



RESONANCE  
ENSEMBLE

# LISTEN

KATHERINE FITZGIBBON, CONDUCTOR

OCTOBER 14 7:30 PM  
OCTOBER 15 3:00 PM

LINCOLN HALL | PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY



## LETTER FROM KATHERINE FITZGIBBON



Kathy with composers Stacey Philipps, Melissa Dunphy, and Renée Favand-See

Dear friends of Resonance Ensemble:

Welcome to the first concert of our 15th anniversary season, a concert which also serves as the album release celebration for our debut album, LISTEN!

**The music we share with you tonight is deeply personal for us.** We commissioned the two major works that bookend our concert: Melissa Dunphy's *LISTEN* and Renée Favand-See's *Only in Falling*. They both call attention to experiences that too often remain invisible (sexual harassment and assault in the Dunphy, and complicated grief after the loss of a child in the Favand-See). Yet the concert and album as a whole share a kind of uplifting arc, as we invite listeners to listen closely, pay attention, take action, and find healing as a community. As Dominick DiOrio's piece assures us, "You do not walk alone," and that spirit of collaboration permeates everything we do.

**This is, after all, our story.** Resonance Ensemble came together in 2009 to show how music can partner deeply with many art forms, and over time our work transformed into the deeply collaborative programming we present in partnership with artists, advocates, and allies - highlighting music and stories that promote meaningful social change.

This is our first album, but it's not our last – at the end of this anniversary season, Resonance will record our second album, sharing our newest commissions with the world. We invite you to LISTEN, now and always, and to celebrate 15 years of creating new music that, in small and large ways, can change the world.

Gratefully,

Katherine FitzGibbon  
Founder and Artistic Director  
Resonance Ensemble

This concert will be professionally recorded and made available to stream at a later date.

**Supported by the Resonance Ensemble Access Project (REAP), thanks to your generous support.**

# LISTEN

## A Celebration of Our Debut Album Release

Katherine FitzGibbon, conductor | Hannah Brewer, pianist

LISTEN.....Melissa Dunphy\*

I. 1991

II. 2018

When the Dust Settles.....Mari Esabel Valverde

Brother Man.....Vin Shambry

*Vin Shambry, soloist*

Witch Trial.....Stacey Philipps

*Emma Rose Lynn, soloist*

You Do Not Walk Alone.....Dominick DiOrio

The Peace of Wild Things.....Jake Runestad

I Have Had Singing.....Steven Samet

- INTERMISSION -

Only in Falling.....Renée Favand-See\*

I. The Finches

II. For the Future

III. Woods

IV. The Law that Marries All Things

V. The Wheel

*Cecily Kiester, Vakarė Petrolūnaitė, Les Green, and Kevin Walsh, soloists*

\* Commissioned by Resonance Ensemble

Audience members are invited to stay after the show for a post-concert chat with Dr. FitzGibbon and guests.



Resonance Ensemble 2022 | Photo by Rachel Hadiashar

## RESONANCE ENSEMBLE SINGERS & GUEST ARTISTS

Katherine FitzGibbon, Conductor

### SOPRANOS

Laurel Barnum  
Henriët Fourie\*  
Amy Stuart Hunn  
Emma Rose Lynn  
Vakarė Petrolūnaitė  
Emily Kinkley

### ALTOS

Sarah Beaty  
Cecille Elliott  
Cecily Kiester  
Rachel Hauge  
Kristen Buhler  
Claire Robertson-Preis

### TENORS

Shohei Kobayashi  
Les Green  
Michael Hilton  
Brandon Michael

### BASSES

Ethan Allred  
Quinton Gardner  
Marcus Peterson  
Kevin Walsh

Hannah Brewer, piano  
Vin Shambry, composer and poet

## ABOUT RESONANCE ENSEMBLE

In its fifteenth season, Resonance Ensemble creates powerful programs that promote meaningful social change. Resonance Ensemble works to amplify voices that have long been silenced, and they do so through moving, thematic concerts that highlight solo and choral voices, new music by composers and poets whose stories have been underrepresented on the concert stage, visual and other performing artists, and community partners.

Under Artistic Director Katherine FitzGibbon, Resonance Ensemble has performed challenging and diverse music, always with an eye toward unusual collaborations with artistic partners from around the country: poets, jazz musicians, singer-songwriters, painters, playwrights, and dancers. The Resonance Ensemble singers are “one of the Northwest’s finest choirs” (Willamette Week), with gorgeous vocal tone, and they also make music with heart. Resonance has commissioned new works from Jasmine Barnes, Kenji Bunch, Melissa Dunphy, Judy A. Rose, Renée Favand-See, Damien Geter, Joe Kye, S. Renee Mitchell, Kimberly Osberg, Vin Shambry, Mari Esabel Valverde, and Freddy Vilches. We look forward to the latest commissioned premiere by beloved jazz pianist and composer, Darrell Grant to celebrate our 15th anniversary on our “Amendments” concert (March 2024). Each concert connects the musical experience with tangible ways the audience can take action in collaboration with our community partner organizations.

The groundbreaking work that Resonance Ensemble has been producing over the last few years has been noted by local media and national arts organizations. In Oregon ArtsWatch, Matthew Andrews described Resonance as “part social commentary, part group therapy, and part best damn choir show in town.”



Resonance Ensemble 2022 | Photo by Rachel Hadiashar

### RESONANCE STAFF

Katherine FitzGibbon, *Founder and Artistic Director*  
 Damien Geter, *Co-Artistic Advisor*  
 Shohei Kobayashi, *Co-Artistic Advisor*  
 Liz Bacon Brownson, *Director of Marketing & Operations*  
 Kim Osberg, *Communication and Artist Coordinator*  
 Patrice Hernandez, *Bookkeeper*

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## PROGRAM NOTES & TEXT

### LISTEN

Melissa Dunphy

**ABOUT LISTEN:** Written for the treble singers of Resonance Ensemble, LISTEN's two movements set testimony by Anita Hill in 1991 and Christine

**I stomped around feeling helpless until I realized what I could do, in my own sphere -- I could amplify this story by commissioning it to be set to music. And I could pair it with the unfortunately parallel testimony of Anita Hill, two and a half decades earlier. ”**

—Katherine FitGibbon

giving many observers whose hearts were broken by these hearings the opportunity for catharsis.

#### I. 1991

*I thought he respected my work  
[I thought] that he trusted my judgment...  
He asked me to go out... with him.  
What happened next,  
and telling the world...  
are the two most difficult experiences of my life.  
I declined the invitation...  
He pressed me...  
His conversations were very vivid.  
He spoke about  
acts... he had seen in pornographic films...  
women having sex with animals...  
group sex...  
rape scenes...  
large penises...  
large breasts...*

Blasey Ford in 2018. The songs confront singers and listeners with these women's challenging and powerful words, and raise the question of whether or not the Senate committees or indeed the world listened to them, while



Anita Hill, 1991

*his own sexual prowess...  
I told him that I did not want to talk about this...  
I would try to change the subject.  
He began to show displeasure...  
He commented on what I was wearing...  
whether it made me more or less... attractive.  
I felt I had a duty...  
...When I was asked,  
I had to tell the truth  
I could not keep silent.*

-Adapted from testimony by Anita F. Hill before the Senate Judiciary Committee, October 11, 1991

#### II. 2018

*Indelible in the hippocampus is the laughter,  
the uproarious laughter between the two,  
and their having fun at my expense...  
They were laughing with each other...  
I was... underneath one of them while the two laughed –  
two friends having a really good time with one another.  
I am a fiercely independent person  
and I am no one's pawn...  
My responsibility is to tell the truth.*

-Adapted from testimony by Christine Blasey Ford before the Senate Judiciary Committee, September 26, 2018.



Christine Blasey Ford, 2018



Miss Major Griffin-Gracy Photograph: W. Sabbatini

## WHEN THE DUST SETTLES

Mari Esabel Valverde, text by Amir Rabiya

**ABOUT WHEN THE DUST SETTLES:** We look to the intersections between those in the margins for humanity’s nerve endings—our vastest source for empathy and nuanced outrage. There we find Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, holding the door open for “the forgotten ones, the discarded, and misunderstood,” asking us all to stay “strong and delicate.”

A former grass roots organizer and lifelong transgender and intersex rights activist from coast to coast, Miss Major is a “veteran” of the 1969 Stonewall Riots and, by many measures, the most

**“When the Dust Settles” is a culmination of trans stories brought to life through singing written in homage to Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, the most celebrated trans activist and elder alive today.**

celebrated trans activist and elder alive today. She has survived being knocked unconscious at riots; overcome years of abuse in prison; outsmarted the white gay non-profit leaders who didn’t want to serve trans sex workers; and built radical programs to defend the most neglected and mistreated queer people in communities across the US. Her fight to liberate her trans and queer descendants continues.

At age 82, Miss Major runs the House of GG, the Griffin-Gracy Educational Retreat and Historical Center for the transgender and gender non-conforming community in Little Rock, Arkansas.

*“Get off our backs and let us live - we are still here.”*

“When the Dust Settles” is a culmination of trans stories brought to life through singing written in homage to Miss Major. Amir Rabiya’s original poem, created only for this song, synthesizes themes of intersectional identity, survival, and humanity, striving to share a bit of Miss Major’s perspective. They note, “Phrases such as ‘when the dust settles,’ and ‘we are still here,’ are direct quotes, while other statements and themes are paraphrased.” Their words point toward a trans woman’s right to life and to pleasure.

The choice of Db major, the key of the earth, hearkens back to “Our Phoenix,” my first collaboration with Rabiya, memorializing the lives of our trans siblings who are murdered across America every year. But now, we celebrate trans

lives and mold the relative minor into its parallel major—Bb—carrying along tones of Db major as badges for what we have survived to get to our “honeymoon” days. #WeAreStillHere #StaySoft



Miss Major drove San Francisco's first needle exchange van during the early years of the HIV/Aids crisis.

*You opened your arms for the forgotten ones  
 the discarded & misunderstood  
 you showed them a mother's love  
 enveloped them in a delicate  
 and powerful embrace, beautiful star  
 when the dust settles, we'll always remember  
 how you showed us how to fight  
 even while the jagged blade of sorrow  
 pressed on us, to fight  
 ceaselessly, to tend to one another  
 You said, when the dust settles  
 I hope my girls will be okay  
 You cried out from the cells of Attica  
 and outside Stonewall's battered streets  
 Do you hear me? Are you listening?  
 How many more have to die?  
 your heart bigger than any cage  
 even in the midst of so much loss  
 you remind us to dream  
 to hold tomorrow between our lips  
 we deserve to kiss without fear  
 to grow old  
 to sway our hips  
 to wear what we wish  
 to relish in the pleasure of our bodies  
 the seeds you planted continue to grow  
 into blooming song*

*when the dust settles, we will raise our voices  
 just as you have always done, in glorious  
 proclamation  
 we will let everyone know—  
 We are still here!  
 We are still here!*

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Vin Shambry

## BROTHER MAN

Vin Shambry

**ABOUT BROTHER MAN:** My perspective is informed by being a man of color living in our predominantly white city at this time in the United States. I let you

**“Being a Black creative person to me means having the ability to preserve our culture beautifully. This purpose means everything to me.”**

—V. Shambry

share our struggles, triumphs, and gifts and brings the Black story in America to life. I take seriously my privilege in detailing the Black experience through my expression of words. It is a constant yearning need for our story to be told, heard, and understood. It brims with call and response, music born of feeling, play, exhaustion, and hope.

Sometimes, that desire weighs heavy, but I remember the many Black creatives before me who have given of themselves for the sake of our culture. And each time I create, this responsibility becomes

in on the degrees of blackness and show a small depiction of how I navigate a day in the life of what’s going on in my psyche as a man of color. Brother Man is a rhythmic container, and at the core, it allows me to

more accessible to bear and share with others.

Being a Black creative means paving the way for others to have the ability to speak in spaces that weren’t always designed to include voices like us. At its core, Brother Man is intertwined with rhythmic storytelling. There’s joy, there’s laughter, there’s heartache, there’s resilience. Being a Black creative person to me means having the ability to preserve our culture beautifully. This purpose means everything to me.

*Brother Man*

*Killing your people, brother man*

*Selling that evil, brother man*

*Hood with addiction,*

*causing pain and afflictions, brother man*

*Put back the pieces, brother man*

*For nephews and nieces, brother man*

*Do what you wanna,*

*But cut back the struggle, brother man*

*Checking the news,*

*And read statistics, brother man*

*Too many men of color are being finger-printed, brother man*

*It’s not a game,*

*Let me tell you why,*

*Another form of slavery,*

*Legal genocide,*

*Brother man*

*Open your eyes,*

*And you will see, brother man*

*They’re building more prisons*

*For you and me, brother man*

*Locked up on the streets,*

*And boy—that’s cold,*

*Gotta report to somebody*

*‘cause I’m on parole, brother man.*

## WITCH TRIAL

Stacey Philipps

**ABOUT WITCH TRIAL:** The text for this piece is based



on trial testimony from the Salem Witch Trials, which took place in 1692 and 1693 in colonial Massachusetts and resulted in the executions of twenty people, most of whom were women. Both the accused and the accusers are present in the music, which offers glimpses of emotional turmoil, confusion,

aggression, panic, innocence, guilt, resolution, and, poignantly, forgiveness.

A simple, plaintive statement opens the piece, where the accused sees her fate and looks gently into the eyes of her accusers, perhaps realizing that everyone in the courtroom is trapped as well. Her final plea for life is followed immediately by a driving, rhythmic energy of somewhat chaotic, disorganized pulses and then the menacing shouts of the crowd coming together to call for burning the witch. Floating above, with a sense of unreality and hope for escape, the soloist portrays disbelief, hope for escape, and a shocked realization of what is about to happen.

The lilting middle section takes inspiration from the melody in the “Martyr’s Hymn,” originally published in the Scottish Psalter of 1615. The low pitch and rocking rhythmic motion evokes self-comforting and calm, interrupted by rests in the music where a catch in the breath or a sob might occur. Knowing what lies ahead, the accused blesses her accusers in this life and the next before repeating the opening text with new acceptance and

sadness, while the crowd continues to panic, loudly and righteously distancing themselves from the accused, so as not to acknowledge their own crime.

This disturbing historical event was captured in music at a time when modern-day witch

hunting was in the news of South Africa, Somalia, and Papua New Guinea. Indeed, despite the horror and revulsion prevalent among those who hear of the Salem Witch Trials, hate crimes continue to occur in this country and around the world. It’s my hope that a recounting of the events in Salem will draw a clear line to our times and bring us into the experience of those unjustly accused.

**“Witch Trial” offers glimpses of emotional turmoil, confusion, aggression, panic, innocence, guilt, resolution, and, poignantly, forgiveness.**

*Whereas I am condemned to die,  
That the evidence giv’n against me were untrue,  
I humbly beg that my life may not be taken away.  
(Execute her! Burn her!)*

*I am ignorant of the crime of witchcraft  
For which I am condemned to die.*

*Your poor and humble petitioner shall forever  
Pray for your health and happiness in this life  
And eternal felicity in the world to come.*



## YOU DO NOT WALK ALONE

Dominick DiOrio

**ABOUT YOU DO NOT WALK ALONE:** *You Do Not Walk*



*Alone* is a setting of a traditional Irish blessing. Its meaning speaks of those who give support in times of trial. We rely on the good graces and hope of others even in our darkest moments. My musical tapestry is one of unadorned

a cappella mixed chorus, using soft dissonances and free-flowing counterpoint. The voices are sometimes asked to divide, creating a sonic wash of color and overtones. Together in song, we do not walk alone.

*May you see the light on the path ahead  
When the road you walk is dark.  
May you always hear,  
E'en in your hour of sorrow,  
The gentle singing of the lark.  
When times are hard may hardness  
Never turn your heart to stone,  
May you always remember  
when the shadows fall—  
You do not walk alone.*

## THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

Jake Runestad

**ABOUT THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS:** The words of



poet, activist, community-builder, and farmer, Wendell Berry, serve as the inspiration for “The Peace of Wild Things.” Berry’s appreciation for the larger circle of existence is evident in this text that explores humanity’s relationship with the earth. When we are so caught up in our human-centered existence, Berry reminds us how the wild things around

us “do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.” My attempt to illuminate Berry’s words begins with swells of anxious, clustered harmony that give way to the basses, the lowest and darkest voices of the choir, who chant the opening lines, “When despair for the world grows in me...” Throughout the work, the musical gestures and harmonies rise and lighten until the highest voice, the sopranos, close the piece on the word “free.” The piano provides an earthly palette throughout, underscoring the scene at the edge of a mountain lake.

*When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron  
feeds.*

*I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.*



## I HAVE HAD SINGING

Steven Sametz

**ABOUT I HAVE HAD SINGING:** *I Have Had Singing* paraphrases lines taken from Ronald Blythe’s *Akenfield, Portrait of an English Village*. In the 1960’s, Blythe traveled to the north of England interviewing farmers, plowmen, blacksmiths — people whose stories dated back to the early 20th century. One subject, given the name Fred Mitchell in the book, was an 80-year old horseman who told his story of working a bleak, unfertile land in a life filled with little joy.

In the midst of his story, he stopped and said, “But there was always singing; the boys in the field, the chapels were full of singing. I have had pleasure enough; I have had singing.”

*The singing.*

*There was so much singing then*

*And this was my pleasure, too.*

*We all sang, the boys in the field,*

*The chapels were full of singing.*

*Here I lie:*

*I have had pleasure enough;*

*I have had singing.*

## ONLY IN FALLING

Renée Favand-See

**ABOUT ONLY IN FALLING:** *Only in Falling* is dedicated to my son Owen, to honor the joyful journey of carrying him and giving birth to him, and to honor the sorrowful journey since losing him just seven days after he was born. Along this path of grieving, Wendell Berry’s poems have been steadfast companions—offering presence and witness in the deepest dark of loss, offering understanding and insight, gradually even light, to my slowly unfolding experience. Berry’s book of poetry, picked up by chance in a hurried gathering of items to bring to hospital, has been a mysterious oracle since the first night of Owen’s life, when sitting in shock in the NICU, my husband opened at random to a page, and touched a node that resonated with everything he was feeling in that moment. The poems in this set of pieces are ones that speak to different aspects of my grief—an ever-changing landscape of feelings and thoughts. They feel as though they were written for me, though of course I know they were written for all who partake. And Berry wrote these words, but it’s more like they moved through him to communicate

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truth that connects us all—the joy and sorrow of birth and death that breaks our hearts open. When he responded to a letter I wrote him sharing my gratitude for his poems, he said, “...I am grateful to my poems for whatever comfort you have found in them.” “My poems” as though they are people in his life, not exactly him, but from him, like children.

*The Finches* accompanied the winter of my grief—the shock and sting of it. The earth spins, goes too fast. You want the rest of the world to stop the way your own world has stopped, but it does not. Everything is laid bare. Yet grief is a complex, many-layered experience. Even in the deepest dark of my loss, my heart was broken open: to human connection; to spirit; to the impossible beauty of the earth; to knowing that bare branches would bud again. The most striking musical element in this poem is its rhythm, specifically the emphatic quality of adjacent accented syllables that command ever-changing odd meters to my ear. Also, the successive accented syllables accumulate pulses over the course of the poem (ears stung; soon go north; bare sticks soon live) toward the inevitable point of arrival in the poem’s message: may winter soon become spring. The poem drives forward with little stopping for breath and elisions of phrases—notably the phrase “in early April” which functions both as the end of one thought and the beginning of the next. I take this poetic phrasing as a cue to follow suit with musical phrasing that often overlaps, one voice ending as the next voice begins. In the case of “in early April,” I set that text twice to underscore its double function. The icy, bristling images at the start of the poem conjured up bare fifths alternating with biting tritones—these intervals color the opening motive that pervades this movement.



The tone of *For the Future* changed with the passage of time after Owen’s birth and death. My husband remarked recently that this piece could be the final movement, instead of the second, and there is merit to that suggestion. In the fresh trauma of my grief, the message I found in this poem was that since I

**“Writing *Only in falling* for Owen is a healing act, an affirmation that he was born and his life holds meaning in this world.**

was still alive, I will continue to live, and perhaps—I don’t know how—new growth will come. In the spring following Owen’s death, with my PSU students & colleagues, Corin and I actually went and planted a grove of native trees in honor of Owen’s life. These trees are an affirmation of the wholeness of life in

the face of death—they give body to Owen’s spirit, which lives on through us and now also, these trees. Berry’s poem is a proverb gone rogue, introducing a question into a seeming certainty. Iambic rhythm and rhyme are broken up in the middle with a question that continues to resonate even after the rhyme returns. I chose the warmth of men’s voices together with harmonic thirds and sixths as a contrast to winter and to underscore a hopeful tone. The melody takes surprising turns, as life gives us the unexpected, both terrible and beautiful. These trees are an affirmation

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“She moves into what she has become, /sure in her fate now/ as a fish free in the current.” *Her First Calf*, Berry). As I emerged from the deep water of my trauma, I sensed a subtle shift as gratitude began to well up in my heart. For my loving, amazing husband Corin; for my family and friends who held me up in a myriad of ways; for the community of bereaved parents at Peace House who gave me a safe place to share the deep dark of it and to be nourished by their understanding and empathy; for

of the wholeness of life in the face of death—they give body to Owen’s spirit, which lives on through us and now also, these trees. Berry’s poem is a proverb gone rogue, introducing a question into a seeming certainty. Iambic rhythm and rhyme are broken up in the middle with a question that continues to resonate even after the rhyme returns. I chose the warmth of men’s voices together with harmonic thirds and sixths as a contrast to winter and to underscore a hopeful tone. The melody takes surprising turns, as life gives us the unexpected, both terrible and beautiful.

The music of *Woods* came to me whole, as a gift. I simply took dictation as the lines, the harmony, and the phrasing poured forth—the music moved through me, a joyful and pure experience. What a fitting conception for the setting of this poem that explores gratitude, another significant timbre in the feeling palette of grief. In new loss there is deep presence—in this moment there is only this action, there is only this feeling, there is only this thought—which guides your life from deep truth. The only parallel experience I can think of is the freedom and inevitability of giving birth to my son

**“Along this path of grieving, Wendell Berry’s poems have been steadfast companions—offering presence and witness in the deepest dark of loss, offering understanding and insight, gradually even light, to my slowly unfolding experience.”**

the natural world and all the signs that Owen’s spirit is close; and especially for the life of my beautiful son. With this song, I give thanks. Just now it occurs to me that the opening movement of this choral cycle begins with perfect fifths, and this movement begins with perfect fourths—their inversion. This musical relationship fits quite nicely with the idea that joy and sorrow are two sides of the same coin—they complete one another, they need one another. The tritone from *The Finches* is also present in *Woods*, but

this time as an emphasized melodic interval functioning clearly within the major scale. The tritone’s brightness is the poignance of gratitude felt in the context of loss. As so many revelations that come to you in grief, I see this now only in retrospect.

*The Law That Marries All Things* is a poem I knew well before Owen was born and one that I turned to early on for comfort. It has taken time for the full depth of this poems meaning to sink in, as it has taken time to cultivate

a spiritual relationship with my son—or to even absorb the full gravity of the fact that I will not get to see Owen again, ever. The “law” as I understand it is the natural law of wholeness. The poem uses the physical

behavior of water as an illustration of nature’s law: the ocean receives water lost by the cloud, and in turn, the cloud receives water lost by the ocean. In the presence of loss, there is ever wholeness and balance. And “in the air/over the water” there is the place in between where water is invisible, neither cloud nor water body—an intangible point of unity. As a nod to Berry’s Baptist roots, I have threaded material from the shape note hymn *Sweet Prospect* throughout this movement, sometimes as an accompaniment texture, sometimes as a model for original music, and sometimes in explicit quotation. As I studied *Sweet Prospect*, I noticed a perfect musical expression of the images in this poem. The upper voices often meet at a unison mid-phrase as one voice descends from high to low balanced by the other voice ascending from low to high. The voices trade places as the water does between cloud and ocean, and they meet at that magical unison “in the air/over the water.” Other melodic elements woven through this movement are a lullaby I sang to Owen—a simple melody in F major with a descending perfect fourth ostinato based on the tones of one of the NICU machines—and a Bb major triad that approximates a redbird (aka cardinal) call.

My musical entry point into *The Wheel* was Berry’s lively opening phrase “At the first strokes of the fiddle bow.” From there I was off with a chord of stacked fifths, pitches corresponding to the open strings of the violin. Add to the mix the image of a gathering of people gradually transforming from a crowd to a formation of dancers, and that opening sonority continues to add fifths until maximum density is reached—then the lowest fifth drops away and the pattern continues to ascend or at significant moments distills into the clarity of a unison or a bright triad. Then add the image of a turning wheel that inexorably

**“In the presence of loss, there is ever wholeness and balance. And “in the air/over the water” there is the place in between where water is invisible, neither cloud nor water body—an intangible point of unity.**

gathers momentum—energized by Berry’s wonderful short-short-long phrasing, like a dancer taking a few running steps before a graceful leap. At a climactic moment in this movement (“time is the wheel that brings it round”), the wheel, or in musical terms the cycle of fifths is traversed much more quickly than the opening long phrases that build harmonic density very gradually.

Another prominent element in this poem’s structure is the continuous thread spun by the repetition of words from one phrase to the next: dancers^dance;

couples^couples; movement^move; etc. I highlight Berry’s tactic musically by overlapping pitches on these recurring words between the cumulating ostinati that carry segments of text. The dance theme of the poem inspired a jaunty waltz often with an emphasis on beat two.

Finally, in this poem downward gestures—down-bows on the fiddle—are balanced at the local level by ascending gestures—the dancers rise. Melodically, leaps are balanced by stepwise movement in the opposite direction. The spinning wheel’s motion is a continuous balancing of descent and ascent. Over the arc of this poem, the wheel, originally grounded in the world of reality, attains such momentum through the dance as to overshoot its original starting point and soar into the spiritual realm. One of the most powerful aspects of music is its ability to hold more than one thought or feeling at once. So at this moment when the poem launches us into spirit realm (“In this rapture the dead return”) a solo soprano line rises into the stratosphere while the harmony falls by thirds (the original cycle of fifths with an extra step in between). These musical gestures together seek to capture something of the experience I feel now of being rooted to earth, while my heart reaches for a deeper spiritual communion with Owen.

These notes would not be complete without a heartfelt expression of gratitude to my friend, Kathy, who bravely offered wise words, soothing gestures, and most importantly, gentle companionship when I was completely broken with early grief. She has been a steadfast support in this long and continuing season of grief. As I shared these amazing poems with Kathy, gradually a seed of an idea formed to set these words for Resonance to sing. One of the many heartbreaks of losing your baby soon after birth is the unfulfilled desire to nurture in the traditional way—after giving birth, your heart is open and ready to nourish your child as long as you live. Despite loss, all those feelings continue to flow and one must seek out ways to fulfill this need. Writing *Only in falling* for Owen is a healing act, an affirmation that he was born and his life holds meaning in this world. Thank you, Kathy, for the invitation to make this music, and for your caring delivery— through the beautiful voices of Resonance’s singers—of these songs into our ears and hearts.



Photographer: Rachel Hadiashar

### **I. The Finches**

*The ears stung with cold sun and frost of dawn in early April, comes the song of winter finches, their crimson bright, then dark as they move into and then against the light. May the year warm them soon. May they soon go north with their singing and the season follow. May the bare sticks soon live, and our minds go free of the ground into the shining of trees.*

### **II. For the Future**

*Planting trees early in spring, we make a place for birds to sing in time to come. How do we know? They are singing here now. There is no other guarantee that singing will ever be.*

### **III. Woods**

*I part the out thrusting branches and come in beneath the blessed and the blessing trees. Though I am silent there is singing around me. Though I am dark there is vision around me. Though I am heavy there is flight around me.*

### **IV. The Law That Marries All Things**

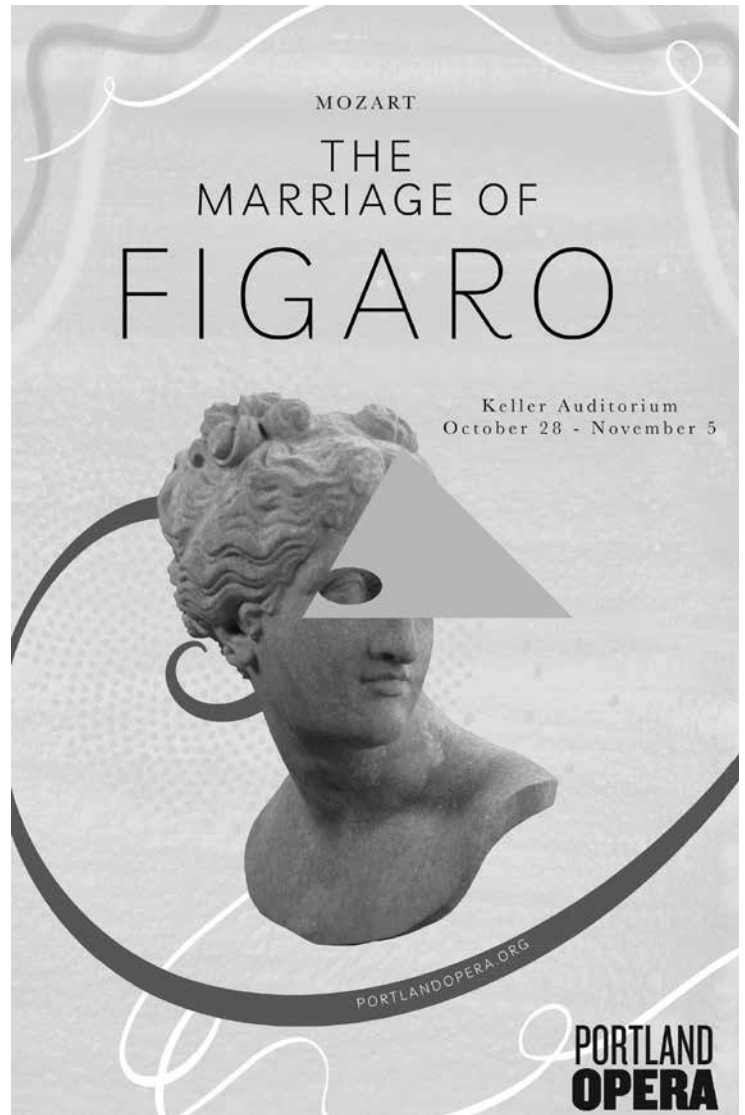
1. *The cloud is free only to go with the wind. The rain is free only in falling. The water is free only in its gathering together, in its downward courses, in its rising into the air.*



2. *In law is rest  
if you love the law,  
if you enter, singing, into it  
as water in its descent.*
3. *Or song is truest law,  
and you must enter singing;  
it has no other entrance.  
It is the great chorus  
of parts. The only outlawry  
is in division.*
4. *Whatever is singing  
is found, awaiting the return  
of whatever is lost.*
5. *Meet us in the air  
over the water,  
sing the swallows.  
Meet me, meet me,  
the redbird sings,  
here here here here.*

**V. The Wheel**

*At the first strokes of the fiddle bow  
the dancers rise from their seats.  
The dance begins to shape itself  
in the crowd, as couples join,  
and couples join couples, their movement  
together lightening their feet.  
They move in the ancient circle  
of the dance. The dance and the song  
call each other into being. Soon  
they are one – rapt in a single  
rapture, so that even the night  
has its clarity, and time  
is the wheel that brings it round.  
In this rapture the dead return.  
Sorrow is gone from them.  
They are light. They step  
into the steps of the living  
and turn with them in the dance  
in the sweet enclosure  
of the song, and timeless  
is the wheel that brings.*



Renée Favand-See at the premiere of *Only in Falling*, 2017 Photographer R Hadiashar

## KATHERINE FITZGIBBON

### FOUNDER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Katherine FitzGibbon is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Lewis & Clark College, where she conducts two of the three choirs and oversees the vibrant voice, choral, and opera areas. In 2014, she was an inaugural winner of the Lorry Lokey Faculty Excellence Award, honoring “inspired teaching, rigorous scholarship, demonstrated

leadership, and creative accomplishments,” and in 2019, she received the David Savage Award for “vision and sustained service.” She has also conducted choirs at Harvard, Boston, Cornell, and Clark Universities, and at the University of Michigan and has served on the faculty of Berkshire Choral International.

Dr. FitzGibbon founded Resonance Ensemble in 2009, initially dedicated to thematic, collaborative vocal performances with artistic partners. In the last several years, she and Resonance have shifted their mission, using the same innovative thematic programming approach to amplify voices that have long been silenced, focusing on underrepresented composers and communities. In June of 2019, Chorus America honored Dr. FitzGibbon with the prestigious Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal in recognition of her work with Resonance Ensemble. Chorus America’s press release noted, “As founder and artistic director of Resonance Ensemble, FitzGibbon has captained a bold organizational shift—from its original mission exploring links between music, art, poetry, and theatre, to a new focus exclusively on presenting concerts that promote meaningful social change.”

With Resonance, she has collaborated with the Portland Art Museum, Third Angle New Music, Portland Chamber Orchestra, Thomas Lauderdale and Hunter Noack, poet/performer S. Renee Mitchell, the Chuck Israels Jazz Orchestra, and many actors, composers, visual artists, and dancers. Resonance has been described as “one of the Northwest’s finest choirs” (Willamette Week) and “the best damn choir show in town” (Oregon Arts Watch). She has commissioned new works from Melissa Dunphy, Renee Favand-See, Damien Geter, Joe Kye, Judy A. Rose, Kenji Bunch, Kimberly Osberg, Freddy Vilches, Vin Shambry, Dr. S. Renee Mitchell, Mari Ésabel Valverde, and Jasmine Barnes.

Dr. FitzGibbon is President-Elect of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, and her choirs have performed at the NCCO, ACDA, and OMEA conferences. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Princeton University, Master of Music degree in conducting from the University of Michigan, and Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting at Boston University. Her research has been presented and published internationally.



Photo by Rachel Hadiashar



## HANNAH BREWER, PIANO

Hannah Brewer took up piano playing at the age of five, began working as a church organist at twelve, and had her first harpsichord lesson at seventeen. She hasn't looked back since, working full time as a church musician and collaborative keyboardist. Trained at Oberlin Conservatory and Pittsburg State University, with additional degrees in Renaissance art history, Hannah's specialties include choral accompanying and early music.

Equally at home at the piano, organ, or harpsichord, Hannah enjoys collaborating with Portland area groups such as Resonance Ensemble, In Mulieribus, the Oregon Symphony, Portland Symphonic Choir, Pacific Youth Choir, Cappella Romana, Cantores in Ecclesia, Ping & Woof Opera, Ensemble Boulanger, and many others. Hannah is also an adjunct music instructor at the University of Portland and Lewis & Clark College. Her "day job" is serving as Director of Music & Organist at St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church in northeast Portland. Hannah lives in Milwaukie, Oregon, with her fiancé and too many cats.

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## RESONANCE ENSEMBLE ACCESS PROJECT (REAP)

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Resonance Ensemble has been dedicated to providing free online access to our artistic projects, to satisfy the global demand for powerful performances that foster community, share stories, and promote meaningful social change. We are grateful for donor support so that we may continue the Resonance Ensemble Access Project (REAP): our initiative to ensure that all of our concerts are available to the world both in-person and online.



## WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU.

Providing this vital accessibility also increases the expenses of producing our concerts. We ask our supporters to consider an additional donation to underwrite this access for those who cannot afford to donate.

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Rachel Hadiashar

Matt Greco and The Rye Room

Susan Nunes and Lewis & Clark College

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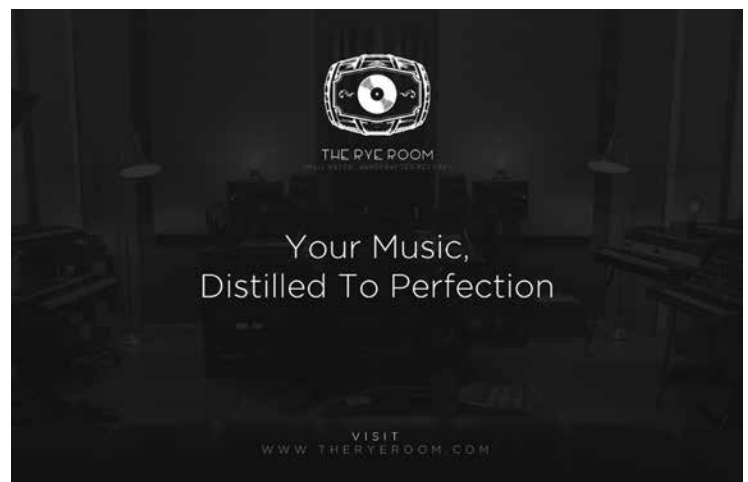
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We are especially grateful for our 2023-24 season partners, who provide mutual support, tickets, resources, and help us connect with our community all season long. If you would like to learn more about how to become a season partner with Resonance, please contact us directly.



### Community Partners

Over the last 15 years, Resonance has fostered meaningful, ongoing relationships with businesses and organizations who continue to support our mission through sponsorships, involvement, and advocacy. Thank you to all of these organizations who have helped us grow in our mission:

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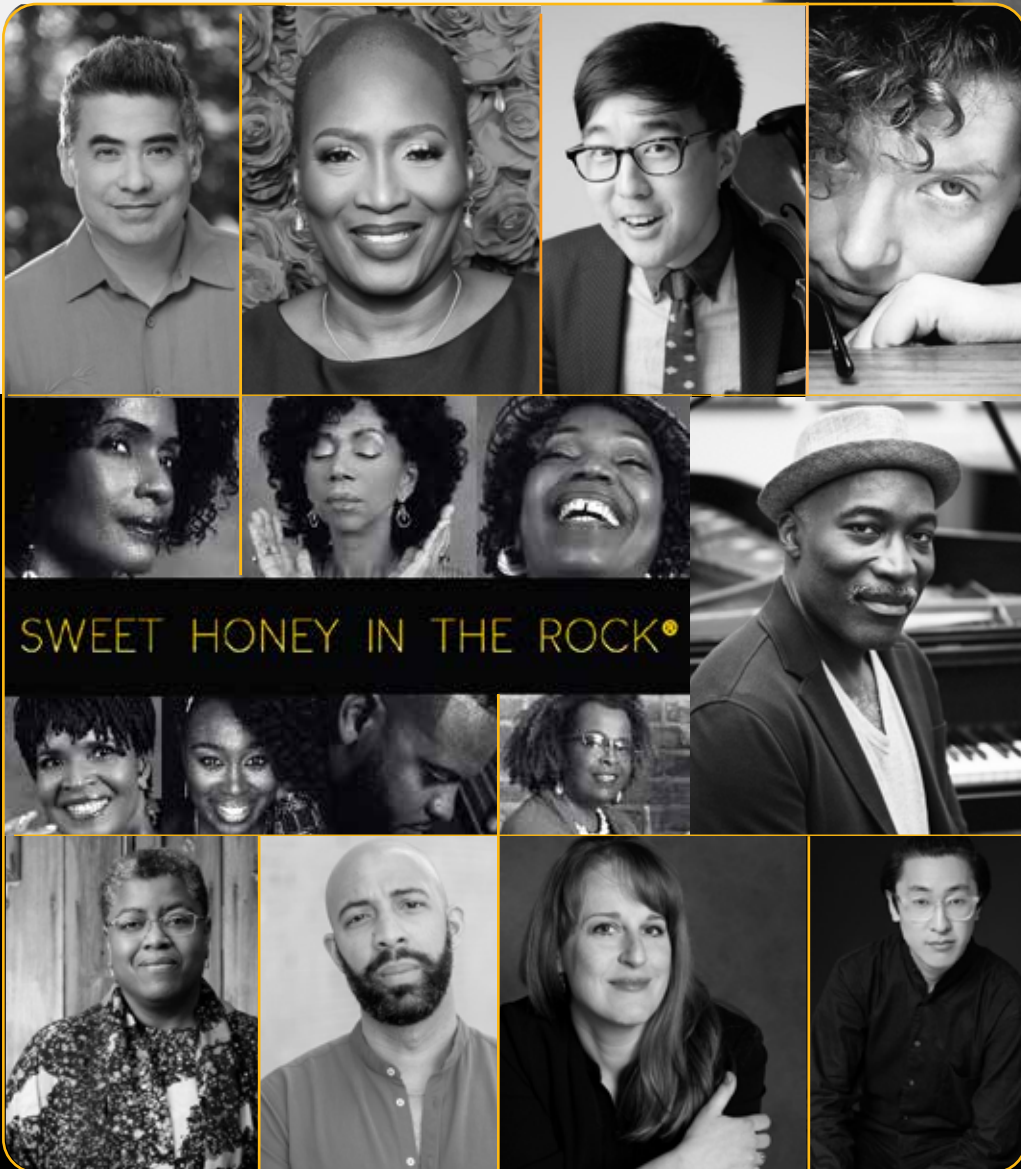
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Sunday, February 25 | 7:30 PM @Portland Art Museum

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