

Jake
HEGGIE

Gene
SCHEER

Out of Darkness
An Opera of Survival

Another Sunrise
Farewell, Auschwitz
For a Look or a Touch

Music of Remembrance

OUT OF DARKNESS

Jake Heggie (b. 1961), Composer

Gene Scheer (b. 1958), Librettist

Commissioned by Music of Remembrance, Mina Miller, Artistic Director

World Première Recordings

1 Another Sunrise (2012) 28:33

Caitlin Lynch, Soprano

Music of Remembrance

Laura DeLuca, Clarinet • Mikhail Shmidt, Violin
Walter Gray, Cello • Jonathan Green, Double Bass
Craig Sheppard, Piano

Farewell, Auschwitz (2013) 27:43

Based on Polish lyrics by Krystyna Żywulska (1914-1993)
written when she was imprisoned at Auschwitz-Birkenau

Caitlin Lynch, Soprano¹ • Sarah Larsen, Mezzo-soprano² • Morgan Smith, Baritone³

Music of Remembrance

Laura DeLuca, Clarinet • Mikhail Shmidt, Violin
Walter Gray, Cello • Jonathan Green, Double Bass
Craig Sheppard, Piano

2 Prologue: For Maria ^{1, 2, 3}	0:41
3 Soldiers ^{1, 2, 3}	6:23
4 Diamonds ³	2:39
5 In The Cards ²	2:18
6 Irenka ¹	5:11
7 Miss Zlutka ^{1, 2, 3}	2:53
8 The Sun and the Skylark ^{1, 2}	3:12
9 Farewell, Auschwitz ^{1, 2, 3}	4:27

For a Look or a Touch (2007/2013) 22:28

10 The Voice	3:51
11 Golden Years	4:51
12 A Hundred Thousand Stars	5:33
13 The Story of Joe	3:44
14 Silence	4:28

Morgan Smith, Baritone

Music of Remembrance

Zart Dombourian-Eby, Flute • Laura DeLuca, Clarinet
Mikhail Shmidt, Violin • Walter Gray, Cello
Craig Sheppard, Piano

Recorded at Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, USA
on 16th and 17th May, 2012 (track 1), 16th May, 2013 (tracks 2-9),
and 17th May, 2013 (tracks 10-14)

This recording was made possible through the generous support
of Music of Remembrance's Recording Circle:

M. Elizabeth Halloran
H. David Kaplan
James and Sherry Raisbeck
David Sabritt
Beth Ann Segal

Jake Heggie (b. 1961) and Gene Scheer (b. 1958)

Out of Darkness

The Holocaust was an unspeakable tragedy, and nearly seventy years after the end of the Third Reich the world is still learning its countless stories. With the passage of time, it becomes too easy for us to reduce the individuals caught in the Holocaust's grasp to caricatures of tragic victimhood or heroic resistance. We forget that each of those people – the millions – was wrenched from everything they knew as normal, and thrown into an unfathomable hell where old rules lost their meaning. They lived or died not only through luck or circumstance, but also through anguished decisions they were forced to make in situations we cannot begin to comprehend.

This recording's three works by composer Jake Heggie and librettist Gene Scheer were commissioned and premiered in 2012 and 2013 by Music of Remembrance. Together, they offer compelling musical witness to the will to survive even in the face of unimaginable adversity. *Another Sunrise* is an intense musical monodrama that tells the story of Krystyna Żywulska. After escaping the Warsaw Ghetto, Żywulska joined the Polish resistance but was captured and sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau as a political prisoner. She hid her Jewish identity, and survived with the help of a sympathetic *Kapo* who secured her a relatively safe job in a warehouse sorting the confiscated possessions of doomed women on the way to their deaths. While in Auschwitz she created poems and songs that circulated

secretly and became anthems of resistance among her fellow prisoners. *Farewell, Auschwitz* is Heggie and Scheer's brilliant adaptation of those actual lyrics. *For a Look or a Touch* illuminates the Third Reich's vicious persecution of homosexuals through the eyes and memories of Gad Beck, who recalls the loss of the freedom he briefly enjoyed as a young gay man in pre-Nazi Berlin, and remembers the idealistic love he shared with Manfred Lewin – sent as a homosexual and a Jew to his death in Auschwitz.

Heggie and Scheer tell these stories with uncompromising emotional honesty, and with deep compassion that never descends to pathos or sentimentality. Their music, of heart-stopping beauty, conveys a wisdom that helps us to appreciate those touched by the Holocaust in all of their complicated humanity.

Music of Remembrance (www.musicofremembrance.org) is a Seattle-based chamber music organization founded in 1998 to remember the Holocaust through music. In addition to presenting music from that period, it has commissioned more than twenty new Holocaust-inspired works by some of today's leading composers.

We offer special thanks to Krystyna Żywulska's son Tadeusz Andrzejewski for granting us permission to share his mother's story with the world.

Mina Miller

Another Sunrise (2012)

World première: 14th May, 2012, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA, at Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Remembrance concert. *Another Sunrise* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance and is dedicated to its founder and artistic director, Mina Miller. *Another Sunrise* was made possible by a generous gift from the Clovis Foundation, Mary Winton Green, Jonathan Green & Brenda Berry.

The woman we know today as the author and lyricist Krystyna Żywulska was a Holocaust survivor with an astonishing, complex, sometimes baffling history. Born Sonia Landau in 1914 to a Jewish family in Łódź, Poland, she was studying law at Warsaw University when World War II erupted. In 1941, she and her family were relocated to the Warsaw ghetto. One day, seeing a window of opportunity, Sonia and her mother bravely walked out of the ghetto in broad daylight, leaving her father behind. She adopted the name Sophia Wisniewska and worked for the underground resistance until she was arrested by the Gestapo in 1943. Refusing to name names to the Nazis, she changed her own name to Krystyna Żywulska (born in 1918 rather than 1914) and was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau as a political prisoner – not as a Jew.

As a prisoner, with no experience as a writer, Krystyna crafted lyrics of protest and survival and set them to well-known folk tunes and popular melodies. Since it was suicide to write them down, her lyrics were passed along by word of mouth from inmate to inmate throughout the camp. A fellow inmate in a position of authority was moved by Krystyna's work and decided to save the "camp poet." After a year of disease, lice, and backbreaking labor in the fields, Krystyna was given one of the few choice jobs inside the *Effektenkammer* (warehouse of personal effects).

Here, she and her co-workers took inventory and took charge of the possessions that thousands upon thousands of Jewish women and children from all over Europe brought with them to the camp. Often, once their possessions had been taken and catalogued, these prisoners were marched next door to the ovens for execution. Krystyna heard the screams and cries, saw the smoke, smelled the stench, and had to live

in an almost unimaginable situation: to survive, she had to take and catalogue the personal belongings of Jewish women and children, then hear them murdered next door.

At the end of the war, during a death march when the camp was being evacuated, Krystyna once again escaped and survived. After the war, she chronicled the atrocities she witnessed in a startlingly candid memoir, *I Came Back* (also titled *I Survived Auschwitz*), published in 1946. However, she still did not claim her Jewish identity or ancestry. In the book, one feels strongly that Krystyna wanted to explain what happened without holding back.

The book is honest, revealing and profoundly moving. It also, curiously, compels one to wonder about the nature of memory and the parts of the past that remain in the shadows despite one's best efforts. It is those shadows, those empty places, *Another Sunrise* explores.

Krystyna Żywulska died in 1993, having reclaimed her Jewish identity in the 1960s. Late in her life, she was interviewed by Professor Barbara Engleking for her book *Holocaust and Memory* (published in Polish in 1994 and English in 2001). In Żywulska's responses to Engleking's questions, one can sense her frustration in trying to find language that might adequately describe the enormity of what happened, or the extraordinary complexity in a fog of memories.

In that interview, a woman whose words had saved her life now struggles to find words to describe what happened. It is this irony that prompted the idea for *Another Sunrise*.

Of course, it is not that she could not find words: it is that none could ever truly describe what she and millions of others experienced. The past is thus clouded not by a lack of willingness to define what happened, but rather by the limits of language itself. Like the uncertainty principle that governs the quantum heart of the world, history too seems to be ruled by immutable paradoxes. If you measure something, you change it. If you describe something, you change it as well – even the past.

Another Sunrise is about the struggle to describe harrowing, unimaginable situations to people who weren't there. It is also about what it is to survive. Like many who make it through a war, Krystyna survived not through grand acts of heroism, but through near-maddening acts

of survival. We do whatever it takes to live another day: to see another sunrise.

We thank Mina Miller for bringing Krystyna Żywulska's story to our attention and for giving us the opportunity to create this new work for Music of Remembrance. *Another Sunrise* is lovingly dedicated to Mina, who reminds us all what it is to remember.

Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer
(used by permission)

Farewell, Auschwitz (2013)

World première: 14th May 2013, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA, at Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Remembrance concert. Based on Polish lyrics by Krystyna Żywulska written when she was imprisoned at Auschwitz-Birkenau. *Farewell, Auschwitz* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance and made possible by generous gifts from Jonathan Green & Brenda Berry, Lloyd & Janet Cluff, and John & Bernice Lindstrom.

Before being sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau as a political prisoner in 1943, Krystyna Żywulska had not written a single song. Writing lyrics and setting them to familiar folk, classical and popular tunes became her creative way to cope with the horror of life in the camp. She did not invent lyrics to save her life, but amazingly, they did just that. Appreciated by her superiors as the camp poet, she was given a premium job in the *Effektenkammer* (Room of Personal Effects): when a fresh transport arrived, she took inventory of the new prisoners' belongings before these hapless women and children were sent to their deaths in the ovens next door.

Another Sunrise portrayed Krystyna and her struggle to tell the truth of what happened to her; to try to find the words to describe the indescribable; what she had endured in the camp, and what was required to survive – to see another sunrise. *Farewell, Auschwitz* is a companion piece to *Another Sunrise* that allows us to explore some of the actual lyrics that Krystyna wrote. Thirty-two complete song texts survive from Krystyna's

time in the camp. There are an additional 54 fragments in a piece entitled *Wiązanka z Effektenkammer* (Medley from the Effektenkammer). Most of the lyrics for *Farewell, Auschwitz* are drawn from this extraordinary document.

In 1944, Krystyna crafted a long name-day card, which contained her texts and colorful drawings by fellow inmate Zofia Brato. Krystyna and 72 other prisoners signed and presented this remarkable gift to fellow prisoner, *Kapo* Maria Grzesiewska-Wojciechowska. On September 8, four inmates – including Krystyna – performed the songs for their beloved friend. (Source: Barbara Milewski: *Krystyna Żywulska: The Making of a Satirist and Songwriter in Auschwitz-Birkenau is Discovered Through Camp Mementos*, Swarthmore College Bulletin, July 2009.)

Krystyna's lyrics describe a broad array of experiences that prisoners faced each day. Her subjects range from whimsical gossip in the barracks to profound fears as well as dreams of rescue, survival and triumph. These lyrics are a window into the torturous psychological strain the prisoners faced as they tried desperately to hold onto their humanity while being forced to live in a place that defined the most inhuman behavior. Mostly, Krystyna's songs speak to the power of music and the imagination to liberate one from even the darkest despair.

The lyrics in the original *Medley* were set to well-known tunes of the day. Rather than attempt the almost impossible task of identifying the original tunes and creating translations from Polish to fit them perfectly, Gene made free poetic translations which Jake has set in a variety of ways: sometimes imitating music of the period, acknowledging the influence of Kurt Weill and film music, sometimes with very folk-like melodies, and in two cases by using classical tunes: Liszt's *La Campanella* (after Paganini) and Chopin's *Waltz, Op. 64, No. 2*. As prisoners in a camp might do, the singers sometimes imitate instruments to fill in the blanks.

Gene's poetic translations are based on literal translations graciously made by his in-laws, Zbigniew and Anna Lechowski.

Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer
(used by permission)

For a Look or a Touch (2007/13)

World première: 14th May 2013, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA, at Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Remembrance concert. The song cycle version of *For a Look or a Touch* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance, Mina Miller, Artistic Director.

Lyrics and texts based on entries from Manfred Lewin's journal in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and on interviews from the film *Paragraph 175*, directed by Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman, copyright Reflective Image Inc., used by permission. All rights reserved.

Homosexuality had been considered a crime in Germany since the late 1800s, and Paragraph 175 – the pre-Nazi legislation outlawing it – remained in effect for years after the war. The Reich considered homosexuality a symptom of "racial degeneracy," and homosexuals were incarcerated in prisons and concentration camps. Through the rigorous enforcement of Paragraph 175, the Nazis murdered thousands, and shattered the lives of countless others. Homosexuality remained illegal in Germany until 1970, making it impossible for many gays persecuted under the Third Reich to speak openly of their suffering. This persecution – with some of the last untold stories of the Holocaust – has recently begun to emerge from historical neglect, thanks in large part to the revelatory 2000 documentary film *Paragraph 175*.

For many years Music of Remembrance had envisioned commissioning a work that would address this tragedy. Jake Heggie, collaborating with librettist Gene Scheer, was the ideal composer for this challenge, and in 2007 MOR premiered the original version of their *For a Look or a Touch*. Drawing on true stories they discovered in the documentary, Heggie and Scheer based their title on the reality that a suspicious "look" or "touch" was sufficient grounds for arrest by Nazi authorities. They were also inspired by the lives of Gad Beck and Manfred Lewin. Those two young men were lovers in Berlin until Manfred and his family were sent to their deaths in Auschwitz. Gad

joined an underground group that helped Jews escape to neutral Switzerland, but he was betrayed and incarcerated in the final months of the war. He managed to keep and preserve Manfred's poetic diary, which he donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1999. Gad died in Berlin in 2012, a week shy of his 89th birthday. He is thought to have been the last known Jewish gay survivor of the Holocaust.

In *For a Look or a Touch*, Heggie and Scheer crafted a musical drama where Manfred (sung by a baritone) returns as a ghost to an older present-day Gad (portrayed by a non-singing actor). Gad wants only to forget the horrors he lived through; Manfred's ghost wants only to be remembered, for Gad to treasure their powerful, timeless love. Manfred implores Gad to recall the exuberant freedom they enjoyed in pre-Nazi Berlin, and he also tells Gad of the atrocities he witnessed in Auschwitz. In the end, Manfred and Gad embrace in the liberating release of shared remembrance. *For a Look or a Touch* accomplished something extraordinary, illuminating essential historical realities through an intensely intimate story of deep personal emotion. The work has entered the repertoire and touched the lives of people around the world, and is available on CD (Naxos 8.559379).

The evolution of *For a Look or a Touch* into the new song-cycle version on this recording is an interesting one. The original musical drama generated immediate interest in settings of the work that could reach even broader audiences. Music of Remembrance encouraged the Seattle Men's Chorus to commission a choral arrangement, for which Heggie added a new number: *A Hundred Thousand Stars*. The choral version, including this emotionally gripping new song, brought further attention to the need for a solo vocal setting that could be performed in a recital venue, or the intimacy of a salon. This deeply moving song cycle, premiered by Music of Remembrance in 2013, speaks with beauty and eloquence to profound questions of love, loss and remembrance.

Mina Miller

Jake Heggie



Photo: Ellen Appel

Jake Heggie was born in West Palm Beach, Florida and has made his home in San Francisco since 1993. Heggie has been drawn to topics that reflect his passion for human rights and social justice (as well as his love of literature), and his operas have been acclaimed for their emotional honesty and dramatic power. Those operas include *Moby-Dick* (libretto by Gene Scheer), *The End of the Affair* (libretto by Heather McDonald), and *Dead Man Walking* (libretto by Terrence McNally). They have been performed on five continents, and by more than a dozen American opera companies that include San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, The Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, Ft. Worth Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, and Madison Opera. Heggie's *Great Scott*, commissioned by Dallas Opera with story and libretto by McNally, will have its première in October 2015. He has written more than 250 songs, as well as orchestral, choral and chamber music. *Farewell, Auschwitz* is Heggie's third MOR commission, following *For a Look or a Touch* (2007) and *Another Sunrise* (2012), both with libretti by Scheer. Recordings of Heggie's compositions include *here/after* (PentaTone Classics), *At The Statue of Venus* (GPR), *PASSING BY: Songs by Jake Heggie* (Avie), *Dead Man Walking* (Virgin Classics), *Three Decembers* (Albany), *Flesh and Stone* (Americus), *To Hell and Back* (Magnatune), *The Faces of Love* (RCA Red Seal), *The Deepest Desire* (Kansas City Symphony), and *For a Look or a Touch* (Naxos 8.559379).

Gene Scheer



Photo: Tony Ryan

Gene Scheer, librettist, is a native of New York City, where he currently resides. With Jake Heggie – an avowed champion of writers – Scheer has forged a remarkable creative partnership. In addition to collaborating on Heggie's three MOR commissions, he was the librettist for many of the composer's other major works: *Moby-Dick*; *Pieces of 9/11 – Memories from Houston*; *A Question of Light*; *Three Decembers*; the lyric drama *To Hell and Back*; the song cycles *Statuesque* and *Rise and Fall*. In February 2012, the Alexander Quartet and Joyce Di Donato gave the première of Heggie and Scheer's *Camille Claudel: Into the Fire*. Scheer has partnered with other major composers as well. With Steven Stuckey he wrote the GRAMMY®-nominated oratorio *August 4th 1964*, which was premiered and recorded by the Dallas Symphony. With Tobias Picker he wrote *An American Tragedy*, which had its première at the Metropolitan Opera. The Chandos recording of the opera *Thérèse Raquin*, Scheer's first collaboration with Picker, was cited by *Opera News* as one of the ten best recordings of 2002. He is now working with composer Jennifer Higdon on an operatic adaptation of the novel *Cold Mountain* for Santa Fe Opera. Scheer is also a gifted composer in his own right. His music has been performed by artists including Renée Fleming (with Christoph Eschenbach), Denyce Graves, Sylvia McNair, Stephanie Blythe, Jennifer Larmore, and Nathan Gunn. Norah Jones sang Scheer's *American Anthem* in Ken Burns' *The War*.

Music of Remembrance

Sarah Larsen



Photo: Brett Chisholm Photography

Mezzo-soprano Sarah Larsen made her MOR debut in May 2013 with the world première of *Farewell, Auschwitz*. Other recent new works include the 2011 world première of John Musto and Mark Campbell's *The Inspector* as Sarelida with the Wolf Trap Foundation, the recording of which was released in 2012 on Wolf Trap Recordings. She is an alumna of the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program, with whom she has performed Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, Charlotte in *Werther* and the Secretary in *The Consul*, as well as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* on the mainstage. Sarah Larsen is also an alumna of the training programs at Sarasota Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival and The Santa Fe Opera.

Caitlin Lynch



Photo: Anelle Domeson

Soprano Caitlin Lynch made her debut with MOR in 2012 as Krystyna Żywulka in *Another Sunrise*. She is an alumna of the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program and Houston Grand Opera Studio Program. Recently, she returned to the Metropolitan Opera for the world première of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, and also created the role of Eliza in the world première of Muhly's *Dark Sisters* in a co-production with Gotham Chamber Opera and Opera Philadelphia. She has appeared with Houston Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Dallas Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Pittsburgh Opera, and Cincinnati Opera, among others.

Morgan Smith



A graduate of Columbia College and the Mannes College of Music in New York City, baritone Morgan Smith made his professional debut in 2001 as Donald in *Billy Budd* at Seattle Opera, where he has also sung the title role of *Don Giovanni*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, and Riccardo in *I Puritani*. Smith has received high praise for the role of Starbuck in Heggie and Scheer's *Moby-Dick*, which he created for Dallas Opera in 2010, and has subsequently performed in San Diego and San Francisco. 2013-2014 season highlights include Tadeusz in the US première of *The Passenger* with HGO, Fritz in *Die tote Stadt* with Dallas Opera, and Lt. Audebert in *Silent Night* with Fort Worth Opera. Smith has been a regular artist at Oper Leipzig since 2009. He previously performed with MOR in 2007 in *For a Look or a Touch*, and in 2006 in the title role in Hans Krasá's *Brundibár* (Naxos. 8.570119).

Laura DeLuca



Photo: Larey McDaniel

The clarinetist Laura DeLuca has been a member of the Seattle Symphony since 1986 and the Seattle Chamber Players since 1989. A frequent performer with MOR since its inaugural season, she was the clarinetist in *For a Look or a Touch* (Naxos 8.559379), Paul Schoenfield's *Camp Songs* and *Ghetto Songs* (Naxos 8.559641), and Lori Laitman's *Vedem* (Naxos 8.559685). She was the solo clarinetist in the Academy Award winning documentaries *The Long Way Home* and *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*. She received her formal training at Northwestern University.

Walter Gray



Photo: Cherails Hegne

The cellist Walter Gray has been a member of the Seattle Symphony for over three decades. A founding member of the Kronos Quartet and the new music ensemble Quake, he produced (and performed on) *Seven Mirrors*, music of Chinary Ung (New World Records). He can also be heard on MOR's recording of Paul Schoenfield's *Camp Songs* and *Ghetto Songs* (Naxos 8.559641) and Lori Laitman's *Vedem* (Naxos 8.559685). He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music.

Zart Dombourian-Eby



Photo: Larey McDaniel

The flutist Zart Dombourian-Eby is principal piccolo of the Seattle Symphony. She has given master classes and concerts throughout the country and has performed with many American orchestras including the Chicago Symphony. She was the flutist in *For a Look or a Touch* (Naxos 8.559379). Her solo CD, *in shadow, light*, is available on Crystal Records, and her edition of the three Vivaldi piccolo concertos is published by Theodore Presser. She is a graduate of Northwestern University.

Jonathan Green



Photo: Brenda Berry

The double bassist Jonathan Green joined the Seattle Symphony as Assistant Principal Bass in 1998. Before moving to Seattle, he performed with the San Diego Symphony for eleven seasons, including three years as Principal Bass. He was the double bassist in Thomas Pasatieri's *Letter to Warsaw* (Naxos 8.559219), and Paul Schoenfield's *Camp Songs* and *Ghetto Songs* (Naxos 8.559641).

Craig Sheppard



Photo: Joanne De Pue

The pianist Craig Sheppard is Professor of Piano and Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor of Music at the University of Washington School of Music. He is a graduate of both Curtis and Juilliard, and has taught at the University of Lancaster, the Yehudi Menuhin School, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He has performed in most major European cities, with all the major orchestras in Great Britain, and with those of Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Rochester, Dallas and Seattle. His solo repertoire encompasses over forty recital programs and over sixty concerti spanning all the major styles of Western music. His extensive discography includes both books of J. S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, the *Inventions* and *Sinfonias*, and the *Six Partitas*, the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, the three late Schubert sonatas, and both books of Debussy's *Préludes*.

Mikhail Shmidt



Photo: Jim Hsu

The violinist Mikhail Shmidt has been a member of the Seattle Symphony since 1990. Born in Moscow, he received his master's degree from the Gnessin Institute of Music. He has performed with the Moscow State Symphony and the Moscow Radio String Quartet, and as concertmaster of the Camerata Boccherini Chamber Orchestra. He has recorded for Melodiya and Erato, and has toured extensively in the USSR, and in Eastern and Central Europe. A central artistic participant with Music of Remembrance since its inception, Shmidt can be heard as violinist in *For a Look or a Touch* (Naxos 8.559379), Paul Schoenfield's *Camp Songs* and *Ghetto Songs* (Naxos 8.559641), and Lori Laitman's *Vedem* (Naxos 8.559685).

Music of Remembrance

Mina Miller, Artistic Director



Photo: Yuen Lui Studio

Founded in 1998 by pianist Mina Miller, Music of Remembrance (MOR) fills a unique role throughout the world by remembering Holocaust musicians and their art through musical performances, educational programs, musical recordings, and commissions of new works. It is well known that the Nazi regime banned performances of music by living and historical Jewish composers, and by many others they deemed degenerate. Amid the horrors, there were courageous musicians who dared to create – even imprisoned in the ghettos and camps. It is a priceless gift that much of this music has survived as moral and artistic defiance in the face of catastrophe. The Music of Remembrance mission is not religious, nor is its scope limited to Jewish music. Although the Holocaust was primarily an assault on Jewish people and culture, others suffered as well in what was history's most potent instance of totalitarian suppression of intellectual and creative work. Musicians' resistance took many forms, and crossed many national and religious boundaries. So that their resistance was not in vain, we remember these musicians by preserving and performing their music. Thus we can share in the transformative power of music to move us from the depths of human suffering to the healing beauty of hope and renewal.

www.musicofremembrance.org



Farewell, Auschwitz, world première performance, May 14th, 2013 (Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA).
Left to right: Caitlin Lynch, Soprano; Sarah Larsen, Mezzo-soprano; Morgan Smith, Baritone.

Photo: Jon LaFollette

1 Another Sunrise

Libretto by Gene Scheer

A sleepless night. Krystyna Żywulska enters humming a melody and makes her way to a tape recorder and microphone on a table. She stares at the machine a moment then turns it on.

KRYSTYNA

This is Krystyna Żywulska. Sonia Landau, the nice Jewish girl from Łódź...

(She turns off the machine.)

What the hell am I doing? 4 a.m. My God. "Just turn it on and talk," she says. So easy! "Whatever pops into your head." So easy! You know what's easy to say, Professor? Nothing. You know just what I should say, Professor? Nothing. I have a nice home and a nice life. I don't *need* to say anything more. Oh hell.

(She turns the recorder on again.)

This is Krystyna Żywulska. Is it my real name? Professor, please. In my life, when it comes to such topics, there is nothing true. Here is what I can tell you: Krystyna Żywulska was born in 1918. Krystyna Żywulska was not a Jew. Krystyna Żywulska was a political prisoner in Auschwitz-Birkenau. A survivor.

Let's be clear: the words of a survivor are like stars in the sky. They illuminate only a tiny piece of the past.

Look up. Look up.

No matter what is spoken of the night

There will always be more darkness than light.

Hm. That's not bad.

So, I can't sleep. And all night, this tune, over and over...

It was always in my head but I never found the words. And there were always words. Words for tunes we all knew. Words we could sing together. Words while we worked in the *Effektenkammer*. Where we took their possessions, wrote down every item with precision, before they were marched in line next door to the ovens. Next door. Amid the screams and cries, the stench, I could always find words. Always words. But not for this tune.

(She turns off the machine.)

This stupid machine. I hate it. You hear that? A survivor is not a hero. A survivor is a survivor. But that word. That word.

(She turns on the machine.)

Professor, describe something – *anything*. The moment it is spoken, it is changed. No matter how clear the words. Listen:

That canyon is deep.
That canyon is a mile deep.
That canyon is so deep, when a rock hits bottom
I cannot hear the echo.

"What happened in Auschwitz?" This is a stupid question. What words can capture those echoes?

A transport arrives at 4am, this one from Holland. A thousand women, just like my own transport the year before. But now I have a position in the camp. The women must line up for inventory, but there is chaos, confusion. They run in circles, crying: "Where is my mother?" "Where is my child?" "Where are we?" "Auschwitz? Oh, God!"

And Magda tells me: "Kryisia, hit them! Get them in line now! Beat them, Kryisia! Get them to mind you. Do it, Kryisia! Do your job now, or go back to the fields and die there with your poems." I cannot move or breathe. The women look at me, eyes wide, desperate. I look away. Magda says: "What will it be, Kryisia? You or them?"

And I feel my arm rise. Feel my fist grow strong. I hear my voice say: "I will beat you. Hit you. Get into line! I will break you, kick you, if you don't mind me." Brava, Kryisia. Brava. You will not be one of the dead today. Brava. You did not die.

My name is Krystyna Żywulska. Krystyna Żywulska lives. But nothing of her past exists as of today.

(She ponders turning off the machine, but stops herself.)

Zosha is dying while prisoners next door play waltzes for the SS. The length of a waltz is the time that I have to fulfill her last request. A cup of hot water is all that she asks. Forbidden. But, Zosha's the last of my friends from our transport a year ago. I must try. So I run and steal a cup of hot water. She sips, smiles and says: "Thank you, Kryisia." Closes her eyes and whispers: "There are no words, Kryisia. There are no words." Then the waltz ends and I leave her.

Look up. Look up...

Professor, not long ago I took my mother and husband to Auschwitz. I was in a fever to show them everything. Look! Here is where Zosha died, here was our barracks. Over here. Here were the ovens next door to the *Effektenkammer*. There. Over there was... And over here was...

My husband says: "Kryisia, nothing is there. Only grass. What happened exists only in your head now."

And I thought: "Why did I come?" A museum for tourists. It sickened me. Day trippers with packets of sandwiches.

Sometimes, often, I feel so cut off. I look at this machine, the reels spinning round and round, and think of something endlessly hovering, circling. Held in a path, unable ever to spin away. Unable ever to come down.

(She turns off the machine and hums the tune again.)

For some melodies, there are no words.

(She rewinds the tape all the way. Removes it from the machine and throws it into the garbage. After awhile, she threads a new tape into the machine and turns it on again.)

This is Krystyna Żywulska. I just saw another sunrise.

(She turns off the machine.)

THE END

© 2012 by Gene Scheer.
All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by permission.



Krystyna Żywulska

Courtesy of Max Bojarski

Farewell, Auschwitz

Lyrics by Gene Scheer

Based on Polish lyrics by Krystyna Żywulska (1914-1993) written when she was imprisoned at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

2 Prologue: For Maria

For our dear Maria on her name day
From all of those with whom she shared
the good and the bad
And whom she helped to endure
We dedicate this song.

3 Soldiers

I do not need millions
just paper and a pencil.
(And poetry, above all poetry.)
Letters are the only soldiers we need.
An alphabet of warriors standing
Shoulder to shoulder.
Do not forget us
when you get older.

An alphabet of warriors
Like us, standing
Shoulder to shoulder
Threaded with the marrow of memory
Into lines of defense.

Shoulder to shoulder.
Do not forget us
when you get older.

4 Diamonds

Soon, soon I will take you away.
Look what has happened!
Fate has given me so many diamonds
They're falling out of my pockets
And now I have pictures of you
In hundreds of gold lockets.

Soon, soon I will take you away.
But, not yet. Today is not the day.
A bit longer longer we have to wait
Oh, haven't we been blessed by fate!

Soon, soon I will take you away.
But, not yet. Not yet. Not yet.

5 In The Cards

I sat in the barracks playing solitaire.
It was forbidden. I did not care.
Lost in the cards, I did not see
When Janda suddenly came up to me:
"You'll have to pay for this, you fool!
You know the rule!
Thirty minutes, kneel on the ground.
You'll be watched by the guards."
I remember being amazed
I had not seen this coming in the cards!

6 Irenka

Irenka, why are you crying?
Is it because somebody took your chair?
Irenka, are you crying because it isn't fair?
Are you crying because all your dreams lie in tatters?
Or is it because wanting just a chair
Is all that matters?

7 Miss Zlutka

Miss Zlutka types so quickly.
Miss Zlutka types so perfectly.
With each stroke her longing starts to disappear.
How does typing make happiness seem near?
Oh, Miss Zlutka!
With each stroke she holds her child
Who only cries from joy.
It's here that Miss Zlutka is in complete control.
Miss Zlutka remains the captain of her own soul.
In the striking of every key,
Miss Zlutka thinks she's almost free.

8 The Sun and the Skylark

First Woman:
The sun is warming me
As it did before.
It gives all of itself
just as it did before the war.

Second Woman:
Last night, I heard a skylark sing
The same song she has sung for ages
A song of flight
A song of hunger
Of love
Of freedom
Not of cages.

9 Farewell, Auschwitz

Take off your striped clothes,
Kick off your clogs.
Stand with me,
Hold your shaved head high.
The song of freedom upon our lips
Will never, never die.

Is it something from which you wake?
A nightmare or a fairytale?
No! It really happened.
No!
We were there.
We were there.
We were there.

Five chimneys belching smoke.
On burning flesh and blood we'd choke.
Yes! It really happened.
Yes!
We were there.
We were there.
We were there.

Farewell, Auschwitz
And savage Birkenau
When winter winds blow
through the empty barracks
Our song will linger
And everyone will know.

Take off your striped clothes,
Kick off your clogs.
Stand with me,
Hold your shaved head high.
The song of freedom upon our lips
Will never, never die.

© 2013 by Gene Scheer.
All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by permission.



Page from Krystyna Żywulska's music revue
Wiazanka Z Efektenkammer (Medley in the Effektenkammer)
performed in Birkenau in 1944.
Reproduced with permission of the Auschwitz Museum,
Oswiecim, Poland.

For a Look or a Touch

Lyrics by Gene Scheer

Based on entries from Manfred Lewin's journal in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC; and interviews from the film Paragraph 175, directed by Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman, copyright Reflective Image, Inc. Used by permission.

10 The Voice

A void consumes me.
My spirit and body are suddenly lame.
Terror fills the time that follows.
Will each new day be the same?

Often I feel utterly abandoned
See myself on the edge of an abyss,
And I become dizzy as I look down,
With blood-drained cheeks that you would kiss.

Suddenly from the darkest depths,
A loving voice echoes and seeks me out.
I look down and ask: "Who is calling?"
And I hear a voice that ends all doubt.

It is the voice of a sanctified power,
The sacred place where fears dissolve.
The unyielding blessing, the generous heart
The voice of souls in perfect resolve.

11 Golden Years

Wild! Free!
We are wild! We are free!
Topsy turvy, joyful Berlin.

You are free! You are wild!
Topsy turvy child of Berlin.
Golden years. Golden years.

Give me a look or a touch and I'll know.
A wink or a nod or a glance.

We don't need words. Just stand very close.
Let's not miss out on a chance for love tonight.

A look or a touch and I'll know you're the one.
A grin or a smile.
Just for a while, tonight or a lifetime,
Let's not miss out on a chance for love right now.

Dance with me.
This is the Schwanenberg,
hottest spot in Berlin.
Meet and greet and eat and cheat and swing.

What a band! What a crowd at Schwanenberg!
Take my hand, dance all night at Schwanenberg!
Let's have a laugh now. Let's have some fun.
Shout: "Police!"
Then watch 'em pull their skirts up and run!

Everybody's running around.
Screaming!
Laughing!
Giddy from the joy of this town
And these Golden years. Golden years.

While we are young, wild and free let's keep dancing.
Let's not miss out on a thing.
And if we should find we're of the same mind,
A look or a touch could lead to a precious night of love.

"Police!"

12 A Hundred Thousand Stars

One by one. One by one.

A hundred thousand stars, love,
Have fallen from the sky.
A hundred thousand dreams gone
A hundred thousand sighs
A hundred thousand whispers
Promises and lies
The constellations change

Our stories rearranged
And darkness fills the sky.

A hundred thousand stars, love,
Have vanished from the sky.
A hundred thousand candle flames
Flicker out and die.
Our laughter in the night, love,
When you would hold me tight, love,
Like shadows on a wall
Nobody will recall.

Who will remember when starlight filled the skies?
As I will always remember how it filled your eyes.
Every star had a name.
Every one was a light.

What is that I hear love?
A train is passing by.
Another star has vanished,
Stolen from the sky.
Hush, my love! Hush, my love!

You must not be afraid now
This will not be the end.
A hundred million stars will be born
To fill the sky again.
You never are alone, love,
I swear I'm by your side.
There's very little light.
Aufwiedersehen, adieu,
Good night, my love.
Good night.

13 The Story of Joe

Horror and savagery are the law.
I am a silent, obedient shadow.
Dead to myself. Dead to the world.
A silent, obedient shadow.

Lined up for roll call,
They pull out Joe,
A loving friend, 18 years old.
Good boy. He's a good boy, Joe.

What has he done?
What is his crime?
His jacket bears a pink triangle.
Be still. Just keep in line.
Be a good boy, Joe. Be obedient, Joe.

They strip him naked,
Put a bucket on his head,
Then sic their dogs on him.
They bite his body,
Tear at his thighs,
Blood everywhere.
His screams and cries
Amplified by the bucket on his head.
Ah! Ah!

Goodbye, Joe.

And on the speakers
They play a waltz.
Back to work.
Silent, obedient shadows.

14 Silence

(A wordless melody)

© 2013 by Gene Scheer.
All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by permission.

**Jake
HEGGIE**
(b. 1961)
and
**Gene
SCHEER**
(b. 1958)

Out of Darkness

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|
| 1 | Another Sunrise (2012) ¹ | 28:33 |
| 2-9 | Farewell, Auschwitz (2013) ² | 27:43 |
| 10-14 | For a Look or a Touch
(2007/13) ³ | 22:28 |

WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

Caitlin Lynch, Soprano^{1,2}
Sarah Larsen, Mezzo-soprano²
Morgan Smith, Baritone^{2,3}

Music of Remembrance

Mina Miller, Artistic Director

A full track list and recording details can be found
on pages 2 and 3 of the booklet • Sung texts included
The sung texts can also be accessed at
www.naxos.com/libretti/559770.htm

Producers: Albert G. Swanson (track 1); Dmitriy Lipay
(tracks 2-14); Engineer and editor: Dmitriy Lipay

Publisher: Bent Pen Music, Inc.

Booklet notes: Mina Miller, Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer

Cover image: Johan Swanepoel (Shutterstock.com)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

In *Out of Darkness*, Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer accomplish something remarkable. They convey the vastness of the Holocaust's scope through emotionally rich portraits of those caught in its grasp, without reducing them to caricatures of martyrdom. The three chapters of this work relate stories that offer compelling musical witness to survival in the face of unimaginable adversity. *Another Sunrise* tells the amazing story of Krystyna Żywulska who, after being captured as a member of the Polish resistance, created poems and songs in Auschwitz that circulated secretly and became anthems of defiance amongst her fellow prisoners. *Farewell, Auschwitz* adapts Krystyna's lyrics, with their exhortations to preserve a sense of humanity in a place defined by inhuman behavior. The deeply-moving song cycle *For a Look or a Touch* illuminates Nazi persecution of homosexuals, informing historical realities through an intensely intimate story of memory and loss.

These works were commissioned by Music of Remembrance, a Seattle-based organization dedicated to remembering the Holocaust through music.

(www.musicofremembrance.org)

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
78:44