



Program Book

Sunday, October 18, 2026, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Ben Bliss, tenor Christopher Allen, piano

PROGRAM

Stephen SONDHEIM (1930–2021) "I'm Calm," from *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962)

Gene DE PAUL (1919–1988)/
Johnny MERCER (1909–1976) The What-Cha-Ma-Call-It (1954)

SONDHEIM "Everybody Says Don't,"
from *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964)

Charles IVES (1874–1954) *The Things Our Fathers Loved*
(and the greatest of these was Liberty) (1917)

Lowell LIEBERMANN (b. 1961)/
Henry Wadsworth LONGFELLOW (1807–1882) "The Arrow and the Song,"
from *Six Songs on Poems*
by Henry W. Longfellow, Op. 57 (1997)

John GRUEN (1926–2016)/
E. E. CUMMINGS (1894–1962) Selections from *Three by E. E. Cummings* (1950)
Spring is like a perhaps hand
lady will you come with me into

Paul SIMON (b. 1941) Bridge Over Troubled Water (1969)

Samuel A. WARD (1848–1903) America the Beautiful (1910)
Katharine Lee BATES (1859–1929)
arr. Ray CHARLES (1930–2004)

Sammy FAIN (1902–1989)/
Jack YELLEN (1892–1991) "Are You Having Any Fun?" from
George White's Scandals of 1939 (1939)

Walter KENT (1911–1994)/
Al HOFFMAN (1902–1960)
Mann CURTIS (1911–1984) I'm Gonna Live Till I Die (1950)

INTERMISSION



Kurt WEILL (1900–1950)/ Langston HUGHES (1901–1967)	“Lonely House,” from <i>Street Scene</i> (1947)
Richard RODGERS (1902–1979)/ Lorenz HART (1895–1943)	“Where or When,” from <i>Babes in Arms</i> (1937)
Samuel BARBER (1910–1981)/ Frederic PROKOSCH (1906–1989)	Nocturne, Op. 13, No. 4 (1940)
Jimmy McHUGH (1894–1969)/ Frank LOESSER (1910–1969)	“Say It (Over and Over Again),” from <i>Buck Benny Rides Again</i> (1940)
Jule STYNE (1905–1994)/ Betty COMDEN (1917–2006)/ Adolph GREEN (1914–2002)	“Just in Time,” from <i>Bells Are Ringing</i> (1956)
SONDHEIM	“Being Alive,” from <i>Company</i> (1970)
Leonard BERNSTEIN (1918–1990)/ Betty COMDEN (1917–2006)/ Adolph GREEN (1914–2002)	“Some Other Time,” from <i>On the Town</i> (1944)
Noël COWARD (1899–1973)	“Let’s Say Good-bye,” from <i>Words and Music</i> (1932)
Harold ARLEN (1905–1986)/ Johnny MERCER (1909–1976)	“One for My Baby (and One More for the Road),” from <i>The Sky’s the Limit</i> (1943)
Philip GLASS (b. 1937)/ Allen GINSBERG (1926–1997)	<i>Wichita Vortex Sutra</i> (1988)

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Hailed as a “truly exceptional tenor” by the *National Review*, Ben Bliss has established himself as one of the most exciting performers on today’s operatic stage, both in his native America and internationally. Bliss has been cited as “an exemplar of the Mozartean tenor” for his “purity of tone, vocal control and artistic sensitivity” (*Opera Warhorses*). A Grammy-nominated artist, he was a 2021 recipient of the Metropolitan Opera’s prestigious Beverly Sills Award. Bliss’ numerous other accolades include the 2016 Martin E. Segal Award at Lincoln Center, the Mozart and Plácido Domingo awards at the 2015 Francisco Viñas Inter-

national Competition, first prize at the 2014 Gerda Lissner and Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation competitions, and the 2013 Operalia Don Plácido Domingo Ferrer Prize of Zarzuela. He is also the author of the *Making It Work*, a guide to financial and entrepreneurial literacy for freelance performers.

This season, Bliss makes his role debut as Alfredo in *La traviata* at the Bayerische Staatsoper before bringing the role to Washington National Opera for his house debut. He makes another house debut at the Staatsoper Berlin as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, returns to the Metropolitan Opera for his role debut as Nikolaus Sprink in

a new production of Kevin Puts' *Silent Night* and for the company's Diamond Jubilee Gala, and returns to the Gran Teatre del Liceu as Tamino in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte*. Concert highlights include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood and his current recital tour with pianist Christopher Allen, taking him to Park Avenue Armory, Vocal Arts DC, and the Musco Center.

Last season, Bliss made his role debut as the Duke in *Rigoletto* with the Canadian Opera Company. He also returned to the Metropolitan Opera as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin, performed in Houston Grand Opera's staged *Messiah*, and sang Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with the St. Louis Symphony. Concert highlights included a return to the Chicago Symphony for Mozart's *Requiem*, a solo recital at LA Opera, and a *Messiah* concert tour with the Handel and Haydn Society.

While in the Lindemann Program, Bliss made his Metropolitan Opera stage debut as Vogelgesang in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* under James Levine and he has since returned as the Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer* under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and Eric in the premiere of Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded*. Bliss made his European debut as Belmonte with Glyndebourne Festival Opera on tour in 2015.

Other operatic highlights have included Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress* at the Opéra national de Paris and Boston Lyric Opera; Jupiter in *Semele* for house debuts at both the Royal Opera House and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; Tamino at the Bayerische Staatsoper, LA Opera, and Opera Philadelphia; Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the Opéra national de Paris and Canadian Opera Company; Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* at the Wiener Staatsoper, Seattle Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Oper Frankfurt; Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Bayerische Staatsoper; Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City; and Flamand in *Capriccio* and Robert Wilson in Peter Sellars' production of *Doctor Atomic* in Santa Fe. Concert highlights include perform-

ances with the Metropolitan Opera and Yannick Nézet-Séguin at Carnegie Hall, as well as with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Recipient of the Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, Christopher Allen was featured in *Opera News* as "one of the fastest-rising podium stars in North America." He has led acclaimed symphonic and operatic performances with, among others, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia, George Enescu Philharmonic, Atlanta Opera, Cincinnati Opera, LA Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Washington National Opera, English National Opera, Daegu Opera House in South Korea, and the China National Opera Orchestra and Chorus.

Upcoming highlights this season include re-engagements with Lyric Opera of Kansas City (*La bohème*), Atlanta Opera (*Carmen*), Des Moines Metro Opera, and concerts with the Omaha Symphony, Tucson Symphony, and George Enescu Philharmonic. This fall, Allen conducts the Manhattan School of Music's *Semele*. At the piano, his current tour with tenor Ben Bliss includes concerts at Vocal Arts DC, Park Avenue Armory, and Musco Center at Chapman University. As Artistic Director of Fourth Wall Ensemble, Allen also leads a series of performances in New York City.

Allen demonstrates his commitment to education through his work with young artists at Los Angeles Opera, Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Aspen Music Festival, Manhattan School of Music, Northwestern University, New England Conservatory, Mannes School of Music, the A.J. Fletcher Institute at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He has been heard on NPR speaking about the importance of the arts in American society. As an award-winning pia-

nist, he has performed at Carnegie Hall and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, on film in *La voix humaine* (starring Patricia Racette and directed by James Darrah), and in *Emily*, a production he created for Opéra de Montréal and performed at Wolf Trap.

Allen's career was launched by the Bruno Walter Conducting Award and Memorial Career Grant and has been fostered by Plácido Domingo and James Conlon, who brought him to Los Angeles Opera as Associate Conductor. At LA Opera, Allen led the musical preparation for the acclaimed *The Ghosts of Versailles*, which won a Grammy for Best Opera Recording. Recognized as a Musical America Artist of the Month and one of that organizations' "25 Stars Still Rising," Allen is also an International Opera Awards nominee and a recent recipient of the Young Alumni Award from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Allen's artistic pursuits extend beyond his role as a conductor. He is the Creative and Artistic Director of Fourth Wall Ensemble, an in-

novative vocal ensemble he founded in 2023. Under the artistic leadership of Christopher Allen, Fourth Wall Ensemble redefines vocal performance, blending tradition with bold new artistic explorations. The ensemble's recent highlights include performances at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Death of Classical, Power Station at Berklee, the Cell Theatre, Avaloch Farm Music Institute, National Sawdust in collaboration with Beth Morrison Projects (Paola Prestini's world premiere opera, *Sensorium Ex*), and at the Exploratorium in San Francisco. Last season, the ensemble embarked on a West Coast tour and released a recording of Kaija Saariaho's *Nuits, Adieux* at National Sawdust+. Fourth Wall Ensemble can be heard on two recordings: *Awake* and *Ad Manus*, the group's debut album created in partnership with the Grammy-winning trio Time for Three and five-time Emmy-winning composer Jeff Beal (*House of Cards*).

Allen is a Recording Academy voting member and serves on the board of the Solti Foundation US.

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TEXTS

STEPHEN SONDHEIM

*"I'm Calm," from A Funny Thing Happened
on the Way to the Forum*

I'm calm, I'm calm
I'm perfectly calm
I'm utterly under control
I haven't a worry
Where others would hurry
I stroll

I'm calm, I'm cool
A gibbering fool
Is something I'd never become
When thunder is rumbling
And others are crumbling
I hum
Ahem
Ahem
Ahem
Ah-ha-ha!
I must think
Calm, comforting things
Butterfly wings
Emerald rings
Or a murmuring brook
Murmuring, murmuring, murmuring
Look!

I'm calm, I'm calm
I haven't a qualm
I'm utterly under control
Let nothing confuse me
Or faze me
Excuse me
I'm calm
Oh so calm
Oh so—

Hysteria!

I'm calm,
I'm calm,
I'm perfectly calm,
Indifferent to tensions and shocks.
Unruffled and ready,
My nerves are as steady
As rocks.

I'm calm, controlled,
So cool that I'm cold,
Aloof than any giraffe.
When something's the matter,
Where others would shatter
I laugh.

I must breathe deep, ever so deep,
Think about sheep
Going to sleep,
Stop and count up to 10,
One, two, three, four, five, six
Seven, eight, nine—when
You need aplomb
And want to be calm
'Cause life is a horrible dream,
Just count up to 10
Very slowly, and then—

Scream!

GENE DE PAUL/JOHNNY MERCER

The What-Cha-Ma-Call-It

You put the who's-it on the what's-it
Attach the what's-it to the who's-it
Connect the thing-a-ma-jig to the
 thing-a-ma-bob
And that'll make the what-cha-ma-call it go

You hook the gadget to the gadget
Adjust the gadget to the gadget
Unhook the dingely-dang from the diddly-doo
That seems to sorta settle the so-and-so

When the you know doesn't almost
And the gizmo never quite
Simply follow these instructions
Everything'll come out alright

You put the who's-it on the what's-it
Attach the gadget to the gadget
Connect the hick-a-ma-do to the
 jig-a-ma-bob
And adjust them to the thing-a-ma
 so-and-so
Then sit back and watch that
 what-cha-ma-call it go

When the you know doesn't almost
And the gizmo never quite
Simply follow these instructions
Everything'll turn out alright

Unhook the who's-it from the what's-it
Attach the gadget to the gadget
Connect the dingely-dang to the jig-a-ma-bob
And adjust them to the thing-a-ma
 so-and-so
Then sit back and watch
Turn it up one more notch
And sit back and watch that
 what-cha-ma-call it go

SONDHEIM

"Everybody Says Don't,"

from *Anyone Can Whistle*

Everybody says don't, everybody says don't,
Everybody says don't, it isn't right, don't it
 isn't nice.

Everybody says don't, everybody says don't,
Everybody says, don't walk on the grass,
 don't disturb the peace,
Don't skate on the ice.

Well, I say do! I say;
Walk on the grass, it was meant to feel!
I say sail!

Tilt at the windmill,
And if you fail you fail!
Everybody says don't, everybody says don't,
Everybody says don't get out of line;
When they say that then, lady that's a sign:
Nine times out of 10, lady you are doing
 just fine!

Make just a ripple,
Come on, be brave.
This time a ripple.
Next time a wave!

Sometimes you have to start small,
Climbing the tiniest wall,
Maybe you're going to fall,
But it's better than not starting at all!
Everybody says no, everybody says stop,
Everybody says mustn't rock the boat,
Mustn't touch a thing!
Everybody says don't, everybody says wait,
Everybody says can't fight city hall,
Can't upset the cart,
Can't laugh at the king!

Well, I say try!
I say: Laugh at the kings or they'll make
 you cry!

Lose your poise! fall if you have to,
 but lady make a noise!
Everybody says don't,
Everybody says can't,
Everybody says wait around for miracles,
That's the way the world is made!
I insist on miracles, if you do them.
Miracles, nothing to them!
I say don't! Don't be afraid!

CHARLES IVES

The Things Our Fathers Loved
(and the greatest of these was Liberty)

I think there must be a place in the soul
all made of tunes, of tunes of long ago;
I hear the organ on the Main Street corner,
Aunt Sarah humming Gospels; Summer
evenings,
The village cornet band, playing in the square.
The town's Red, White and Blue,
all Red, White and Blue; Now! Hear the songs!
I know not what are the words
But they sing in my soul of the things our
Fathers loved.

**LOWELL LIEBERMANN/
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**
"The Arrow and the Song"

from *Six Songs on Poems by Henry
Wadsworth Longfellow*, Op. 57, No. 6

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

JOHN GRUEN /E. E. CUMMINGS

Selections from Three by E. E. Cummings

Spring is like a perhaps hand
Spring is like a perhaps hand
(which comes carefully
out of Nowhere) arranging
a window, into which people look (while
people stare
arranging and changing placing
carefully there a strange
thing and a known thing here) and

changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps
Hand in a window
(carefully to
and fro moving New and
Old things, while
people stare carefully
moving a perhaps
fraction of flower here placing
an inch of air there) and

without breaking anything.

lady will you come with me into

lady will you come with me into
the extremely little house of
my mind. Clocks strike. The

moon's round, through the window

as you see and really i have no
servants. We could almost live

at the top of these stairs, there's a free
room. We almost could go (you
and i) into a together whitely big
there is but if so or so

slowly i opened the window a
most tiny, the moon (with white wig
and polished buttons) would take you away

—and all the clocks would run down the
next day.

PAUL SIMON

Bridge Over Troubled Water

When you're weary, feeling small,
When tears are in your eyes
I will dry them all I'm on your side
When times get rough
And friends just can't be found
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
When you're down and out
When you're on the street
When evening falls so hard
I will comfort you
I'll take your part
When darkness comes
And pain is all around
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Sail on, silver girl Sail on by
Your time has come to shine
All your dreams are on their way
See how they shine
If you need a friend
I'm sailing right behind
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind

**SAMUEL A. WARD/KATHARINE LEE
BATES/ARR. RAY CHARLES**

America the Beautiful

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

SAMMY FAIN/JACK YELLEN

**"Are You Having Any Fun?" from
*George White's Scandals of 1939***

Are you havin' any fun?
Whatcha gettin' out o' livin'?
What good is what you've got
If you're not havin' any fun?

Are you havin' any laughs?
Are you gettin' any lovin'?
If other people do so can you
Have a little fun

After the honey's in the comb
Little bees go out and play
Even the old gray mare down home
Has got to have hay, hey

You better have some fun
You ain't gonna live forever
Before you're old and gray, still okay
Have your little fun
Son, have your little fun, go

Why do you work and slave and save?
Life is full of ifs and buts
You know, the squirrels save and save
And what have they got? Nuts

Better have some fun
You ain't gonna live forever
Before you're old and gray, still okay
Have your little fun
Son, have your little fun

WALTER KENT/AL HOFFMAN/MANN CURTIS

I'm Gonna Live Till I Die

I'm gonna live till I die
I'm gonna laugh 'stead of cry
I'm gonna take the town and
Turn it upside down
I'm gonna live, live, live till I die
They're gonna say "What a guy!"
I'm gonna play for the sky
Ain't gonna miss a thing I'm
Gonna have my fling
I'm gonna live, live, live till I die
The blues'll lay low I'll make 'em stay low
They'll never trail over my head
I'll be a devil till I'm an angel
But until then, Hallelujah! Gonna dance
Gonna fly I'll take a chance ridin' high
Before my number's up I'm gonna fill my cup
I'm gonna live, live, live, live
Live until I die
The blues'll lay low I'll make 'em stay low
They'll never trail over my head
I'll be a devil till I'm an angel
But until then, Hallelujah! Gonna dance
Gonna fly I'll take a chance ridin' high
Before my number's up I'm gonna fill my cup
I'm gonna live, live, live, live
Live until I die

KURT WEILL/LANGSTON HUGHES

"Lonely House," from *Street Scene*

At night when everything is quiet
The old house seems to breathe a sigh.
Sometimes I hear a neighbor snoring,
Sometimes I hear a baby cry.

Sometimes I hear a staircase creaking,
Sometimes a distant telephone.
Then the quiet settles down again,
The house and I are all alone.

Lonely house, lonely me,
It's funny with so many neighbors,
How lonely it can be
On lonely street, lonely town.
Funny you can be so lonely
With all these folks around!

I guess there must be something
I don't comprehend.
Sparrows have companions,
Even stray dogs find a friend.

The night for me is not romantic,
Unhook the stars and take them down!
I'm lonely in this lonely house,
In this lonely town,
In this lonely town.

RICHARD RODGERS/LORENZ HART

"Where or When," from *Babes in Arms*

It seems we stood and talked like this before
We looked at each other in the same way then
But I can't remember where or when
The clothes you're wearing are the clothes
 you wore
The smile you are smiling you were
 smiling then
But I can't remember where or when
Some things that happened for the first time
Seem to be happening again
And so it seems that we have met before
And laughed before, and loved before
But who knows where or when

When you're awake, the things you think
Come from the dreams you dream.
Thought has wings
And lots of things
Are seldom what they seem.
Sometimes you think you've lived before
All that you live today.
Things you do
Come back to you
As though they knew the way.
Oh, the tricks your mind can play!
It seems we stood and talked like this before.
We looked at each other in the same
 way then,
But I can't remember where or when.
The clothes you're wearing are the clothes
 you wore.
The smile you are smiling you were
 smiling then,
But I can't remember where or when.
Some things that happen for the first time
Seem to be happening again.
And so, it seems that we have met before
And laughed before and loved before,
But who knows where or when?

SAMUEL BARBER/FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Nocturne, Op. 13, No. 4

Close my darling both your eyes
Let your arms lie still at last
Calm the lake of falsehood lies
And the wind of lust has passed
Waves across these hopeless sands
Fill my heart and end my day
Underneath your moving hands
All my aching flows away

Even the human pyramids
Blaze with such a longing now:
Close, my love, your trembling lids
Let the midnight heal your brow
Northward flames Orion's horn
Westward th' Egyptian light
None to watch us, none to warn
But the blind eternal night

JIMMY McHUGH/FRANK LOESSER

"Say It (Over and Over Again),"

from *Buck Benny Rides Again*

Say it over and over again

Never stop saying you're mine

Tell me ever and ever so sweet

Soft words of love be repeating

Just like an old valentine

When you say I love you

The same old I love you

They whisper in stories and plays

You can change I love you

Same old I love you

To oh such a heavenly phrase

So say it softly and gently and then

Over and over again

Never stop saying you're mine

JULE STYNE/

BETTY COMDEN & ADOLPH GREEN

"Just in Time," from *Bells Are Ringing*

Just in time

I found you just in time

Before you came, my time

Was runnin' low

I was lost

The losing dice were tossed

My bridges all were crossed

Nowhere to go

Now you're here

And now I know just where I'm going

No more doubt or fear

I found my way

For love came just in time

You found me just in time

And changed my lonely life

That lovely day

SONDHEIM**"Being Alive," from *Company***

Someone to hold you too close
Someone to hurt you too deep
Someone to sit in your chair
To ruin your sleep

You're on to something
Someone to need you too much
Someone to know you too well
Someone to pull you up short
To put you through hell

Someone you have to let in
Someone whose feelings you spare
Someone who, like it or not
Will want you to share
A little, a lot
Someone to crowd you with love
Someone to force you to care
Someone to make you come through
Who'll always be there
As frightened as you of being alive
Being alive
Being alive
Being alive

Somebody hold me too close
Somebody hurt me too deep
Somebody sit in my chair and ruin my sleep
And make me aware of being alive
Being alive
Somebody need me too much
Somebody know me too well
Somebody pull me up short and put me
through hell
And give me support for being alive
Make me alive
Make me alive
Make me confused
Mock me with praise

Let me be used
Vary my days
But alone is alone
Not alive

Somebody crowd me with love
Somebody force me to care
Somebody let me come through
I'll always be there
As frightened as you, to help us survive
Being alive
Being alive
Being alive

LEONARD BERNSTEIN/**BETTY COMDEN & ADOLPH GREEN****"Some Other Time," from *On the Town***

Twenty four hours can go so fast
You look around, the day has passed
When you're in love, time is precious stuff
Even a lifetime isn't enough

Where has the time all gone to?
Haven't done half the things we want to
Oh well, we'll catch up some other time

This day was just a token
Too many words are still unspoken
Oh well, we'll catch up
Some other time

Just when the fun is starting
Comes the time for parting
But let's be glad for what we've had
And what's to come

There's so much more embracing
Still to be done, but time is racing
Oh well, we'll catch up
Some other time

NOËL COWARD

"Let's Say Good-bye," from *Words and Music*

Let our affair be a gay thing
And when these hours have flown
Then, without forgetting happiness
that has passed
There'll be no regretting fun that didn't
quite last
Let's look on love as a play thing
All these sweet moments we've known
Mustn't be degraded
When the thrill of them has faded
Let's say goodbye and leave it alone

Now we've embarked on this foolish game
Don't let's destroy it with tears
Once we begin to let sentiment in
Happiness disappears
Reason may sleep for a moment in Spring
But please let us keep it a casual thing
Something that's sweet to remember
through the years

Let our affair be a gay thing
And when these hours have flown
Then, without forgetting happiness
that has passed
There'll be no regretting fun that didn't
quite last
Let's look on love as a play thing
All these sweet moments we've known
Mustn't be degraded
When the thrill of them has faded
Let's say goodbye and leave it alone

HAROLD ARLEN/JOHNNY MERCER

"One for My Baby (and One More for the Road)," from *The Sky's the Limit*

It's quarter to three, there's no one in the
place except you and me
So set 'em up, Joe I got a little story I think
you oughtta know
We're drinking, my friend, to the end of a
brief episode
So make it one for my baby and one more
for the road

I know the routine put another nickel
in that there machine
I'm feeling so bad won't you make
the music easy and sad
I could tell you a lot but you gotta
be true to your code
So make it one for my baby and one more
for the road

You'd never know it but buddy I'm a kind
of poet
And I've got a lot of things I wanna say
And if I'm gloomy, please listen to me
Till it's all, all talked away

Well, that's how it goes and Joe, I know
you're gettin' anxious to close
So thanks for the cheer. I hope you didn't
mind my bending your ear
But this torch that I found, it's gotta
be drowned,
Or it soon might explode
So make it one for my baby and one more
for the road

PHILIP GLASS/ALLEN GINSBERG

Wichita Vortex Sutra

I'm an old man now, and a lonesome man in
Kansas
but not afraid
to speak my lonesomeness in a car,
because not only my lonesomeness
it's Ours, all over America,
O tender fellows—
& spoken lonesomeness is Prophecy
in the moon 100 years ago or in
the middle of Kansas now.
It's not the vast plains mute our mouths
that fill at midnight with ecstatic language
when our trembling bodies hold each other
breast to breast on a mattress—
Not the empty sky that hides
the feeling from our faces
nor our skirts and trousers that conceal
the bodylove emanating in a glow
of beloved skin,
white smooth abdomen down to the hair
between our legs,
It's not a God that bore us that forbid
our Being, like a sunny rose
all red with naked joy
between our eyes & bellies, yes
All we do is for this frightened thing
we call Love, want and lack—
fear that we aren't the one whose body
could be
beloved of all the brides of Kansas City,
kissed all over by every boy of Wichita—
O but how many in their solitude weep
aloud like me—
On the bridge over Republican River
almost in tears to know
how to speak the right language—
on the frosty broad road
uphill between highway embankments
I search for the language
that is also yours—
almost all our language has been taxed
by war.
Radio antennae high tension
wires ranging from Junction City across
the plains—
highway cloverleaf sunk in a vast meadow
lanes curving past Abilene

to Denver filled with old
heroes of love—
to Wichita where McClure's mind
burst into animal beauty
drunk, getting laid in a car
in a neon misted street
15 years ago—
to Independence where the old man's
still alive
who loosed the bomb that's slaved all
human consciousness
and made the body universe a place of fear—
Now, speeding along the empty plain,
no giant demon machine
visible on the horizon
but tiny human trees and wooden houses
at the sky's edge
I claim my birthright!
reborn forever as long as Man
in Kansas or other universe—Joy
reborn after the vast sadness of War Gods!
A lone man talking to myself, no house in
the brown vastness to hear,
imaging the throng of Selves
that make this nation one body of Prophecy
language by Declaration as Pursuit of
Happiness!
I call all Powers of imagination
to my side in this auto
to make Prophecy,
all Lords
of human kingdoms to come
Shambu Bharti Baba naked covered
with ash
Khaki Baba fat-bellied mad with the dogs
Dehorahava Baba who moans Oh how
wounded, How wounded
Sitaram Onkar Das Thakur who commands
give up your desire
Satyananda who raises two thumbs in
tranquility
Kali Pada Guha Roy whose yoga drops be-
fore the void
Shivananda who touches the breast and
says OM
Srimata Krishnaji of Brindaban who says
take for your guru
William Blake the invisible father
of English visions

Sri Ramakrishna master of ecstasy eyes
half closed who only cries for his mother
Chaitanya arms upraised singing & dancing
his own praise
merciful Chango judging our bodies
Durga-Ma covered with blood
destroyer of battlefield illusions
million faced Tathagata gone past suffering
Preserver Harekrishna returning in the age
of pain
Sacred Heart my Christ acceptable
Allah the compassionate one
Jaweh Righteous One
all Knowledge-Princes of Earth-man, all
ancient Seraphim of heavenly Desire,
Devas, yogis
& holymen I chant to—
Come to my lone presence
into this Vortex named Kansas,
I lift my voice aloud,
make Mantra of American language now,
I here declare the end of the War!
Ancient days' Illusion!—
and pronounce words beginning my own
millennium.

Let the States tremble,
let the nation weep,
let Congress legislate its own delight,
let the President execute his own desire—
this Act done by my own voice,
nameless Mystery—
published to my own senses,
blissfully received by my own form
approved with pleasure by my sensations
manifestation of my very thought
accomplished in my own imagination
all realms within my consciousness fulfilled
60 miles from Wichita
near El Dorado,
The Golden One,
in chill earthly mist
houseless brown farmland plains rolling
heavenward
in every direction
one midwinter afternoon Sunday called the
day of the Lord—
Pure Spring Water gathered in one tower
where Florence is
set on a hill,
stop for tea & gas