



World Premieres & Commissions

In partnership with the [Sorel Organization](#), SongFest has made a substantial contribution to the art song repertoire through its commissioning program that has produced new works for voice and piano by such distinguished composers as William Bolcom, Tom Cipullo, Gabriela Lena Frank, John Harbison, Jennifer Higdon, Libby Larsen and Ben Moore. Below are listed the works given their world premiere at SongFest in reverse chronological order from 2019 to our founding in 1996. All works were commissioned by SongFest unless otherwise noted. Links to performances are included where possible.

2020

Sorel Commission

If Trees Could Talk

by [Sheila Silver](#)

A vocal work for three singers, piano and video projections. The subject revolves around the veneration of trees as givers of life. Trees and plants take carbon dioxide from the air and water from the soil and make all the food (sugars) that form life – this is the awe inspiring process of photosynthesis which also provides the oxygen we breathe. Through their transpiration (similar to perspiration in animals) trees act as giant air conditioners, cooling the planet. Through the mycorrhizal fungi attached to their roots, trees in a forest communicate with one another. The tree has been used as a symbol of life in many cultures. Ms Silver will explore the living power of trees through selected passages of prose and poems. Included will be some text from Richard Powers' recent and powerful Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *The Overstory*. Videographer John Feldman will collaborate and add video projections. He is an avid wildlife photographer and much acclaimed for his recent film, [Symbiotic Earth](#).

2019

[Meri Sakhi Ki Avaaz](#) (My Sister's Voice)

by [Reena Esmail](#)

for piano quintet, soprano and Hindustani singer

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 21, 2019 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Robin Steitz, soprano • Sails Oak, Hindustani singer • Phillip Matsuura, piano

Maia Jasper, violin I • Joel Pargman, violin II • Joshua Newburger, viola • Yoshika Masuda, cello

[Feeling the world as it passes through you](#)

by [Martin Hennessy](#)

5 poems of [Naomi Shihab Nye](#) for soprano, baritone and piano

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 21, 2019 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Victoria Browsers, soprano • John Tibbetts, baritone • Bronwyn Schuman, piano

Friday, May 25 • 7 p.m. • Zipper Hall

[Purchase the score here](#)

2018

[Scott Joplin: A Nosegay for Bill Bolcom](#)

by [Libby Larsen](#)

Text by [Bill Holm](#)

Premiered on May 25, 2018 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Ian Walker, baritone • Lucas Wong, piano

Commissioned by SongFest with generous support from the Sorel Organization in honor of William Bolcom

[Purchase the score here](#)

[A Catskill Eagle](#)

by [James Primosch](#)

Text by [Herman Melville](#)

Premiered on May 25, 2018 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Kyle Ferrill, baritone • James Primosch, piano

Commissioned by SongFest with generous support from the Sorel Organization in honor of John Harbison

2017

[When the South Wind Sings](#)

by [Juliana Hall](#)

Text by [Carl Sandburg](#)

Premiered on June 24, 2017 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Tabitha Burchett, soprano • Riley McKinch, piano

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization [Purchase the score here](#)

2016

[Love's Call](#)

by [Shulamit Ran](#)

English lyrics by Charles Kondek adapted from the Song of Songs

Premiered on June 17, 2016 in Thayer Hall, the Colburn School, Los Angeles

Alize Rozsnyai, soprano • Dimitri Dover, piano

[Purchase the score here](#)

2015

[Shadow Memory](#)

by [James Primosch](#)

Text by [Susan Orlean](#)

Underwritten by SongFest and dedicated to Marcia Brown

Premiered on June 3, 2015 in Thayer Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Lisa Williamson, soprano • Rami Sarieedine, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

[Radiant Depth Unfolded](#)

by [Anne LeBaron](#)

Text by [Rumi](#)

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 21, 2015 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Melanie Henley Heyn, soprano • Jesse Malgieri, baritone • Gloria Kim, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

2014

[Love Sweet](#)

by [Jennifer Higdon](#)

Text by Amy Lowell

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 18, 2014 in Thayer Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Yungee Rhie, soprano • Itamar Zorman, violin • Peter Myers, cello • Liza Stepanova, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

2013

John and Abigail by [Ben Moore](#)

Text by John and Abigail Adams

Underwritten by SongFest and dedicated to Marcia Brown

Premiered on June 28, 2013 in Thayer Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Devony Smith, soprano • Mario Diaz-Moresco baritone, • Bridget Hough, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

[Honey \(from the Kitchen Songbook\)](#)

by [Gabriela Lena Frank](#)

Text by [Nilo Cruz](#)

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on July 19, 2013 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Jessica Rivera, soprano; Kelley O'Connor, mezzo- soprano; and Raquel Gorgojo, piano.

2012

[Gettysburg: July 1, 1863](#)

by [William Bolcom](#)

Text by [Jane Kenyon](#)

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 20, 2012 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School, Los Angeles

Nathan Wyatt, baritone and Lucas Wong, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

2011

[Three Love Songs](#)

by [Libby Larsen](#)

Text by [Pablo Neruda](#)

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Dedicated to Marcia Brown and Janet Loranger

Premiered on June 19, 2011 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

David McFerrin, baritone and Liza Stepanova, piano.

1. Before Loving You
2. How Many Roads
3. Two Happy Lovers

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[Donal Oge](#)

by [Libby Larsen](#)

text : Anonymous

Underwritten by Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 19, 2011 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Anne Jennifer Nash, soprano and Justin Snyder, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

[Stone Soup](#)

by [Libby Larsen](#)

Text by [Marcia Brown](#)

Gift from Libby Larsen

Dedicated to Marcia Brown and Janet Loranger

Premiered on June 19, 2011 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Victoria Browsers, Hannah Goldshlack, Marie Marquis, sopranos; Leroy Davis, narrator; and Brent Funderburk, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

2010

Dear Theo (from the letters of Vincent van Gogh)

by [Ben Moore](#)

Text by [Vincent Van Gogh](#)

Premiered on June 11, 2010 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Matthew Morris, baritone; Joe Lodato, baritone; and Kathleen Tagg, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

The Act

by [Lori Laitman](#)

Text by [H.L. Hix](#)

Commissioned by SongFest and New Triad for Collaborative Arts

Underwritten by the Sorel Organization

Premiered on June 19, 2010 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Andrea Leyton-Mange, soprano; Blaise Pascal, tenor; and Andrew T. Rosenblum, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

Vocalism II

by John Harbison

Text by [Walt Whitman](#)

performed by soprano Mary Mackenzie and pianist Rosemary Ritter

[Purchase the score here](#)

2009

Insomnia

by [Tom Cipullo](#)

Text by Various

Co-commissioned by SongFest and I Cantori

Underwritten by SongFest and I Cantori

Dedicated to SongFest and Rosemary Hyler Ritter

Premiered on June 25, 2009 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Elizabeth Bell, Angela Dinkleman, Sarah Parnicky, sopranos; Christin Marie Hill, Jennifer Beattie, mezzo- sopranos; Marcio de Oliveira, Javier Bernardo, tenors; David Krohn, Michael Anthony McGee, baritones; and Jui-Ling Hsu, Seunghah Seo, Liza Stepanova, piano.

1. You'll Never Sleep Tonight ([Cornelius Eady](#)) – Quartet
2. Insomnia ([Dana Gioia](#)) – Baritone Solo
3. Storm ([Lisel Mueller](#)) – Quartet
4. Prayer (Anonymous) - Soprano and Tenor Duet
5. from The Eve of St. Agnes ([John Keats](#)) – Soprano Solo
6. Snoring ([Juliet Wilson](#)) – Quartet

7. Music ([Howard Moss](#)) – Mezzo and Baritone Duet
8. For the Bed at Kelmscott ([William Morris](#)) – Mezzo Solo
9. Insomnia Reprise – Quartet
10. A Clear Midnight ([Walt Whitman](#)) – Tenor Solo

2007

[Vocalism I \(Grand Aria\)](#)

by [John Harbison](#)

text by [Walt Whitman](#)

Gift from John Harbison

Dedicated to Marc and Eva Stern

Premiered on June 21, 2007 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Sarah Davis, soprano and Susan Gaeddert, piano.

[Purchase the score here](#)

2005

Vocalism II

by John Harbison

text by Walt Whitman

Gift from John Harbison

Dedicated to Marc and Eva Stern

Premiered on June 5, 2005 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Amanda Gosier, soprano and Rosemary Hyler, piano.

2004

Therefore We Do Not Lose Heart (2003)

by [Angel Lam](#)

Text from II Corinthians 4:16-18

Premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Song About Law and Light (1996)

by [Anna Weesner](#)

Text from Psalm 119: 73-77

Commissioned by Dawn Upshaw

Selected movements premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Ji-Young Yang, soprano and Kate Stevens, piano.

While millions join the theme...(2004)

by [Erica Muhl](#)

Texts from *Children's Letters to God*

Premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Khori Dastoor, soprano and Serena Chin, piano.

Forever is Composed of Nows (2004)

by [Sally Lamb](#)

Text by [Emily Dickinson](#)

Premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University
Ji-Young Yang, soprano and Kate Stevens, piano.

The Artist

by [Anna Weesner](#)

Text by [William Carlos Williams](#)

Underwritten by and dedicated to Marcia Brown
Premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University
Sang-Yun Yoon, baritone and Kate Stevens, piano.

Autumn

by [Dorothy Chang](#)

Text by [Rainier Maria Rilke](#)

Dedicated to Marcia Brown
Premiered on June 14, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University
Carola Emrich-Fisher, soprano and Hisako Hiratsuka, piano.

Songs of Separation (2002)

by Antonio Carlos Defeo

Text by various

Premiered on June 16, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University
Teresa D'Amico, soprano; Margaret O'Connell, mezzo- soprano; and Tamara Cashour, piano.

1. When we two parted ([Lord Gordon Byron](#))
2. By this he knew she wept with waking eyes ([George Meredith](#))
3. Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part (Michael Drayton)

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth (2004)

by [Julia Carey](#)

Text by [William Shakespeare](#)

Premiered June 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Turning to him, who meets me with desire

by [Mark Carlson](#)

Text from Song of Songs

Premiered on June 20, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University
Khori Dastoor, soprano; and Monica Swope, piano.

Burning (2004)

by [Dorothy Chang](#)

Text by [William Carlos Williams](#)

Dedicated to Marcia Brown

Premiered on June 16, 2004 in Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University

Carola Emrich-Fisher, mezzo-soprano; and Hisako Hiratsuka, piano.

1. Full Moon
2. The Counter
3. An Address

2002

Arise, My Love

by [Richard Hundley](#)

Text from Book of Proverbs

Underwritten by SongFest

Dedicated to SongFest and Rosemary Hyler

Premiered on November 2, 2002 in Zipper Hall, The Colburn School

Frances Young, soprano; Janice Felty, mezzo; and Rosemary Hyler, piano.

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1996

NOTE All works below were published in The Art Song Collection (G. Schirmer's New American Voices Series) [purchase the score here](#)

ALL the works were premiered by SongFest 1996 singer and pianist participants at UCLA

Spring is purple jewelry

by [James Aikman](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

If you were coming in the Fall

by [Jake Heggie](#)

text by [Emily Dickinson](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

Canción Tonta

by [Jonathan Kulp](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

Bedtime

by [James Primosch](#)

Text by [Denise Levertov](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

Poem

by [Paul Siskind](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

Alter? When the hills do

by [Anna Weesner](#)

Text by [Emily Dickinson](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

The Rear Guard

by [Jeffrey Wood](#)

Text by [Siegfried Sassoon](#)

Commissioned by G. Schirmer - 1995 Young Americans' Art Song Competition

Premiered on July 16, 1996 in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA
