

THE SOUNDING SEA

The Unicorn Singers

Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt, Op. 112 Ludwig von Beethoven
(*Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage, text by Goethe*) (1770-1827)

The Broad Cove Chorale

From Six Sea Songs Eric H. Thiman (1900-1975)

Neptunes's Empire (*Thomas Campion*)
The Tide Rises (*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*)
Break, break, break (*Alfred Lord Tennyson*)
The Sea Wanderers (*John Phillips*)
To Sea! To Sea! (*Thomas Beddoes*)

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The Sounding Sea (*George Curtis*) Eric William Barnum (b.1979)
They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships (*Ps.107*) Herbert Sumsion
(1899-1995)

Northwest Passage Stan Rogers (1949-1983), arr. Rich Jensen
Rich Jensen, solo

The Broad Cove Chorale

Blow the Wind Southerly (*Northumbrian*) Arr. John Clements
Glee! The Storm is O'er (*Sadness of the Sea II*) Sally Lamb (b.1966)
The Sea Witch (*W.Nichols*) Will Nichols & Anthony Patterson

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The Captain's Apprentice Vaughan Williams, arr. R.D.Ruplenas
Bob Ruplenas, solo
Full Fathom Five (*William Shakespeare*) Ralph Vaughan Williams
As Is the Sea Marvelous (*e e cummings*) Matthew Hazzard (b.1989)
Bob Ruplenas, solo

The Combined Ensembles

The Seal Lullaby (*Rudyard Kipling*) Eric Whitacre (b.1970)
The Water Is Wide (*American folk song*) Arr. Grant Cochran (b.1962)
Quartet: Jane Buettner, Joan Soble, Stephen Tooker, Will Boericke

Lenae Badger, *Accompanist*

Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (*Johann von Goethe, 1749-1832*)

One of Beethoven's lesser-known works, sung in German. The overt tone painting in the first section, with its stagnant tempo and copious silences depicts the ship becalmed in the doldrums. There's no mistaking the point at which the wind picks up and the voyage resumes.

Deep quiet rules the waters; motionless, the sea reposes, and the boatman looks about with alarm at the smooth surfaces about him. No wind comes from any direction! A deathly, terrible quiet! In the vast expanse not one wave stirs.

The mist is torn away, the heavens turn bright, And Aeolus unfastens the bonds of fear. There, the winds rustle, the boatman stirs. Quickly! Quickly! The waves rise up again. The distant view draws close. Land ho, I call!

Six Sea Songs

The prolific English composer Eric Thiman (1900-75) is well known to church choirs for his voluminous body of masterful church music. Largely self-taught as a composer, he also wrote secular music, much of it for treble voices. His elegantly crafted settings of nautical poems by British and American poets capture the unique mood of each poem.

Neptune's Empire (*Thomas Campion, 1567-1620*)

Of Neptune's empire let us sing,
At whose command the waves obey;
To whom the rivers tribute pay,
Down the high mountains sliding:
To whom the scaly nation yields
Homage for the crystal fields
Wherein they dwell:
And every Sea-god pays a gem
Yearly out of his wat'ry cell
To deck great Neptune's diadem.

The Tritons dancing in a ring
Before his palace gates do make
The water with their echoes quake,
Like the great thunder sounding:
The Sea-nymphs chant their accents
shrill And the Syrens, taught to kill
With their sweet voice,
Make ev'ry echoing rock reply
Unto their gentle murmuring noise
The praise of Neptune's empery.

The Tide Rises (*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-1882*)

The tide rises, the tide falls, The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.
Darkness settles on roofs and walls, But the sea, in the darkness, calls and
calls; The little waves, with their soft, white hands, Efface the footprints in the
sand. And the tide rises, the tide falls.
The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls Stamp and neigh, as the hostler
calls; The day returns, but nevermore Returns the trav'ler to the shore.
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Break, Break, Break (*Alfred Lord Tennyson, 1809-1892*)

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.
O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill; But
O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!
Break, break, break
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is
dead Will never come back to me.

The Sea-Wanderers (*John Phillips, 1676-1709*)

Under fair skies or dark skies runs the flowing tide; Through calm,
through tempest the bold ships ride. The sea winds bear them across
the ocean wide Where the waves are rolling forever.

Old is the sea's song and loud its call. The shrill breezes whistle in the
rigging tall. There's music and dancing, and shanties rise and fall
Where the waves are rolling forever.

Through the strange seas the and strange lands afar they roam,
With the blessing of the starlight, The kiss of the foam,
Those restless wand'ers who know their home Where the waves are rolling...

To Sea! To Sea! (*Thomas Beddoes, 1803-1849*)

To sea, to sea! The calm is o'er; The merry water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore; The dolphins wheel, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen mermaids' pearly song Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dig deep the oar: To sea! To sea! The calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark, Break the caved Tritons' azure day,
Like mighty eagles soaring light Or antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free, The sails swell full! To sea! To sea!

The Sounding Sea (*George William Curtis, 1824-1892*)

Through rapid and repeating musical phrases, Eric Barnum captures the relentless, rhythmical effect of the sea's rising and falling; ocean sound effects permeate the closing pages. The poet, George Curtis, largely forgotten today, was a major figure in 19th century American literary life.

O listen to the sounding sea That beats on the remorseless shore,
O listen! for that sound will be When our wild hearts shall beat no more.
O listen well and listen long! For sitting folded close to me,
You could not hear a sweeter song Than the hoarse murmur of the sea.

They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships (*Psalm 107: 23-30*)

The little-known British composer Herbert Sumsion (1899-1995) was composing when Elgar was still alive. His florid setting of Psalm 107 is imbued with the colors of late English Romanticism.

They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great
waters; these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.
For at his word the stormy wind ariseth, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul
melteth away because of the trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a
drunken man, and are at their wits' end. So when they cry unto the Lord in
their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress. For he maketh the storm
to cease, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they
are at rest; and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

Northwest Passage (Stan Rogers, 1949-1983)

This rugged melody has qualities of a traditional folk song, but was written by the late Canadian folk singer Stan Rogers in 1981. It recounts British explorer Sir John Franklin's Arctic expedition of 1845 in search of a Northwest sea passage to the orient. Franklin and his 129 compatriots died after his ship Erebus was iced in off King William Island. Later expeditions sought traces of this ill-fated voyage. In 1850 a stone cairn was found, containing a written record of Franklin's death and the plans of his men to head south.

Refrain: Ah, for just one time I would take the Northwest Passage To find the hand of Franklin Reaching for the Beaufort Sea. Tracing one warm line Through a land so wild and savage And make a Northwest Passage to the sea.

Westward from the Davis Strait 'Tis there 'twas said to lie: The sea route to the Orient For which so many died. Seeking gold and glory, Leaving weathered, broken bones And a long-forgotten lonely cairn of stones. *Refrain.*

Three centuries thereafter I take passage overland In the footsteps of brave Kelso Where his "sea of flowers" began. Watching cities rise before me Then behind me sink again This tardiest explorer across the plain. *Refrain.*

How then am I so diff'rent From the first men through this way. Like them I left a settled life; I threw it all away To seek a Northwest Passage At the call of many men, To find there but the road back home again. *Refrain.*

Blow the wind southerly (Northumbrian Folk Song)

Refrain: Blow the wind southerly, southerly, southerly,
Blow the wind south oe'r the bonny blue sea. Blow the wind southerly, southerly, southerly, Blow, bonny breeze, my lover to me.

They told me last night there were ships in the offing, And I hurried down to the deep rolling sea. But my eye could not see it, wherever might be it, The bark that is bearing my lover to me. *Refrain.*

Is it not sweet to hear the wind singing, As lightly it comes o'er the deep rolling sea? But sweeter and dearer by far when 'tis bringing The bark of my true love in safety to me.

Glee! The great storm is over! (Emily Dickinson, 1830-1886)

This musical setting is the second section of Sally Lamb McCune's 'The Sadness of the Sea.' The composer writes "I imagined hearty women singing a rustic sea shanty, depicting the tragic story of a fatal shipwreck."

Glee! the storm is o'er!
Four recovered the land;
Forty gone down together
Into the boiling sand.

How they'll tell the story
When winter shake the door,
Till the children urge, 'Did the
Forty come back no more?'

Ring, for scant salvation!
Toll, for the bonnie souls,—
Neighbor and friend and bridegroom,
Spinning upon the shoals!

Then a softness suffuse the story,
And a silence the teller's eye;
And the children no further question,
And only the sea reply.

The Sea Witch (Will Nichols)

Anne Bonney, born in Ireland c.1698, proved that a woman could succeed at piracy. Disguised as a man, she became one of the most feared pirates along the Spanish Main. She cut a wide swath from the Carolinas to Lake Maracaibo on the Venezuelan coast. History has not recorded her ultimate fate.

From County Cork to Carolina's shore, Anne Bonney knew no home,
'Til she joined Nassau's pirate trade, Wind at her back and the sea all a-foam.
*Sail away Bonny all on the salt seas,
the merchant men of Nassau she brought to their knees.*

Pistol and cutlass she wore at her side,
and the Sea Witch sails alone at the top of the tide.
*Sail on, Anne Bonny, Sail on sweet Bonny Anne. Sail south from Cuba
down to Lake Maracaibo you'll be safe for a day.*

On honest folk Anne Bonney turned her back, and sailed away to sea.
A ruthless woman she became, Wind at her back and her heart had no key.
*Sail away Bonny...No man could tame her nor make her his bride,
and the Sea Witch sails alone at the top of the tide. Sail on, Anne Bonny...*

Now mothers guard your bonny little girls and pray they never stray,
lest they join Bonny and her crew, Wind at her back and no law to obey.
*Sail away Bonny.....Silver and gold were her joy and her pride,
and the Sea Witch sails alone at the top of the tide. Sail on, Anne Bonny...*

The Captain's Apprentice (English Folk Song from Norfolk)

In 18th and early 19th century Britain, boys from workhouses were commonly apprenticed on merchant vessels. Abuse and maltreatment were unsurprisingly common. In a notorious case in the early 19th century a whaling skipper was charged with an apprentice's death. A popular song about the case was arranged by Vaughan Williams; the same tragic story served as the inspiration for Benjamin Britten's opera Peter Grimes.

One day a poor boy to me was bound apprentice, Because of his being fatherless;
I took him out of St. James' workhouse, His mother being in deep distress.

One day this poor boy unto me offended, But nothing to him I did say,
Up to the mainmast shroud I sent him, And there I kept him all that long day.

All with my nine-tails I misused him, So shamefully I can't deny,
That by my barbarous cruel entreatment The very next day this poor boy died.

You captains all throughout the nation, Hear a voice and a warning take by me;
Take special care of your apprentice While you are on the raging sea.

Full Fathom Five (*William Shakespeare, 1564-1616*)

Ariel's song from The Tempest is an example of Vaughan Williams' dense and intricate late vocal style. He uses tone painting for the tolling bells, and dissonant harmonic effects to evoke the richness of the sea-change.

Ding-dong bell. Full fathom five thy father lies; Of his bones are coral made; Those are pearls that were his eyes: Nothing of him that doth fade, But doth suffer a sea-change Into something rich and strange. Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell. Hark! now I hear them—ding-dong, bell.

As is the Sea Marvelous (*e e cummings, 1894-1962*)

Matthew Lyon Hazzard's setting of this poem melds the theme of the sea with that of love. Hazzard calls on the choir to produce sounds of the ocean waves, and undergirds a tuneful melody with a dense and cloud-like sonic texture. In his own words, "Like the sea waxing and waning through the ages, love...waxes and wanes, yet always endures."

as is the sea marvelous from god's hands
which sent her forth to sleep upon the world

and the earth withers the moon crumbles
one by one stars flutter into dust

but the sea does not change and she goes forth out of hands
and she returns into hands and is with sleep....
love, the breaking of your soul upon my lips

The Seal Lullaby (*Rudyard Kipling, 1865-1936*)

The charismatic Eric Whitacre has attained a leading place in contemporary choral music with his online 'virtual choir' projects, connecting in one chorus hundreds of singers spread across the world. In 2004 the Disney Studios asked him to write the score for a proposed animated film based on Kipling's "The White Seal" in The Jungle Book. Inspired by Kipling's beautiful Seal Lullaby in that story, Whitacre set the words to music. Disney backed off, but the music was published anyway. Whitacre's ravishing setting of Kipling's tender words is destined to become a choral classic.

Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.

Where billow meets billow, there soft be thy pillow;
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.

The Water is Wide (*American Folk Song*)

We conclude with a stunning arrangement of two nautical ballads. 'Shenandoah' and 'The Water is Wide' have long been favorites of singers and audiences alike; Grant Cochran has woven them together into a seamless and lush musical fabric.

The water is wide, I cannot cross o'er, And neither have I wings to fly.
Give me a boat that can carry two, And both shall row, my love and I.

A-down in the meadow the other day, A-gath'ring flow'rs both fine and gay,
A-gath'ring flow'rs both red and blue, I little thought what love can do.

O Shenandoah, I long to see you And hear your rolling river. O Shenandoah,
I long to see you. Away, we're bound away, Across the wide Missouri.

I leaned my back up against an oak, Thinking that it was a trusty tree.
But first he bended and then he broke, As so did my love prove false to me.
Must I be bound and she go free? Must I love one that does not love me?
Why should I act such a foolish part, and love a girl that will break my heart?

O love is handsome and love is fine, And love's a jewel while it is new,
But when it is old it groweth cold, And fades away like the morning dew.

O Shenandoah, I love your daughter. Away you rollin' river. O Shenandoah,
I love your daughter. Away, we're bound away Across the wide Missouri.

There is a ship sailing on the sea. She's loaded deep as deep can be,
But not so deep as the love I'm in. I care not if I sink or swim.