

grand finale

Post-concert Dessert Reception
sponsored by Sorensen's Resort

8p SAT **AUG 12**

tributes part 2

SANTA CRUZ CIVIC AUDITORIUM

Cabrillo Festival Orchestra
conducted by **CRISTIAN MĂCELARU**

▶ **Moby-Dick Orchestral Suite**

(2010/2017)

Jake Heggie (b. 1961) /

arranged by **Cristian Măcelaru**

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

▶ **Overture to La Haine** (2017)

Christopher Rountree (b. 1983)

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

Commissioned by the Pacific Harmony Foundation.

INTERMISSION

▶ **Field Guide** (2017)

Gabriella Smith (b. 1991)

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

Commissioned in honor of John Adams' 70th birthday
with support from Margaret Dorfman.

▶ **The Prisoner** (2017)

Karim Al-Zand (b. 1970)

texts by **Adnan Latif** (1974–2012), **Abul Ala Al-Ma'arri** (973–1057), **Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī** (1207–1273), and **Rainer Maria Rilke** (1875–1926)

Jonathan Lemalu, *bass-baritone*

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

Commissioned by Richard and Diane Klein.

- I. From this darkness
- II. I am weary
- III. This prison is a piece of hell
- IV. I wish my death would happen in a desert
- V. I will be sent to a world
- VI. It's been so long since I spent the night with you
- VII. This is my testimony
- VIII. Before us stands great death
- IX. The cry of death
- X. You left ground and sky weeping
- XI. Do whatever you wish

Jonathan Lemalu



Christopher Rountree

Gabriella Smith



Jake Heggie

Karim Al-Zand



This concert will be broadcast on Monday,
September 11, 9pm on KALW 91.7
San Francisco, and webcast on KALW.org

Moby-Dick Orchestral Suite (2010/2017)

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)/

arranged by Cristian Măcelaru

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

The creation of the opera *Moby-Dick* began early in 2005, when the Dallas Opera contacted me about composing a new work for the inaugural season of the new Winspear Opera House in 2010. At the time, I was at work on a piece with playwright Terrence McNally. He had been the librettist for our opera *Dead Man Walking* (2000) and we had been on the lookout for another big project. When I asked Terrence what he thought, he said “There’s only one opera I’m interested in doing: *Moby-Dick*.” I think I was as stunned as anybody. It seemed a gargantuan, impossible undertaking.

But he is a great man of the American theater, and when I saw the knowing sparkle in his eye, I knew it could be possible. I had never read the book, but when I did, I realized how essentially musical and operatic it is. The charged lyricism of Melville’s writing is deeply influenced by Shakespeare and there is great theatricality. The characters themselves are Shakespearean, and the events so epic they feel biblical. The drama could certainly fill an opera house, and it struck me that the music was already there. I could hear musical textures, rhythms, orchestral and vocal colors as I considered it. The hardest part would be to craft a workable, stage-worthy libretto.

Terrence suggested three things off the bat: Ahab should be a heroic tenor, the action of the opera should be entirely on the ship, and the cabin boy, Pip, should be a pants role for a soprano—the sole female voice. And then about a year into the process, Terrence had to withdraw from the project for personal reasons. It was devastating. But as luck would have it, I had already worked extensively with the gifted writer Gene Scheer. He is a prolific collaborator and we had created several song cycles, a one-act opera (*To Hell and Back*), and were in the process of creating a three-character opera (*Three Decembers*). Gene read *Moby-Dick* and thought deeply about what he might be getting into. I wanted to keep Terrence’s initial thoughts, which meant Gene would have to take on something already in process. He bravely agreed to join me.

About this time, we had the idea that the famous first line of the novel—“Call me Ishmael”—should be the last line of the opera.

We could treat the novel as a memoir that would be written long after the events of the opera took place. This would give us enormous freedom to move events around, create moments and dialogues that aren’t in the book, but are in the spirit of the book and would work well on the stage. The central journeys of the opera became immediately clear and the architecture started to take shape.

We started working in earnest in April 2008 on a trip to Nantucket, where the story of the book begins. On this remarkable island, Gene and I visited the whaling museum and met with the great author Nathaniel Philbrick, who makes his home there. It was his prize-winning novel, *In The Heart of the Sea*, that made everything jump to life for us. His book is about the true story of the Essex, the whaling ship rammed and sunk by a sperm whale in 1820 off the coast of South America. It was this legend that inspired Melville to write his novel, and it was Philbrick’s vivid, modern, human telling of it that made all of it seem real to me.

Gene worked closely with our director, Leonard Foglia, who also served as our dramaturg: asking questions, helping us to trace a meaningful, cogent, and poetic journey. All the while, I was trying to find the musical language of the opera. I wrote a chant for Queequeg and about 60 additional pages of music. In December of 2008, in agony, I discarded everything I’d written. It was good, just not good enough. What was blocking me? I realized that all of the characters had become real to me—except for Ahab. And without Ahab, you don’t have *Moby-Dick*. I had been trying to write from the beginning, which is what I prefer. But I had to cast that aside. Halfway through the first act libretto was the great monologue “I leave a white and turbid wake.” And there was the aching human being—the fully formed individual. The music for Ahab emerged and the world of the opera cracked open for me.

After completing that aria, I was able to go back to the first measure and compose straight through Act One. Ahab is the tree from which all branches grow. A four-chord harmonic theme became the meat of the entire opera, and from that all musical, harmonic, and rhythmic motifs emerged organically. Gene had given me a solid architecture on which to build the opera. Act Two went quickly and in July 2009, I had a complete piano/vocal score. A workshop in San Francisco was headed by our first conductor Patrick Summers, which led to further clarification of the story and score. After orchestration and completion of the score, the extraordinary cast and crew for *Moby-Dick* rehearsed tirelessly in Dallas in

spring 2010, and miracle of miracles, an opera based on “*Moby-Dick*” opened and shook the rafters of the new opera house.

The associate conductor for the premiere of *Moby-Dick* was an extraordinarily gifted young man named Cristian Măcelaru. From the start, he expressed interest in one day creating an orchestral suite based on the score. His passion and determination have led to the premiere of the suite you will hear at the Cabrillo Festival tonight.

—Jake Heggie

Moby-Dick was premiered at the Winspear Opera House in Dallas, Texas, on April 30, 2010, by the Dallas Opera, conducted by Patrick Summers.

Recommended DVD of the Complete Opera: “Heggie: Moby Dick.” San Francisco Opera, conducted by Patrick Summers. EuroArts.

Overture to La Haine (2017)

Christopher Rountree (b. 1983)

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

This work is the seventh Cabrillo Festival commission made possible by composer John Adams and his wife Deborah O’Grady, in support of emerging young composers; the commission was funded by their Pacific Harmony Foundation.

What frustrates me more than anything else is blind hate. And so, in our world, I’m finding myself frustrated often. More and more recently, I’m finding myself frustrated every day. Frustrated to the point of being scared even. And, making and writing *music* from this space of dark paralysis is a strange proposition. What a strange idea: “Sound in a time of hate.” How can we, makers of fleeting temporal artworks, ever hope to respond accurately or effectively in the face of political evil, zealously baseless morality, damaging grandstanding, and simple beyond-blind bigotry? All of this is so much larger than each of us, even sometimes larger than all of us collectively. Surely making art and sound in a climate like this couldn’t possibly even be appropriate, could it?

So, in these dark times, I set out to write a short piece of music. A piece for a whole lot of people to play. Together. First I thought to make a piece based on the national anthems of the “Axis of Evil.” A prospect that, in hindsight, was like making a ballet in a pit filled with lime Jell-O, while everyone not in the pit—snakes in expensive outfits—looked on and watched,

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jaws open, teeth bared over-wide. Then I thought, well, if not a piece made from the musics of some arbitrarily assigned “other” enemies, maybe I’d make up 18 nations, their national traditions, their songs, and then their anthems, finally making a piece that used all of those, imagining all their conflicts, wars and hatred, failures, self-doubt, joys, bliss, loss, and setting their arts against one another in nationalistic warfare. Clearly that’s a larger project, and maybe it’ll appear another day—who knows.

Then, somewhere in the winter I re-watched Mathieu Kassovitz’s 1995 black-and-white masterpiece about three brash young guys, the day after the Parisian riots of the time. These guys find a gun. Imagine that? A gun. It’s like Excalibur for them. The movie’s called *La Haine* (“The Hate”).

I realized pretty quickly that most of these sketches I’d made for this piece were in, of, from, and against hatred. And while Kassovitz’s *La Haine* already has a wonderful overture scored by Bob Marley, writing an overture to *La Haine* was what I was already doing. It could be something about public protest in the face of violence inflicted on disenfranchised communities, something imploring against hate, something about walls and privilege, inclusion and community, something of an operatic cinema overture. Or something else altogether.

—Christopher Rountree

Not recorded

Field Guide (2017)

Gabriella Smith (b. 1991)

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

Commissioned by the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in honor of composer John Adams' 70th birthday with generous support from Margaret Dorfman. The composer has offered the following notes:

In the past few years, I have become obsessed with making field recordings everywhere I go. It began with my desire to record the unfolding and trajectory of the dawn choruses I remember hearing every early Sunday morning as a teenager on the drive out to Point Reyes Bird Observatory, where I would volunteer as a bird bander. It would always start just as we drove past Lagunitas Creek, about thirty minutes before sunrise, and we'd turn off the music and roll down the windows and let in the glorious cacophony and cold morning air. Since then I have recorded dawn choruses and many other natural and human-produced soundscapes around the world, while backpacking in the Sierras, Cascades, and Andes, in temperate and tropical rainforest, in desert, in coastal scrub, in oceans, tide pools, bays, lakes, and glacial streams, recording underwater sounds with my hydrophone, and in the streets and parks and subways of the cities I have spent time in. I envisioned *Field Guide* as a collage inspired by these various recordings, my improvisations with them on violin and voice, and experiments processing them electronically.

Many thanks to the Cabrillo Festival for commissioning this piece in honor of John Adams' 70th birthday. John, I dedicate this piece to you in celebration of your birthday and especially in gratitude for the many ways you and your music have inspired me over the years.

—Gabriella Smith

Not recorded

The Prisoner (2017)

Karim Al-Zand (b. 1970)

Jonathan Lemalu, *bass-baritone*

texts by Adnan Latif
(1974–2012)

Abul Ala Al-Ma'arri
(973–1057)

Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī
(1207–1273)

Rainer Maria Rilke
(1875–1926)

[World Premiere | Festival Commission]

Karim Al-Zand's The Prisoner is the first work commissioned by the Cabrillo Festival under new Music Director Cristian Măcelaru; it is made possible with generous support from Richard and Diane Klein. The composer has offered the following notes:

The Prisoner tells the story of Adnan Latif, one of the first men imprisoned at the United States' Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp in 2002. Its text is drawn from Latif's own letters, sent to his lawyer while in captivity, and from other literary sources including poems of Rilke, Al-Ma'arri, Rūmī, and the Book of Psalms. Latif was unjustly imprisoned. Never charged with a crime, he was held at Guantánamo for more than ten years and endured daily torture and near constant abuse. Although cleared for release by several courts and military tribunals, he remained in custody until his death under mysterious circumstances in 2012. Latif's affecting letters were collected by human rights lawyer David Remes, and his poetry is included in the 2007 anthology "Poems from Guantánamo." *The Prisoner* alternates the words of Latif, set to music in a dramatic narrative style, with songs reflecting on his tragic plight.

—Karim Al-Zand

Not recorded

The Prisoner libretto on page 67



Adnan Latif travelled to Pakistan from his home in Yemen in late 2001 seeking affordable medical treatment. The 26-year-old had been experiencing neurological problems brought on by head injuries suffered in a car accident. In December, Latif was caught up in a dragnet of young Arab men undertaken by bounty hunters in the aftermath of 9/11. In exchange for a reward, he was turned over to U.S. authorities in 2002 and transferred to the newly opened Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp. While there, Latif was subjected to repeated and prolonged torture, beatings, psychological abuse, and extreme deprivation. With other prisoners he participated in an extended hunger strike, during which inmates were painfully force-fed, and he attempted suicide on numerous occasions. Latif was held for almost 11 years without charge. According to documents, military tribunals had concluded multiple times that he posed no threat and that there was no evidence to justify his continuing incarceration. He was cleared for release by officials as early as 2004 and again in 2007. A further court ruling in 2010 ordered the administration to "take all necessary and appropriate diplomatic steps to facilitate Latif's release." On each occasion his release was denied, first by the Bush administration, and later by the Obama administration. In September of 2012, Latif was found dead in his cell, the ninth prisoner to die at Guantánamo. An autopsy was performed, but its results are classified. A year later his body was returned to Yemen, to his wife and his now 14-year-old son. Forty-one prisoners remain at Guantánamo today. President Trump has pledged to add to its population, and Attorney General Jeff Sessions has called it "a very fine place."

The Prisoner

I. LETTER *From this darkness* (from Adnan Latif)

Do whatever you wish to do, the issue is over. From this darkness I can draw a true picture of the condition in which I exist. I am moving towards a dark cave and a dark life, in the shadow of a dark prison. This is a prison that does not know humanity and knows but the language of power, oppression, and humiliation for whoever enters it. Hardship is the only language used here. It is evil without mercy. It is my life, but who is going to leave me alone? Who is going to rescue me? Send me the one I love and save me!

II. SONG *I am weary* (from Psalm 69, 1-4; 14-15)

*I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.
Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head;
mighty are those who would destroy me,
those who attack me with lies.
Deliver me from sinking in the mire;
let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters.
Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up,
or the pit close its mouth over me.
For the waters have come up to my neck.*

III. LETTER *This prison is a piece of hell* (from Adnan Latif)

This prison is a piece of hell that kills everything, the spirit, the body. The first and last stop. The injustice and the torture that humiliates, wastes one's dignity. Anybody who is able to die will be able to achieve happiness for himself. He has no other hope except that. To leave this life which is no longer really a life, but death itself and renewable torment. Laying the body in the grave is better than laying it in the fire I am enduring. Do whatever you wish to do, the issue is over.

IV. SONG *I wish my death would happen in a desert*

(from *Two Epigrams on Death*, Abul Ala Al-Ma'arri)

*I wish my death would happen in a desert land
Where shimmering mirages mark no roads.
There I would die, all on my own, alone,
Be buried in unsullied virgin soil.*

*If after death the body kept its shape,
We might hope it would be revived again.
Just as a jug, emptied of wine, could be
Refilled, as long as it remained unbroken.
But, alas, all its parts have come undone and turned
To particles of dust swept by the winds.*

V. LETTER *I will be sent to a world* (from Adnan Latif)

I will be sent to a world that is much better than this world. There, real life will live again, filled with complete happiness and absent all harassment. There, the air will clear, things will calm and I will relax and not see the world of evil people.

VI. SONG *It's been so long since I spent the night with you*

(from *Longing*, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī)

*It's so long since I spent the night with you.
My friends! You know how we were torn apart.
Love of my soul, where will we meet again?
Noon Sun! I need your brightness in my heart.
Hey! Full Moon! Blinding light that stuns all men!
So long deserted, I want none but you.
You were my Morning Breeze, who brought good news.
Seduce me now. Save me with love once more.
On that strange and fateful night
you will hear a familiar voice.
The euphoria of love will sweep over your grave;
it will bring wine and friends, candles and food.*

VII. LETTER *This is my testimony* (from Adnan Latif)

This is my testimony of death and consolation. A world power failed to safeguard peace and human rights and save me. I will do whatever I am able, to rid myself of the imminent death imposed on me at this prison. With all my pains, I say goodbye to you.

VIII. SONG *Before us stands great death*

(from *Death* by Rainer Maria Rilke)

*Before us stands great Death
Our fate held close within his quiet hands.
When we lift life's red wine with proud joy
To drink deep of the mystic shining cup
And ecstasy leaps through all our being—
Death bows his head and weeps.*

IX. LETTER *The cry of death* (from Adnan Latif)

The cry of death should be enough for you. Do whatever you wish to do, the issue is over.

X. SONG *You left ground and sky weeping*

(from *The Death of Saladin*, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī)

*You left ground and sky weeping,
mind and soul full of grief.
No one can take your place in existence
or in absence. Both mourn:
the angels, and the prophets —and this sadness
I feel has taken from me the taste of language,
so that I can't say the flavor
of my being apart. The roof
of the kingdom within has collapsed!*

XI. LETTER *Do whatever you wish* (from Adnan Latif)

Do whatever you wish to do, the issue is over.