

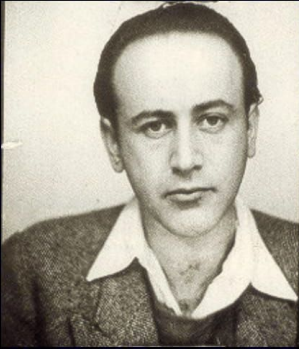
ONCE /  
MEMORY  
/ NIGHT:  
PAUL CELAN



*Ensemble for These Times*



# PAUL CELAN



A seminal writer whose poetic creativity and linguistic inventiveness greatly influenced 20th Century European literature, Paul Celan was born in Romania in 1920 to a German-speaking Jewish family; in 1942, while he was away, his parents were taken by the Nazis and sent by train to a concentration camp, where both perished. Celan himself was taken to a forced labor camp later that year, and his experience of loss, incarceration, and survival under the cloud of fascism are reflected in his work. After the war, he lived in Bucharest and Vienna before settling in Paris. Although he lived in France and was influenced by French Surrealism, Celan wrote in German, his mother tongue. His first collection of poems, "Sand from the Urns" ("Der Sand aus den Urnen"), was published in 1948; his second, "Poppy and Memory" (Mohen und Gedächtnis), appeared in 1952 and brought him critical acclaim. He was known for his vivid neologisms ("wordwall," "icethorn") and surreal imagery, and during the 1960s he published more than six books of poetry, gaining international fame. Celan suffered from depression, and committed suicide in 1970.

Celan is regarded as one of the most important poets to emerge from post-World War II Europe, and the dark themes in his work—of the rise of fascism, "strong men" leaders and coups, and nations marching as one to the dis-unifying drumbeat of nationalism and isolationism—are profoundly resonant today, in the face of the global resurgence of right-wing power in the U.S. and Europe. These themes are the force behind "Once/Memory/Night," and while they are complex topics, not easy to engage with, they are of these times, and the ones that the ensemble feels compelled to address.

Much has been made in the past five-ten years of alleged parallels between the ascendance of right-wing power in the U.S. and the demagoguery, xenophobia, misogyny, racism, disregard for truth, and threats to free speech that marked Hitler's rise to power in 1930's Germany. In turbulent political times such as these,

E4TT feels that it is more important than ever for artists to keep the lessons of history before today's audiences—in this case, via the words of Paul Celan, a Romanian—born, German-speaking Jew who survived forced labor and lost both of his parents at the hands of the Nazis. The commissioned works on this recording examine the life, work, and times of this singularly influential 20<sup>th</sup> century poet whose style and artistic concerns are very relevant to today's world and today's issues.

# CZESLAW MILOSZ

Poet, writer, immigrant, diplomat, translator, "Righteous Among the Nations," professor, asylum-seeker, Polish, American, Lithuanian... Nobel Prize winner Czeslaw Milosz (1911-2004) was all these and more. Milosz has been described as an "ecstatic pessimist" who, according to his son, Anthony Milosz, despite being a "close-up witness to some of the worst catastrophes and evils of the 20th century (Soviet and Nazi totalitarianism), retained a deep belief in humanity's spiritual potential without sentimental illusion." A contemporary of Paul Celan, Milosz addresses many of the same concerns and his work inhabits much of the same ethos, all in his inimitably direct voice. The ensemble was honored to include his poem in this project and to have Anthony Milosz read his father's beautiful text as part of this recording.





# ONCE/MEMORY/NIGHT: PAUL CELAN

E4TT commissioned and premiered three new musical works for this program:

④ "Die eichne Tür" ("The Oaken Door")  
a 7-movement, 5-song cycle to poems by Paul Celan, written by the ensemble's co-director, composer David Garner, for soprano, violin, English horn, cello, and piano:

"In die Rillen" ("Into the furrows")

"Unter die Haut" ("Under the skin")

"Die Gauklertrommel" ("The juggledrum")

"Das Geschriebene" ("The written")

and "Eспенbaum" ("Aspen tree"—the poet's famous, heartrending reflection on his survival and his mother's death);

④ "Nachtlang" ("Nightlong") by Jared Redmond, a two-song cycle for soprano, cello, and piano, setting Celan's "Notturmo" ("Night") and "Einmal" ("Once");

④ "A Song On the End of the World" by Stephen Eddins for soprano, cello, and piano, set to a poem by Celan's contemporary, Nobel Prize winner Czeslaw Milosz (translated and read on this recording by his son, Anthony Milosz).

The ensemble also paired these three works with American icon Libby Larsen's pre-existing piano solo, "4 ½: A Piano Suite," chosen for its fourth movement, subtitled "In Memoriam." In her notes about the piece, Larsen writes:

4 ½: A Piano Suite is a set of five short pieces, four of which are for both hands, and one for left hand only. The pieces relate to each other through shared Crystallized musical motives, which are transformed and developed. Each piece has its own character.

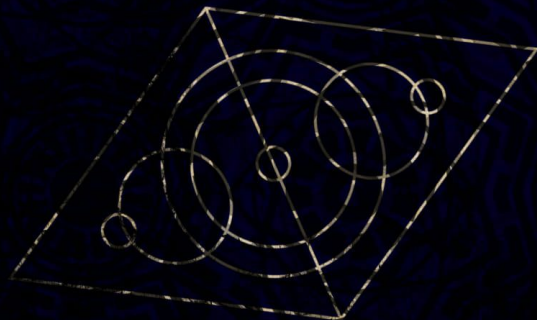
I's character is dance-like, riffing on echoes of 1940's popular dance music.

II, for left hand only, has repeated 16th-note pedal tones punctuated by a twenty-one note pitch-string in the outer voices.

Within III's flowing character, the first three notes of Victor Schertzinger and Johnny Mercer's 1941 hit song, "Tangerine," emerge and return as an important part of V.

IV, subtitled "In Memoriam" is an elegy for departed, beloved ones. A single phrase quoting a short fragment of the "Dies Irae" slowly unfolds in counterpoint with itself resolving/concluding with more of the familiar melody.

Finally, piece V is a rambunctious rhapsody on the shared musical motives from the previous four pieces.





# TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

## *Die eichne Tür*

### **In die Rillen**

der Himmelssäure im Türspalt

preßt du das Wort,  
dem ich entrollte,  
als ich mit bebenden Fäusten  
das Dach über uns  
abtrug, Schiefer um Schiefer,  
Silbe um Silbe, dem Kupfer-

schimmer der Bettel-  
schale dort oben  
zulieb.

**Unter die Haut** meiner Hände genächt:  
dein mit Händen  
getrösteter Name.

Wenn ich den Klumpen Luft  
knete, unsere Nahrung,  
säuert ihn der  
Buchstabenschimmer aus  
der wahnwitzig-offenen  
Pore.

### **Die Gauklertrommel,**

von meinem Herzgroschen laut.

Die Sprossen der Leiter, über  
die Odysseus, mein Affe, nach Ithaka klettert,

rue de Longchamp, eine Stunde  
nach dem verschütteten Wein:

tu das zum Bild,  
das uns heimwürfelt in  
den Becher, in dem ich bei dir lieg,  
unausspielbar.

**Espenbaum**, dein Laub blickt weiss ins Dunkel.  
Meiner Mutter Haar ward nimmer weiss.

Löwenzahn, so grün ist die Ukraine.  
Meine blonde Mutter kam nicht heim.

Regenwolke, säumst du an den Brunnen?  
Meine leise Mutter weint für alle.

Runder Stern, du schlingst die goldne Schleife.  
Meiner Mutter Herz ward wund von Blei.

Eichne Tür, wer hob dich aus den Angeln?  
Meine sanfte Mutter kann nicht kommen.

## *The Oaken Door*

### **Into gullies carved**

By acid from heaven's cracked-open door

You press the word  
From which I unfolded  
When I, with quivering fists,  
Cleared away the roof over us,  
Slate by slate,  
Syllable by syllable, for the sake of the coppery

Shimmer from the begging  
Bowl up  
There.

### **Sewn under the skin** of my hands:

Your handmade  
Comforting name.

When I knead the clumps  
Of air, our nourishment,  
They're leavened by  
The letters' shimmering out from  
Insanely open  
Pores.

### **The juggler's drum,**

Loud from my heart-penny.

The rungs of the ladder, upon which  
Odysseus, my ape, clammers towards  
Ithaca,

Rue de Longchamp, one hour  
After the spilled wine:

Make that the image  
that rolls us homeward in the  
Dice-cup, in which I lie next to you,  
Unplayable.

**Aspen tree**, your leaves peer white into the dark.  
My mother's hair was never white.

Dandelion, Ukraine is so green.  
My blond mother never came home.

Rain cloud, do you linger over the well?  
My silent mother cries for all.

Round stars, you tie a golden ribbon.  
My mother's heart was scarred by bleed.

Oaken door, who lifted you from your hinges?  
My gentle mother cannot come back.

**Das Geschriebene** höhlt sich, das  
Gesprochene, meergrün,  
brennt in den Buchten,

in den  
verflüssigten Namen  
schnellen die Tümmler,

im geewigten Nirgends, hier,  
im Gedächtnis der über-lauten Glocken in—wo nur?,

wer  
in diesem  
Schattengeviert  
schraubt, wer  
unter ihm  
schimmert auf, schimmert auf, schimmert auf?

**The written** is worn away; the  
spoken, sea green,  
Burns in the bays;

In the  
Liquified names  
The porpoises speed;

In the eternal nowhere, here,  
In the memory of the over-  
Loud bells in—but where?—

Who  
In this  
Shadowy square  
Huffs, who  
Under it  
Shimmers, shimmers, shimmers?





## Nachtlang

### Notturmo

Schlaf nicht. Sei auf der Hut.  
Die Pappeln mit singendem Schritt  
Zieh'n mit dem Kriegsvolk mit.  
Die Teiche sind alle dein Blut.

Drin grüne Gerippe tanzen.  
Eins reist die Wolke fort, driest:

Verwittert, vershtümmelt, vereist,  
Blutet dein Traum von den Lanzen.

Die Welt is ein kreissendes Tier,  
Das kahl in die Mondnacht schlich.

Gott ist sein Heulen. Ich  
Fürchte mich und frier.

### Einmal

Einmal

Da hörte ich ihn,  
Da wusch er die Welt,  
Ungesehn, Nachtlang,  
Wirklich.

Eins und Unendlich  
Vernichtet,  
Ichten.

Licht war. Rettung.

*All Celan translations by McGuinness and Garner.*

## Nightlong

### Nocturne

Beware. Do not sleep.  
The poplars singing in step  
Move along with the soldiers.  
Your blood fills the ponds.

Within, green skeletons dance.  
One sweeps away the clouds,  
bold—  
Weathered, maimed, iced:  
Your dream bleeds from strokes of  
the lance.

The world is a laboring beast,  
Which, shorn, slinks in the moon  
light.

God is its wail. I  
Fear and freeze.

### Once

Once

I heard him;  
He washed the world—  
Unseen, all night long,  
Really.

One and unendless,  
Destroyed,  
Me-ed.

Light was. Redemption.

## A Song on the End of the World

by Czeslaw Milosz

Translated by Anthony Milosz

On the day the world ends  
A bee circles a clover,  
A fisherman mends a glimmering net.  
Happy porpoises jump in the sea,  
By the rainspout young sparrows are playing  
And the snake is gold-skinned, as it always should be.

On the day the world ends  
Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas,  
A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of a lawn,  
Vegetable peddlers shout in the street  
And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer the island,  
The voice of a violin lasts in the air  
And leads into a starry night.

And those who expected lightning and thunder  
Are disappointed.  
And those who expected signs and archangels' trumps  
Do not believe it is happening now.  
As long as the sun and the moon are above,  
As long as the bumblebee visits a rose,  
As long as rosy infants are born  
No one believes it is happening now.

Only a white-haired old man, who would be a prophet  
Yet is not a prophet, for he's much too busy,  
Repeats while he binds his tomatoes:  
No other end of the world will there be.  
No other end of the world will there be.

Warsaw, 1944

"In die Rillen," "Unter die Haut," "Die Gauklertrummel," "Das Geschriebene,"  
"Einmal," and "Notturmo" from: Paul Celan, *Die Gedichte. Kommentierte  
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"Espanbaum" from Paul Celan, *Mohn und Gedächtnis* © 1952, Deutsche Verlags-  
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# ABOUT ENSEMBLE FOR THESE TIMES

Awarded second place for Chamber Music Performance in 2019 by The American Prize and a Finalist for the 2019 Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music, Ensemble for These Times (E4TT) consists of award-winning soprano and co-director Nanette McGuinness, Van Cliburn competitor pianist Dale Tsang, cellist Anne Lerner, and co-director and 2015 The American Prize in Composition winner composer David Garner, regularly joined by exemplary guest artists violinist Ilana Blumberg, English hornist Laura Reynolds, pianist Xin Zhao, and others. Founded in 2007 as the Jewish Music & Poetry Project (which remains an important group project), the group rebranded in 2015 and focuses on 20th and 21st century music that is relevant, engaging, original and compelling—music that resonates with today and speaks to tomorrow, that harnesses the power of artistic beauty, intelligence, wit, lyricism, and irony to create a deep understanding of our times and the human condition. E4TT performed at the 2016 Krakow Culture Festival and the Conservatorio Teresa Berganza in 2017, was sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Budapest in 2014 for a four-city tour in Hungary, and made its international debut in Berlin in 2012. E4TT has performed at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust, Paderewski Festival, and UCLA and in the SF Bay Area at the German Consulate General, SF Conservatory of Music, Old First Concerts, JCC Peninsula, Trinity Chamber Concerts, and Noontime Concerts, among other venues. E4TT's debut CD, *Surviving: Women's Words* (Centaur CRC 3490, 2016) won a Silver Medal in the 2016 Global Music Awards; Lesley Mitchell-Clarke in *The Whole Note* wrote of it, "Now more than ever [...] the potent and timeless messages of survival, love, tolerance and forgiveness contained on this brilliant presentation need to resonate throughout the world." E4TT's second CD, *"The Hungarians: From Rózsa to Justus"* (Centaur CRC 3660, 2018) won a Gold Medal in the 2018 Global Music Awards in three categories: chamber music, ensemble, and album.

## ABOUT THE MUSICIANS



Violinist **ILANA BLUMBERG** has appeared across the United States and internationally, in solo appearances with the San Francisco Symphony, the Albany Symphony (NY), Symphony Napa Valley, and the Merced Symphony, as well as performances at the prestigious Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Marlboro Music Festival, the La Jolla Summerfest as a 'Rising Star', the Aspen Music Festival, and many others. She appears frequently throughout the Bay Area with the Marin, Silicon Valley, West Edge Opera, Berkeley, and California Symphonies, as well as with the Golden Gate String Quartet, eco ensemble, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble.



Cellist **ANNE LERNER** completed her B.A. in Music at Northwestern University as a Cello Performance major after three years as a Spanish Literature major at Bryn Mawr College, earning an M.M. in cello performance at the San Francisco Conservatory, where she earned a Master of Music in Cello Performance. She has performed with numerous Bay Area orchestras and is a sought-after chamber musician and performer of contemporary music. A dedicated educator, Anne conducts two youth orchestras in the Marin Symphony Youth Program, is on the faculties of Dominican University and San Rafael High School and maintains a large private studio.



photo credit: Russ Fischella

Soprano and E4TT co-founder and co-director **NANETTE MCGUINNESS** has performed in 12 languages on two continents in over 25 roles with the Silesian State Opera (Czech Republic), Opera San Jose (Opera in the Schools), and West Bay, Pacific Repertory, Trinity Lyric, and Livermore Valley Operas, among others. Solo concert engagements include Mahler's Fourth Symphony, as well as *Shéhérezade* (Ravel), *Nuits d'étés* (Berlioz), *Stabat Mater* (Rossini), *Requiem* (Fauré), *Gloria* (Vivaldi), *Lord Nelson Mass* (Haydn), *Vesperae Solennes* (Mozart), and *Handel's Messiah* and *Solomon*. Her CD of music by 19th and 20th century women composers, *"Fabulous Femmes"* (Centaur CRC 2461) was called "perfect for the song recital lover" by *Chamber Music Magazine* and features several premiere recordings.



**LAURA REYNOLDS** is an active chamber and orchestral performer throughout Northern California. Principal oboist with the Santa Rosa Symphony, the California Symphony, and English horn with Marin Symphony, Ms. Reynolds is additionally a member of the wind *Trois Bois* and was a founding member of *Citywinds*, a San Francisco woodwind quintet dedicated to contemporary repertoire. She is a past participant in the Carmel Bach Festival and Sun Valley Music Festival and is currently a member of the applied faculty of Sonoma State University and the Pre-College and Extension Divisions at the SF Conservatory of Music.







Pianist **XIN ZHAO** received a B.M. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and an M.M. in Chamber Music Performance. Zhao received the San Francisco Conservatory's Mirina Grin Award, and the second annual Kristin Pankonin Art Song Award; she was also the First Place winner in the Fresno Music Club Awards, receiving the Bell T. Ritchie Award. Zhao has collaborated with the Master Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra and many prominent musicians including Menahem Pressler, Richard Fleischman, Pinchas Zukerman, Jeff Nuttall, members of Miro Quartet, and Jean-Michel Fonteneau. In 2016, Zhao's piano trio, the Capitoline, won the Berkeley Piano Club's Emerging Artist Award.

## ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



photo credit:  
Frogsong Photography

E4TT composer and founding member **DAVID GARNER** (b. 1954) won The American Prize in 2015 for his String Quartet No. 2. Garner's music has been reviewed as "alluring" and "a heady and touching revelation," and his works have been performed nationally and internationally by artists such as Suzanne Mentzner, Catherine Cook, Crystal Philippi, David Krakauer, and Matt Haimowitz. Garner's opera, "Mary Pleasant at Land's End," is in the final stages of pre-production. A faculty member in composition, chamber music, music theory and literature at the SF Conservatory of Music, Garner is a member of BMI, American Composers Forum, and the American Music Center.



One of America's most performed living composers, **LIBBY LARSEN** (b. 1950) has created a catalogue of over 400 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and over twelve operas. Grammy Award winning and widely recorded, including over fifty CD's of her work, she is constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world, and has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertory. A vigorous, articulate advocate for the music and musicians of our time, Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers (now the American Composer's) Forum, which has become an invaluable aid for composers in a transitional time for American arts. A former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Larsen has held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra and the Charlotte and Colorado Symphonies.



**JARED REDMOND** (b. 1986) is a musician based in Seoul, Berlin, and the San Francisco Bay Area. He writes for new music soloists and ensembles, and develops experimental works and new notation systems for Korean traditional performers. He is artistic director of new music collective Geori, and performs as pianist in both Geori and Boston-based experimental ensemble Ehnahre. In Seoul, he plays in free improvisation duo Beheaded. Jared has appeared as a piano soloist throughout North America, Europe, and Korea, and composes for himself and others internationally. He holds degrees from Brandeis University and the University of California at Berkeley, and has been a researcher at the Academy of Korean studies and the Kyujanggak Institute of Seoul National University.



**STEPHEN EDDINS** (b. 1954) wrote his first compositions when he was nine, songs for his church's children's choir, and a fascination with literary texts and the interplay between words and music has been a catalyst for much of his work. He received music degrees from Oberlin, the University of Akron, and a doctorate in composition from the University of Michigan. His stage works include *Paranoia: A Psycho-Opera*, incidental music for *Henry V*, *Macbeth*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (Yeats) and *Why I Live at the P.O.* (Eudora Welty), scenes from which were performed by Tapestry Opera; Fort Worth Opera's Frontiers Festival and West Edge Opera's Snapshot showcase, where it was described as "the home run... the highlight of a strong program." He recently participated in Opera Theater Unlimited's initial 48-Hour Opera Festival. Three Canadian companies have mounted his opera *The Doll's House*, with one production nominated for seven Toronto Theatre Guild awards, including Outstanding New Musical."



# Ensemble for These Times

ENSEMBLE FOR



## ONCE/MEMORY/NIGHT: PAUL CELAN

THESE TIMES

**Libby Larsen** (b. 1950) *4 1/2: A Piano Suite* (2016)

Xin Zhao, piano

(10:08)

- |                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| 1. I                        | 2:09 |
| 2. II <i>left hand only</i> | 1:36 |
| 3. III                      | 1:50 |
| 4. IV <i>In Memoriam</i>    | 1:58 |
| 5. V                        | 2:35 |

**David Garner** (b. 1954) *Die eichne Tür* (2017)

Nanette McGuinness, soprano; Laura Reynolds, English horn;  
Ilana Blumberg, violin; Anne Lerner, cello; Xin Zhao, piano

(22:35)

- |                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| 6. <i>In die Rillen</i>      | 3:53 |
| 7. Interlude 1               | 1:49 |
| 8. <i>Unter die Haut</i>     | 2:49 |
| 9. <i>Die Gauklertrommel</i> | 2:44 |
| 10. <i>Espenbaum</i>         | 4:45 |
| 11. Interlude 2              | 2:59 |
| 12. <i>Das Geschriebene</i>  | 3:36 |

**Jared Redmond** (b. 1986) *Nachtlang* (2017)

Nanette McGuinness, soprano; Anne Lerner, cello; Xin Zhao, piano

(11:53)

- |                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| 13. <i>Notturmo</i> | 4:51 |
| 14. <i>Einmal</i>   | 7:02 |

**15. Czeslaw Milosz** (1911-2004) *A Song on the End of the World* (1944)

Anthony Milosz, reader

1:51

**16. Stephen Eddins** (b. 1954) *A Song on the End of the World* (2018)

Nanette McGuinness, soprano; Anne Lerner, cello; Xin Zhao, piano

6:18

*Total Time: 52:45*

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