

OBERLIN COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

THE COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

FIAT LUX!

A Spectrum of Meanings for Light



*... Newton with his prism and his silent face,
The marble index of a mind for ever,
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.*

(William Wordsworth, The Prelude, III)

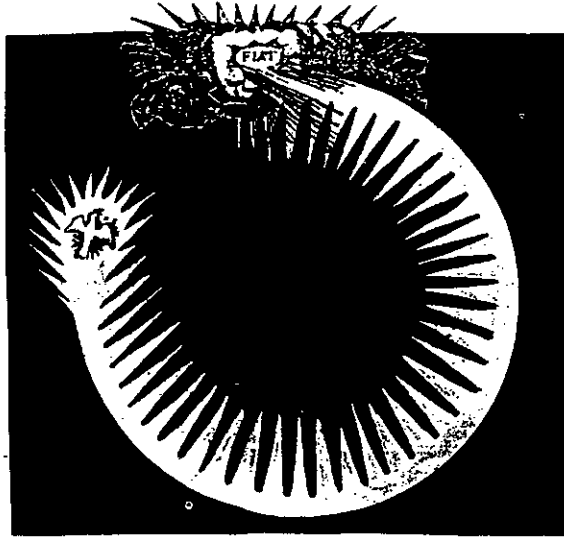
FAIRCHILD CHAPEL

1988

4:30 P.M.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4



The first day of creation depicted in Robert Fludd's *Utriusque cosmi majoris*.

I. THE CREATION OF LIGHT

God's first creature, which was light.

(Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis*)

Fiat lux!

Let there be light: and there was light! And God saw the light, that it was good!
(*Genesis* I, 3-4)

CHORUS

JOHN MILTON, *Hymn to Light* from *Paradise Lost*, III:

Paul Patanella, reader

PROCESSIONAL:

Lucis Creator optime

Tomás Luis de Victoria
(c. 1549-1611)

Victoria's setting surrounds the Vesper hymn melody with three lines of imitative counterpoint.

Beneficent Creator of Light, Thou brought forth the Light of Day, with the first beginnings
of a new Light to the world at its origin.

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ROBERT GROSSETESTE, *On Light*, (1215-1235):

Carlo Maley, reader

O lux

Christopher Tye
(c. 1500-1572)

Tye's instrumental work is constructed around a melody found in the bass line of John Redford's keyboard setting of *O Lux on the Faburden* in the *Mulliner Book*.

GAMBA CONSORT

KORAN XXIV, 35; 40:

Catherine Aragon, *reader*

Author of Light (The First of Two Books of Ayres)

Thomas Campion
(1567-1620)

Campion's work opens the first published English collection of sacred ayres—originally intended for performance with voice, lute and viol.

Author of Light, revive my dying spright,
Redeem it from the snares of all confounding night.
Lord, light me to thy blessed way:
For blind with worldly vain desires,
I wander as a stray.

Paul Patanella, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

II. EARTHLY LIGHTS AND MORTALS

THE LIGHT OF BEAUTY:

*What light through yon window breaks?
It is the East and Juliet is the Sun.*

(Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* II, ii)

SHAKESPEARE, *Love's Labour's Lost* I, i:

David Zajic, *reader*

Altra aurora bisogna, altro oriente

Luca Marenzio
(1533-1599)

Marenzio's madrigal is the seventh in a large cycle based upon Tansillo's Capitolo *Se quel dolor*. The setting is remarkable for its chromaticism and dissonances induced by the text.

Another dawn is needed, another east, by my eyes.
For without you, the sky is dark
And its lights are extinguished.
Wretched am I when I think upon what I am
And upon what which I shall be. The journey over,
Nearly wounding me is the gift of that fair glance.
(Luigi Tansillo)

CHORUS

THE LIGHT OF THE EYES:

*The light that lies in woman's eyes
Has been my heart's undoing.*

(Thomas Moore, *The Time I've Lost in Wooing*)

The light of the body is the eye.

(Matthew VI, 22)

WALLACE STEVENS, *Tattoo*:

Emily Greenleaf, *reader*

A un giro sol de' begl'occhi lucenti

Claudio Monteverdi

(1567-1643)

The text by Guarini, author of the famed pastoral drama, *Il pastor fido*, provided Monteverdi plentiful opportunities for word painting. The brightening air, the wind and sea becalmed by the glance of the lady's eyes, and the poet's anguish are all appropriately represented by musical figures.

At a single glance of those beautiful, shining eyes
The air all around brightens
And the sea grows calm, as do the winds,
And the sky is adorned with another light.
Only I have the lights [eyes] which are tearful and sad.
Surely when you were born so cruel and mocking,
My death as well was born.

(Giovanni Battista Guarini)

Suzanne Metz, Catherine Aragon, *sopranos* Emily Greenleaf, *alto*
Paul Patanella, *baritone* Carlo Maley, *bass*

THE LIGHT OF POWER:

*In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot . . .*

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Idylls of the King*)

MICHEL MONTAIGNE, *Essays* III, 7:

Katrina Grieve, *reader*

Lux purpurata-Diligite

Jacopo da Bologna

(fl. 1329-1350)

The initial letters of the lines of the Latin text in the triplum form an acrostic on Luchino Visconti, to whom the motet is dedicated. The florid writing, remarkable double-leading tone cadences, and hockets are typical of the Italian Ars Nova.

FOR LUCHINO VISCONTI, LORD OF MILAN [1339-1349]:

TRIPLUM: Light with purple rays comes to dispell darkness—a gentle, flourishing prince and, indeed, a celebrity of honor. For himself for all time he acquires the fame of virtue and grace. A savior of the people, best cultivator of virtue, true lover of efficiency, constant in all endeavors, permitting nothing of uselessness, a kind and just lord, aggravated by arrogance, merciful to the wanting—he sends out a Light to all! Greetings therefore and, moreover, a prosperous life!

MOTETUS: Honor justice when you judge a crime. Advance all learning, ignore no complaint. This is the characteristic of the prince that the defeated be let free. Let the uneasiness of the restless become as at peace. His subjects are content.

Suzanne Metz, Catherine Aragon, *sopranos*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

LIGHT AND RELATIVITY:

Energy equals mass times the velocity of light squared.

(Albert Einstein)

ARTHUR HENRY REGINALD BUTLER, *Limerick*, in *Punch*, 1923:

Jennifer Baker, *reader*

THE LIGHT OF THERMO-NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION:

*The unleashed power of the atom
has changed everything save our modes of thinking
and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophes.*

(Albert Einstein)

J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER from *Bhagavad Gita* at the explosion of the first atomic bomb:

Carlo Maley, reader

RESPONSORIUM:

Dies illa, dies irae

Tomás Luis de Victoria

That day, a day of wrath, calamity and misery! That great and very bitter day!

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JOHN HERSEY, *Hiroshima*, I:

Emily Greenleaf, reader

SEQUENCE:

Dies irae, dies illa

O day of wrath! That day shall dissolve the world in ashes, as David and the Sibyl testify.

What a trembling there will be!

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LIGHTS OF THE BEAT GENERATION:

*A glorious place, a glorious age I tell you
—A VERY NEON RENAISSANCE!
And the myths that actually touched you at that time
—Not Hercules, Orpheus, Ulysses and Aenas—
but Superman, Captain Marvel, Batman.*

(Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*)

JACK KEROUAC, *On the Road*:

Nathan Wilkes, reader

LIGHT AND FEAR:

HENRIK IBSEN, *Ghosts*, II:

Heather Parker, reader

III. DIVINE LIGHT AS LOGOS

IN THE BEGINNING:

NICOLAS AND ELENA CALAS, *In the Light of Dreams*:

Jennifer Love, reader

In principio erat verbum

Josquin des Prez
(c. 1440-1521)

This motet excerpt is the opening portion of Josquin's complete setting in three parts of the Gospel for the Third Mass for Christmas day. It includes a free paraphrase of the Gospel Tone, the liturgical formula used in the mass for presenting the text.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made. In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men; and the Light in darkness shineth, and the darkness comprehended it not.

(John I, 1-5)

Suzanne Metz, Kirsten Hagstrom, *sopranos*
Katrina Grieve, *alto* Nathan Wilkes, *bass*

JOHN I, 6-9:

Peter Goehring, *reader*

O nata lux de lumine

Thomas Tallis
(c. 1505-1585)

Tallis' *O nata lux* contrasts with his other hymn settings in that the music is homophonic, restricted to only two verses of the text, and carries no reference at all to the hymn melody.

O born Light of Light, Jesus redeemer of mankind, with loving kindness, deign to hear, from suppliant voices, praise and prayer. Thou who, to raise our souls from perdition, didst deign in fleshly form to dwell. Permit our body to unite with Thy holy Body.

CHORUS

Christe, der Du bist Tag und Licht

Christ, Thou art the Day and Light. Before Thee, Lord, is nothing concealed. Thou brightness of the Fatherly Light, teach us the way of total truth.

WOMEN'S CHORUS

Christe, der Du bist Tag und Licht

Michael Praetorius
(1511-1621)

Praetorius places the chorale melody in the highest voice of his three-voice setting. The German text is a free translation of the Latin hymn, *Christe, qui lux es*.

RECORDER TRIO

A LIGHT FULFILLED FOR THE GENTILES:

ISAIAH LIX, 21; LX, 1-5:

David Fuqua, *reader*

LUKE II, 25-28:

Kate McEvoy, *reader*

Nunc dimittis

William Byrd
(1543-1623)

Byrd's setting of the Song of Simeon concludes one of his most extended and masterful works, the *Great Service* for Anglican use. This portion is in verse anthem form, which contrasts a solo group with the larger choir.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people in Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning and is now, and ever shall be, and ever shall be. Amen.

Catherine Aragon, Kirsten Hagstrom, *sopranos* Jennifer Love, Emily Greenleaf, *altos*
Peter Goehring, *baritone*

CHORUS

LIGHT AND TRANSFIGURATION:

EXODUS XXXIV, 29-35:

David Zajic, *reader*

MATTHEW XVII, 1-7:

Catherine Aragon, *reader*

Resplenduit facies ejus

Tomás Luis de Victoria

Victoria's motet for the Feast of the Transfiguration presents a strict canon at the unison between the two soprano voices.

His face shone as the sun and his vestment was white as snow. And, behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with Jesus. Alleluia.

CHORUS

Christe qui lux es et dies

Sarum Chant

Christ, who art the Light and Day, who drivest away the dark night as the Light of Light
Thou invokest, proclaiming Holy Light. Amen.

CHORUS

Christe qui lux es et dies

Robert White

(c. 1535-1574)

The Sarum melody for the chant appears in the upper voice of White's setting over a skillful web of counterpoint involving a constantly recurring descending motif in all the voices.

SACKBUT QUARTET

IV. CELESTIAL LIGHT AND ETERNAL LIFE

LIGHT AND MARTYRDOM:

Telus purpurium—Splendida flamigero

John Benet

(fl. 1430-1450)

Benet's motet is totally isorhythmic. Each of the two upper voices introduces and repeats in turn three different extended rhythmic patterns, which are fitted to freely ordered successions of pitches. The tenor, in contrast, is restricted to three statements of a single recurring melody that is divided into two equal sections. Each section shares the same rhythmic pattern, but the two subsequent statements of the complete melody are each subjected to proportional reductions of the note values—first by one-third, then by an additional one-half. The final tenor melodic statement thus moves in rhythmic values amounting to only one-third of those found in the opening statement.

TRIPLUM: [The earth gave birth to a purple flower of the British race which like a heavenly star gives its light everywhere. This is the blessed Alban, flower of the faith and rose of the world; and a violent hand shed waves of his blood. Lying prone while the light falls, the first martyr dies and in so doing gives a light to the people. He dries up the river, feeling pity of the people passing, so that the divine will and truth should prevail together. At the top of the hill a stream quickly flows and by a springing wave gives a healing draught. Now, soldier of Christ, protect the camp of your servants and, rescuing us from a doleful death, lead us, O martyr, to the stars.]

MOTETUS: [A splendid shining light blazed from a fiery star when in martyrdom he held up the palm of faith. He sowed a new seed on the hard earth for the citizens and nurtured his own hungry race. Hear this in your praise when we rejoice with song. And be a kind father of the English and a leader of your people.]

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

LIGHT AND THE VIRGIN MOTHER:

La luz de vuestros ojos from Canciones spirituales

Francisco Guerrero

(1528-1599)

Guerrero's *Canciones* demonstrate his superiority over all of his contemporaries in setting vernacular religious poetry. Apparently products from his early career, they were not published until a decade before the composer's death.

The light of your eyes—pure, burning—and the gentle grace, beauty, rays of shining gold, and the riches that God has granted you, Mary, heavenly Queen, in the victory for your soul which now realizes greatness. And, moreover the victory over your sorrow, which although still remembered, you are able now to exchange for great glory.

Suzanne Metz, Catherine Aragon, *sopranos* Emily Greenleaf, *alto*
Paul Patanella, *baritone* Carlo Maley, *bass*

Ave lumen gratiae

Robert Fayrfax
(1465-1521)

This work, the opening section of a polyphonic Antiphon praising the Blessed Virgin, survives incomplete in a choirbook that lay neglected for centuries in the College Library of Eton College. The works contained therein had remained unperformed for nearly 400 years.

Hail Light of grace, font of mercy, fruitful Virgin, hope of eternal glory, heavenly Queen, reverend and admirable Mother, through whom is born an incomparable flower of unutterable splendor, a joyful gate to heaven. Hail new joy, window of heaven, solace for the weary, holy figure. Hail mirror of Light, dwelling place of Christ, blessed Virgin, who saved mankind giving birth to the child through whom death is conquered.

Paul Patanella, Allen Kastle, *tenors*
David Zajic, Peter Goehring, *baritones*
Alex Wolf, Carlo Maley, *basses*

SACKBUT ENSEMBLE

*We say that God and the imagination are one . . .
How high that highest candle lights the dark.*

(Wallace Stevens, *Final Soliloquy* . . .)

Lux perpetua lucebit

Sebastián de Vivanco
(1550-1622)

Vivanco's motet was discovered in 1975 within a forgotten choirbook in the archives of the Cathedral at Salamanca, where the composer served both as choirmaster and professor at the University. To the best of our knowledge, this is probably the first performance of the work in several centuries.

Perpetual Light shall shine upon your Saints, O Lord. Alleluia. And for an eternity of ages. Alleluia. Crowned with everlasting joy. Alleluia.

CHORUS

VLADIMIR NABOKEV, *Speak memory:*
SAMUEL BECKETT, *Waiting for Godot:*
HERACLITUS, *On the Universe:*
JOHN VIII, 12:

David Zajic, Jennifer Baker, David Fuqua, Kate McEvoy, *readers*

LIGHT OF THE SAINTS:

GRADUAL:

Requiem eternam from *Missa pro defunctis*

Cristóbal de Morales
(c. 1500-1553)

The Gradual from Morales' *Requiem* of 1544 incorporates the chant melody in the alto voice, which serves as a foundation for successive surrounding points of imitation in the other voices. Ambros, the distinguished music historian once wrote, perhaps somewhat unjustly: "Morales' *Missa pro defunctis*, though magnificent, inspires terror! One shivers in the presence of this somber, nocturnal masterpiece."

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual Light shine upon them.

CHORUS

THE LIGHT WITHIN THE HOLY CITY:

REVELATION XXI, 9-10; 23-24:

Paul Patanella, *reader*

COMMUNION:

Lux eterna luceat eis

L. D. Nuernberger

(Written 1988)

The *Communion* and *Antiphon* conclude an extended *Requiem: In memoriam* written in memory of my mother. Throughout the entire work there is a coupling of 12-tone serialism with quotations from the chants associated with the various liturgical portions of the Requiem. *In paradisum* is a free canonic setting of the diatonic chant melody—first presented in two voices, then in four.

May eternal Light shine upon them, O Lord, with Thy Saints into eternity, for Thou art gracious. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual Light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

CHORUS

RECESSIONAL ANTIPHON:

In paradisum

Into paradise may the Angels take you. On your way, may the martyrs come to welcome you and lead you into the Holy City, Jerusalem. Amen.

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SYNOPSIS

The mysteries of light have exerted a preeminent influence on human thought and experience since prehistoric times. The famed Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain has now proven to be oriented to the seasonal movements of the sun. The pyramids in Egypt apparently were once faced with white stone and constructed at such an angle as to reflect the maximum sun rays at the winter solstice. Some tombs within the pyramids are provided with slits so that at specific times of the year the rays of the sun penetrate the darkness and magically illuminate the wall paintings within. The study of light over the centuries constitutes a history of the development of the scientific method. Robert Grosseteste believed the very nature or form of body itself was light, and he gave a special importance to optics. The corpuscular theory of light initially rejected by Aristotle was later propounded by Newton who, with his prism, was the first to undertake a study of the spectrum of the sun. The wave theory advanced by Huygens and later Fresnel eventually supplanted Newton's theory. Accurate measurement of the velocity of light was not accomplished until the nineteenth century. That quantity proved vital to Einstein's equation and eventually to our thermo-nuclear age.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, light was the first element of creation, a position now shared by most scientific theories concerning the origin of the universe. Hannukah and Candlemas celebrate feasts of light. Christmas and Easter of the Christian year correspond essentially to the winter solstice and vernal equinox. John in his gospel first equated Light with the Logos and Christ. Events in the life of Christ—the birth, presentation in the temple, transfiguration are associated with light, and light is a topic central to many of Christ's teachings.

In abstract terms, light has been associated symbolically with knowledge, beauty, justice, music, painting, jurisprudence, and power. The eyes as windows of the soul have figured prominently in religion, drama and poetry. In medieval times, the light which filtered through the stained glass of Gothic cathedrals and the alabaster slits of Mozarabic chapels was believed divine. The aureoles ascribed to the Trinity and Mary in paintings and frescoes and the halos assigned to the saints are further representations of the divine light. Within the Holy Celestial City of Jerusalem, the divine light symbolizes eternal life.

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

L. D. Nuernberger, *director*

Catherine Aragon, *assistant director*

SINGERS

Catherine Aragon
Jennifer Baker
Anne Crawford
David Fuqua
Peter Goehring
Emily Greenleaf
Katrina Grieve
Kirsten Hagstrom
Allen Kastle

Jennifer Levin
Jennifer Love
Carlo Maley
Kate McEvoy
Suzanne Metz
Heather Parker
Paul V. Patanella
Nathan Wilkes
Alex Wolf

David Zajic

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Catherine Aragon, *treble viol, vielle*
Greg Bloy, *recorders*
Patrick Collier, *sackbut*
Anne Crawford, *tenor viol*
Nathaniel Dickey, *sackbut*
Emily Greenleaf, *portative, lute*
Lenore Horner, *recorders*

Suzanne Metz, *tenor viol*
Laura Schattschneider, *recorders*
Roger Schmidt, *sackbut*
Elizabeth Sharp, *recorders*
Dawn Stevenson, *Gothic harp*
Sarah Walder, *bass viol*
Nathan Wilkes, *sackbut*

David Zajic, *recorder*