

PROGRAM

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

– William Butler Yeats

Part I: Monet, The Implicit Conversation, and Us

In the space given, please write down a few words or phrases that reflect your visceral reaction to “The Second Coming”.

William Butler Yeats (poem)

In the spaces that follow, please write a few words or phrases that reflect your visceral reaction to the music you hear.
(Feel free to write during the performance). There will be about a minute pause between each work.

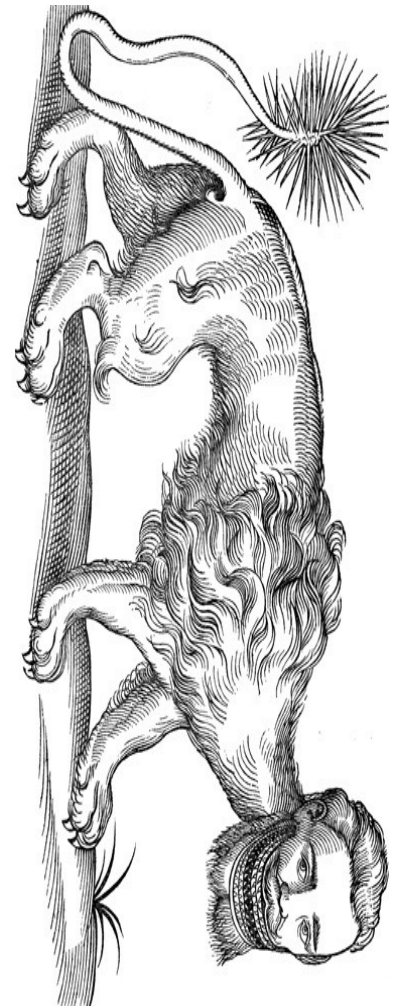
Tom Schnauber

Elena Ruehr

Howard Frazin

Part II: The Explicit Conversation of From Words to Song

Your reactions to the words; your reactions to the music; our musical reactions to the words; our music.
Second performances of the works will be interspersed throughout the conversation.



BIOGRAPHIES

WordSong, founded in 2008 by composer Howard Frazin and Tom Schnauber, is Boston's premier interactive concert organization. WordSong has created a new concert format focused on public conversation around intuitive musical understanding, aspiring to reconnect musicians and audiences through shared, active, artistic experiences. In its 16-year history, WordSong has produced 15 forum series and various other programs based on texts as diverse as Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" and Langston Hughes's "Harlem." More than 100 performances, including more than 70 new works by living composers, have been presented throughout New England, as well as in New York, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C., and as far away as Vancouver and Bulgaria.

The Performers

Mezzo-soprano **Krista River** won a Grammy award for the role of Mrs. Fox on Boston Modern Orchestra Project's recording of Tobias Picker's *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. She has appeared as a soloist with the Boston Symphony, the Santa Fe Symphony, Handel & Haydn Society, the Florida Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Krista won the Concert Artists Guild International Competition and a Sullivan Foundation grant, and is featured on numerous recordings under Naxos, Dorian, and Navona record labels. She is on the voice faculty at Brandeis University and Phillips Academy in Andover. Krista resides in Boston and is a regular soloist with Emmanuel Music's Bach Cantata Series.

The **Arneis Quartet** performs an eclectic range of programs from the standard to contemporary, including commissions of new works and interdisciplinary collaborations in New England and throughout the world. Known for playing with "a conviction that commands attention" (Fanfare) and "a unique collective sound which is as warm and full of sparkle as liquid gold" (Boston Musical Intelligencer), the quartet is playfully named after the Arneis grape—a varietal that is difficult to grow, but which yields an exquisite white wine.

Working with living composers serves as a key part of the quartet's artistic mission. Gramophone praised their "vivacious rendition" of Elena Ruehr's String Quartet No. 8 on a recently released recording of her works. Arneis collaborated with Coro Allegro to premiere Andrea Clearfield's *here i am: i am here*, based on open letters by LGBTQ+ youth advocates Mimi Lemay and Sam Brinton. Other recent premieres and collaborations include works by Gabriela Lena Frank, Jonathan Berger, Julien Labro, and Aaron Travers. Building on their affinity for collaboration Arneis launched their Kaisahan Initiative in 2022 to explore projects and partnerships to broaden their eclectic approach to programming across a diverse range of cultural traditions. Recent Kaisahan artists-in-residence include Susie Ibarra and Vân-Anh Vanessa Vö.

The Composers

The music of **Howard Frazin** has been called "genuinely touching" by the *Dallas Morning News* and "clear in design ... ingeniously scored ... [with] an almost unbearable poignancy" by the *Boston Globe*. His works have been commissioned and performed by many leading ensembles including A Far Cry, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, Boston Classical Orchestra, the Claremont Trio, Florestan Recital Project, Lorelei Ensemble, Lydian String Quartet, Arneis Quartet, and Triple Helix, and programmed at festivals including Tanglewood, Aspen, Banff, Rockport, Monadnock, Bowdoin, Kneisel Hall, and Yellow Barn. His works are published by Editions Peters and recorded on Ravello Records and MSR Classics. Frazin is the cofounder and artistic director of WordSong.

With works described as "sumptuously scored and full of soaring melodies" (The New York Times), and "unspeakably gorgeous" (Gramophone), American composer **Elena Ruehr** is known for her bold lyricism, which is informed by her ability to combine diverse musical structures spanning the second Viennese School to minimalism. Currently composer in residence with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra, she has been a Guggenheim Fellow (2014) and a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute (2008) and composer-in-residence with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, which recorded her opera Toussaint Before the Spirits (BMOP Sound) and her complete orchestral works (BMOP Sound, O'Keeffe Images). She has written five operas, twelve string quartets, and numerous other chamber, film and dance works that have been recorded on over twelve CDs and performed internationally.

German-American composer **Tom Schnauber** is a co-founder of the Boston-based arts organization WordSong and a former co-president of Composers in Red Sneakers (Boston). He has also studied French horn performance, ethnomusicology, and did a small stint in Hollywood scoring films no one will ever see. A versatile composer, Schnauber enjoys writing for a variety of ensembles, including unaccompanied instruments, chamber ensembles, solo voice and vocal ensembles, string orchestra, and symphony orchestra, and works for stage. His music has been performed throughout the United States and Europe and can be found on the Quartz and Navona labels. He is a full-time teacher, sometime writer and copyeditor, and a proud Trekkie and Whovian.