

## Ornithology

An aviary featuring Vaughan Williams, Joseph Holbrooke  
Pratorius-Gómez & other Birds

Roy Malan, violin  
Polly Malan, viola  
Lars Johannesson, flute & alto flute  
Leslie Tagorda, clarinet & bass clarinet  
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano  
Chris Pratorius-Gómez, piano & concert director

With special guests Ariose Singers, conducted by Camille Couture

## PROGRAM

Six Studies in English Folk Song      Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)  
clarinet and piano

Nocturne: "Fairyland"      Joseph Holbrooke (1878-1958)  
clarinet, viola & piano

Fantasy on Bird's *Ornithology*      Charlie Parker (1920-1955)  
arr. By Chris Pratorius-Gómez  
alto flute, bass clarinet, viola & piano  
featuring recordings of birds from Santa Cruz County

Le chant des oiseaux      Clément Janequin (1485-1558)  
*Featuring guest artists Ariose Singers, directed by Camille Couture*

### *Intermission*

The Lark Ascending      Ralph Vaughan Williams  
violin and piano

Syrinx      Claude Debussy (1862-1918)  
flute solo

13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird      Chris Pratorius-Gómez (1974- )  
poetry by Wallace Stevens  
*Featuring guest artists Ariose Singers, directed by Camille Couture*

***Six Studies in English Folk Song*** was composed by English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1926. Never straying from his English roots, Vaughan Williams sought to organically weave elements of his native music into all of his compositions, rather than imitate it. One of the earliest researchers in ethnomusicology, he traveled the British countryside recording and transcribing folk music directly from its source.

Originally written for cellist May Mukle and piano, Vaughan Williams wrote that his aim in setting the songs be that they be “treated with love.” It has been transcribed by the composer and others for many instruments.

There are six movements:

1. *Adagio* ('Lovely on the Water')
2. *Andante sostenuto* ('Spurn Point')
3. *Larghetto* ('Van Dieman's Land')
4. *Lento* ('She Borrowed Some of her Mother's Gold')
5. *Andante tranquillo* ('The Lady and the Dragoon')
6. *Allegro vivace* ('As I walked over London Bridge')

**Joseph Holbrooke** was an English composer, conductor and pianist born in Croydon, Surrey in 1878. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music and was a musically prolific composer primarily known for his orchestral works.

*Nocturne: Fairyland* is a programmatic work inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s poem *Fairyland*. It’s a typical late romantic work featuring lush harmonies, soaring melodies and intricate accompaniment figures. The pairing of viola and clarinet is unusual and welcome, as both instruments have a rich, velvety tone. Poe’s poem was printed in the original score.

### **FAIRYLAND.**

Dim vales and shadowy floods —  
And cloudy-looking woods,  
Whose forms we can’t discover  
For the tears that drip all over!  
Huge moons there wax and wane —  
Again — again — again —  
Ev’ry moment of the night —  
For ever changing places —  
And they put out the star-light  
With the breath from their pale faces.  
About twelve by the moon-dial  
One, more filmy than the rest  
[A kind which, upon trial,  
They have found to be the best]  
Comes down — still down — and down  
With its centre on the crown  
Of a mountain’s eminence,  
While its wide circumference  
In easy drapery falls  
Over hamlets, over halls,  
Wherever they may be —  
O’er the strange woods — o’er the sea —  
Over spirits on the wing —

Over every drowsy thing —  
And buries them up quite  
In a labyrinth of light —  
And then, how deep! O, deep!  
Is the passion of their sleep.  
In the morning they arise,  
And their moony covering  
Is soaring in the skies,  
With the tempests as they toss,  
Like — almost any thing —  
Or a yellow Albatross,  
They use that moon no more  
For the same end as before —  
Videlicet a tent —  
Which I think extravagant:  
Its atomies, however,  
Into a shower dissever,  
Of which those butterflies,  
Of Earth, who seek the skies,  
And so come down again,  
(Never contented things!)  
Have brought a specimen  
Upon their quivering wings.

**Charlie Parker** (1920-1955) was a seminal bebop jazz saxophonist and composer who laid the stylistic groundwork for generations of later players. Bebop, a style of jazz birthed during WW II, is characterized by blistering tempos, virtuosity, small ensembles, copious improvisation and extended harmonies. It was a development that many lovers of swing bemoaned, as bebop is essentially undanceable. As such, it mirrors the development of many other instrumental forms throughout history, which begin as dance music and later develop into genres associated primarily with listening.

Parker was given the nickname of “Yardbird” early in his career, which was shortened to “Bird.” This inspired the names of many compositions, including “Yardbird Suite,” “Bird Gets the Worm,” “Bird of Paradise” and of course “**Ornithology**.” “Ornithology” was first recorded by the Charlie Parker Septet in 1946, and has since become a jazz standard. It is a newly composed tune using an existing chord progression, in this case the chord changes from “How High the Moon.” The practice of using existing chord progressions for new compositions is as old as chord progressions themselves, and in no way diminishes the role of the composer. Most compositions from many all time periods rely on pre-existing progressions.

**Clément Janequin** (c. 1485 – 1558) was one of the most famous composers of popular French chansons of the entire Renaissance. His wide spread fame was made possible by the concurrent development of music printing. *Le chant des oiseaux* was originally published in 1529 in a collection with other polyphonic chansons and is a very colorful work, featuring many imitations of bird calls which at one point are layered on top of as if to suggest all the birds of the countryside singing at once. Janequin wrote other works which are similarly onomatopoeic, including *La bataille*, a vivid depiction of a battle scene.

*Le Chant des Oiseaux, English Translation*

Awake, sleepy hearts,  
The god of love calls you.  
On this first day of May,  
The birds will make you marvel.  
To lift yourself from dismay,  
Unclog your ears.  
And fa la la la la (etc...)  
You will be moved to joy,  
For the season is good.

You will hear, I advise you,  
A sweet music  
That the royal song thrush will sing (the blackbird, too)  
In a pure voice.  
Ti, ti, pi-ti (etc...)  
To laugh and rejoice is my device,  
Each with abandon.

Nightingale of the pretty woods,  
Whose voice resounds,  
So you don't become bored,  
Your throat jabbars away:  
Friar, friar (etc...)  
Flee, regrets, tears and worries,  
For the season commands it.

Turn around, master cuckoo  
Get out of our company.  
Each of us gives you a 'bye-bye'  
For you are nothing but a traitor.  
Cuckoo, cuckoo (etc...)  
Treacherously in others' nests,  
You lay without being called.

Awake, sleepy hearts,  
The god of love is calling you.

***The Lark Ascending.*** One of the most memorable sights of the British countryside in spring and early summer is the courting flight of the skylark. The bird ascends in steps while singing continuously. He hovers for a short while then rises almost vertically to a new point of pause, and then on and up until almost lost from sight. Shelley called the skylark "blythe spirit" and Wordsworth called him the "ethereal minstrel" The Victorian poet George Meredith in his poem "The Lark Ascending" associates the lark with rural English life:

'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up,  
Our valley is his golden cup,  
And he the wine which overflows  
To lift us with him as he goes:  
The woods and brooks, the sheep and kine,  
He is, the hills, the human line,

The meadows green, the fallows brown,  
The dreams of labour in the town;  
He sings the sap, the quickened veins;  
The wedding song of sun and rains  
He is, the dance of children, thanks  
Of sowers, shout of primrose-banks,  
And eye of violets while they breathe;

The lark is depicted by the solo violin. The piece opens with a beautiful cadenza, played very quietly and delicately, that describes the hovering flight of the bird climbing higher and higher. The music avoids any tonal centre, and is written without bars giving the soloist an almost improvisatory freedom to describe the ethereal minstrel. The cadenza returns in the middle and at the end of the work, and the two intervening episodes draw on English folk music idioms.

The composition was begun in 1914, but was put aside during the first world war. It was completed in 1920 and first performed in 1921. In many ways the work was an escape from the hard realities of a changing way of life. A critic wrote of the first performance, "It showed supreme disregard for the ways of today or yesterday. It dreamed itself along". In his dreaming Vaughan Williams creates a picture of a perfect world as he saw it.

*-notes from Portobello Orchestra*

**Syrinx** is the Greek name for the widespread folk instrument made of end-blown reeds, more commonly called "panpipes." Both names come from the Greek myth about the nymph Syrinx, who escaped the pursuit of the lecherous satyr Pan by turning herself into a bunch of reeds. Pan, hearing the sound of the wind blowing through the reeds, turned them into the instrument associated with him. Debussy seemed to identify with the lustful, half-man, half-goat deity he previously portrayed musically in the song *La flûte de Pan* and the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

The short flute solo *Syrinx* was composed in 1913 to accompany a scene in Gabriel Mourey's play *Psyché*, in which Pan dies. It became a flute repertory standard when Louis Fleury, the flutist who played the part in the original production, became enamored of the piece and performed it frequently in concert.

*-notes by Howard Posner*

**"Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird"** is a poem from Wallace Stevens' first book of poetry, *Harmonium*. The poem consists of thirteen short, separate sections, each of which mentions blackbirds in some way. The poem's haiku-like austerity is striking. Affinities to imagism and cubism are evident, with Buttel proposing that the title "alludes humorously to the Cubists' practice of incorporating into unity and stasis a number of possible views of the subject observed over a span of time". "This group of poems is not meant to be a collection of epigrams or of ideas", Stevens remarks in one of his letters, "but of sensations".

The current musical setting seeks to maximize each miniature's impact by focusing on one specific musical idea and letting it stand on its own, without the impulse to connect it with the surrounding moments, but rather for each to exist as one star within an constellation.

*Program notes from Wikipedia, ChoralWiki and by Chris Pratorius-Gómez unless otherwise designated.*

**Camille Couture** is a conductor, early childhood music educator, vocalist, and native of Santa Cruz. As of 2016, she became Artistic Director of Ariose Singers. During and immediately following receiving degrees in choral conducting from both UC Santa Cruz and the University of Washington, Camille conducted church choirs and community ensembles for over 12 years. One of her favorite positions was that of chorus master for the BayShore Lyric Opera when it was still housed in the former Capitola Theatre.

While in Southern California, Camille worked in artistic administration and as an orchestra manager. It was during this same time that Camille became a wife and mother, and focus turned to family. Now back in Santa Cruz, Camille is thrilled to once again be conducting, especially with the skilled and dedicated members of Ariose Singers. She looks forward to many seasons presenting beautiful choral works to Santa Cruz audiences.

**Lars Johannesson**, flutist, is an active performer and teacher in the San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas. Lars studied modern flute with Lloyd Gowen and Tim Day at the SF Conservatory of Music, where he also began playing Baroque flute. He pursued post-graduate studies in Baroque flute with Wilbert Hazelzet at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Holland.

Lars performs with numerous West Coast early music ensembles and orchestras, as well as a variety of 'modern' instrument groups. Lars appears regularly with Santa Cruz Baroque Festival, Ensemble Monterey Chamber Orchestra, New Music Works and Santa Cruz Chamber Players. Having an interest in different musical genres, Lars also performs Celtic, Swedish and other traditional music. As a studio musician, Lars has recorded for numerous CD releases, including many on the local Gourd Music label. Lars lives in Santa Cruz and has a website at [www.larsjohannesson.com](http://www.larsjohannesson.com).

Polly Malan: Request to use what's on file with SCCP

Roy Malan: Request to use what's on file with SCCP

**Keisuke Nakagoshi** has received training from some of the most celebrated musicians of our time - Emanuel Ax, Gilbert Kalish, Menahem Pressler and Paul Hersh and he has performed concert stages across the United States, including the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, and Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco. In 2014, he made a solo debut with San Francisco Symphony on Ingvar Lidholm's Poesis with Herbert Blomstedt conducting.

In 2009, Keisuke and Swiss pianist Eva-Maria Zimmermann formed a piano duet team, ZOFO and their first CD was nominated for Grammy award for best chamber music/small ensemble in 2013. Mr. Nakagoshi is currently Pianist-in-Residence at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and he serves as pianist in the production team for Opera Parallèle.

**Chris Pratorius Gómez** is a composer and pianist based in Santa Cruz. He has written three one-act operas, a harp concerto, two orchestral works and many pieces for solo voice, choir, chamber ensembles and electronic media that have been performed in San Francisco, Istanbul, New York, Guatemala and other spots around the world.

As composer-in-residence for Opera Parallèle he wrote a trio of children's operas for their Hands-on-Opera educational program. The third opera, *Xochitl and the Flowers*, which tells the story of a young girl and her family who move to San Francisco from El Salvador, premiered in November 2016 a few days after the U.S. election. *Claroscuro en Flor*, a harp concerto commissioned by the American Harp Society and San José Chamber Orchestra, saw its premiere in 2013. Chris teaches theory, history, composition and piano at UC Santa Cruz and Cal State Monterey Bay and maintains a private studio.

### **Leslie Tagorda, Clarinet**

Born and raised in Hawaii, clarinetist Leslie Tagorda received a B.M in Clarinet Performance from the Eastman School of Music and an M.M. from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. In her long career as musician, Leslie has worked as both educator and performer. In Hawaii, Leslie worked with the Royal Hawaiian Band, the Hawaii Opera Theater, and the Honolulu Symphony as a freelance clarinetist. In the Bay Area, Leslie has freelanced with regional orchestras including the San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Opera, Oakland East Bay Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic, Sacramento Opera, Modesto Symphony, Marin Symphony, Monterey Symphony, California Symphony, and New Century Chamber Orchestra.

Currently Leslie concentrates her musical time to chamber music, performing with the touring ensemble, Quinteto Latino and other chamber ensembles. When not busy with music, Leslie runs her own branding and design studio, FLAIR-Designs where she weaves her musical sensibilities into design.