

# *Exultet Terra*

rejoice in the earth

October 14th @ 8pm

*Grace Church  
76 Eldredge St,  
Newton, MA 02458*



October 15th @ 4pm

*Emmanuel Church  
15 Newbury St,  
Boston, MA 02116*

**CAPPELLA** Twelve Centuries of New Music  
Amelia LeClair, Director **CLAUSURA**



# AN HOMAGE TO HILARY TANN

(1947-2023)

CAPPELLA CLAUSURA

Director, *Amelia LeClair*

**The Moor (poetry by R.S. Thomas (1966))**

*solì: Janet Stone,  
Caroline Olsen*

**Measuring the Distance (poetry by Penny Harter)**

*solì: Barbara Hill,  
Connor Vigeant*

**Wales Our Land (“Os Ydyw Cymru’n Fach”)**

(translation by John S. Ellis)

*flute: Fausto Miro*

*PLEASE STAND*

*BRIEF PAUSE*

**EXULTET TERRA**

*solì: Janet Stone,  
Caroline Olsen,  
Fausto Miro, Anthony  
Garza*

**I. Exultet Terra**

**II. Trio of Descent**

**III. In Sanctis Eius**

**IV. Trio of Ascent**

**V. Iubilate Domino**

## **SINGERS**

### **CHOIR 1**

*Janet Stone*

*Barbara Hill*

### **Sopranos**

### **CHOIR 2**

*Carol Millard*

*Shannon Larkin*

### **Altos**

*Caroline Olsen*

*Jodie Fernandes*

*Shiba Nemat-Nasser*

*Jamie Chelel*

### **Tenors**

*Fausto Miro*

*Jason Connell*

*Connor Vigeant*

*Eduardo Ramos*

### **Basses**

*Anthony Garza*

*Heath Dill*

*Killian Grider*

*Thaddeus Bell*

## **INSTRUMENTALISTS**

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

English Horn

Bassoon 1

Bassoon 2

*Jennifer Slowik*

*Catherine Weinfeld-Zell*

*Laura Shamu*

*Jensen Ling*

*Sally Merriman*

# POEM TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

## THE MOOR

*Laudate Dominum. Laudate Eum. Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius.*

It was like a church to me. I entered it on soft foot, Breath held like a cap in the hand. It was quiet.

What God was there made himself felt, Not listened to, in clean colours That brought a moistening of the eye In movement of the wind over grass.

There were no prayers said. But stillness Of the heart's passions – that was praise Enough; and the mind's cession Of its kingdom. I walked on,

Simple and poor, while the air crumbled And broke on me generously as bread. *Laudate, laudate Dominum.*

*Montes et omnes colles Laudent nomen Domini. Benedic anima mea Domino Qui ambulat super pinnas ventorum. Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius.*

*Laudate Dominum de caelis; Laudate Dominum de terra.*

*Nefol Dad, Boed mawrhad, Taena d'adain dros ein gwlad*

Text: R. S. Thomas; *Vulgata, Psalms 103, 148, 150 (excerpts); Rheidol (Welsh hymn)* Adapted by composer

## MEASURING THE DISTANCE

*Decem, viginti, triginta, quinquaginta ... Omnes, celebrate!*

Unroll a tape measure, stretch it across the fabric of a day, a year. Record the reach of the wind or the height of corn stalks greening in an abandoned field.

If your tape be infinite, you will never see the end of it; if finite, you will run out of numbers, and clock hands will cease their commentary.

Raise your two hands before you, palms facing, and feel the tension between them as you expand and compress the invisible accordion of your days.

Then try to measure love — love that can leap any distance to fuse your atoms with those of your beloved until you resonate together, harmonics pure as a tuning fork.

*Decem, viginti, triginta, quinquaginta ... Omnes, celebrate!*

Penny Harter

*(Italicized Latin words added by composer.)*

## **WALES, OUR LAND**

If Wales, our land, is small within this wide world, yet is our country filled with greatness.

The wise hand of the Lord may be seen everywhere, from the green lowlands to high mountain peaks.

If Wales, our land, is small, her wealth overflows. Countless are the treasures found in her hills.

Her clear streams are full of life's music, drawing down angels at creation's dawn.

If Wales, our land, is small, worthy is her history. She stands high in the poets' gallery.

For all time, from St. David's to the present, Welsh bards sing evermore.

*Ap Ivor, Fair Haven, VT, trans. Dr. John Ellis; adapted by Hilary Tann. Used with permission.*



## **I. Exultet Terra**

### **Exultet terra: gaudebunt campi, cantate Domino omnis terra**

Let the earth be glad: Let the field be joyful,  
Then shall all the trees of the wood  
rejoice. For ye shall go out with joy, and  
be led forth with peace: the mountains  
and the hills shall break forth before you  
into singing, and all the trees of the field  
shall clap their hands.

*Psalm 95 (96) 1, 11, 12 Vulgate Bible,  
Psalm 96, Isaiah 55:12, King James Bible*

*I Blesse thee, Lord, because I GROW  
Among thy trees, which in a ROW  
To thee both fruit and order OW.  
What open force, or hidden CHARM  
Can blast my fruit, or bring me HARM,  
While the inclosure is thine ARM? Inclose  
me still for fear I START.  
Be to me rather Sharp and TART,  
Then let me want thy hand and ART.  
When thou dost greater judgements SPARE,  
And with thy knife but prune and PARE, Ev'n  
fruitfull trees more fruitfull ARE.  
Such sharpnes shows the sweetest FREND:  
Such cuttings rather heal then REND: And  
such beginnings touch their END.*

*"Paradise" George Herbert*

## **III. In Sanctis Eius**

### **Laudate dominum in sanctis eius.**

My heart is smitten, and withered like grass;  
I am like an owl of the desert.  
I watch, and am as a sparrow alone on the  
house top.  
Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul  
had almost dwelt in silence.

*Psalm 150:1 Vulgate Bible, Psalms 102:4, 67;  
94:17, King James Bible*

*MY words and thoughts do both expresse this  
notion,  
That LIFE hath with the sun a double motion.  
The first IS straight, and our diurnall friend,  
The other HID and doth obliquely bend.  
One life is wrapt IN flesh, and tends to  
earth:  
The other winds towards HIM, whose happie  
birth  
Taught me to live here so, THAT still one eye  
Should aim and shoot at that which IS on high:  
Quitting with daily labour all MY pleasure,  
To gain at harvest an eternall TREASURE.  
"My life is hid in him that is my treasure."*

*"Colos. 3.3" George Herbert.*



#### IV. IUBILATE DOMINO, OMNIS TERRA.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all the earth.

**Flumina plaudent manu, simul montes exultabunt  
a conspectu Domini**

Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful  
together before the Lord.

Thou visitest the earth, thou makest it soft with  
showers: thou blessest the springing  
thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy  
goodness; the little hills rejoice on every side; they  
shout for joy, they also sing.

*Psalm 97 (98) 4, 8-9 Vulgate Bible; Psalms 98:4, 8-  
9; 65:9-13 King James Bible*

*O who will show me those delights on high? I. Thou  
Echo, thou art mortall, all men know. No.*

*Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?  
Leaves.*

*And are there any leaves, that still abide? Bide.*

*What leaves are they? impart the matter wholly.*

*Holy.*

*Are holy leaves the Echo then of blisse? Yes. Then  
tell me, what is that supreme delight? Light.*

*Light to the minde: what shall the will enjoy? Joy.*

*But are there cares and businesse with the  
pleasure? Leisure.*

*Light, joy, and leisure; but shall they persever? Ever.*

*Light, joy, and leisure ... Ever.*

## PROGRAM NOTES

*By Amelia LeClair*

**Welsh-born composer Hilary Tann (1946-2023)** lived in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York where she was the John Howard Payne Professor of Music at Union College, Schenectady. She held degrees in composition from the University of Wales at Cardiff and from Princeton University. She was guest Composer-in-Residence at the 2011 Eastman School of Music Women in Music Festival and composer-in-residence at the 2013 Women Composers Festival of Hartford.

Praised for its lyricism and formal balance, her music is influenced by her love of Wales and a strong identification with the natural world. A deep interest in the traditional music of Japan has led to private study of the shakuhachi and guest visits to Japan, Korea and China. Her compositions have been widely performed and recorded by ensembles such as the European Women's Orchestra, Tenebrae, Lontano, Meininger Trio, Thai Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic,





BBCNOW and KBS Philharmonic in Seoul, Korea. Her work has been supported and commissioned by many distinguished organizations including the Welsh Arts Council, New York State Council on the Arts, Hanson Institute for American Music, Vaughan Williams Trust, Holst Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer/Arts Endowment Commissioning Music USA. Arts, Vaughan Williams Trust, Holst Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer/Arts Endowment Commissioning Music USA. Her connection with Wales continues in various choral commissions, including Psalm 104 (Praise, my soul) for the North American Welsh Choir (1998) and Paradise for Tenebrae (Gregynog Festival, 2008). The influence of the Welsh landscape is also evident in many chamber works and in text selections from Welsh poets such as George Herbert, whose texts we hear today.

**The Moor** Typically, moorland in Wales is to be found high on the central plateau. This is where the sky is close to the surface of the earth, and the surface consists of grasses, and mosses, and the occasional outcrop of lichen-covered granite. There is such a moor above the composer's first home in Ferndale, South Wales. It is an ancient place of great bleakness and great beauty. The words of Welsh poet, R. S. Thomas, capture the hallowed quality of the Welsh moorland. Thomas' words directly inspired the piece and also suggested the use of additional text from the Vulgata. The Welsh hymn, "Rheidol", is echoed in the music and the piece ends with a quotation, in Welsh, from the words of the hymn.

In its original form, the piece we are performing today, *Exultet Terra*, was the result of a commission by the Hanson Institute for American Music. Ms. Tann graciously re-cast this work especially for Cappella Clausura's performing forces and you are hearing this new version this weekend. Hildegard's "O Deus, qui est tu?" with its ecstatic leaps of 2 consecutive 5ths - to the ninth of the mode - served as the inspiration for Tann's equally remarkable work, a five piece cycle for five double reeds and double chorus. Tann quotes the chant verbatim, but also treats it in a variety of rich and moving ways. She opens the first movement with what seems like her own fugal "answer" to the chant, then quotes it soon after. The first movement, "Exultet Terra," quickly moves from this incipit, to a "danza" which is drawn from that answer. And what a dance it is: in 5/8 time, with frequent changes and the most wonderful "hiccups," it is a celebration of sheer joy, a call to the fields, mountains and rivers to rejoice. The second movement, a "Trio of

Descent” for oboes and English horn, quotes a snippet of “O Deus,” and makes circles around that theme, bringing us ever so sweetly from E down to B for the third movement. “In Sanctis Eius,” in a straight-forward 3/4 with only a solo oboe accompanying the singers, is soft, contemplative, yet relentlessly moving forward like a river of sonority, with little waves that call attention to themselves as they float by. Again, the harmonic structure is of compound intervals rather than basic triads. The “Trio of Ascent,” for English horn and bassoons, is another perfect palate cleanser, between the thicker textures of the choral movements, echoing the motifs from them. It brings us to the fifth movement, “Iubilate Domino.” Beginning in a sprightly 6/8 time, this movement consolidates all of the others into one powerful exultation of all that life is, ending with a resounding quote again of “O Deus.”

Tann’s setting of the Herbert poems pays close attention to their use of word conceits: “Paradise” prunes each ending word by one letter. “Colos” includes a hidden inner text running diagonally down through the poem. “Heaven” echoes the final syllable with a new rhyming word. *Exultet Terra* is, in short, a textual and musical answer to Hildegard’s eternal question.

*Boston Musical Intelligencer - Susan Miron’s review of EXULTET TERRA premiere, 2015*

*The important piece after intermission was by contemporary Welsh composer Hilary Tann, who was in the audience. Her “Exultet Terra” consists of five movements for five double reeds and double chorus. The texts are all by the Welsh-born George Herbert “at his most ecstatic,” she remarked at the post-concert talk. “I loved the conceit of this poetry.... I am a word person as well as a note person.” Indeed. Embedded in these songs are all sorts of clever wordplay.*

*LeClair’s notes explain: “Paradise” prunes each ending word by one letter (start, tart, art). “Colos” includes a hidden inner text running diagonally down through the poem. “Heaven” echoes the Pinal syllable with a new rhyming word. And “Exultet Terra” is a textual and musical answer to Hildegard’s eternal question.”*

*The composer has written an oboe concerto and knows how to make the instrument sound fabulous. Cappella Clausura boasts “music you won’t hear anywhere else!” and is certainly to be thanked for introducing this charming work, sung and played so exquisitely. There was a*

*plangent oboe and English horn duet, a wonderful interlude with two bassoons and English horn, and in "Laudate Dominum" an oboe solo intermittent with the singers.*

*Tann charmed during the talk, describing the double reeds as "earth-belonging instruments" (to go with the poetry) and remarking that "In Wales we have a lot of aspens," which translates from Welsh as "women's tongues". "I couldn't imagine setting a tree to a square rhythm!", so she used a lot of 2+3 and 3+2. In "Jubilate," she recalls, "Okay, I'm going to make a noise!" and the noise made was exuberant indeed. Brava to Amelia LeClair and her excellent musicians.*

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CHORAL MUSIC OF HILARY TANN

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