



Illustration: Sienna Barney-Yapo

THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR
**TOBIAS AND
THE ANGEL**

*A church opera by Jonathan Dove
to a libretto by David Lan*

SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 2018 • 4 PM

WELCOME to the Memorial Church at Harvard University, and to this afternoon's performance of Jonathan Dove's church opera *Tobias and the Angel*. One of today's most theatrical composers, Jonathan Dove's music combines an overt lyricism with a sensitivity to text declamation that makes his music instantly relatable. Inventive orchestration, subtle characterizations, and dramatic choruses permeate this work, resulting in a vivid portrayal of one of the quirkier episodes in the Apocrypha. One of the most haunting dramatic motifs that recurs throughout the work concerns our inability to hear the various musics that surround us on a daily basis in nature. To musicians and non-musicians alike, this is surely a powerful wake-up call, and one that I have found particularly affecting over these weeks of rehearsal.

It has been a joy to prepare this work with such wonderful young soloists (including one UChoir alum and several current choir members), such fine instrumentalists, and the excellent students of the Harvard University Choir. The choir is in the midst of a very busy year, which has already seen a concert performance of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, a tour of Montreal, and a residency with guest director Dr. Barry Rose; still to come are performances of Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* and Monteverdi's *Vespers* (1610).

It continues to be my very great privilege to serve in this church and to lead a choir of students whose love of singing brings so much joy to the community. Our work would not be possible without the support of so many benefactors, and I would like to thank all of our patrons for their ongoing generosity. This is indeed an exciting time for music and ministry in the Memorial Church, and I encourage you to join our email list by visiting our website, memorialchurch.harvard.edu, where you can also make a contribution to our free concert series.

My sincere thanks go to my colleagues in the church, and in particular to Professor Jonathan Walton, Alanna Sullivan, Thomas Sheehan, and Carson Cooman, for their support and encouragement. To the Harvard University Choir secretaries, Cara Jacobson and Fred Metzger, I give my endless gratitude for all they do to ensure the group's smooth-running. Finally, I thank you, our audience, for your support of this afternoon's concert, and for your enthusiasm for the music program here in the Memorial Church.

Edward E. Jones

TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL

(1999)

Music by Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

Libretto by David Lan (b. 1952)



In Nineveh

Tobit: Christopher Talbot

Anna, his wife: Susannah Thornton

Tobias, his son: Jonas Budris '06

Raphael, an angel: Benjamin Wenzelberg '21

In Ecbatana

Raguel: Nathan Reiff

Edna, his wife: Sol Kim Bentley

Sara, his daughter: Ketti Jane Muschler

Ashmodeus, a demon: Fred Metzger '18

Raguel's Men (Soloists: James Baskerville '18, Sean Telford G1),
Sparrows, the Fish, People in the Market, the Mountain, the River,
Wedding Guests, the Trees: Members of the Harvard University Choir



Edward Elwyn Jones, *conductor*

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SYNOPSIS

In Nineveh, Tobit, a good man, defies the law and buries the body of one of his fellow Jews who has been killed on the orders of the king. His wife, Anna, is afraid but his son, Tobias, helps him.

Polluted by the burial, they sleep outside. Tobias joins villagers in a dance. He meets a Stranger who tells him to “listen for the silence in the song.” Tobias prefers dancing.

In the morning, when Tobit wakes, birds defecate in his eyes and he becomes blind.

On the same morning, in far away Ecbatana, Sara wakes to find that her newly married husband is dead, murdered by an evil spirit, Ashmodeus, who is in love with her. This is the seventh time this has happened. Sara’s father, Raguel, instructs his servants to bury the body secretly.

Tobit and Sara both pray for help.

Unable to earn a living, Tobit sends Tobias to Ecbatana to reclaim a debt from his cousin Raguel. The Stranger goes with him.

On the journey, the Stranger encourages Tobias to listen to the songs sung by the trees, the mountain and a river. Tobias can’t hear them. He falls into the river and is almost devoured by a giant fish whose song he is also unable to hear. He kills the fish. The Stranger tells him to cut out its heart and gall.

They arrive in Ecbatana. Raguel, unwilling to repay the debt, hatches a plot to get Tobias to become Sara’s eighth husband, hoping that the evil spirit will kill him too. When Tobias sees Sara he at once “hears” the song of her beauty and they are married.

On their wedding night, Tobias is unable to hear the “song” of the evil spirit but, just in time, the Stranger advises him to throw the fish’s heart onto the fire in their bedroom. The spirit is exorcised: Sara at last is free. Raguel is still reluctant to hand over the money he owes, but Sara persuades him.

On the journey back Tobias and Sara hear the songs of the river, the mountain and the trees.

At home, the Stranger tells Tobias to apply the fish’s gall to his father’s eyes. Tobit’s sight is restored. They offer to pay the Stranger all the money in return for his help, but he reveals himself to be the angel Raphael, who has descended to earth to answer Tobit’s and Sara’s prayers. He returns to heaven.

David Lan

HARVARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR

Edward Elwyn Jones, Gund University Organist and Choirmaster

Thomas Sheehan, Associate University Organist and Choirmaster

Carson Cooman, Research Associate in Music and Composer in Residence

Frank Kelley and Shannon Larkin, Vocal Instructors

Cara Jacobson and Theodora Mautz, Choir Secretaries

Fred Metzger, Acting Junior Choir Secretary

Italics denote members of the Choral Fellows.

Soprano

Lily An

Ellie Corbus

Ilana Harris

Cara Jacobson

Anna Lee

Rebecca Stewart

May Wang

Benjamin Wenzelberg

Eliza Wiant

Elizabeth Wu

Alto

Elba Alonso Monsalve

Bo Choi

Kath Courtemanche

Erin Dahlstrom

Claire Dickson

Eden Girma

Jessie King

Isabella Kopits

Katherine Lazar

Caroline

Rakus-Wojciechowski

Tenor

Jake Corvino

Ethan Craigo

Michael Giles

Gregory Lipson

Sydney Mukasa

Harrison Phelps

Hugh Strike

Michael Wingate

Bass

James Baskerville

Nik Boström

Adrian Cho

Joseph Gauvreau

Alexander Hunt

Mateo Lincoln

Freddie MacBride

Fred Metzger

Thomas Michaels

Sean Telford

Fraser Weist

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Flute

Vanessa Holroyd

Accordion

Katherine Matasy

Cello

Michael Unterman

Clarinet

Alexis Lanz

Harp

Maria Rindenello-Parker

Contrabass

Edward Kass

Percussion

Nicholas Tolle

Violin

Asuka Usui

Organ

Thomas Sheehan

Edward Elwyn Jones is the Gund University Organist and Choirmaster at Harvard University, a post he has held since 2003. Mr. Jones directs the music program in the Memorial Church in the midst of Harvard Yard and leads the 180-year old Harvard University Choir in its daily choral services, broadcasts, tours, commissions, and recordings. Mr. Jones is also Music Director of the Harvard Radcliffe Chorus, the Lowell House Opera (New England's longest-running opera company), and is a frequent collaborator with Yale's Schola Cantorum. As a conductor, he has guested with such organizations as Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Grand Harmonie, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, Boston Camerata, Emmanuel Music (Boston), Longwood Symphony Orchestra, and the Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra. He has led opera productions with Iceland's Reykjavik Summer Opera Festival, New England's Intermezzo Opera, Lowell House Opera, and the Harvard Early Music Society. Mr. Jones has worked alongside William Christie, Christopher Hogwood, Nicholas McGegan, and Gil Rose, and has served as continuo player and Assistant Conductor to Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists.

During his time at Harvard, Mr. Jones has overseen the publication of a new university hymnal and the installation of two new pipe organs in the Memorial Church, and has commissioned works from some of America's most prominent contemporary composers, including Daniel Pinkham, Alice Parker, and David Conte. A native of Wales, Mr. Jones studied music at Cambridge University, where he was Organ Scholar of Emmanuel College, and served as conductor of three university orchestras. He received his Master of Music degree in orchestral conducting from Mannes College of Music in New York City, where he was the recipient of the Felix Salzer Memorial Award.

Tenor **Jonas Budris** is a versatile soloist and ensemble singer, engaging new works and early music with equal passion. An alumnus of the Harvard University Choir and Choral Fellows, he has since returned to sing with the group as the tenor soloist in Haydn's *The Creation*, as Aaron in C. P. E. Bach's *Die Israeliten in der Wüste*, and as Brother William in John Austin's *Heloise and Abelard*. In the Boston area, he sings frequently with the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and Emmanuel Music as a soloist and choral singer. He also enjoys touring with such ensembles as Cut Circle, Blue Heron, Spire, Skylark, and the Thirteen. On the opera stage, he has performed principal and supporting roles with numerous musical organizations, including Opera Boston, OperaHub, Guerilla Opera, and Odyssey Opera. Originally from Martha's Vineyard, Mr. Budris holds a degree in Environmental Sciences & Engineering from Harvard College.

Two-time Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions regional finalist **Sol Kim Bentley** was lauded by *Opera News* for her "ardently sincere...beautifully restrained and heartbreaking" performance as Cardillac's Daughter in the New England premiere of Hindemith's *Cardillac* for Opera Boston, the production of which was named one of the top ten international musical events of 2011 by *Musical America's* George Loomis. *The Financial Times* remarked that she "put her ample soprano voice to sure dramatic use," while *The Boston Globe* acclaimed that she sang "with impressive urgency and directness." Previously, she understudied the title role in Opera Boston's world premiere of Zhou Long's 2011 Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Madame White Snake* (performing the role for an invited dress rehearsal), and was the Roll Seller in Opera Boston's New England premiere of Shostakovich's *The Nose*.

Also with Opera Boston she has understudied the title role of Donizetti's *Maria Padilla*, Elvira (*Ernani*), and Agathe (*Der Freischütz*). Other performances include Micaëla in *Carmen* with Opera New Hampshire/New Hampshire Philharmonic, Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Lowell House Opera, Leonore in *Fidelio* with North End Music and Performing Arts Center (NEMPAC), Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* and the title role of *Tosca* with Longwood Opera, Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* (NEMPAC, Connecticut Lyric Opera, New England Light Opera), and Mimi in *La Bohème* (NEMPAC, Riverside Theatre Works/Boston Opera Collaborative). She is a former apprentice of Virginia Opera, where she understudied the roles of Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*) and Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and of Central City Opera, where she understudied Blanche and sang the role of Sr. Mathilde (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*).

Fred Metzger concentrates in chemistry at Harvard College. He has studied voice with Frank Kelley for nearly six years and is a member of the choral fellows at Memorial Church. Fred also enjoys playing double bass in the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra.

Connecticut-born soprano **Ketti Jane Muschler** is a versatile performer of classical vocal works in stage productions, concerts, and recordings. Ketti Jane's live performances in 2017–18 included her first "baritone" role in an all-women's production of *La Bohème* (MetroWest Opera) and the international premiere tour of an opera based on writings of Jane Austen. Other recent opera roles include Mary Warren in *The Crucible* (Miami Music Festival) and 'The Lady with the Cake Box' in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*. 2017–18 season recordings included choral works of Praetorius, Schütz, & Telemann in Germany with the Canto Armonico early music ensemble as well as two solo song cycle premieres in Boston. She is currently appearing with local Boston companies Lowell House Opera and Opera51. Also respected as a choral conductor and speaker, Ketti Jane will enjoy contracts at several major American music conferences over the next two years. Ketti Jane was a winner of the Longy School of Music's Conservatory Honors competition in 2016, and also holds Sigma Alpha Iota's Sword of Honor Collegiate Award "for outstanding musicianship, scholarship, and fraternity service."

Active as a conductor, educator, and vocalist, **Nathan Reiff** is a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Yale University and holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University. Reiff's work as a conductor has brought him before ensembles representing some of the broad diversity of the choral world, including the Young People's Chorus of New York City, the Yale Glee Club, the Yale Camerata, and the Ann Arbor Cantata Singers. Beginning in the 2017–2018 season, he serves as Resident Conductor of the Harvard Glee Club and Instructor at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, where he leads the Conservatory Chorale and Women's Chorus and teaches courses on choral repertoire. Reiff's activity as a vocalist has included performances around the world with ensembles including Ghostlight Chorus, the Yale Schola Cantorum, and the Whiffenpoofs of Yale, as well as roles as featured soloist with the Yale Camerata, Pro Musica, and Baroque Opera Project. His teachers of conducting have included Jerry Blackstone, Jeffrey Douma, and Marguerite Brooks, and he has studied voice with Richard Lalli, Scott Murphree, and Judith Malafronte.

Bass-baritone **Christopher Talbot** began his career as a boy chorister at All Saints Church, Worcester, MA, where he performed around the Northeast as well as at the Three Choirs Festival in England. As an undergraduate at Drew University he pursued both vocal performance and composition, with an emphasis on early music performance. A student of Spanish, he studied opera and early music for a term at IUNA—a national conservatory in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Recently he traveled to Germany with Canto Armonico, where they recorded music of Schütz and Praetorius under the direction of Ulf Wellner. He performs actively around Boston and has sung with The Harvard Early Music Society, Boston Choral Ensemble, and the choir of First Lutheran Church, Boston.

New England based mezzo-soprano **Susannah Thornton** is equally at home performing operatic roles and interpreting art song. In May 2016 she earned a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance *magna cum laude* from the Longy School of Music of Bard College where she studied with Carol Mastrodomenico. While at Longy, Thornton performed the role of Miss Todd (Menotti, *The Old Maid and the Thief*) and the mezzo roles in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*. She is a Roster Artist with Boston Opera Collaborative, with whom she has performed the roles of Suzy in a condensed "remix" of *La Rondine* during May 2017, Schumann Soloist in "Mirror" (a staged production of *Frauenliebe und Leben*), and April 3 in Oliver Caplan's *Symposium*. Thornton made her international debut touring John Morrison's chamber opera *Jane's History of England* throughout England in March 2017. She also can be seen singing at Second Parish in Hingham. Susannah will be a Young Artist with Finger Lakes Opera during the summer of 2018.

Benjamin P. Wenzelberg, countertenor, composer, conductor, and pianist is a proud 2017 US Presidential Scholar in the Arts, and freshman at Harvard. He is thrilled to be a part of *Tobias and the Angel*! This winter he performed the role of Prince Orlofsky in Harvard College Opera's *Die Fledermaus*, and this fall was a soloist at Harvard in the Dunster House *Messiah*, *L'Orfeo* at the Memorial Church's Monteverdi 450th anniversary celebration, and in *Chichester Psalms* at Sanders Theatre with the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and Harvard Choruses in a Leonard Bernstein centenary concert. His composition for solo flute premiered last month in the Harvard Composers Association fall concert, where he also played piano in a second chamber composition. He made his European composition and conducting debut with his orchestral composition at the Grafenegg Festival in Austria last year; the piece won first prize and will be reprised by the Tonkünstler Orchestra at the Vienna Musikverein Golden Hall this winter. An eight-season soloist and chorister with the Metropolitan Opera, Benjy studied at Juilliard Pre-College for eight years, majoring in composition and also studying piano, voice in a chamber group, and conducting there. He has been a soloist with companies/venues including The New World Center, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, NY City Opera, NY Philharmonic, Atlanta Opera, and David Geffen Hall. At Harvard he also sings with the University Choir, is Co-Music Director of the Mozart Society Orchestra, and will be serving as Chorus Master in Lowell House Opera's *Le Comte Ory* this spring.



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The Memorial Church

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