

Tuesday, February 23, 2010, 7:30pm
First Congregational Church

Lisa Delan, *soprano*
Mikhail Pletnev, *piano*

PROGRAM

Gordon Getty (b. 1933) *The White Election* (1981)
A cycle of 32 songs for soprano and piano
on poems by Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

Part One: *The Pensive Spring*

1. I Sing to Use the Waiting (major setting)
2. There Is a Morn by Men Unseen
3. I Had a Guinea Golden
4. If She Had Been the Mistletoe
5. New Feet Within My Garden Go
6. She Bore It
7. I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed
8. I Should Not Dare to Leave My Friend

Part Two: *So We Must Meet Apart*

9. There Came a Day at Summer's Full
10. The First Day's Night Had Come
11. The Soul Selects Her Own Society
12. It Was Not Death, for I Stood Up
13. When I Was Small, a Woman Died
14. I Cried at Pity, Not at Pain
15. The Night Was Wide
16. I Cannot Live with You

INTERMISSION



Lisa Delan

Part Three: *Almost Peace*

17. My First Well Day, Since Many Ill
18. It Ceased to Hurt Me
19. I Like to See It Lap the Miles
20. Split the Lark and You'll Find the Music
21. The Cricket Sang
22. After a Hundred Years
23. The Clouds Their Backs Together Laid
24. I Shall Not Murmur

Part Four: *My Feet Slip Nearer*

25. The Grave My Little Cottage Is
26. I Did Not Reach Thee
27. My Wars Are Laid Away in Books
28. There Came a Wind Like a Bugle
29. The Going from a World We Know
30. Upon His Saddle Sprung a Bird
31. Beauty Crowds Me
32. I Sing to Use the Waiting (minor setting)

Funded by the Koret Foundation, this performance is part of Cal Performances' 2009–2010 Koret Recital Series, which brings world-class artists to our community.

Cal Performances' 2009–2010 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Notes on *The White Election*

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886) was born and died in the “Brick House” or “Homestead” her grandfather had built in his heyday as founder of Amherst Academy and Amherst College. Writing and family gave her enough to do. We know 1,775 of her poems and 1,049 of her letters. The tone is playful, the language puzzling, the content profound. Only 11 of the poems were published in her lifetime. The survival of so many letters, even so, suggests that her gift had been recognized within her circle. The rest lay in a chest by her bed, or were mailed with her letters. Her sister Lavinia and a few other friends published some of these, at their own expense, beginning in 1890. Early editions sold out, and Emily’s fame was assured. Squabbles over rights delayed a complete and authentic printing until the 1959 Harvard Press Variorum, edited by Thomas Johnson.

The White Election is meant to tell her story in her words. It is the story of a poet, and the business of poets is to observe and invent. Are her love poems, among the most desolating in the language, simply inventions? If not, who does she mean? The most likely suggestions include Charles Wadsworth, Otis Lord and Samuel Bowles, all leaders of opinion, all a generation older, and all happily married. We might like it to be the handsome and gregarious Bowles, whose *Springfield Republican* published six of her poems. Judge Lord is an even stronger candidate, since he and Emily became engaged after his wife died, when she was 47 and he 66. But I will argue, as Johnson does, that the evidence favors Wadsworth over both, and over the null hypothesis that the “dim companion” of those poems was wholly a pretend person.

They cannot have met often. Wadsworth was pastor of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and famous for his sermons. Mark Twain poked fun at his rhetoric. Emily and Lavinia traveled to Washington in 1854 to visit their father while he served in Congress, and may have met Wadsworth then. We know that he visited the Homestead in 1859 and 1880. His one surviving letter to “My Dear Miss Dickenson” [*sic*], which has not been dated, begins: “I am distressed beyond

measure at your note. I can only imagine the affliction which has befallen, or is now befalling you....” This suggests that she had written him, and that no actual romance had taken place. We do have a letter from Emily to her Philadelphia friends, the Josiah Hollands, asking that something enclosed be sent on to “our arch friend,” and we have letters after his death describing him as her “closest” and “dearest earthly friend.”

Evidence that Wadsworth was the Dim Companion, if only in her mind, comes mostly from her poetry itself, as we will see, and from the second of the three draft letters addressed to “Master.” Johnson dates these letters to 1858, 1861 and 1862, more or less, from her handwriting. Though all of Emily’s letters are love letters in the wide sense, the second and third Master letters are implorations. The second includes “If it had been God’s will that I might breathe where you breathe...to come nearer than Presbyteries, and nearer than the new coat that the tailor made....” “Presbyteries” (ecclesiastical courts) does not seem to fit at all unless for Wadsworth, who was America’s most famous Presbyterian minister after Henry Ward Beecher. Neither Bowles nor Lord was Presbyterian, and neither showed particular interest in religion.

In 1862, Wadsworth became pastor of the First Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, remaining there eight years. The period 1861–1865 is Emily’s most productive, if the handwriting analysis is right, and brings her first death/marriage poems. White is decreed in tradition for weddings and funerals. Emily tells us in these poems that for her, these two events would be as one. She will be “born, bridaled, shrouded in a day.” In heaven, she will be “dressed to meet you, see, in white.” The Dim Companion will be “Mine, by the right of the White Election...Mine, by the Grave’s Repeal!” It was in this period that Emily began wearing white.

The evidence for Wadsworth in these poems is mainly the reference to Calvary. Calvary is mentioned nine times in this period, according to Johnson, and not before. Emily was not religious at any age; she sometimes writes about religion, but more as a merry critic, except in the love poems, than as a participant. Although Calvary is a more natural metaphor for suffering than presbyteries

for closeness, nine mentions of Calvary, packed in this period, are enough to make the case for Wadsworth.

Emily had studied voice and piano, and sometimes played at home. A friend remembers:

Oftentimes, during these visits to the Dickinson relatives, father would be awakened from his sleep by heavenly music. Emily would explain in the morning, “I can improvise better at night.” On one or two occasions, when not under their friendly roof, my father, in paying his respects at the house, would receive a message from his cousin Emily saying, “If you will stay in the next room, and open the folding doors a few inches, I’ll come down to make music for you.” My father said that in those early days she seemed like a will-o’-the-wisp.

Another visitor recalls the Emily was “often at the piano playing weird and beautiful melodies, all from her own inspiration.” Emily herself writes to a friend, “I play the old, odd tunes yet, which used to flit about your head after honest hours.”

All this inspires the conjecture that Emily may have set her own poems to music, or even conceived of some of them as songs in the first place. I have set them, in large part, just as Emily might have if her music had found a balance between tradition and iconoclasm something like that in her poems.

Gordon Getty

Gordon Getty (b. 1933)
The White Election (1981)
Texts: Emily Dickinson

Part One: The Pensive Spring

1. I Sing to Use the Waiting (c. 1864)

I sing to use the waiting,
 My bonnet but to tie
 And shut the door unto my house,
 No more to do have I

Till his best step approaching,
 We journey to the day
 And tell each other how we sang
 To keep the dark away.

2. There Is a Morn by Men Unseen (c. 1858)

There is a morn by men unseen
 Whose maids upon remoter green
 Keep their seraphic May,
 And all day long, with dance and game,
 And gambol I may never name,
 Employ their holiday.

Here to light measure move the feet
 Which walk no more the village street
 Nor by the wood are found,
 Here are the birds that sought the sun
 When last year's distaff idle hung,
 And summer's brows were bound.

Ne'er saw I such a wondrous scene,
 Ne'er such a ring on such a green
 Nor so serene array,
 As if the stars, some summer night,
 Should swing their cups of Chrysolite
 And revel till the day.

Like thee to dance, like thee to sing,
 People upon the mystic green,
 I ask each new May morn.
 I wait thy far fantastic bells
 Announcing me in other dells
 Unto the different dawn!

3. I Had a Guinea Golden (c. 1858)

I had a guinea golden,
 I lost it in the sand,

And though the sum was simple
 And pounds were in the land,
 Still, had it such a value
 Unto my frugal eye,
 That when I could not find it
 I sat me down to sigh.

I had a crimson robin
 Who sang full many a day,
 But when the woods were painted,
 He too did fly away.
 Time brought me other robins,
 Their ballads were the same,
 Still, for my missing troubadour
 I kept the "house at home."

I had a star in heaven,
 One "Pleiad" was its name,
 And when I was not heeding
 It wandered from the same.
 And though the skies are crowded,
 And all the night ashine,
 I do not care about it
 Since none of them are mine.

My story has a moral;
 I have a missing friend,
 "Pleiad" its name, and robin,
 And guinea in the sand.
 And when this mournful ditty,
 Accompanied with tear,

Shall meet the eye of traitor
 In country far from here,
 Grant that repentance solemn
 May seize upon his mind,
 And he no consolation
 Beneath the sun may find.

4. If She Had Been the Mistletoe (late 1858)

If she had been the mistletoe
 And I had been the rose,
 How gay upon your table
 My velvet life to close.
 Since I am of the Druid,
 And she is of the dew,
 I'll deck tradition's buttonhole
 And send the rose to you.

5. New Feet Within My Garden Go (c. 1859)

New feet within my garden go,
 New fingers stir the sod.

A troubadour upon the elm
 Betrays the solitude.

New children play upon the green,
 New weary sleep below,
 And still the pensive spring returns,
 And still the punctual snow!

6. She Bore It (c. 1859)

She bore it till the simple veins
 Traced azure on her hand,
 Till pleading, round her quiet eyes
 The purple crayons stand.

Till daffodils had come and gone,
 I cannot tell the sum,
 And then she ceased to bear it
 And with the saints sat down.

No more her patient figure
 At twilight soft to meet,
 No more her timid bonnet
 Upon the village street,

But crowns instead and courtiers
 And in the midst so fair,
 Whose but her shy, immortal face
 Of whom we're whispering here?

7. I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed (c. 1860)

I taste a liquor never brewed
 Prom tankards scooped in pearl;
 Not all the vats upon the Rhine
 Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,
 And debauchee of dew,
 Reeling through endless summer days
 From inns of molten blue.

When landlords turn the drunken bee
 Out of the foxglove's door,
 When butterflies renounce their "drams,"
 I shall but drink the more,

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats
 And saints to windows run,
 To see the little tippler
 Leaning against the sun.

8. I Should Not Dare to Leave My Friend (c. 1860)

I should not dare to leave my friend;
 Because, because if he should die
 While I was gone, and I too late
 Should reach the heart that wanted me,

If I should disappoint the eyes
 That hunted, hunted so to see
 And could not bear to shut until
 They noticed me, they noticed me,

If I should stab the patient faith
 So sure I'd come, so sure I'd come,
 It listening, listening went to sleep
 Telling my tardy name,

My heart would wish it broke before,
 Since breaking then, since breaking then
 Were useless as next morning's sun
 Where midnight frosts had lain!

Part Two: So We Must Meet Apart

9. There Came a Day at Summer's Full (early 1862)

There came a day at summer's full
 Entirely for me;
 I thought that such were for the saints
 Where resurrections be.

The sun as common went abroad,
 The flowers accustomed blew,
 As if no soul the solstice passed
 That maketh all things new.

The time was scarce profaned by speech;
 The symbol of a word
 Was needless as, at Sacrament,
 The wardrobe of our Lord.

Each was to each the sealed church,
 Permitted to commune
 This time, lest we too awkward show
 At Supper of the Lamb.

The hours slid fast, as hours will,
 Clutched tight by greedy hands,
 So faces on two decks look back,
 Bound to opposing lands.

(Please turn the page quietly.)

And so when all the time had leaked,
Without external sound
Each bound the other's crucifix,
We gave no other bond,

Sufficient troth that we shall rise,
Deposed, at length, the grave,
To that new marriage justified
Through Calvaries of love.

10. The First Day's Night Had Come (c. 1862)

The first day's night had come,
And grateful that a thing
So terrible had been endured,
I told my soul to sing.

She said her strings were snapped,
Her bow to atoms blown,
And so to mend her gave me work
Until another morn.

And then a day as huge
As yesterdays in pairs
Unrolled its horror in my face
Until it blocked my eyes,

My brain began to laugh,
I mumbled like a fool,
And though 'tis years ago, that day,
My brain keeps giggling still.

And something's odd within;
That person that I was
And this one do not feel the same.
Could it be madness, this?

11. The Soul Selects Her Own Society (c. 1862)

The soul selects her own society
Then shuts the door;
To her divine majority
Present no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariots pausing
At her low gate,
Unmoved, an emperor be kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one,
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.

12. It Was Not Death, for I Stood Up (early 1862)

It was not death, for I stood up
And all the dead lie down,
It was not night, for all the bells
Put out their tongues for noon.

It was not frost, for on my flesh
I felt siroccos crawl,
Not fire, for just my marble feet
Could keep a chancel cool.

And yet it tasted like them all.
The figures I have seen
Set orderly for burial
Reminded me of mine,

As if my life were shaven
And fitted to a frame,
And could not breathe without a key,
And 'twas like midnight some,

When everything that ticked has stopped
And space stares all around,
Or grisly frosts, first autumn morns,
Repeal the beating ground,

But most like chaos, stopless, cool,
Without a chance or spar,
Or even a report of land
To justify despair.

13. When I Was Small, a Woman Died (early 1862)

When I was small, a woman died;
Today her only boy
Went up from the Potomac,
His face all victory

To look at her. How slowly
The seasons must have turned,
Till bullets clipped an angle
And he passed quickly round.

If pride shall be in paradise,
Ourselves cannot decide;
Of their imperial conduct
No person testified.

But proud in apparition,
That woman and her boy
Pass back and forth before my brain,
As even in the sky

I'm confident that bravos
Perpetual break abroad
For braveries remote as this
In scarlet Maryland.

14. I Cried at Pity, Not at Pain (early 1862)

I cried at pity, not at pain.
I heard a woman say
"Poor child," and something in her voice
Convicted me of me.

So long I fainted, to myself
It seemed the common way,
And health and laughter, curious things
To look at, like a toy.

To sometimes hear "rich people" buy,
And see the parcel rolled
And carried, I supposed, to heaven,
For children made of gold,

But not to touch, or wish for,
Or think of, with a sigh,
And so and so had been to me,
Had God willed differently.

I wish I knew that woman's name,
So when she comes this way,
To hold my life, and hold my ears
For fear I hear her say

She's "sorry I am dead" again,
Just when the grave and I
Have sobbed ourselves almost to sleep,
Our only lullaby.

15. The Night Was Wide (c. 1862)

The night was wide, and furnished scant
With but a single star
That often as a cloud it met
Blew out itself for fear.

The wind pursued the little bush
And drove away the leaves
November left, then clambered up
And fretted in the eaves.

No squirrel went abroad.
A dog's belated feet,
Like intermittent plush, he heard
Adown the empty street.

To feel if blinds be fast,
And closer to the fire
Her little rocking chair to draw,
And shiver for the poor,

The housewife's gentle task.
"How pleasanter," said she
Unto the sofa opposite,
"The sleet than May, no thee."

16. I Cannot Live with You (c. 1862)

I cannot live with you.
It would be life,
And life is over there
Behind the shelf

The sexton keeps the key to,
Putting up
Our life, his porcelain,
Like a cup

Discarded of the housewife,
Quaint or broke:
A newer Sevres pleases,
Old ones crack.

I could not die with you,
For one must wait
To shut the other's gaze down,
You could not,

And I, could I stand by
And see you freeze,
Without my right of frost,
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise with you,
Because your face
Would put out Jesus,
That new grace

Glow plain and foreign
On my homesick eye,
Except that you than he
Shone closer by.

They'd judge us. How?
For you served heaven, you know,
Or sought to.
I could not,

Because you saturated sight,
And I had no more eyes
For sordid excellence
As paradise.

And were you lost, I would be,
Though my name
Rang loudest
On the heavenly fame.

And were you saved,
And I condemned to be
Where you were not,
That self were hell to me.

So we must meet apart,
You there, I here,
With just the door ajar
That oceans are, and prayer,
And that white sustenance,
Despair.

Part Three: Almost Peace

17. My First Well Day, Since Many Ill (c. 1862)

My first well day, since many ill,
I asked to go abroad
And take the sunshine in my hands,
And see the things in pod

A blossom just when I went in,
To take my chance with pain,
Uncertain if myself or he
Should prove the strongest one.

The summer deepened while we strove.
She put some flowers away,
And redder cheeked ones in their stead,
A fond, illusive way.

To cheat herself it seemed she tried,
As if before a child
To fade. Tomorrow rainbows held,
The sepulchre could hide,

She dealt a fashion to the nut,
She tied the hoods to seeds,
She dropped bright scraps of tint about,
And left Brazilian threads

On every shoulder that she met,
Then both her hands of haze

Put up, to hide her parting grace
From our unfitted eyes.

My loss by sickness, Was it loss,
Or that ethereal gain
One earns by measuring the grave,
Then measuring the sun?

18. It Ceased to Hurt Me (c. 1862)

It ceased to hurt me, though so slow
I could not feel the anguish go,
But only knew by looking back
That something had benumbed the track.

Nor when it altered I could say,
For I had worn it every day
As constant as the childish frock
I hung upon the peg at night,

But not the grief. That nestled close
As needles ladies softly press
To cushions' cheeks to keep their place.

Nor what consoled it I could trace,
Except whereas 'twas wilderness,
It's better, almost peace.

19. I Like to See It Lap the Miles (c. 1862)

I like to see it lap the miles
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks,
And then prodigious step

Around a pile of mountains,
And supercilious peer
In shanties by the sides of roads,
And then a quarry pare

To fit its ribs and crawl between,
Complaining all the while
In horrid hooting stanza,
Then chase itself downhill

And neigh like Boanerges,
Then, punctual as a star,
Stop, docile and omnipotent,
At its own stable door.

20. Split the Lark and You'll Find the Music (c. 1864)

Split the lark and you'll find the music,
Bulb after bulb in silver rolled,

Scantly dealt to the summer morning,
Saved for your ear when lutes be old.

Loose the flood, you shall find it patent
Gush after gush reserved for you.
Scarlet experiment! Sceptic Thomas!
Now do you doubt that your bird was true?

21. The Cricket Sang (c. 1866)

The crickets sang and set the sun,
And workmen finished one by one
Their seam the day upon.

The low grass loaded with the dew;
The twilight stood as strangers do,
With hat in hand, polite and new
To stay as if, or go.

A vastness as a neighbor came,
A wisdom without face or name,
A peace as hemispheres at home,
And so the night became.

22. After a Hundred Years (c. 1869)

After a hundred years
Nobody knows the place,
Agony that enacted there
Motionless as peace.

Weeds triumphant ranged;
Strangers strolled and spelled
At the lone orthography
Of the elder dead.

Winds of summer fields
Recollect the way,
Instinct picking up the key
Dropped by memory.

23. The Clouds Their Backs Together Laid (c. 1870)

The clouds their backs together laid,
The north begun to push,
The forests galloped till they fell,
The lightning played like mice.

The thunder crumbled like a stuff.
How good to be in tombs,
Where nature's temper cannot reach,
Nor missile ever comes.

24. I Shall Not Murmur (c. 1877)

I shall not murmur if at last
The ones I loved below
Permission have to understand
For what I shunned them so.
Divulging it would rest my heart,
But it would ravage theirs.
Why, Katie, treason has a voice,
But mine dispels in tears.

Part Four: My Feet Slip Nearer

25. The Grave My Little Cottage Is (date unknown)

The grave my little cottage is,
Where keeping house for thee,
I make my parlor orderly
And lay the marble tea

For two divided briefly,
A cycle it may be,
Till everlasting life unite
In strong society.

26. I Did Not Reach Thee (date unknown)

I did not reach thee, but my feet
Slip nearer every day,
Three rivers and a hill to cross,
One desert and a sea;
I shall not count the journey one
When I am telling thee.

Two deserts, but the year is cold,
So that will help the sand;
One desert crossed, the second one
Will feel as cool as land.
Sahara is too little price
To pay for thy right hand.

The sea comes last. Step merry, feet,
So short we have to go,
To play together we are prone,
But we must labor now;
The last shall be the lightest load
That we have had to draw.

The sun goes crooked.
That is night,
Before he makes the bend.
We must have passed the middle sea.

(Please turn the page quietly.)

Almost we wish the end
Were further off;
Too great it seems
So near the whole to stand.

We step like plush,
We stand like snow,
The waters murmur new.
Three rivers and the hill are passed,
Two deserts and the sea!
Now death usurps my premium,
And gets the look at thee.

27. My Wars Are Laid Away in Books (c. 1882)

My wars are laid away in books;
I have one battle more,
A foe whom I have never seen
But oft has scanned me o'er,
And hesitated me between
And others at my side,
But chose the best, neglecting me,
Till all the rest have died.
How sweet if I am not forgot
By chums that passed away,
Since playmates at threescore and ten
Are such a scarcity!

28. There Came a Wind Like a Bugle (c. 1883)

There came a wind like a bugle,
It quivered through the grass,
And a green chill upon the heat
So ominous did pass,
We barred the windows and the doors
As from an emerald ghost.
The doom's electric moccasin
That very instant passed.
On a strange mob of panting trees,
And fences fled away,
And rivers where the houses ran
Those looked that lived that day.
The bell within the steeple wild
The flying tidings told:
How much can come,
And much can go,
And yet abide the world!

29. The Going from a World We Know (mid-1884)

The going from a world we know,
To one a wonder still
Is like the child's adversity
Whose vista is a hill.
Behind the hill is sorcery
And everything unknown,
But will the secret compensate
For climbing it alone?

30. Upon His Saddle Sprung a Bird (late 1884)

Upon his saddle sprung a bird
And crossed a thousand trees;
Before a fence without a fare
His fantasy did please.
And then he lifted up his throat
And squandered such a note,
A universe that overheard
Is stricken by it yet.

31. Beauty Crowds Me (date unknown)

Beauty crowds me till I die,
Beauty, mercy have on me,
But if I expire today
Let it be in sight of thee.

32. I Sing to Use the Waiting (c. 1864)

I sing to use the waiting,
My bonnet but to tie
And shut the door unto my house,
No more to do have I

Till his best step approaching,
We journey to the day
And tell each other how we sang
To keep the dark away.



Gordon Getty, born in Los Angeles in 1933 and residing in San Francisco since 1945, studied piano with Robert Vetleson and voice with Easton Kent during his formative years. As a student at the University of San Francisco, he majored in English literature. His first published piece was the *a cappella* chorus *All Along the Valley* (1959). In the early 1960s, he enrolled at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying music theory with Sol Joseph, and there composed the *Homework Suite* (1964) for solo piano.

Since the 1980s, he has produced a steady stream of compositions, beginning with *The White Election* (1981), his oft-performed cycle of 32 poems by Emily Dickinson for solo singer and piano. Recorded by both Lisa Delan the late Kaaren Erickson, this cycle has been performed in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, the Kennedy Center and National Gallery of Art in Washington DC, and the Hermitage Theater in St. Petersburg Russia, among many other venues.

In 1984, he unveiled his opera *Plump Jack*, an operatic interpretation (to his own libretto, based on *Henry IV* and *Henry V*) of Shakespeare's outrageous but poignant Falstaff. Following premiere performances by the San Francisco Symphony, *Plump Jack* was revived in semistaged concert versions by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic and, most recently, in London, Austin, Albuquerque and Mazatlán.

Most of Mr. Getty's compositions, which are published by Rork Music and distributed by Theodore Presser Company, involve the voice. His *Victorian Scenes* (1989) and *Annabel Lee* (1990) are choral settings—with orchestra or, optionally, piano—of poems by Tennyson, Housman and (in the latter work) Poe. Both were premiered by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion of the Los Angeles Music Center. The San Francisco Symphony and

the men of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus performed *Annabel Lee* in both 1998 and 2004, conducted on those occasions by Michael Tilson Thomas. Mr. Getty's *Young America* (2001), a cycle of six movements for chorus and orchestra to texts by the composer and by Stephen Vincent Benét, was also performed and recorded in 2004 by the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. *Young America* was released on PentaTone Classics in 2005 on Mr. Getty's choral music CD, which also includes his *Victorian Scenes*, *Annabel Lee*, *Three Welsh Songs* (1998) and *Jerusalem* (a choral extract from *Plump Jack*).

Mr. Getty's cantata *Joan and the Bells* (1998), to the composer's own libretto about the execution of Joan of Arc, was released on PentaTone in 2003 in a critically acclaimed recording by the Russian National Orchestra, Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, and soloists Lisa Delan and Vladimir Chernov, with Alexander Vedernikov conducting. *Joan and the Bells* was performed in March 2004 in St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle under the baton of Mikhail Pletnev. Since its premiere in 1998, *Joan and the Bells* has been performed extensively throughout the United States, Europe and Russia. Mr. Getty's nonvocal compositions include his *Three Waltzes for Piano and Orchestra* (1988, performed by André Previn and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra), and works for orchestra, chamber ensembles and for solo piano including the ballet suite *Ancestor Suite*, loosely based on Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. His music has been performed in such prestigious venues as New York's Carnegie Hall, London's Royal Festival Hall, Vienna's Brahmsaal and Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall, as well as at the Aspen and Spoleto festivals.

Mr. Getty has been widely lauded for his creative and philanthropic achievements and has received honorary doctorates from the University of Maryland, Pepperdine University, UC San Francisco, the San Francisco Conservatory and the Mannes College of Music. In 1986 he was honored as an Outstanding American Composer at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and in 2003 he was awarded the Gold Baton of the American Symphony Orchestra League.

Of his compositions, Mr. Getty has said: “My style is undoubtedly tonal, though with hints of atonality, such as any composer would likely use to suggest a degree of disorientation. But I’m strictly tonal in my approach. I represent a viewpoint that stands somewhat apart from the 20th century, which was in large measure a repudiation of the 19th, and a sock in the nose to sentimentality. Whatever it was that the great Victorian composers and poets were trying to achieve, that’s what I’m trying to achieve.”



American soprano **Lisa Delan** has won acclaim as an outstanding interpreter of a vast repertoire. She is recognized for her versatility and breadth of accomplishment in the opera and song repertoire, in live performance and on recordings.

Lisa Delan

Ms. Delan has performed on some of the world’s leading concert stages, including Lincoln Center, the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, the Moscow Conservatory, and in a special appearance at Windsor Castle. Her festival appearances include the Bad Kissingen Festival in Germany; the Colmar Festival in France; the Rachmaninoff Festival in Novgorod, Russia; the Festival del Sole in Napa Valley, California; and the Tuscan Sun Festival in Cortona, Italy. Most recently, she performed in the 2009 Domaine Forget Festival in Canada, in collaboration with cellist Matt Haimowitz.

Ms. Delan won recognition from singing the title role in the world premiere of Gordon Getty’s *Joan and the Bells* in 1998, a role she has since reprised in France, Germany, the United States and Russia, and on the 2002 recording for PentaTone Classics.

As a recital artist, her repertoire encompasses the Baroque to the contemporary and she is privileged to collaborate with composers whose musical lives are still works in progress: Ms. Delan has performed and recorded the music of William Bolcom, John Corigliano, David Garner, Gordon

Getty, Jake Heggie, Andrew Imbrie and Luna Pearl Woolf, among others. Most recently, in 2009, she performed Mr. Getty’s well-known song cycle *The White Election*, to poems by Emily Dickinson, in a recital presented by the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Ms. Delan was featured on three recordings released by PentaTone Classics in 2009: *And If the Song Be Worth a Smile*, her debut solo recording of songs by American composers (with pianist Kristin Pankonin and guest artists Matt Haimovitz and Susanne Mentzer); *The White Election*, a new recording of Mr. Getty’s song cycle (with pianist Fritz Steinegger); and as a guest artist on *Phenomenon*, a recording of works by San Francisco-based composer David Garner.

Ms. Delan’s performances in 2010 include an appearance at Cal Performances with the Russian National Orchestra under the baton of Mikhail Pletnev, in the world premiere of his *Yeats Song Cycle*; a recital of songs by American composers with Kristin Pankonin at the Rose Theater in New York City; and a return to the Festival del Sole.



Phil Szyer

Mikhail Pletnev is an artist whose genius as pianist, conductor and composer enchants and amazes audiences around the globe. His musicianship encompasses a dazzling technical power and provocative emotional range, and a searching interpretation that fuses instinct

with intellect. At the keyboard and podium alike, Mr. Pletnev is recognized as one of the finest artists of our time. He was winner of the Gold Medal and First Prize at the 1978 Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition when he was only 21, a prize that earned him early recognition worldwide. An invitation to perform at the 1988 superpower summit in Washington led to a friendship with Mikhail Gorbachev and the historic opportunity to make music in artistic freedom.

In 1990, Mr. Pletnev formed the first independent orchestra in Russia’s history. The risks of this step, even with Gorbachev’s endorsement, were enormous and it was Mr. Pletnev’s reputation and commitment that made his long-held dream a reality. Sharing his vision for a new model for the performing arts, many of the country’s finest musicians joined Mr. Pletnev in launching the Russian National Orchestra (RNO). Under his leadership, the RNO has achieved a towering stature among the world’s orchestras. Mr. Pletnev describes the RNO as his greatest joy and today serves as its Artistic Director and Principal Conductor. In 2006, he launched the Mikhail Pletnev Fund for the Support of National Culture, a nonprofit organization that supports major cultural initiatives and projects, including the RNO’s annual Volga Tour and, in collaboration with Deutsche Grammophon, the Mikhail Pletnev Beethoven Project.

As a guest conductor, Mr. Pletnev appears regularly with leading orchestras such as London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and City of Birmingham Symphony. In 2008, he was named first guest conductor of the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano, Switzerland.

As a solo pianist and recitalist, Mr. Pletnev appears regularly in the world’s music capitals. His recordings and live performances have proved him to be an outstanding interpreter of an extensive repertoire. Mr. Pletnev’s recordings have earned numerous prizes, including a 2005 Grammy

Award for the CD of his own arrangement, for two pianos, of Prokofiev’s *Cinderella*, recorded by Martha Argerich and Mr. Pletnev at the keyboards. He received Grammy nominations for a CD of Schumann’s *Symphonic Etudes* (2004) and for his recording of the Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev Third Piano Concertos with the RNO and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich (2003). His album of Scarlatti’s keyboard sonatas (Virgin/EMI) received a *Gramophone* Award in 1996. In 2007, he recorded all of Beethoven’s piano concertos with Deutsche Grammophon, and his CD of Concertos Nos. 2 and 4 was named “The Best Concerto Recording of 2007” by the Tokyo Record Academy.

As a composer, Mr. Pletnev’s works include *Classical Symphony*, *Triptych for Symphony Orchestra*, *Fantasy on Kazakh Themes* and *Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra*. His unrivaled transcriptions for piano of Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker Suite* and *Sleeping Beauty* were selected, along with his performance of Tchaikovsky’s Second Piano Concerto and *The Seasons*, for the 1998 anthology *Great Pianists of the 20th Century* (Philips Classics).

The son of musician parents, Mr. Pletnev was conducting and learning multiple instruments as a young child and entered the Moscow Conservatory as a teenager. Today, he is one of Russia’s most respected and influential artists. An advisor on Russia’s Cultural Council, in 2007 Mr. Pletnev was awarded a Presidential Prize for his contributions to the artistic life of the country. Pianist, conductor, composer and cultural leader—all are significant facets of Mikhail Pletnev’s life as an artist. Yet he considers himself, simply, a musician.