Precentor of Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, WA. Perhaps his most significant contribution to the Episcopal Church was the founding of the Compline Choir in 1951. This ensemble sings the Office of Compline at the Cathedral every Sunday at 9.30pm. With a large following, the Office has become something of a Seattle institution and has been continuously broadcast on public radio since 1978. More significantly, it demonstrated the possibilities of the Office as a missional tool to the wider Church. A man of deep faith, Hallock's music is firmly grounded in aesthetic-mysticism. Its purpose is to draw the listener closer to the divine through a numinous, spiritual experience. Hallock used the cavernous five-second acoustics of Saint Mark's Cathedral to create this mystical effect, with much of his music relying on the characteristics of a resonant space.

Concerning his compositional style, Hallock once said that 'writing the music is easy because the music exists, you just write it down-it is somehow inherent in the text.' Nowhere is this clearer than in *Michael, Archangel of the King of Kings* which he composed in 1963 for the choir of Saint Mark's Cathedral. Hallock sets Helen Wadell's (1889-1965) translation of a poem by the English scholar-monk Alcuin of York (c. 735-804). Hallock's treatment of the text is clearly inspired by Herbert Howells' setting of the same words composed two years earlier – *A Sequence for Saint Michael*. Although Hallock's setting is considerably spikier than Howells' version, the two pieces are strikingly similar. A fine piece of musical craftsmanship, the work demonstrates both Hallock's early style and the significant abilities of the choir that he possessed.

A Brevity for Baritone (1977) sets a text by Thomas Merton which calls on the reader to absorb passively all that life can throw at him. *A Brevity for Baritone* was composed for a concert at Saint Mark's Cathedral on March 13, 1977, and was premiered by the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, directed by Peter Hallock. According to Jason Anderson (the Director of the Hallock Institute), Hallock considered *A Brevity for Baritone* to be his *magnum opus*.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was one of the most significant British composers of the last century. Following a brief period of study with Maurice Ravel, Vaughan Williams sought to distance himself from the Germanic influences that characterized the music of many of his contemporaries. He was among a group of composers and ethnomusicologists who accompanied Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) on his journeys around the British Isles to record and catalogue folk-songs which, in turn, led to the folk-song revival in the 1920s. The influence of folk-song on Vaughan Williams' musical style is significant, and resulted in the distinctly modal flavor of his melodies and harmonic language.

Vaughan Williams composed *The Lark Ascending* in 1914. Initially intended for piano and violin, Vaughan Williams reworked the accompaniment for orchestra during the First World War. The full version was premiered at the Queen's Hall, London, under the direction of Sir Adrian Boult in 1921. The work was inspired by 1881 poem of the same name by the Victorian poet George Meredith (1828-1909). In essence, *The Lark Ascending* is a tone poem reflecting the idyll of the fields and rolling hills of rural England. However, it also contains a sense of melancholy with the titular lark flying not just above the countryside, but also over the villages and towns now bereft of those men who went to the Western Front never to return.

Randall Thompson (1899-1984) was an important voice in the twentieth century American choral world with many of his works being standard repertoire for collegiate glee clubs, choral societies, and choruses. Thompson was also the professor of composition at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he taught the young Leonard Bernstein. *The Place of the Blest* (1968) is a four-movement oratorio for orchestra and upper-voice choir. It sets a pair of poems by Robert Herrick (1591-1634) alongside an Alleluia and Richard Wilbur's (1921-2017) translation of a poem about the pelican from a medieval bestiary. The work was composed in 1968 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Saint Thomas Choir School and was the first time that the Vestry of Saint Thomas had commissioned a large-scale work from a leading American composer. It was premiered on March 2nd, 1969 by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys under the guest direction of George Bragg, the founder of the Texas Boys' Choir of Fort Worth.

Richard Strauss' (1864-1949) *Metamorphosen* had a rather strange compositional genesis. In the dying days on the Second World War, Strauss was in poor health and his doctors advised him to visit the spa town of Baden, Switzerland, to recuperate. Unable to secure a travel permit from the Nazi government, a group of his friends 'commissioned' a work from Strauss and sent him an invitation to attend the premiere in Zürich. Thus, Strauss began composing his *Metamorphosen* for 23 solo strings. The title is somewhat strange in that none of the five main themes (one of which is from Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* and the other from the *Eroica Symphony*) undergo significant developments. As such, it is probable that the 'metamorphosis' in question refers to the end of the Second World War and its effects on Germany. On completing *Metamorphosen*, Strauss wrote in his diary: 'The most terrible period of human history is at end, the twelve-year reign of bestiality, ignorance and anti-culture under the greatest criminals, during which Germany's 2000 years of cultural evolution met its doom.' Concluding with a quotation of the funeral march from *Eroica* and accompanied by the marking 'IN MEMORIAM!', the work can be seen as a requiem for Germany.

An Oxford Elegy was composed between 1947 and 1949. Scored for mixed choir, orchestra, and narrator, the work was the result of a life-long desire by Vaughan Williams to compose an opera based on Matthew Arnold's (1822-1888) poem *The Scholar Gypsy*. Aside from a few sketches, no such opera ever materialized. However, motifs from these sketches found their way into *An Oxford Elegy* which was premiered in 1952 at the Holywell Music Room, Oxford, under the direction of Bernard Rose. The libretto chosen by Vaughan Williams consists of excerpts from Arnold's *The Scholar Gypsy* and *Thyrsis*. Both poems are incredibly affected, and were written by Arnold in a haze of nostalgia following the departure and later death of Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861) from his fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, of which Arnold, too, was a fellow. Both poems contain reminiscences of times spent walking in the hills and villages around Oxford and looking down at the 'dreaming spires' of the city. *The Scholar Gypsy* recounts the legend of an Oxford scholar leaving the University to join a band of travelers and 'learn the Gypsy way'. The eponymous scholar gypsy is almost certainly an allusion to Clough who left Oriel to pursue non-academic interests.

JEREMY FILSELL, CONDUCTOR

Jeremy Filsell, Organist and Director of Music of Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, is one of only a few virtuoso performers as both pianist and organist. He has appeared as a solo pianist in Russia, Scandinavia, New Zealand and Australia and throughout the USA and UK. His concerto repertoire encompasses Bach, Mozart and Beethoven through to Shostakovich, John Ireland, Constant Lambert and the Rachmaninov cycle.

He has recorded the solo piano music of Herbert Howells, Bernard Stevens, Eugène Goossens and Johann Christoph Eschmann and recent releases include discs of Rachmaninov's solo piano music (Signum), the first two Rachmaninov Concerti (Raven) and the piano music of Francis Pott (Acis). Jeremy is on the international roster of Steinway Piano Artists and has recorded for BBC Radio 3, USA, and Scandinavian radio networks in solo and concerto roles. His discography comprises more than 35 solo recordings. Gramophone magazine commented on the series of 12 CDs comprising the premiere recordings of Marcel Dupré's complete organ works for Guild in 2000 that it was '*one of the greatest achievements in organ recording*'. In 2005, Signum released a 3-disc set of the six organ symphonies of Louis Vierne, recorded on the 1890 Cavaillé-Coll organ in St. Ouen, Rouen.

He has taught at universities, summer schools, and conventions in both the UK and USA and has served on international competition juries in England and Switzerland. Solo engagements have taken him across the USA and UK and to Germany, France, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Australia and New Zealand. In North America, and he concertizes under the auspices of Philip Truckenbrod Concert Artists.

As a teenager, Jeremy Filsell was a Limpus, Shinn & Durrant prizewinner for FRCO and was awarded the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. As a student of Nicolas Kynaston and Daniel Roth, he studied as an Organ Scholar at Keble College, Oxford before completing graduate studies in piano performance with David Parkhouse and Hilary McNamara at the Royal College of Music in London. His PhD in Musicology from Birmingham City University/Conservatoire was awarded for research involving aesthetic and interpretative issues in the music of Marcel Dupré. Before moving to the USA in 2008, he held Academic and Performance lectureships at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, and was a lay clerk in the Queen's choir at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. He combined an international recital and teaching career with being director of music at the Church of the Epiphany and then of St. Alban's in Washington DC, Artist-in-residence at Washington National Cathedral, and Professor of Organ at the Peabody Conservatory (Baltimore). He moved to New York in April 2019 to become Organist and Director of Music at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue.

EIKO KANO, VIOLIN

Since she started to play the violin at age 4, Ms. Kano has won numerous awards and prizes both in Japan and Internationally. After studying in Tokyo (Tokyo Geidai) and in London, Eiko moved to New York and since then has established herself as a unique and versatile artist. Both of her innovative CDs with her own story writing and violin performances "A Manhattan Story" have been featured on all JAL international flights. Eiko's videography of Bach's Chaconne at Kyoto Temple "Eikando" playing on Stradivarius violin which was awarded to her by Nippon Music Foundation with a costume designed by Junko Koshino has

been critically acclaimed. Eiko is in high demand as a chamber musician as well as a soloist and as a concertmaster of various orchestras in both the USA and Japan. She serves as an assistant concertmaster of multiple Grammy prizes winner, Albany Symphony Orchestra, also as the concertmaster and senior artistic advisor of Pegasus: the Orchestra since 2017 and started her role as a concertmaster for MOO in 2023. She received a master degree from the Manhattan School of Music and her mentors include a legendary NY Philharmonic concertmaster, Glenn Dictorow. She has been reviewed much and has been praised as an artist with “electrifying intensity and lyrical expression” by Kyoto Newspaper and “mesmerizing interpreter” by Ongakuno-Tomo Magazine.

JUSTIN BISCHOF, CONDUCTOR

New York City resident Justin Bischof is one of the most eclectic artists and leaders of his generation. He is an internationally acclaimed orchestral & opera conductor as well as a concert organist, pianist, and improviser. Venues include New York’s Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Lincoln Center, Lincoln Center, Tonhalle of Zurich, Eli Broad Theatre of Los Angeles, Royal Opera House Oman, St. Paul’s Cathedral London, Notre Dame Paris, and Cologne Cathedral. He has collaborated with numerous exceptional artists including Joshua Bell, Philippe Entremont, Bright Sheng, Tan Dun, and Roberta Peters. As an orchestral conductor, he has worked with various ensembles including the NAC Orchestra, The Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, the Vancouver Symphony, the Royal Symphony of Oman, the WAAPA Orchestra of Perth, and the National Orchestra of Haiti. Recent engagements include MOO’s Annual Spring Concert, the AGO Gala Closing Concert for Organ & Orchestra, Mozart Requiem, MOO’s Annual Merkin Hall Concert, and Handel Messiah. Upcoming concerts include the Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue Bicentennial Closing Concert, Mozart Requiem, and the NY premiere of the Auburn Requiem at SUNY Purchase Recital Hall.

He is the Founder & Artistic Director of the Modus Operandi Orchestra MOO of New York City which is comprised of 65 of New York’s finest orchestral musicians. MOO’s mission is to present symphonic, operatic, and choral repertoire at the highest artistic level to engage and enrich the local community. In 2022, MOO presented the World Premiere, outside of Cuba, of Guido Gavilan’s *Afro-Cuban Antilles Violin Concerto* with Harlem String Quartet founder Ilmar Gavilan as the soloist. He made his Australian Opera Conducting Debut in Perth at the WAAPA leading a critically acclaimed production of the Australian Premiere of Robert Ward’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Crucible*. With MOO, he led several full productions including Mozart’s *Marriage of Figaro* & *Don Giovanni*. He partnered with international mezzo-soprano Ariana Chris, conducting and leading from the piano several benefit concerts entitled Opera Trash at Carnegie Hall and Le Poisson Rouge receiving rave reviews. In 2019, he led a production of Britten’s *Rape of Lucretia* at the newly renovated historic Flea Theatre with New Camerata Opera.

As concert organist, he has concertized extensively including presenting numerous premieres for solo organ as well as organ and orchestra. Described as “a master virtuoso” by the Frankfurt News and “virtuosic” by the Los Angeles Times, he won the First Prize at the 2000 AGO Organ Improvisation Competition and is a leading proponent of the craft with his all-improvisation performances which have been met with critical acclaim throughout the world. Dr. Bischof taught for many years at the esteemed Manhattan School of Music as well as Barnard and is sought after as a guest clinician for master classes internationally.

THE SAINT THOMAS CHOIR OF MEN AND BOYS

The Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys is considered to be the leading ensemble of its kind in the Anglican choral tradition in the United States. While its primary *raison d'être* is to sing five choral services each week, the choir also performs regularly with Orchestra of St. Luke's and New York Baroque Incorporated as part of Saint Thomas Church concert series. Live webcasts of choral services and further information concerning recordings, tours and concerts given by the choir can be found at www.SaintThomasChurch.org.

Over recent years, the choir has toured throughout the US, Europe and Scandinavia with performances at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral in London, King's College, Cambridge, the Aldeburgh Festival, at the Vatican, and in Dresden and at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. Domestically, the choir has appeared often at National AGO Conventions.

The boy choristers make frequent appearances on local and national television programs, such as the TODAY program, and the classical music radio station WQXR. They have sung with Sting at the tree lighting ceremony in Rockefeller Center, performed at the new Steinway Piano Hall on 6th Avenue, and in 2019 they appeared as the opening act at the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular.

Besides annual performances of Handel's *Messiah*, the choir's concerts at Saint Thomas Church have included presentations of the Faure, Durufle and Mozart *Requiems*, the J. S. Bach *Passions*, the *Mass in B Minor*, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and James MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*. The choir has given the US premieres of works by John Tavener and Nico Muhly, and in recent times has commissioned new choral music by Julian Wachner and Francis Pott. In 2016, a concert in memory of former Director of Music John Scott was performed with Orchestra of St. Luke's under the direction of Sir Simon Rattle.

The choir has made many commercial recordings under successive Directors of Music and in 2020 did so under the direction of Jeremy Filsell: The Music of Gerre Hancock, an album of music indelibly associated with Saint Thomas Church. The choir marked the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd by recording the Byrd Mass and Propers for the feast of Corpus Christi. Both this and an album of music for the Christmas season, No Small Wonder, were released in the winter of 2023. The Gentlemen of the Saint Thomas Choir are all professional singers, and the Boy Choristers all attend the Saint Thomas Choir School, instituted in 1919; nowadays the only remaining educational establishment of its type in the US. The Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys is represented by Karen McFarlane Artists, Inc.

MODUS OPERANDI ORCHESTRA

Founded by Music Director Justin Bischof, Modus Operandi Orchestra began as two organizations: Modus Opera, a boutique opera company in Manhattan, and the Canadian Chamber Orchestra (CCO) of New York City. Modus presented all of the Mozart/Da Ponte operas in fully staged productions with orchestra, and CCO presented an Annual Children's Benefit Concert in Westchester County. Other concerts included our Carnegie Hall debut at Weill Recital Hall in 2007 as part of the Variety NYC Opera Trash Benefit which raised money for children in need in the tri-state area. They made their Le Poisson Rouge debut with internationally acclaimed Canadian mezzo Ariana Chris in the same program. As a synthesis of these two organizations, MOO's mission is to present symphonic, operatic, and choral

repertoire at the highest artistic level to engage and enrich the local community. A vital component of their mission is to provide the opportunity for some of the finest freelance musicians in New York City to perform the staples of the great symphonic and operatic repertoire as well as contemporary works and world premieres with their colleagues. Many MOO players have gone on to become members of/perform with major ensembles including Konzerthaus Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera, NY Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the Seattle Symphony. MOO's stellar roster of international guest soloists has appeared with the Vienna Philharmonic, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Lyric Opera Chicago, Canadian Opera Company, Seattle Symphony & Opera, Hong Kong Opera, Sante Fe Opera, Montreal Opera, Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. MOO was in residency at the historic Church of St. James the Less Scarsdale, NY, from 2007–2017. During this time they presented 10 Annual Children's Benefit Concerts which were a result of the inspiring leadership and dedication of Benefit Chair Dorothy E. Yewer. These concerts raised over \$1,000,000 which enabled more than 800 at-risk children from Mount Vernon to attend the life-altering Children's Aid Society Wagon Road summer camp. Their Gala 10th benefit concert included Beethoven's 9th at SUNY Purchase Recital Hall with Met Opera soloists. In November 2019 MOO began a residency at St. Mary Church, LIC and in November 2022, they began an annual concert tradition at Merkin Hall. Past 2023 concerts include a Durufle Requiem in Westport CT, the American Guild of Organists' Closing Concert for Organ and Orchestra in Rye with David Enlow, and a Mozart Requiem and Messiah in Scarsdale NY as part of the inaugural season of a new residency at IHM Church.

THE SAINT THOMAS CHOIR OF MEN AND BOYS

TREBLE

Edric Baty
 Bakore Camara ¹
 Daniel Conrado
 Christian Goudge
 Rocco Halvey
 Will Hanoian ⁵
 Ephrem Henthorn
 Jacob Hwang
 Jayden Hwang
 Elias Jeon ⁷
Head Chorister
 Royce Jung
 Ian Kim
 Nathan Kim ⁴

Allan Lee
 William Lee ⁶
Deputy Head Chorister
 Arthur Li ²
 Julian Moreno
 Henry Park
 William Park
 Emrys Pengelly
 Dominic Scarozza ³
 Joshua Shin ⁸
 Arthur Stowe
ALTO
 Eric Brenner
 Padraic Costello
 Tomás Cruz

Jonathan May

TENOR

Andrew Fuchs
 John Ramseyer
 Emerson Sieverts
 Mike Williams

BASS

Benjamin Howard
 Brian Mummert
 Charles Perry Sprawls
 Christopher Trueblood

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>The Ogden Northrop Lewis, Jr. Choristership</i> | 6. <i>The T. Tertius Noble Centennial Choristership</i> |
| 2. <i>The Francis S. Falconer Choristership</i> | 7. <i>The William C. Stubing and Ronald L. Thomas Choristership</i> |
| 3. <i>The John G. Scott Memorial Choristership</i> | 8. <i>The Rev. Charles Wallace Choristership</i> |
| 4. <i>The James L. Tuohy MD Choristership</i> | |
| 5. <i>The Richard Heschke Choristership</i> | |

MODUS OPERANDI ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Eiko Kano, *Concertmaster*
 Keiko Tokunaga
 Arthur Moeller
 Francisco Salazar
 Joel Lamdin

VIOLIN II

Una Tone, *Principal*
 Nikita Morozov
 Jessica Park
 Garry Ianco
 Sodam Kim

VIOLA

Greg Luce, *Principal*
 Isabella Mensz
 Edwin Kaplan
 Dudley Raine
 Gregory Williams

CELLO

Luke Krafka, *Principal*
 Valeriya Sholokhova
 Lydia Rhea
 Oliver Weston
 Sam Chung

BASS

Troy Rinker, *Principal*
 Roger Wagner
 Tom Forletti

FLUTE

Anna Urrey, *Principal*
 Ryu Cipris

OBOE

Boris Baev, *Principal*

COR ANGLAIS

Setsuko Otake

CLARINET

Yasmina Spiegelberg,
Principal
 Paul Cho

BASSOON

Joshua Butcher, *Principal*
 Taylor Smith

FRENCH HORN

Sarah Boxmeyer, *Principal*
 Zohar Schorndor

HARP

Chelsea Lane

MICHAEL, ARCHANGEL, OF THE KING OF KINGS

PETER HALLOCK (1924-2014)

Michael, Archangel, of the King of Kings,
give ear to our voices.
We acknowledge thee to be the Prince of the
citizens of Heaven,
And at thy prayer God sends His angels,
That the enemy, with cunning craft, shall not prevail.
To do the hurt he craves, to weary men,
Yeah, thou hast the dominion of perpetual Paradise

And ever do the holy angels honor Thee.
Thou wast seen in the Temple of God,
A censer gold in thy hands
And the smoke of it fragrant with spices
Rose up till it came before God
Thou didst smite the cruel dragon
And many souls didst thou rescue from his jaws.

Then was there a great silence in Heav'n
And a Thousand, saying, "Glory to the Lord King."
Michael, hear us Greatest angel,
Come down a little from thy high seat,
Bring us the strength of God
And the light'ning of His mercy.
Do thou, Raphael, heal our sick,
Ease our pain, and give us to share
In the joys of the blessed.

Alcuin, Sequence for St. Michael

A BREVITY FOR BARITONE

PETER HALLOCK

Come where the grieving rivers of the night
Copy the speeches of the sea:
And hear how this devouring weather steals our music.
Under a tent of branches let grow our harps in windy trees.

But, in the flowering of our windless morning
We should be slow-paced watchmen,
Crossing, on our ecliptics, with a cry of planets,
Homesick, at the sharp rim of our Jerusalem, the day.

Then weep where the splendid armies of the sky
Copy the prisoner's visions:
Yet keep the arrows of your eyes unquivered.
Light more watch fires:

Because the thieving stars may come
And steal our lives.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

THE PLACE OF THE BLEST

RANDALL THOMPSON (1899-1984)

THE CAROL OF THE ROSE

Go, pretty child, and bear this flow'r unto thy little Saviour;
And tell him, by that bud now blown, He is the Rose of Sharon known.
When thou hast said so, stick it there upon his bib, or stomacher;
And tell him (for good handsel too) that thou hast brought a whistle new,
Made of a clean straight oaten reed, to charm his cries (at time of need).
Tell him for coral, thou hast none. But if thou hadst, he should have one;
But poor thou art, and known to be ev'n as moniless as he.
Lastly, if thou canst win a kiss from the mellifluous lips of his,
Then never take a second one to spoil the first impression.

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

THE PELICAN

Pelicanus is the word For a certain breed of bird
Who truly is a crane. Egypt is his domain.
There are two kinds thereof. Near to the Nile they live.
One of them dwells in the flood, The fishes are his food.
The other lives in the isles On lizards, crocodiles,
Serpents, and stinking creatures, And beasts of evil nature.
In Greek his title was Onocrotalos, Which is *longum rostrum*
Said in the Latin tongue instead, Or *long beak* in our own.
Of this bird it is known That when he comes to his young,
They being grown and strong, And does them kindly things,
And covers them with his wings, The little birds begin
Fiercely to peck at him; They tear at him and try
To blind their father's eye. He falls upon them then
And slays them with great pain, Then goes away for a spell,
Leaving them where they fell.

On the third day he returns, And thereupon he mourns,
Feeling strong woe To see the small birds so,
That he strikes his breast with his beak
Until the blood shall leak.
And when the coursing blood Spatters his lifeless brood,
Such virtue does it have That once again they live.
Know that this pelican Signifies Mary's Son;
The little birds are men Restor'd to life again
From death, by that dear blood Shed for us by our God.
Now learn one meaning more, Reveal'd by holy lore:
Know why the small birds try To peck their father's eye,
Who turns on them in wrath And puts them all to death.
Men who deny the light Would blind God's blazing sight,
But on such people all His punishment will fall.
This is the meaning I find; Now bear it well in mind.

*Original text by Philippe de Thaun from an 1120
Anglo-Norman Bestiary. This version from
Things of this World by Richard Wilbur (1921-2017)*

THE PLACE OF THE BLEST

In this world (the Isle of Dreams) While we sit by the sorrow's streams,
Tears and terrors are our themes Reciting.
But when once from hence we fly, More and more approaching nigh
Unto young eternity Uniting.
In that whiter island, where Things are evermore sincere,
Candor here, and lustre there Delighting.
There no monstrous fancies shall Out of hell an horror call,
To create (or cause at all) Affrighting.
There in calm and cooling sleep We our eyes shall never steep,
But eternal watch shall keep Attending.
Pleasures, such as shall pursue Me immortaliz'd, and you,
And fresh joys, as never to Have ending.

Robert Herrick

AN OXFORD ELEGY

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes;
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd grasses shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometime seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green;
Come Shepherd, and again begin the quest.

*Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne
With distant cries of reapers in the corn –
All the live murmur of a summer's day.*

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,
And here till sundown, Shepherd, will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,

And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep:
And air-swept lindens yields
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers:
*That sweet city with her dreaming spires,
She needs not summer for her beauty's heightening,
Lovely all times she lies, lovely today!*

Come, let me read the oft-read tale again:
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Who, one summer morn forsook his friends,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good.
But came to Oxford and his friends no more,
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, Wanderer, on thy trace;

Or in my boat I lie
 Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,
 'Mid wode grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
 And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
 And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.
 Leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
 And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
 Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,
 And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream,
 Still waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
 Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
 Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge
 Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
 Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
 And thou hast climb'd the hill
 And gain'd the white brow of the Cumnor range;
 Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snowflakes fall,
 The line of festal light in Christ Church hall –
 Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd grange.

But what – I dream! Two hundred years are flown;
 And thou from earth art gone
 Long since and in some quiet churchyard laid –
 Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
 Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave,
 Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
 Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven! and we,
 Ah, do not we, Wanderer, await it too?
 See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
 Today from Oxford up your pathway strays!
 Here came I often, often, in old days;
 Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.
 Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,
 Up past the wood, to where the elm-tree crowns
 The hill behind whose ridge the sunset flames?
 The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
 The Vale, the three lone weird, the youthful Thames? –
 That single elm-tree bright
 Against the west – I miss it! Is it gone?
 We prized it dearly; while it stood, we said,
 Our friend, the Scholar Gypsy, was not dead;
 While the tree lived, he in these fields lived on.
 Needs must I, with heavy heart
 Into the world and wave of men depart;
 But Thyrsis of his own will went away.
 So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
 From the wet field, through the vext garden-trees,
 Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze:
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I!

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?
*Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
 Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
 Soon shall we have gold-dusted snapdragon,
 Sweet-William with his homely cottage-smell,
 And stocks in fragrant blow;
 Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
 And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
 And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
 And the full moon, and the white evening-star.*
 He hearkens not! Light come, he is flown!
 What matters it? Next year he will return,
 And we shall have him in the sweet spring-days,
 With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling fern,
 And blue-bells trembling by the forest-ways,
 And scent of hay new-mown.
 But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see.
 Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
 In the old haunt, and find our tree-topp'd hill.

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I? –
 But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,
 With thorns once studded, old, white-blossom'd trees,
 Where thick the cowslips grew, and far, descried,
 High tower'd the spikes of purple orchises,
 Hath since our day put by
 The coronals of that forgotten time.
 They are all gone, and thou art gone as well.

*Yes, thou art gone! And round me too the night
 In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
 I see her veil draw soft across the day,
 And long the way appears, which seem'd so short
 And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
 The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth.*

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here
 Sole in these fields; yet will I not despair.
 Despair I will not, while I yet descry
 That lonely Tree against the western sky.
 Fields where soft sheep from cages pull the hay,
 Woods with anemones in flower till May
 Know him a wanderer still.
 Then let in thy voice a whisper often come,
 To chase fatigue and fear.

*Why faintest thou? I wander'd till I died.
 Roam on! The light we sought is shining still.
 Our tree yet crowns the hill,
 Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside.*

*Adapted from The Scholar Gypsy and Thyrsis
 by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)*

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