

# Aether: Earth nature/conservation



INVERSION  
ENSEMBLE

Saturday, August 10th @ 7pm  
St. John's UMC

Sunday, August 11th @ 3pm  
Redeemer Presbyterian

## ***Note from the Artistic Director, Trevor F. Shaw***

Welcome to Coda's second concert! We are honored you've joined us for the first concert of Inversion Ensemble's 2019/2020 season, "Aether", an exploration of the four ancient elements; earth, air, fire, and water. Coda's presentation, "Earth", will remind us of the beauty, value, and fragility of our incredible planet. Themes of noble trees and playful animals are mixed with songs that stress our responsibility as stewards of the earth and what we leave for generations beyond our own. I'm delighted that we'll be joined on the stage by harp/flute duo, Chaski, two musicians that continually find innovative ways to tell stories through music. It's also exciting to note that this will be Cina Crisara's third time as a guest conductor for Inversion Ensemble! Cina is one of Austin's most complete and accomplished musicians, and we are proud to have another opportunity to work with her. Enjoy "Aether: Earth". I hope you'll leave with reverence for the world around us and inspiration to do your part to preserve it.



### ***Dr. Cina Crisara, Guest Conductor***



Guest conductor, Cina Crisara is in her third season as Chorus Master/Assistant Conductor of Austin Opera. Previously she held the position of Chorus Master for Opera Omaha spanning 17 seasons. She was also serving as a full-time faculty member at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Concurrently she completed 16 seasons as the Chorus Master for the Omaha (Nebraska) Symphony, culminating in Cina becoming the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Omaha Symphonic Chorus. She made her conducting debut with the Omaha Symphony in 1999.

Cina Crisara is also a professional singer, and has been a member of the Conspirare Symphonic Choir and Company of Voices since 2009. She has served as a Section Leader/Rehearsal Conductor for the Conspirare Symphonic Choir, and has performed on 10 Company of Voices recordings, including the Grammy award winning "The Sacred Spirit of Russia".

Presently, Dr. Crisara is the Director of Music at Saint John's United Methodist Church in Austin. In addition to regular Sunday services, she designs and directs special musical events and services which are offered throughout the year. A production of the musical "Godspell" was given recently. In the summer of 2016, several members of the Saint John's Chancel Choir combined with singers from the Conspirare Symphonic Choir to perform in Italy with Craig Hella Johnson. Cina will co-direct concerts with Craig Hella Johnson in Australia in the summer of 2018.

Cina Crisara has a Master of Music in Piano Performance from New York's Ithaca College, and she earned a DMA in Choral Conducting from the University of Texas at Austin, having studied with Dr. Morris Beachy and Dr. Fiora Contino.

This is Dr. Crisara's third concert conducting with Inversion Ensemble having performed and conducted on the inaugural performance in February 2017.

# Chaski

## Guest Artists



Chaski [CHAH-ski] means “messenger” in the Incan language of Quechua [KECH-wah]. In the spirit of this Andean traveler, Chaski brings to its audiences classical, Celtic, and Latin American folk music featuring all kinds of flutes and harps. Based in Austin, Texas, Chaski has performed together since 1985 and has toured the United States, Costa Rica, Venezuela, England, and Scotland. Five independently produced recordings, *Chaski* (1989), *Pacha Mama* (1991), *El sariri* (1995), *Unay* (2000), and *Viracocha* (2005) feature selections from Chaski’s repertoire on flute, sikus (panpipes), quena, flauto traverso, harp, cuatro, guitar, charango, bombo, maracas and other instruments. Chaski was featured on the soundtrack of 2006 IMAX film *Ride Around the World: A Cowboy Adventure*.

Chaski began performing classical flute and harp music in April of 1985. Venezuelan songs that Adrienne’s mother had brought from her homeland gradually made their way into Chaski’s repertoire.

Shana and Adrienne joined the University of Texas at Austin Brazilian and Andean Music Ensembles to learn more about depth and variety of Latin American music. The success of their expanded repertoire led them to welcome guitarist Dan Dickey into the group in about 1991.

### ADRIENNE INGLIS

Adrienne Inglis received a Bachelor of Music in Flute at Lewis and Clark College and a Master of Music in Flute at the University of Texas at Austin and has studied with Caryl Mae Scott, Scott Goff, Karl Kraber, and Bolivian zampoñero Fernando Jiménez. In 1992 she graduated with highest honors with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from UT Austin. She teaches flute at Southwestern University and freelances extensively as a performing and recording artist in Central Texas. She serves as principal flute of the Central Texas Philharmonic, Panoramic Voices Orchestra, and Chorus Austin Orchestra. She recorded on the *SpyKids 2*, *Kill Bill: Vol. 2*, and *The Children's War*, and *Ride Around the World* film soundtracks playing as many as twelve different flutes. She is a founding composer and singer with Inversion Ensemble. See her composer page at [adrienneinglis.com](http://adrienneinglis.com).

### SHANA NORTON

Shana Norton graduated with highest honors earning a Bachelor of Music Education from Abilene Christian University and attended the Eastman School of Music, studying with Julia Hermann Edwards and Eileen Malone. In 1995 she graduated from The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs with a Master of Public Affairs degree. She plays principal harp with the Mid-Texas Symphony and the Symphony of the Hills. Ms. Norton has performed with the San Antonio Symphony, the Hot Springs Music Festival Orchestra, the Victoria Bach Festival Orchestra and the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra.

# Inversion Ensemble Coda

presents

*Aether: Earth*

*nature/conservation*

August 10 & 11, 2019

Trevor Shaw, Artistic Director/ Cina Crisara, Guest Conductor

\*indicates World Première Performance

## **The Heart of the Tree\***.....Marjorie Halloran

Text: Henry Cuyler Bunner (1885-1895)

What does he plant who plants a tree? He plants a friend of sun and sky; He plants the flag of breezes free; The shaft of beauty, towering high; He plants a home to heaven anigh; For song and mother-croon of bird In hushed and happy twilight heard— The treble of heaven's harmony— These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree? He plants cool shade and tender rain, And seed and bud of days to be, And years that fade and flush again; He plants the glory of the plain; He plants the forest's heritage; The harvest of a coming age; The joy that unborn eyes shall see— These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree? He plants, in sap and leaf and wood, In love of home and loyalty And far-cast thought of civic good— His blessings on the neighborhood, Who in the hollow of His hand Holds all the growth of all our land— A nation's growth from sea to sea Stirs in his heart who plants a tree.

“The Heart of the Tree,” by Henry Cuyler Bunner, is set in a lighthearted manner to reflect the innocent optimism prevalent in the text. The consonant melodic lines and predictable harmonies support the feeling of a “nursery rhyme for adults,” and the compound meter serves to showcase the lilting iambic flow of the text, which only departs from its rhythm in the third stanza. “Who in the hollow of His hand...” is set in a slower Common time to draw attention to the universality of “all the growth of all our land.” The soaring line sung by the sopranos (and by the tenors in verse two) during the penultimate line of each verse is meant to mimic looking upward into the branches of a tall tree. Each verse begins with the question “What does he plant who plants a tree?”, which is answered in increasing degrees of magnitude: a home for birds, a forest that will live for generations, and the growth of an entire nation.

## **Tree of Life**.....Trevor F. Shaw (ASCAP)

Text: Charles Darwin, from *The Origin of Species*

“As buds give rise by growth to fresh buds, and these, if vigorous, branch out and overtop on all sides many a feebler branch, so by generation I believe it has been with the great Tree of Life, which fills with its dead and broken branches the crust of the earth, and covers the surface with its ever branching and beautiful ramifications.”

Creating music to live up to the words of one of history's most iconic scientific figures was equally intimidating and irresistible to me as a composer. I needed a piece of choral music to open an album I was working on with a choir in Dallas in late 2014. While visiting with some Dallas-based musician friends to talk about the album, I noticed Charles Darwin's "On the Origin of Species" on my host's bookshelf and knew in that moment from where I would draw the text for the needed piece. When I returned to Austin, I immediately looked up the "Tree of Life" passage and wrote the original draft in a few days. Darwin's writings fill my mind with busy imagery of living things; plants and animals alike. I find myself picturing tortoises, finches and insects simply as a result of hearing Darwin's name spoken aloud. I made sure never to present the basic syncopated theme exactly the same way as the piece progresses. The adaptation of the theme to different harmonies and textures is intended to mirror the adaptation of all life to its surroundings. The closing fade-out symbolizes the idea that life will continue to evolve and that it has the tenacity to go on, even if in a form we can't currently imagine.

**The Singing Shepherd**.....Kathleen Allan

Text: Marjorie Pickthall (1883-1922)

O saw you our beloved where the cedars darken over  
The moon-white iris grown beside the stream?  
Or did you meet him walking in the honey-breathing clover,  
The first star flowered before him like a dream?  
O far and very far away from all your quiet fountains,  
From all your solemn valleys rich in sleep,  
I only heard a shepherd singing on the mountains,  
Singing as he folded in the sheep.

O found you our beloved ere the winds of morning found him  
In the thickets by still waters where love is?  
Did you know him from his fellows by the thorny bents that crowned him  
Among the lily-gardens that are his?  
O far away and far away from all the hidden meadows,  
From the gardens where the year goes shod in gold,  
I only heard a shepherd singing in the shadows  
As he carried home the younglings to the fold.

**Deep Blue**.....Ian Clarke

Chaski

In composing Deep Blue for flute and piano (2012), British flutist and composer Ian Clarke (b. 1964) found inspiration in whale songs and oceans. The flute employs extended techniques such as pitch bends and microtones to represent whales and other ocean sounds. The lush chords and rhythmic shifts in the C# minor piano part complete the creation of an ocean soundscape. Chaski has arranged this piece for flute and harp.

**Terre [Earth]**.....François Pernel

Chaski

Chaski has arranged this piece for flute and harp.

**Symbiosis\***.....Robbie LaBanca

with Chaski

Text: Bill Yake

trees are our lungs turned inside out  
& inhale our visible chilled breath.

our lungs are trees turned inside out  
& inhale their clear exhalations.

Written for Inversion Ensemble Coda in 2019, *Symbiosis* is a work for SAB chorus, lever harp, and flute. This piece explores the connection between humans and nature. The evocative text by poet and naturalist Bill Yake provides an image of trees as lungs and lungs as trees in a way to demonstrate how inextricably linked all creatures and nature are to each other. The singers used choreographed unison breathing to create a bond between each other throughout the piece. The musical phrases are also presented and then re-presented inverted. Using a repetitive music form similar to that of Taizé my hope is that the music can provide a meditative mood to allow both the listener and singers to join as one larger organism sharing one thought - the recognition that we are linked and owe it to each other to take care of each other and our earthly home.

**A Call to Silence**.....Craig Courtney

Cathie Parsley, Piano

Text: Pamela Martin

I listen to the forest in cathedrals made of trees,  
and to the twilight vespers as the sun falls to its knees.  
I listen to the echoes of the ageless canyon walls,  
and to the stained glass worship of the rainbow as it calls:  
"Be still and know, be still and know, be still and know that I am God."

I listen to the whisper of the river as it flows,  
and to the swirling ballet of a thousand flakes of snow.  
And when I hear the eagle's wings repeat a soaring prayer,  
And when the falling stars cry out I know that God is there.  
"Be still and know, be still and know, be still and know that I God."

Each of these a silent choir, a wordless hymn of praise,  
The language is unspoken, yet heard in many ways,  
A soundless sanctuary where I am free to go  
To meet God in the silence, to just be still and know:  
"Be still and know, be still and know, be still and know that I am God."

Imagery and texture are at the heart of this simple, uncluttered number. In the accompaniment you will hear the textual painting, from "cathedrals made of trees" and "the river as it flows" to a "ballet of a thousand flakes of snow." It is the refrain, though, that expresses the central message: "be still and know that I am God."

**The Song of the Harp Seal (Òrain Ròin na Clàrsaich)\*.....Adrienne Inglis**

Text: Gillean McDougall

We are strangers in these waters,  
seeking food by the Sound of Sleat.  
My sea-child skims the crystal swells,  
dip-dives aquamarine, balancing thrust  
and thrum of sand on sea shells.

Peaceful at Claigan, Talisker, Braes,  
the harp pup plays on silver sands, swims  
with starfish, her pearl skin the warp  
and weft of myth. I hope for you,  
I heart for you, my selkie girl, my joy.

But the currents carry the sins of man;  
death-water, the world's waste. The ocean  
toys with us, day poisons night

and the light in my child fades.

By Vaternish,  
innocent, she is taken in.

The sea comes to claim her. I search  
blind, sleeping by turns then a-wake;  
a dear small space by my side.

Borroraig, Colbost;

the waters  
black, never-ending.

The world did not want us,  
my child, my child,

my selkie girl, my joy.

My heart, my mother, my dear  
See me play, see me swim, see me dive

The water is full of treasure! Full of gifts!  
I see things I do not understand

Moth-er, I can't see you. I am failing,

I am fall-ing. What is sea, and what is sky?

Thig, thig, leanabh beag,

'S e do chàirdean a th'annain a-nis,

Chan eil an saoghal gad iarraidh.

Bhàsaich thu air an son.

The mermaids are my friends now.  
They call to me, play with me.

Remember me, let all remember me,  
the harp seal

Cuimhnich, cuimhnich air  
ròin na clàrsaich.

Composed especially for Inversion Ensemble Coda, *The Song of the Harp Seal* by Adrienne Inglis sets to music Gillean McDougall's poem of the same name, commissioned by the composer for this project. For treble chorus and harp, this work tells the story of a mother harp seal and her pup forced south of their usual Arctic range by the climate crisis. The pup ingests plastic pollution which contributes to her death near the shores of the Isle of Skye. Scottish legend mixes with modern tragedy as mermaids beckon in Gaelic to the harp pup and summon the audience to remember the harp seal.

Note from poet:

When Adrienne approached me to write the poem, I'd just read a news story about a harp seal pup which had washed up on a beach on Scotland's Isle of Skye. An autopsy revealed it had eaten plastic. This made a great impact on me - these animals are particularly gentle, beautiful and vulnerable, and incidents like this send a strong message to us to look after our world in a better way. When writing the poem, I wanted to use language that was 'singable,' with open vowels. I thought the place names of Skye had a beautiful musicality about them, too. Spatial separation of different voices was an exciting prospect, and the use of some Scots Gaelic lines emphasises the other-worldly nature of the sounds. — Gillean McDougall

Gillean McDougall trained in classical music and worked in broadcasting in the UK for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Scotland as an announcer and newsreader. Incipient madness led to incipient writing, and she moved to the University of Glasgow, graduating MLitt with Distinction in the creative writing program in 2017. She's now undertaking a PhD there, looking at the absence in families caused by mental illness, while walking round a famed abandoned Victorian asylum in Glasgow. When not thinking about her writing, she plays the Celtic harp and enjoys an occasional Isle of Harris Gin with friends.

**Loon Mountain Moose**.....Catriona McKay  
Chaski

*Loon Mountain Moose* by Catriona McKay (2002) for solo harp, who while adjudicating alongside Isobel Mieras at the New Hampshire Highland Games, saw a moose on Loon Mountain that inspired this piece.

**the bee and the frog**.....David von Kampen  
Cathie Parsley, Piano

I. The Honey Bee

Text: F.W. Hutt

Look at the honey bee buzzing away  
Over the blossoms the long summer day;  
Now in a lily cup drinking her fill,  
Now where the blossoms bloom under the hill  
Over the meadows laden with sweets  
Back to the beehive she swiftly retreats to the beehive  
Quickly unloading, she hastens away,  
Over the meadows, over the blossoms,  
buzzing away gathering the nectar  
Humming her song.

II. Hopping Frog

Text: Christina Rossetti

Hopping frog, hop here and be seen,  
I'll not pelt you with stick or stone:  
Your cap is laced and your coat is green;  
Good bye, we'll let each other alone.  
Plodding toad, plod here and be looked at,  
You the finger of scorn is crooked at:  
You the finger of scorn is crooked at:  
But though you're lumpish, you're harmless too;  
You won't hurt me, and I won't hurt you.

Ten years after composing my first SATB choral pieces (*2 Childhood Poems of Walter de la Mare*) as a junior in high school, I decided to try setting another pair of children's poems for my D.M.A. composition recital at the University of Kansas. I



thought it would be fun to revisit the style of those first pieces—and I needed to write something that a volunteer choir could pull together with minimal rehearsal time—so it seemed like a good fit. The settings are simple, with what I hope are a few pleasant surprises along the way. The set would be a good challenge for an experienced high school choir, but I believe there is enough nuance and harmonic variety to hold the interest of a collegiate or professional ensemble.

**The Blueberry Lesson**.....Steve Murray

Cathie Parsley, Piano

Text: Arthur Phinney

I. Stillness

One lone waterfowl wings its solitary way  
through the soft mists shrouding this upland meadow  
in this hushed early autumn day

II. The Blueberry Lesson

The tiny scraping of an empty pail against another  
and its falling bail tunking against its side sounded warning of another berry trip that morning  
My first thought was always slip away,  
but thinking of my father's lonely day without me,  
I'd reluctantly forsake my fun for scratches sweaty heat and ache.  
Oh it wasn't really as unpleasant as I make it out to be at present,  
however that may be  
Now I am grown, I never do pick berries on my own.  
My brothers seldom went, I notice though, that now when they are men,  
they often go.



Trevor Shaw, Artistic Director †  
Cina Crisara, Guest Conductor  
Robbie LaBanca, Managing Director †

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Betty Armstrong	Mary Simon
Bill Lasher	Meri Liston
Bonnie Lockhart	Mollie Hejl
Christine Duval	Murphy McBride
Debra Watkins	Nancy Ebert
Diane Skeel	Nancy Rooks
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Cathie Parsley, Pianist

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