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 A large version of the Volti San Francisco logo, with the stylized 'V' and the text 'VOLT SAN FRANCISCO' in teal and orange.

VOLT
 SAN FRANCISCO

ROBERT GEARY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

 A group photograph of the House of Voices choir members, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

HOUSE OF VOICES

More new directions in American choral music



Volti's twenty professional singers, under the direction of founder and Artistic Director Robert Geary, are dedicated to the discovery, creation, and performance of new vocal music. The ensemble's mission is to foster and showcase contemporary American music and composers, and to introduce contemporary vocal music from around the world to local audiences. The group has commissioned more than 70 new works, by emerging and established composers.

Hailed by San Francisco Classical Voice as "possibly the finest collection of chamber singers in the country," Volti boasts a 32-year record of exploring some of the most imaginative and innovative repertoire yet composed. Composers seek opportunities to partner with Volti, whose musicians are known for their sheer technical brilliance as well as their vibrant, passionate sound. Nationally recognized as a pioneer in new vocal music, Volti is the first and only ensemble to have won the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music six times, a testament to the fresh perspective and new voices the group brings to life.



Art is redefined in every generation by the best and the brightest, artists who are paying attention to the world around them. Volti seeks composers who explore timely issues of the modern human experience. At a Volti concert you might hear music addressing such topics as social justice, responsible citizenship, diverse conceptions of God/spirit, political strife, class distinctions, and internet culture. Volti explores the nexus between poetry and sound, the translation of inspiration to creation, the evocative power of an artist compelled to express this thing, at this time, in this way. At its best, it's the aural equivalent of a sunspot – an explosion of energy, a flash of brilliance, a glimpse of some eternal truth seen in a new and breathtaking way.

Attending a Volti concert has been likened to a visit to a museum of modern art, stimulating the mind, the imagination and the heart.

www.VoltiSF.org

The internationally-acclaimed **Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir** offers children throughout San Francisco's East Bay an outstanding program of choral training and performance. Ensemble is the Choir's flagship group. They tour annually and have claimed first prizes and gold medals at many prestigious competitions world-wide. www.piedmonthchoirs.org

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CREDITS

PRODUCED BY Lolly Lewis, Robert Geary, Mark Wings, Sidney Chen and Barbara Heroux

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The moon's a steaming chalice
of honey and venom-wine
- Lindsay *What Semiramis Said*

IV. Nuntius Noctis
nuntius noctis
primas referens tenebras
clarior quanto micat orbe pleno
cum suos ignes coeunte cornu
iunxit et curru properante pernox
exerit vultus rubicunda Phoebe
nec tenent stellae faciem minores;
talīs est, primas referens tenebras,
nuntius noctis.
- Seneca (4 BCE – 65 CE) *Phaedra*

V. Procession II
Luna, nova luna,
panem bis scinde
et nobis dona
semissem tibi,
salutem mihi.
Latin version by Ciara Sanker

Messenger of the night
who brings back the first shadows
more lovely than the full-orbed moon
your beauty shines more brightly
when with meeting horns she has joined her fires,
and with speeding chariot Phoebe
shows her blushing face and the lesser stars fade;
it is the one, who brings back the first shadows,
messenger of the night.
trans. adapted from F. Miller

Moon, new moon,
cut the bread in two
and give us
half to thee,
health to me.
Romanian prayer for the new moon

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VOLTI: HOUSE OF VOICES

YU-HUI CHANG (b. 1970)
Being: Two Collins Songs (2009)*
1 Shoveling Snow with Buddha 5:15
2 The Night House 7:00

TED HEARNE (b. 1982)
Privilege (2010)*
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4 Casino 2:08
Lindsey McLennan, soprano
Joseph Sargent, tenor
5 Burning tv song 1:44
6 They get it 2:03
David Kurtenbach, tenor
7 We cannot leave 5:47

DONALD CROCKETT (b. 1951)
8 *Daglarym / My Mountains* (2008)* 12:08
Pam Igelsrud, Amy White, sopranos
Julia Metzler, alto
Michael Eisenberg, tenor
Sidney Chen, Joseph Trumbo, basses

ERIC MOE (b. 1954)
9 *The Crowds Cheered
as Gloom Galloped Away* (2008)* 9:43
Madison Emery Smith, soprano

WAYNE PETERSON (b. 1927)
Two Poems of Delmore Schwartz (2006)
10 She Lives with the Furies of Hope
and Despair 4:44
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MARK WINGES (b. 1951)
Luna, Nova Luna (2010)**
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13 Welcome 1:40
14 The Moon-Dance 3:49
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16 Procession II 4:17

with Ensemble from Piedmont East Bay
Children's Choir

Volti soloists: Julia Fabrizio, alto
Michael Eisenberg,
David Kurtenbach, tenors
Philip Saunders, bass

Ensemble soloists:
Madeline Heaps, Kristi Hong,
Kai Vogel, Michelle Wan

* Commissioned by Volti
** Co-commissioned by Volti
and Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir

Volti is a 20-voice chamber choir. Singers vary slightly from concert to concert. Starred names appear on every track.

Soprano: Kristen Brown, Tonia D'Amelio, Pam Igelsrud*, Lindsey McLennan*, Madison Emery Smith, TJ Togasaki*, Christa Tumlinson, Amy White

Alto: Naomi Braun, Julia Fabrizio, Marjorie Gómez, Verah Graham*, Julia Metzler, Emily Ryan, Celeste Winant, Jessica Winn

Tenor: Seth Arnople, Andrew Cox, Michael Eisenberg*, Paul Ingraham, David Kurtenbach*, Roderick Lowe*, Joseph Sargent

Bass: Jeff Bennett, Eric Carter, Sidney Chen, Adam Cole, Joshua Fishbein, E.E. "Chip" Grant IV*, Philip Saunders*, Cole Thomason-Redus, Joseph Trumbo, Donald A. Ziff



Robert Geary, founding Artistic Director of Volti, the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, and the Golden Gate International Choral Festival, also serves as Artistic Director of the San Francisco Choral Society. His multi-dimensional commitment to the choral arts over the past thirty-five years has led him and his choirs to national and international prominence.

Geary has conducted first performances of more than 100 compositions. He has conducted in dozens of countries, served as a clinician and guest conductor in the US, Finland, Denmark and Singapore, and his choirs have been recognized in the United States by invitations to perform for

the national conferences of Chorus America, the American Choral Directors Association, the Organization of American Kodaly Educators, and the College Music Society.

His choirs can be heard on recordings with many labels including Other Minds, Harmonia Mundi, Koch International, Swiss International Radio, Ablaze, and Innova. They have performed for radio, television, opera, symphony and music festivals nationally and internationally. Geary also has prepared his choirs for some of the world's leading conductors, including Helmuth Rilling, Robert Shaw, Kurt Herbert Adler, Edo de Waart, Krzysztof Penderecki, Herbert Blomstedt, Dale Warland, Kent Nagano and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Recipient of awards for Outstanding Conductorship Achievement in Giessen, Germany, and Artistic Interpretation from the Miedzyszdroje Festival in Poland, Geary has also received the KDFC Music Educator of the Year Award and the Lois B. Rawlings Educational Inspiration Award.

La lune se lève
 O route en grand rêve
 O route sans terme
 - Laforgue *Solo de lune*

La luna cava un blanco abismo
 de quietud, en cuya cuenca
 las cosas son cadáveres
 y las sombras viven como
 - Lugones *La blanca soledad*

É a lúa que baila
 na Quintana dos mortos
 - Lorca *Danza da lúa en Santiago*

La luna está redonda
 La luna se ha hecho láminas
 como un pan de oro blanco
 - Lorca *Juego de lunas*

countdown claptrap moon-prints rock-box
 - Plomer *To the Moon and Back*

cheese
 no door
 no more

sail off in a wooden shoe
 Wynken, Blynken and Nod
 - Field *Wynken, Blynken and Nod*

midsummer not-to-call night in the white and walk of the morning
 paring of paradisaical fruit
 A cusp still clasped him, a fluke yet fanged him, entangled him
 - Hopkins *Moonrise*

See the moon climb.
 Dream road beyond time,
 Dream road without end

The moon carves a white abyss
 of silence, socket in which
 objects are corpses
 ideas and shadows alive like ideas

It is the moon that dances
 in the courtyard of the dead

Moon is round
 Moon's become a gilt leaf
 like a loaf of white gold

I. Procession I

Luna, nova luna,
panem bis scinde
et nobis dona
semissem tibi,
salutem mihi.

Latin version by Ciara Sanker

Moon, new moon,
cut the bread in two
and give us
half to thee,
health to me.

Romanian prayer for the new moon

II. Welcome

Welcome, precious stone of the night,
Delight of the skies, precious stone of the still night
Mother of stars, precious stone of the night skies
Child raised by the sun, precious stone of the silent night
Excellency of stars, precious stone of the night

Anon. translation of a pre-11th century Gaelic poem

III. The Moon-Dance

gotta dance
moon gotta dance
moon roll
sky roll

La luna blanche
Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
- Verlaine *Clair de lune*

The white moon
Your soul is a landscape rare
Where masks and bergamasks charming pass

Dans l'giron
Du Patron,
On y danse, on y danse
Dans l'giron
Du Patron
On y danse tous en rond.

- Laforgue *Complainte de cette bonne lune*

On the lap
Of our Master
We are dancing, fast and faster
On the lap
Of our Master
Dancing faster in a ring.

Being: Two Collins Songs

2009 Volti Commission

Yu-Hui Chang (b. 1970)

Award-winning composer Yu-Hui Chang has written a wide range of music that compels and resonates with professional musicians and audiences alike. Her compositions have been performed to critical acclaim throughout the U.S. and across continents in the Netherlands, Italy, UK, China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University, and commissions from Fromm, Koussevitzky, Barlow, and Meet The Composer. A native of Taiwan, Yu-Hui is an Associate Professor in Composition and Theory at Brandeis University. She also serves as a Co-Artistic Director of the Boston-based Dinosaur Annex Music Ensemble, a leading exponent of contemporary music performance since 1975.

The texts for *Being...* are by Billy Collins, who served two terms as Poet Laureate of the United States from 2001 to 2003. Poet Stephen Dunn has said of Collins, "We seem to always know where we are in a Billy Collins poem, but not necessarily where he is going. I love to arrive with him at his arrivals. He doesn't hide things from us, as I think lesser poets do. He allows us to overhear, clearly, what he himself has discovered."

Composer's Note:

Reading Billy Collins's poems is like having a good conversation with a long-time friend – comfortable and without pretension. Insight and reflection emerge from everyday topics. Wisdom about life is shared not with the sternness of a lecture, but often with humor. The two poems set in *Being...* - *Shoveling Snow with Buddha* and *The Night House* - are both about the awareness of the physical and psychological selves. In the first poem, the bodily snow-shoveling transfigures into a sense of deep understanding, while in the second mental faculties metaphorically materialize out of mundane activities.

Musically, *Shoveling Snow with Buddha* is lively with its irregular rhythm, reflecting the subtle humor of the text. *The Night House* has a veiled quality in its harmony and texture, as a portrayal of the poem's subliminal setting. Despite the difference in character, both pieces strive to retain the clarity and the narrative nature of Mr. Collins's writing.

Shoveling Snow With Buddha – Billy Collins

In the usual iconography of the temple or the local Wok
you would never see him doing such a thing,
tossing the dry snow over a mountain
of his bare, round shoulder, his hair tied in a knot,
a model of concentration.

Sitting is more his speed, if that is the word
for what he does, or does not do.

Even the season is wrong for him.
In all his manifestations, is it not warm or slightly humid?
Is this not implied by his serene expression,
that smile so wide it wraps itself around the waist of the universe?

But here we are, working our way down the driveway,
one shovelful at a time.

We toss the light powder into the clear air.
We feel the cold mist on our faces.
And with every heave we disappear
and become lost to each other
in these sudden clouds of our own making,
these fountain-bursts of snow.

This is so much better than a sermon in church,
I say out loud, but Buddha keeps on shoveling.
This is the true religion, the religion of snow,
and sunlight and winter geese barking in the sky,
I say, but he is too busy to hear me.

He has thrown himself into shoveling snow
as if it were the purpose of existence,
as if the sign of a perfect life were a clear driveway
you could back the car down easily
and drive off into the vanities of the world
with a broken heater fan and a song on the radio.

Luna, Nova Luna

Mark Wings (b. 1951)

2010 Joint Commission, Volti and Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir

Luna, Nova Luna was part of a multi-year cycle of commissioning new works for professional choir and high-level children's choir. This project resulted in 15-minute works by Mark Wings, Elliott Gyger, and Kui Dong.

Mark Wings, born in Louisville, Kentucky, currently resides in San Francisco, where he is composer / advisor for Volti, a position he has held since 1990. He is a graduate of the College-Conservatory of Music - University of Cincinnati, SF State University, and has studied at the Musikhögskolan in Stockholm, Sweden. His principal teachers have been Ellsworth Millburn, Henry Onderdonk, and Arne Mellnäs. His works have been performed by the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, the SF Contemporary Music Players, Earplay, Works-in-Progress: Berlin, the Empyrean Ensemble, pianist Teresa McCollough, Volti, the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, the San Francisco Girls Chorus, the Pharos Music Project (NY), Carmina Slovenica (Slovenia), the Guangdong Choir (China), the Marin, Berkeley and Piteå (Sweden) Symphonies and many others. Gramophone magazine has characterized his music as "Stylistically adventurous in setting, but strongly beholden to conventional means."

Composer's Note:

In agrarian societies, the power of the moon, in all its manifestations, was worshiped, celebrated and feared. Even today, some of that fascination persists: who of us has not looked up at the night sky and been drawn in by the moon's silvery presence? *Luna, Nova Luna* is my own response to the recurring patterns of the moon: its nightly rising, its longer cycle of waxing and waning.

The origin of the piece is a bit unusual. It started with *The Moon-Dance*, which was composed as an independent piece for the Piedmont Choir in 2002. When planning *Luna, Nova Luna*, it seemed quite natural to use the earlier work as a centerpiece to and from which other pieces of the moon-story could relate. Having the expanded forces of two choirs allowed for more dramatic contrasts in sound: treble voices alone, mixed voices alone, younger treble voices with men, a multi-hued treble sound (using both adult and younger sopranos and altos as a unit), and of course, the full sound of both choirs together. The way these different forces are used and where they occur in the piece is a part of the unfolding drama of the music.

Composing for each of these inspiring ensembles individually is a joy I've experienced many times. Being able to work with both of them in combination has been a treat, and has opened my own ears to new possibilities in choral sound. I am sure that hearing them together will open your ears as well.

Luna, Nova Luna was made possible in part by a generous gift from Lewis Butler, and is dedicated To Catherine, Elena and Tobias – May your creativity have no limits.

I Am Cherry Alive, the Little Girl Sang

"I am cherry alive," the little girl sang,
 "Each morning I am something new:
 I am apple, I am plum, I am just as excited
 As the boys who made the Hallowe'en bang:
 I am tree, I am cat, I am blossom too:
 When I like, if I like, I can be someone new,
 Someone very old, a witch in a zoo:
 I can be someone else whenever I think who,
 And I want to be everything sometimes too:
 And the peach has a pit and I know that too,
 And I put it in along with everything
 To make the grown-ups laugh whenever I sing:
 And I sing: It is true; It is untrue;
 I know, I know, the true is untrue,
 The peach has a pit,
 The pit has a peach:
 And both may be wrong
 When I sing my song,
 But I don't tell the grown-ups: because it is sad,
 And I want them to laugh just like I do
 Because they grew up
 And forgot what they knew
 And they are sure
 I will forget it some day, too.
 They are wrong. They are wrong. When I sang my song, I knew, I knew!
 I am red, I am gold,
 I am green, I am blue,
 I will always be me,
 I will always be new!"

– Delmore Schwartz

"I Am Cherry Alive, the Little Girl Sang," from *SELECTED POEMS*, copyright ©1959
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All morning long we work side by side,
 me with my commentary
 and he inside his generous pocket of silence,
 until the hour is nearly noon
 and the snow is piled high all around us;
 then, I hear him speak.

After this, he asks,
 can we go inside and play cards?

Certainly, I reply, and I will heat some milk
 and bring cups of hot chocolate to the table
 while you shuffle the deck.
 and our boots stand dripping by the door.

Aaah, says the Buddha, lifting his eyes
 and leaning for a moment on his shovel
 before he drives the thin blade again
 deep into the glittering white snow.

The Night House

– Billy Collins

Every day the body works in the fields of the world
 Mending a stone wall
 Or swinging a sickle through the tall grass -
 The grass of civics, the grass of money -
 And every night the body curls around itself
 And listens for the soft bells of sleep.

But the heart is restless and rises
 From the body in the middle of the night,
 Leaves the trapezoidal bedroom
 With its thick, pictureless walls
 To sit by herself at the kitchen table
 And heat some milk in a pan.

And the mind gets up too, puts on a robe
 And goes downstairs, lights a cigarette,
 And opens a book on engineering.
 Even the conscience awakens
 And roams from room to room in the dark,
 Darting away from every mirror like a strange fish.

And the soul is up on the roof
 In her nightdress, straddling the ridge,
 Singing a song about the wildness of the sea
 Until the first rip of pink appears in the sky.
 Then, they all will return to the sleeping body
 The way a flock of birds settles back into a tree,

Resuming their daily colloquy,
 Talking to each other or themselves
 Even through the heat of the long afternoons.
 Which is why the body - the house of voices -
 Sometimes puts down its metal tongs, its needle, or its pen
 To stare into the distance,

To listen to all its names being called
 Before bending again to its labor.

Lyrics from the poems "The Night House" and "Shoveling Snow with Buddha" from *Picnic, Lightning*,
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She Lives with the Furies of Hope and Despair

She lives with the Furies of Hope and Despair.
 O Jan Vermeer of Delft, descend,
 Come near the Hudson and the West's last capital.
 Here is the new Ophelia, beautiful:
 Only your lucid brush could make her clear
 and vivid as the daughter of the Swan.
 Vermeer, you too! The early morning light
 Only the sleepless see gazing all night
 Return as faint and delicate as dawn.
 Pretty and beautiful, romping and yet
 Serene as statues of the classic age,
 Her goodness generous in her luminous face.
 Though cruel pride rack the world with rage,
 Or power and vanity dance, they dance their minuets,
 Her candor and her gaze are marvelous:
 Marvelous shines her candor and her gaze.
 – Delmore Schwartz

"She Lives with the Furies of Hope and Despair," from VAUDEVILLE FOR A PRINCESS,
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Two Poems by Delmore Schwartz (2006)

Wayne Peterson (b. 1927)

Wayne Peterson, born in Albert Lea, Minnesota, has been a San Francisco resident since 1960. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and was a Fulbright Scholar at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Peterson was Professor of Music at San Francisco State University for more than three decades, and from 1992 to 1994 was a guest professor of composition at Stanford University.

He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 1992 for *The Face of the Night, The Heart of the Dark*, commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony, crowning a distinguished career that has included fellowships and commissions from the Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, Fromm, Gerbode, and Djerassi Foundations, and *Meet The Composer*, as well as an award of distinction from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Volti has commissioned and performed several works by the composer including *A Robert Herrick Motley* (five a cappella choruses) in 1996, *An e.e. cummings Triptych* (three a cappella choruses), composed in 1962 and performed in 2005, and *Carol* in 2001.

Poet Delmore Schwartz (1913-1966) pursued a degree in philosophy and, though he did not complete an advanced degree, became a lecturer at Harvard. He later followed a more itinerant teaching career at various schools in the Northeast. Schwartz succumbed to the ravages of alcoholism and drug abuse at the age of 52.

Composer's Note:

She Lives with the Furies of Hope and Despair caught my attention with its sensitive, yet occasionally somewhat bizarre, references to Jan Vermeer's famous Dutch Renaissance painting, "The Girl with the Pearl Earring," the Greek myth of Leda and the Swan, Hamlet's Ophelia, the Classical Age and New York City. Essentially, this poem champions Goodness, Purity and Candor, suggested by the beautiful young woman in Vermeer's masterpiece, as a welcome antidote to the cruel wantonness of our contemporary society. *I Am Cherry Alive, the Little Girl Sang* contrasts the light, sweet and unbridled enthusiasm of a young child who insists that she will not grow up and have her joyous innocence stifled like those "grown-ups" around her. I have endeavored to set both of these poems as simply and directly as possible, in keeping with the sentiments expressed.

Privilege

2009/10 Volti Choral Arts Laboratory Commission

Ted Hearne (b. 1982)

Volti's Choral Arts Laboratory ("CAL") is an annual commissioning and residency program designed to give American composers under the age of 35 the opportunity to create a piece for the ensemble, and work with Volti's singers during the compositional process. Submissions are solicited every year, the deadline falling around January 1. Ted Hearne was the composer chosen for the CAL program in 2009/10.

Ted Hearne is a dynamic composer, conductor and performer living and working in Brooklyn. His *Katrina Ballads*, a modern-day oratorio with a primary-source libretto, received the 2009 Gaudeamus Prize in composition and was listed as a Top 10 Classical Album of 2010 by The Washington Post and Time Out Chicago. Upcoming commissions include works for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, eighth blackbird, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and A Far Cry.

Composer's Note:

Privilege is a collection of five short pieces. The first and third movements are both little snapshots of a contemporary privileged life, set to texts written by a contemporary privileged person (me). *Motive/mission* captures the thought-stream of an ambitious and conscientious individual, at the moment those thoughts are interrupted with a circumstance that begs uncomfortable comparisons: "How much of my life is given? How much is earned?" *Burning tv song* is a love letter to the comfort found in a modern media apparatus whose output so alluringly confirms our visions of ourselves.

The second and fourth movements are set to portions of an interview with David Simon (creator of HBO's *The Wire*) by journalist Bill Moyers, which aired in April 2009 on PBS. *Casino* sets Simon's response to Moyers' question: "Why do you think that we tolerate such gaps between rich and poor?" *They get it* addresses the idea that there is a large segment of our population - Simon guesses ten to fifteen percent - whose existence is unnecessary to the American economy, especially those who "are undereducated, that have been ill served by the inner city school system, that have been unprepared for the technocracy of the modern economy." Until there is a place for them in the American ideal, Simon posits, drug trafficking and other illegal activity will provide a more viable financial option. The final movement, *We cannot leave*, is set to an English translation of *As' Kwaz' uKuhamba*, a black South African anti-Apartheid song, the original words of which are in Xhosa, the native language of Nelson Mandela. South Africa has a strong tradition of music being used as a tool to fight societal oppression and inequality. This setting is a tribute to that practice.

I. Motive/mission

motive/mission

you were always fair
you were almost always kind
weren't you?

you always reached out your hand
you almost always refused to lie
didn't you?

you wouldn't shut your shining eyes
would you?

II. Casino

it's almost like a casino
you're looking at the guy winning,
you're looking at the guy who pulled the lever
and all the bells go off
and all the coins are coming
out of a one-armed bandit
and you're thinking
that could be me.
I'll play by those rules.

III. Burning tv song

flashing window
empty street
burning tv song
stay

The Crowds Cheered as Gloom Galloped Away
– Matthea Harvey

Everyone was happier. But where did the sadness go? People wanted to know. They didn't want it collecting in their elbows or knees then popping up later. The girl who thought of the ponies made a lot of money. Now a month's supply of pills came in a hard blue case with a handle. You opened it & found the usual vial plus six tiny ponies of assorted shapes & sizes, softly breathing in the Styrofoam. Often they had to be pried out & would wobble a little when first put on the ground. In the beginning the children tried to play with them, but the sharp hooves nicked their fingers & the ponies refused to jump over pencil hurdles. The children stopped feeding them sugarwater & the ponies were left to break their legs on the gardens' gravel paths or drown in the gutters. On the first day of the month, rats gathered on doorsteps & spat out only the bitter manes. Many a pony's last sight was a bounding squirrel with its tail hovering over its head like a halo. Behind the movie theatre the hardier ponies gathered in packs amongst the cigarette butts, getting their hooves stuck in wads of gum. They lined the hills at funerals, huddled under folding chairs at weddings. It became a matter of pride if one of your ponies proved unusually sturdy. People would smile & say, "This would have been an awful month for me," pointing to the glossy palomino trotting energetically around their ankles. Eventually the ponies were no longer needed. People had learned to imagine their sadness trotting away. & when they wanted something more tangible, they could always go to the racetrack & study the larger horses' faces. Gloom, #341, with those big black eyes, was almost sure to win.

"The Crowds Cheered as Gloom Galloped Away," copyright © 2004 by Matthea Harvey. Reprinted from *Sad Little Breathing Machine* with the permission of Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

The Crowds Cheered as Gloom Galloped Away

2008 Volti commission

Eric Moe (b. 1954)

Eric Moe, composer of what the New York Times calls “music of winning exuberance,” was educated at Princeton University (A.B.) and the University of California, Berkeley (M.A., Ph.D.). He has held visiting professorships at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania and is currently Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh.

A founding member of the San Francisco-based Earplay ensemble, he currently co-directs the Music on the Edge new music concert series in Pittsburgh. He has received commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Barlow Endowment, and Meet-the-Composer USA.

The Crowds Cheered as Gloom Galloped Away is Volti’s second commission from Moe of a setting of poetry by Matthea Harvey, the first being *O the flesh is hot but the heart is cold*, premiered in 2005 and recorded on Volti’s CD *Turn the Page*. Both poems may be found in *Sad Little Breathing Machine* (2004), the poet’s collection of prose poems that she describes as “tiny stories on narrative steroids . . . half narrative, half lyric; half melancholy, half mischievous; half head, half heart.”

Composer’s Note:

The poem begins: “Everyone was happier. But where did the sadness go? People wanted to know.” The plot of *The Crowds Cheered* . . . arose when the poet dreamt that antidepressants came in cases with tiny ponies. It explores the fantastical premise of a world in which a month’s dosage of antidepressants includes six miniature ponies that make the patient’s sadness visible and tangible. The piece is a simultaneously funny and profound look at contemporary culture, our attempts to externalize “bad” feelings and emotions.

IV. They get it

we pretend to need them
we pretend to educate the kids
but we don’t
and they’re not foolish
they get it

V. We cannot leave

we cannot leave
this land of our ancestors
on this earth

we are being killed by the monster
on this earth

shuku shuku *(the sound of the train)*
oh, mother, it’s leaving me behind!
i want to get on the train
to get on the train in the morning
i want
oh, mother, it’s leaving me behind!

text: *As’ Kwaz’ uKuhamba*
traditional Xhosa anti-Apartheid song
translation by Patiswa Nombona
and Mollie Stone, 2003

Daglarym / My Mountains

2008 Volti Commission

Donald Crockett (b. 1951)

Donald Crockett has received commissions from the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (Composer-in-Residence 1991-97), Kronos Quartet, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hilliard Ensemble, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Firebird Ensemble, the California EAR Unit, and Volti, among many others. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2006, and has also received grants and prizes from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Barlow Endowment, Copland Fund, Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards, Meet the Composer, and the National Endowment for the Arts. He is Chair of the Composition Department and Director of the Contemporary Music Ensemble at the USC Thornton School of Music, and Senior Composer-in-Residence with the Chamber Music Conference and Composers' Forum of the East.

Composer's Note:

The title of *Daglarym/My Mountains* is drawn from folk music of Tuva, an autonomous republic of the Russian Federation bordering Mongolia. The texts, adapted from folk song lyrics by Katherine Vincent, are the fruit of an excursion to Tuva for linguistic and folk song research in which Kate took part. These brief poems are evocative of the vast expanses of this country through which nomadic tribes of herdsman move across the landscape in an eternal seasonal cycle. As a musical basis for the piece I used melodic fragments from folk tunes which the poet and violist, Kate Vincent, notated in her journal.

There are several Tuvan words in the text:

daglarym ("my mountains") barypla ("going") bazala ("once again")
 honash ("the flattened circle in the grass left by the departed yurt after the nomads have moved on")
 aal ("a nomadic encampment of several yurts")
 Saryglyg (as in 'the plains of Saryglyg,' "a yellow-ful place")

Translations and transliterations of Tuvan words provided by K. David Harrison.

Daglarym/My Mountains

– Text by Katherine Vincent, adapted from Tuvan folk song lyrics

I. Daglarym

Daglarym, my mountains.
 Like cranes flying, gliding in formation,
 silently through this nomadic night.

II. Honash

Barypla, bazala.
 Honash.
 The yurt has left its echo in the pasture.
 As the season exhaled the aal moved on.
 Barypla, bazala.

III. Daglarym

Daglarym, my mountains.
 Youth recalled from your whisperings.
 Remembering cliffs where goats were herded by moonlight
 under your gaze.

IV. Honash

Honash.
 Barypla, bazala.
 The land mourns the sounds of children
 Herding goats across the plain.
 Barypla, bazala.
 The land mourns the sounds of children
 and the heat of a fire which warms the chai.

V. Daglarym

Daglarym, my mountains.
 Climbing toward twilight beyond the plains of Saryglyg,
 The child runs with the herd, invisible.
 You bear our mortality,
 and our aal moves on.
 Daglarym.
 The child runs with the herd,
 invisible in this nomadic night.