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## Conrad Susa's Discovery and Praises: A Conductor'S Guide to Performance Considerations

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CONRAD SUSA'S *DISCOVERY AND PRAISES*:  
A CONDUCTOR'S GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

by

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I am grateful to the many people who made it possible for me to complete this degree. Returning to school as full-time student has been rewarding and challenging. I conclude my studies at the University of South Carolina with a mix of excitement and sadness. The journey to completing this degree has been filled with wonderful experiences that I will cherish. I am thankful for the many friendships that have developed and blossomed during this time. While there are many who have assisted me, I would especially like to thank the following:

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## ABSTRACT

Conrad Susa (b. 1935) is an American composer who has contributed over thirty choral works that are of high quality incorporating texts written by well-known literary figures. His choral works are usually spiritual in nature though not strictly liturgical. *Discovery and Praises* is presently an unpublished cantata in four movements for mixed chorus, with solos for two sopranos, an alto, a tenor, and a baritone. The accompaniment is scored for organ, harp, percussion, flute, and handbells. Susa chose to set ancient poetry by Caedmon, Wipo of Burgundy, John Donne, and St. Patrick. Although the piece was composed in 1966 and revised in 1970, the focus of this study is the second revision completed in 1986. The purpose of this study is to bring to light an unpublished twentieth-century choral work by a significant American composer.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### **Brief History**

*Discovery and Praises* by American composer Conrad Susa (b. 1935) is a four-movement cantata for mixed chorus, two soprano soloists, one alto soloist, tenor and baritone soloists, organ, handbells, flute, harp, and percussion. The work has undergone two major revisions (1970, 1986) since its original conception in 1966. The most recent revision was completed on a commission from the Georgia Tech Foundation in conjunction with the centennial celebration of the Georgia Institute of Technology. The focus of this study will be the 1986 version. The work has existed only in the composer's manuscript until recently. A transcription of the piece into Finale music software is being completed as part of this study resulting in a performing edition of the work.

The choral music of Conrad Susa is generally tonal, but the key centers are often difficult to determine. Susa has a penchant for the interval of the second, its inversion, the seventh, and its expansion, the ninth. He uses a mixture of tertian, quartal, and quintal sonorities, polychords, triads with added notes and clusters of seconds. Susa shows a strong tendency toward linear writing resulting in non-functional "color" chords.<sup>1</sup> His melodies are often disjunct.

Susa chose ancient texts from four different authors for the four movements of *Discovery and Praises*. The first movement titled, "The Source," presents a text by the

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<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Otis Jackson, "The Choral Music of Conrad Susa" (DMA research paper, Michigan State University, 1984), 96.

seventh-century English monk, Caedmon. The second movement, “The Redemption,” is a setting of the Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes* attributed to Wipo (c. 995-c. 1048), a native of Burgundy. Wipo served as the chaplain to Emperor Konrad II (c. 990-1039) in the first half of the eleventh century. Susa chose the John Donne (1572-1631) sonnet “Death, be not proud” for the third movement titled “The Defiance.” The work ends with the text known as “The Deer’s Cry” written by Saint Patrick of Ireland in 433 CE. Susa added his own original text to extend the length of the movement.

### **Need for Study**

Conrad Susa is best known for his operas *Transformations* (1973) and *Dangerous Liaisons* (1994). His choral music has been studied on a limited basis despite his having written over thirty works. *Discovery and Praises* is a significant piece of choral literature that is virtually unknown except to those who have performed one of the three versions. The piece has been difficult to perform due to the lack of a printed score and lost instrumental parts. This study is intended to expand the awareness of the piece and discuss the editorial considerations in preparing the printed score and instrumental parts. Having access to a printed score and instrumental parts, conductors and singers will be able to present this work to a larger audience.

The study will endeavor to illuminate considerations germane to the preparation of the piece for a performance from the perspective of the conductor. The general characteristics of Susa’s compositional style as demonstrated in the score will be discussed. The performing forces will also be discussed so that the conductor may adequately consider programming this piece with an appropriate choir.

## **Delimitations of the Study**

To place *Discovery and Praises* in the context of Susa's output, a history of the evolution of this piece will be included. The three versions will be compared in order to show the differences among the revisions. Portions of the 1966 version were incorporated into the 1986 revision, and some of the original manuscripts have been lost. A copy of the 1970 version is housed in the New York Public Library. Susa decided to abandon the instrumentation of this version that included electric guitar and brass. In addition, a movement with text by St. Augustine was removed during the 1986 revision. For this study the 1970 version will be discussed only to provide historical context.

## **Organization**

Chapter One consists of the proposal for the study, which includes the Need for Study, Delimitations, Organization, and Literature Review. Chapter Two presents biographical information about Susa with particular attention to his time in Nashville, Tennessee working under a Ford Foundation Grant for the city schools. The original version of *Discovery and Praises* was first performed in Nashville in 1966. The commission for this piece resulted from the composer's friendship with Gregory Colson who was organist/choirmaster at St. George's Episcopal Church in Nashville in the 1960's. Chapter Three discusses the history and development of *Discovery and Praises*. The study will include insights obtained through an interview with the composer to help illuminate the compositional and performance aspects of the piece. An interview with Gregory Colson is also included providing a conductor's perspective. The text choices,

all from ancient sources, are discussed in their historical context to help conductors and singers understand their meaning. In an interview for a 1984 dissertation surveying his choral works, Susa stated that he is drawn to ancient texts as a source of embarkation.<sup>2</sup>

Chapter Four includes a discussion of the issues related to transcribing *Discovery and Praises* into a printed conductor's score, vocal/keyboard score, and the instrumental parts. The details of the transcription process are presented and variations from the manuscript are noted. Most of the editorial changes that have been made are to correct typographical errors and omissions. All editorial decisions will be discussed with the composer before the final printed version of the transcription is made public. These changes are subject to his approval.

Chapter Five summarizes the concepts and premises of this document, placing *Discovery and Praises* in the context of Susa's career. The discussion of performance considerations approaches the piece from the point of view of the conductor. The theoretical analysis approaches the work in the context of harmonic, melodic and rhythmic characteristics that are common among his choral works. He drew inspiration for this piece from Mahler's *Symphony No. 3*, Fifth Movement, Webern's *Six Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 6, Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*, and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. The subsequent discussions deal with aspects of the conductor's preparation of the work. The final focus of this section of the study will address logistical concerns in performing *Discovery and Praises*, including issues related to performing forces and programming. The goal of this paper is to disseminate information about this piece and bring this music to a larger audience of conductors and singers leading to more performances of the piece.

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<sup>2</sup> Jackson, 64.

## Review of Literature

The scholarly writing on Conrad Susa's music is limited at present. Gilbert Otis Jackson completed a DMA research paper in 1984 surveying Susa's choral music to that time. Jackson's work provides a helpful overview of Susa's compositional style and musical characteristics that are commonly found in his pieces. An article in the August 1956 issue of the journal *Diapason* provides some biographical information about the composer's early career.<sup>3</sup> The article about Susa included in *Oxford Music Online* provides more current biographical information.<sup>4</sup>

The four texts set to music in this piece are discussed briefly from a historical perspective. Several sources of literary criticism and history have been consulted to shed light on these thought-provoking texts. The first movement of the cantata is a setting of the text known as Caedmon's Hymn. *Caedmon: The First English Poet* by Robert Tate Gaskin presents a short biography of the poet, and the legend of how Caedmon was divinely inspired to write this hymn. The account of this story comes down to us in the writings of the medieval monk Bede (c. 672-735).<sup>5</sup> The collection of essays, *Caedmon's Hymn and Material Culture in the World of Bede* edited by Allen J. Frantzen and John Hines contains a series of essays discussing the social and historical contexts of Caedmon's life and work as a herdsman and cleric. Daniel Paul O'Donnell's chapter in

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<sup>3</sup> "Conrad Susa," *Diapason* 56 (August 1965): 10.

<sup>4</sup> "Susa, Conrad," *Oxford Music Online*.

[http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/47033?q=Conrad+Susa&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/47033?q=Conrad+Susa&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit) (accessed March 7, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Tate Gaskin, *Caedmon: The First English Poet* (New York: E. & J. B. Young, 1902) 3-4.

the above volume discussing Caedmon's Hymn in the context of Anglo-Saxon poetry gives us a point of reference to gain an understanding of the text.<sup>6</sup>

The second movement is a setting of an English translation of the Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*. This text is attributed to Wipo of Burgundy. A discussion of the historical and liturgical context of the Latin sequence can be found in *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Volume 1: Sacred Latin Texts* by Ron Jeffers. Additional biographical information about the eleventh-century cleric is found in Richard Crocker's article in *Grove Music Online* and Patricius Schlager's article "Wipo" found online in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Susa chose John Donne's Holy Sonnet X, "Death Be Not Proud" for the third movement. In *John Donne, Body and Soul*, author Ramie Targoff devotes a chapter to Donne's Holy Sonnets in their historical and literary contexts. The collection of scholarly essays, *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne*, provides insight into Donne's life and work. John Stubbs' biography *John Donne: The Reformed Soul* brings to light Donne's Catholic background in turbulent Tudor England, his struggles with his faith, and his fascination with death.

The fourth movement presents St. Patrick's "The Deer's Cry" taken from the Breastplate. Philip Freeman's *St. Patrick of Ireland* is an extensive biography of the life and work of the Irish cleric. In this book, the author discusses the historical context of this morning invocation of praise.

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Paul O'Donnell, "Material Differences: The Place of Caedmon's Hymn in the History of Anglo-Saxon Vernacular Poetry," *Caedmon's Hymn and Material Culture in the World of Bede*, ed. Allen J. Frantzen and John Hines (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2007), 15.

## **Methodology**

The study of Susa's *Discovery and Praises* has grown out of this author's journey with this piece from his first performance of the 1986 revision and a subsequent performance in 1990 with the Georgia Tech Chorale under the direction of Gregory Colson. The author has obtained anecdotal evidence that the 1970 version was performed at Duke University on May 9, 1970. The Duke Chorale archive contains only a listing of the performance date associated with the piece.

The 1986 revision of *Discovery and Praises* has been used for the transcription into a printed score and parts. A copy of the composer's facsimile edition was purchased from ECS Publishing and used as the basis for this study. The composer and the publisher have granted permission to undertake the study.

Personal interviews with the composer and Colson were recorded. Printed transcripts of the interviews are included as Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively. The information from these interviews regarding the commission, composition, and performance of *Discovery and Praises* has been invaluable to completing the study.

## CHAPTER II: BIOGRAPHY OF CONRAD SUSA

Conrad Stephen Susa was born in Springdale, Pennsylvania on April 26, 1935. During his undergraduate studies at Carnegie Mellon University, he studied music theory with Nickolai Lopatnikoff, counterpoint with Roland Leich, and flute with Bernard Goldberg. He completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1957 and a master's degree from the Julliard School in 1961. While at Julliard, Susa studied with Vincent Persichetti and William Bergsma.<sup>7</sup>

Susa was awarded a grant from the Ford Foundation in 1961 to compose music for the public schools in Nashville, Tennessee. During this period, he also composed pieces for the symphony orchestras in Nashville and San Diego.<sup>8</sup> Composed for the choir at St. George's Episcopal Church, "A Closing Anthem" was awarded first prize in the American Guild of Organists Prize Anthem Contest in 1965.<sup>9</sup> In 1972, after a period of activity in New York, Susa moved to San Francisco. He served as composer-in-residence for the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego (1959-94), and as dramaturge for the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theatre Center in Waterford, Connecticut. Since 1988, Susa has served on the faculty of San Francisco Conservatory in the composition department.<sup>10</sup>

A prolific composer of incidental music and choral works, he writes in a style characterized by an inventive use of tonality, brilliant instrumental and vocal timbres, and

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<sup>7</sup> *Bakers Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, Centennial Ed., s.v. "Susa, Conrad."

<sup>8</sup> "Conrad Susa," *Diapason*, (August 1965): 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>10</sup> "Susa," Oxford Music Online.



polyphonic textures. Susa has a penchant to write choral works for Christmas and Easter, and explores a wide range of emotions as exemplified in his five operas.

*Transformations* (1973), one of his most widely performed works, is based on a contemporary re-telling of Grimm's fairy tales by poet Ann Sexton (1928-1974).

Minnesota Opera gave the premier of this work in May 1973. *Black River: A Wisconsin*

*Idyll* (1975, rev. 1981, 1993) is a surrealistic tragedy set in late nineteenth-century rural

America. *The Wise Women* (1994) is both a Christmas mystery play and a witty parable.

*Dangerous Liaisons* (1994, rev. 1997) is a masterly study of desire and self-deception

cast as a grand opera.<sup>11</sup> San Francisco Opera premiered this work in 1994.

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<sup>11</sup> "Susa, Conrad" Oxford Music Online.

## CHAPTER III: HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK

### History

With a performance time of approximately twenty minuets, *Discovery and Praises* is Susa's first work of a substantial length. He describes the work as having a "wonderful kind of sincerity to it."<sup>12</sup> He did not feel that the first version was completely successful and completed a revision in 1970 at the request of J. Benjamin Smith that he felt was less successful. The first revision was heavily influenced by a summer of study with Igor Stravinsky. Susa incorporated rapidly changing mixed meter in keeping with Stravinsky's style. After radically changing the meter and adding instruments of a rock band, Susa realized that the addition of electric guitar and other elements of rock music of the early 1970s were perhaps best left to secular texts.<sup>13</sup> Both the 1966 and 1970 versions presented a sermon by St. Augustine to be read over an organ solo. After the 1970 performance at Duke University conducted by J. Benjamin Smith, this movement was removed because the text was deemed incomprehensible, and Susa decided it did not work with the accompaniment. In an interview with Gilbert Jackson, Susa expressed that he still did not have the instrumental forces under control even in this revision.<sup>14</sup> The final revision, completed in 1986, seems to have been more satisfying. The final orchestration consists of organ, harp, handbells, flute, and percussion. In correspondence

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<sup>12</sup> Jackson, 141.

<sup>13</sup> Conrad Susa, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, June 5, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson, 141.

with the author, Susa expressed that *Discovery and Praises* has been a favorite piece for a long time. He stated that he attempted to make the piece sound less like *Symphony of Psalms* even though he was inspired by the piece. He commented, “It’s as if Stravinsky and I ate at the same table.”<sup>15</sup>

Evidence of additional performances of *Discovery and Praises* is found in the archives of Gregory Colson who commissioned the work. Colson was the organist/choirmaster at St. George’s Episcopal Church in Nashville. He moved to Atlanta in 1968. In the spring quarter of 1976, he was hired as guest conductor of the Georgia Tech Glee Club and the newly formed Women’s Chorale. He continued in this position for the next twenty years. Colson programmed *Discovery and Praises* for tours with the Georgia Tech Chorale in March 1981 and March 1985. On March 9, 1986, a performance of the most recent version was presented at Northside Drive United Methodist Church in Atlanta as part of the centennial celebration of the Georgia Institute of Technology. Prior to this study, the last known full performance of *Discovery and Praises* took place in March 1990 for a Georgia Tech Chorale tour to California directed by Colson. The composer attended performances in San Francisco and San Diego.

## **Development**

According to Colson, the original orchestration was full orchestra including strings. Colson employed the forces of the Nashville Symphony to present monthly concerts of major choral-orchestral works as part of his duties as organist-choirmaster at St. George’s Episcopal Church. As Colson prepared to take the work on tour in 1981,

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<sup>15</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

Sue Goddard, accompanist for the Georgia Tech Chorale, reduced the orchestra parts to the organ part. The instrumental parts for the original orchestration are presumed lost.

Susa's compositional style can best be described as eclectic. There are, however, some general harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic gestures that recur throughout his output. Susa frequently uses vertical and horizontal seconds and fifths and vertical sevenths and ninths. His music is tonal but the final sonority is ambiguous. He uses triadic harmonies, groups of seconds that are spread out over a wide range, clusters of seconds in close position, polychords, seventh chords, and ninth chords. He also incorporates ostinato technique, pedal point and inverted pedal point.<sup>16</sup>

The end of the fourth movement exemplifies Susa's tendency toward ambiguity of the final tonality and his departure from conventional cadential formulas. The concluding "Amens" are far removed from the standard Plagal cadence often associated with this word. He also avoids authentic cadence formulas of the common practice period. The concluding "Amens" are foreshadowed at the end of the first movement in the organ. (Ex. 3.1) In the fourth movement, the composer chose a chord progression

Example 3.1 *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 1, mm. 10-11

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The musical score for Example 3.1 is written for Organ in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and ends with a half note B4. The bass staff begins with a half note G2, followed by a half note A2, and ends with a half note B2. Dynamics are marked *mf* for the first two measures and *p* for the final measure. The second system consists of a single bass clef staff. It begins with a half note G2, followed by a half note A2, and ends with a half note B2. Dynamics are marked *mf* for the first two measures and *p* for the final measure. A short pause is indicated at the end of the piece.

<sup>16</sup> Jackson, 28.

with a descending bass line that resembles a natural d-minor scale. The first “Amen” begins on a d-minor chord in first inversion moving to a C-major chord in first inversion with an added fourth (F). The second “Amen” returns to a d-minor sonority this time in root position moving to a quintal chord rooted on C. The final “Amen” begins on a B-flat major seven progressing with passing tones to a g-minor chord with a major seventh and ends on an e-minor chord with an added six (A). (Ex. 3.2) This concluding passage creates tension and release arriving at a final chord that is ethereal and tonally ambiguous. The key signature indicates no flats or sharps. Accidentals are used extensively to change the key center.

Example 3.2, *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 4, mm. 174-177  
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Some of the melodic characteristics common in Susa’s choral works include wide ranges for all parts, use of repeated notes, avoidance of melodic repetition, and use of melismatic writing as a word-painting device. In *Discovery and Praises*, he sets the text mostly in syllabic and neumatic constructions. While he uses conjunct melodic movement, he also moves in perfect intervals, thirds, sixths, and sevenths.<sup>17</sup> The larger leaps give a disjunct quality to the melodic lines, especially in the third movement that


<sup>17</sup> Jackson, 34.

draws inspiration from Webern's *Six Pieces for Orchestra* and Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*.

Susa likes to blur the sense of a regular rhythmic pattern. He accomplishes this by minimizing the strength and activity of the first beat of the measure. He uses syncopation frequently taking his rhythmic cues from the vowel lengths of the words. Susa changes meter often and uses asymmetric meters that also mimic the poetic rhythm of the text.<sup>18</sup> Many of the choral entrances happen on the second beat of the measure preceded by rests. He also uses notes tied across the bar line to minimize the downbeat stress. (Ex. 3.3)

Example 3.3. *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 3, mm. 45-53, Tenor/Bass  
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*dolcissimo*



And soon-est our best men with Thee do go,

Susa employs a variety of textural characteristics in his choral works. His basic texture consists of four vocal lines with organ or piano accompaniment. He alternates between homophonic and polyphonic sections. The composer sets portions of text with unison or octave singing for all the voice parts or smaller groupings. He moves from vocal lines in unison or octaves to harmony in order to create a variety of textures. (Ex. 3.4) Susa favors pairings of voices with soprano-alto and tenor-bass combinations being the most common. His use of imitation is generally free.<sup>19</sup> An example of his free

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<sup>18</sup> Jackson, 40.

<sup>19</sup> Jackson, 46.

imitation can be seen in the second movement, “The Redemption”, in measure 88 in the soprano and alto parts singing “Alleluia.” (Ex. 3.5)

Example 3.4 *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 2, mm. 100-106  
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Soprano 1  
 We know in truth, that Christ, the Lord, is ris-en from the dead, from the dead. —

Soprano 2  
 We know in truth, that Christ, the Lord, is ris-en from the dead, from the dead. —

Alto  
 We know in truth that Christ, the Lord, is ris-en from the dead, from the dead. —

Example. 3.5, *Discovery and Praises* Movement 2, mm. 88-90  
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Soprano 1  
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu

Soprano 2  
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu

Alto  
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu ia,

## Texts and Musical Inspirations

Susa chose one of the oldest known texts in English for the opening movement written by Caedmon (active ca. 657-680) in the seventh century. Caedmon is one of

three Anglo-Saxon vernacular poets for whom we have both contemporary biographical information and an extant example of his work.<sup>20</sup> Caedmon was a lay brother who cared for animals at what is now known as Whitby Abbey in Yorkshire.<sup>21</sup> In his writings about Caedmon, St. Bede (ca. 673-735) relates the story of Caedmon falling asleep while tending cattle and having a dream in which he was asked to sing. Caedmon protested at first that he could not sing. The story continues that after being told that he must sing, he inquired as to what he should sing, and was told to “sing of the beginning of things.”<sup>22</sup> Caedmon’s nine-line song of praise has become known as Caedmon’s Hymn.

The first movement of *Discovery and Praises*, “The Source,” is a duet for tenor and baritone set mostly in parallel thirds and fifths. The accompaniment consists of sustained organ chords punctuated by chords on the harp and interjections on the gong and bass drum. Susa sets the text “The King of mankind...” in parallel fifths reminiscent of organum, which is befitting this ancient text from the Middle Ages. Accompanying the words “The world in its beauty...” a chime tremolo is executed with felt vibraphone mallets giving the phrase an ethereal quality. Caedmon’s words have an innocent character that provides the awe of the discovery of a beautiful world. In Susa’s original concept of this piece, a sermon by St. Augustine was intended as the “discovery” portion of the title. After he removed the Augustine sermon, Susa felt he had a better title than he had a piece. A combination of praise and new awareness of the benevolence of the creator combine in the remaining texts to give the piece a sense of discovery.

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<sup>20</sup> Daniel Paul O’Donnell, “Material Differences: The Pace of Caedmon’s Hymn in the History of Anglo-Saxon Vernacular Poetry,” *Caedmon’s Hymn and Material Culture in the World of Bede*. ed. by Allen J. Frantzen and John Hines. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2007) 15.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Humphreys Villiers Gurteen, *The Epic of the Fall of Man: A Comparative Study of Caedmon, Dante and Milton*, (New York: Haskell House, 1964) 83.

<sup>22</sup> Gaskin, 3-4.



The second movement, “The Redemption,” presents Susa’s own translation of the Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*. Authorship of this sequence is attributed to the eleventh-century Burgundian priest and poet, Wipo. The sequence was used in the Easter Miracle or Mystery Plays of the late medieval period. It is a dramatic text that was influential in the development of liturgical drama. Composers have been drawn to this text for centuries.<sup>23</sup> Susa created an original tune for this ancient text and chose to avoid the traditional chant.

According to the composer, “The Redemption” draws inspiration from the fifth movement of the Symphony No. 3 by Gustav Mahler. The movement opens with the soprano II singing “Alleluia” while the divisi tenor section imitates church bells. Mahler uses a children’s choir to create his bell effects at the beginning of the fifth movement of his symphony. Susa follows Mahler’s model by setting the main text for women’s voices. The tenors and basses accompany the sopranos and altos with a series of bell imitations and an occasional “Alleluia” throughout the second movement. The 1966 version of this movement was for women’s voices only. The tenor and bass parts were added in the 1986 revision to make use of the large men’s sections of the Georgia Tech Chorale. The orchestration for this movement is very bright with the use of glockenspiel, handbells, and chimes added to the organ and harp parts.

Susa borrows a motive found in measure 4 of the Mahler as an anchor for the second movement. The clarinets and bassoons play the motive in octaves in the Mahler symphony. Susa introduces it in the left hand of the organ part in measure 5. He adds a dot to the first eighth note in place of Mahler’s rest making the motive more legato. A

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<sup>23</sup> Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Volume 1: Sacred Latin Texts* (Corvallis, OR: Earthsongs, 1988) 245.



an immoral life would be condemned to eternal damnation. In his *Holy Sonnets* his fears are represented as the earliest imaginings of divine judgment.<sup>24</sup> This text shows the abject terror that he must have felt toward death and the perceived consequences of living an unholy life.

Susa begins this movement with an instrumental introduction that is ominous and mysterious reflecting the fear and curiosity in the poem. The opening uses a sixteen-foot reed stop in the organ pedal and shorter reeds on the manuals. The gong creates a mysteriously majestic effect as if some ancient ruler is about to enter the room. With its indication to play *sforzando*, the bass drum in measure 3 serves as a jolt to bring the listener back to reality and heightens the sense of dread of impending death. (Ex. 3.7) The opening passage is repeated with slight alteration in the organ pedal. A third variation of the opening material precedes the first entrance of the voices. The three statements of this melodic idea could be interpreted as an angry reference to the Trinity. The silence following each bass drum hit in the opening passage serves as a brief moment of contemplation that one may have gone too far in shaking his fist at God.

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<sup>24</sup> Ramie Targoff, *John Donne, Body and Soul* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) 106.

Example 3.7 *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 3, mm. 1-13  
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Broodingly, with motion ♩ = 54

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with multiple staves:

- System 1 (Measures 1-6):**
  - Harp:** Two staves in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *f* (measures 1-2), *f* (measures 5-6).
  - Gong:** One staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *pp* (measures 1-2), *pp* (measures 5-6). Includes instruction: "(with gong beater)".
  - Bass Drum:** One staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *molto sfz* (measures 3-4), *sempre L.V.* (measures 5-6). Includes instruction: "(tilted and muffled)".
  - Organ:** Two staves in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *mf* (measures 1-2), *mf* (measures 5-6). Includes instructions: "GT or CH: Reed 8", "SW: Reeds 8", "Pedal: 16' Reed (with a snarl) (Enclosed)".
  - Bottom Staff:** A single staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *f* *menacingly* (measures 1-2), *p* (measures 3-4), *p* < *f* (measures 5-6), *p* (measures 5-6).
- System 2 (Measures 7-13):**
  - Hp.:** Two staves in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *p* (measures 7-8), *f* (measures 9-10), *p* (measures 11-12), *f* (measures 13).
  - Gong:** One staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *p* (measures 7-8), *f* (measures 9-10), *p* (measures 11-12), *f* (measures 13).
  - B. Dr.:** One staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *p* (measures 7-8), *f* (measures 9-10), *p* (measures 11-12), *f* (measures 13).
  - Org.:** Two staves in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *f* (measures 7-8), *p* (measures 9-10), *f* (measures 11-12), *f* *cantabile* (measures 13). Includes instructions: "(Eng. hn.)", "(CH)".
  - Bottom Staff:** A single staff in 3/4 time. Dynamics: *p* (measures 7-8), *f* (measures 9-10), *p* (measures 11-12), *p* (measures 13).

In the third movement, Susa drew inspiration from Anton Webern's (1883-1945) *Six Orchestral Pieces*, Op. 6. In an interview with the author, Susa states that he uses some quotations from this piece though no direct quotations have been discovered. According to Gregory Colson, *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1947) by Arnold Schoenberg was also a source of inspiration for this movement.<sup>25</sup> The similarities between "The Defiance" and Schoenberg's work can be seen in the unison men's singing and the wide leaps in the melodic line. The disjunct melodies that are common in dodecaphonic music are very appropriate to the character of Donne's text. At measure 40, the melodic line is more conjunct for the text "From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be." The choir is instructed to sing *cantabile*, and the character changes briefly from the ominous to a more peaceful sonority. The disjunct character of the melody returns in measure 54 for the text "Rest of their bones..." returning to the ominous mood. In measure 73, a phrase marked *espressivo* presenting the words "One short sleep past, we wake eternally," is another brief respite from the angry tone of the poem. The end of this movement, "And death shall be no more, death, thou shalt die," is set in the upper male register and marked *fiercely* on the last phrase of text. The men sing this movement in unison until measure 78 where Susa has set the word "die" on a D major triad as if to declare triumph over death. (Ex. 3.8) The sopranos and altos join the tenors and basses on the neutral syllable "ohm" for the final chord. All the instruments play at this point creating the impression that death has ultimately been defeated. The closing "ohm" creates the effect that good has triumphed over evil and life in some form will continue for eternity. The flute sustains an A<sup>5</sup> over the final chord that segues into the fourth movement, enhancing the effect that life will continue.

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<sup>25</sup> Greg Colson, interview with author, Atlanta, GA, January 18, 2013.

Example 3.8 *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 3, mm. 73-80, Tenor and Bass  
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*mp* *espress.*

One short sleep past, we wake e-ter-nal - ly, And death \_\_\_\_ shall be no more.

*fiercely* *ff*

\_\_\_\_ Death, Thou shalt die. die \_\_\_\_ die \_\_\_\_

“The Defiance” carries a dedication to Jack Cecil (1942-1966). Cecil was a member of the choir at St. George’s Episcopal Church in Nashville during the time the first version of *Discovery and Praises* was written. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer and did not survive the year of the premiere. According to the composer, this was the first of a number of dedications that appear in his music.<sup>26</sup> These dedications are almost always for someone who died.

Following the destruction of death in the third movement, the closing movement, “The Confession,” opens with a calm “Alleluia” in a slow tempo. For this movement, Susa was inspired by the opening of the third movement of Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*. Stravinsky presents the “Alleluia” once before launching into the “Laudate Dominum” text. Susa opens “The Confession” with an extended eight measure “Alleluia” that creates an atmosphere of the sunrise after a stormy night that occurred in the third movement. The baritone and tenor soloists return in measure 13 reciting the words of St. Patrick of Ireland (385-460). This duet is similar in structure to *Symphony of*

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<sup>26</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

*Psalms* in that the tenors and basses sing the opening statement of “Laudate Dominum” in octaves. The text known as “The Deer’s Cry” or “The Breastplate of St. Patrick” (*Lorica* in Latin; *Fáeth Fiada* in Irish) is a morning song of praise and invocation. It has been attributed to Patrick from the earliest times, but some scholars believe now that it may have been written at least a century after his death. It is a powerful prayer full of nature imagery. It calls on the Trinity for guidance and protection against a variety of evils such as the spells of witches, blacksmiths, who were thought to have supernatural powers in Celtic society, and Druids.<sup>27</sup> Blacksmiths and other metal workers held a place of high honor in Celtic society, perhaps because of their ability to transform seemingly useless material such as iron ore into useful objects. These craftsmen guarded their secrets and had their own god called Goibhniu in Ireland.<sup>28</sup> He was known by different names in other Celtic regions. Susa paraphrases much of the original text adding his own words beginning in measure 135. He stated that he found more things for which the Lord would be useful. These added words, according to the composer, “were written quite purposely and without any strain. They came to me quite logically. I thought they were logical from the point of view of where the poem was going.”<sup>29</sup> The baritone and tenor soli return at measure 148 accompanied by the choir. Susa closes this movement with a duet recitative similar to the one that opened the piece bringing some symmetry to the overall structure of the work. The piece closes with a three-fold “Amen” for five voices. The chord progression used for the closing of the fourth movement is foreshadowed by

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<sup>27</sup> Philip Freeman, *St. Patrick of Ireland: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) 161.

<sup>28</sup> Joan P. Alcock, *Daily Life of the Pagan Celts* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2009), 116

<sup>29</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

the closing chord progression of the first movement adding another level of continuity to the work as a whole.

Susa chose a declamatory style of setting the primary text in the second movement. The text in this movement is set syllabically with a few instances of neumatic usage in measure 33 for the word “living” and for the “Alleluia” in measures 36 to 38. The only other instances of neumatic text setting in this movement occur in measure 113 on the word “Lord” in the soprano II and alto parts. He gives a similar treatment to “Lord” in the soprano I in measures 115 and 116. The third movement presents the text in a declamatory style using syllabic text setting. Florid text setting is avoided because of the basic angry mood of Donne’s poetry.

The fourth movement contains a few examples of word painting. The first instance occurs in measures 52 to 57. The composer sets the word “Ascension” in the classic rising pitches in measures 52 and 53. On the text “for the judgment of doom,” Susa sets the upper four voices in a descending pattern in contrary motion with the bass II. This phrase concludes with a F-flat minor chord on the word “doom” marked *non diminuendo* to avoid the singer’s tendency to decrescendo on the descending line at the end of the phrase. In measures 78 to 82, the setting of the text “swirl of fire, rush of wind, depth of sea, might of rock” is neumatic with all the voices in the upper register giving a bright, tempestuous quality. Even though the harmony is static for all three phrases of text, this passage gives the impression of a sequence with the same rhythm pattern for each phrase. The individual chord progression changes rapidly within each phrase providing an obvious example of word painting. (Ex. 3.9) To further enhance the stormy quality of this passage, the glockenspiel and vibraphone play tremolo chords. The harp



plays *glissandi* spanning three octaves. The organ supports the singers playing parallel fifths with the same eighth-note pattern as the voices.

Example 3.9 *Discovery and Praises*, Movement 4, mm. 78-82  
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The musical score consists of five staves, each representing a different voice part. The Soprano staff is at the top, followed by Alto, Tenor, Baritone, and Bass at the bottom. The music is written in 3/8 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The Soprano part is marked with *brillante* and *non rit.*. The lyrics are: "Swirl of fire, rush of wind, depth of sea, might of rock." The Tenor part includes the word "ia!" before the lyrics. The other parts (Alto, Baritone, Bass) follow the same melodic line as the Soprano but without the *brillante* and *non rit.* markings.

The texts for *Discovery and Praises* are spiritual in nature and have strong connections to the Christian faith. These writings are more reflective of the personal faith struggles of their authors. Susa stated that he always has a spiritual connection to all the texts he chooses to set. He said that he has no interest in setting passages from the Bible. He finds the wayward religiosity of persons like St. Patrick and John Donne to be much more interesting and refreshing. Susa’s texts for this piece are statements about the challenges of humankind as we move through our daily lives. “You can say it is the peril of walking through the woods. It’s just downright ordinary in a way, the texts. They are very down to earth texts.”<sup>30</sup> These texts require some life experience in order to be

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<sup>30</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

understood fully. They will have an impact on people of all ages, but a degree of maturity brings new and different meaning to the texts.

#### CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION OF THE TRANSCRIPTION PROCESS

*Discovery and Praises* has only existed in manuscript form until now. As part of this study, the author has undertaken a transcription of the piece in order to make the score easier to interpret. The first tasks were to copy the musical elements and texts into the Finale music software program. The transcription is based on a copy of the composer's manuscript of the full score purchased by the author from ECS Publishing.

In addition to a full score, the instrumental parts have been extracted using the "Extract Parts" feature of the Finale software. The vocal solo lines have been moved above the chorus parts reflecting a typical choral score order. A vocal/organ score was created so that the singers and the organist could work from a score that would fit into a standard sized folder or binder.

A limited number of editorial changes have been made in the transcription. These changes were made mostly to correct omissions and typographical errors in the manuscript. (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1. Editorial Changes

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
I. The Source	1	Fermata added in the left hand downbeat of the organ part	Harp and Cymbal have a fermata on the downbeat
II. The Redemption	9	Tied 8th note in T2 omitted	Rests in the previous measure
II. The Redemption	21	Accent added to beat 3 of T2 part	Other notes in the pattern have one
II. The Redemption	30	Accent added to T1	Other notes in the pattern have one
II. The Redemption	37	Slur added to T2	Consistent with other parts
II. The Redemption	44	Accent added to T1	Other notes in the pattern have one
II. The Redemption	111	B in LH of organ part transcribed as half note, looks like a quarter note	Creates the correct number of beats
II. The Redemption	115	Flag added to last 16 <sup>th</sup> note in RH of organ part	Dots on previous notes in manuscript
IV. The Confession	Whole movement	Measure numbers shifted to reflect the two-beat anacrusis	
IV. The Confession	4	Quarter rest changed to half rest	Measure was one beat short
IV. The Confession	30	Manual parts in the organ, last 2 beats written as a half rest	Common practice
IV. The Confession	41	Dots added to A <sup>b</sup> and E <sup>b</sup> in the RH of the organ part	Consistent with other parts
IV. The Confession	78-80	Pedal part in the organ, last 2 beats written as a half rest	Common practice
IV. The Confession	90	Half rest on downbeat of baritone changed to quarter rest	Consistent with other parts, too many beats
IV. The Confession	94	Dot added to half note in baritone line	Consistent with other parts
IV. The Confession	129-131	Dots added to LH of organ part	Consistent with other parts
IV. The Confession	135	Stem added to A <sup>#</sup>	Half note corrects rhythm
IV. The Confession	149	Dot added to downbeat of baritone solo	Consistent with other parts
IV. The Confession	155	Missing Quarter rest added to flute part	Consistent with other parts
IV. The Confession	161	“Call” in the manuscript omitted in T2	Consistent with other parts

## CHAPTER V: PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS AND SUMMARY

### **Performance Considerations**

It is the hope that the information provided here will aid other conductors who may wish to perform this work. *Discovery and Praises* requires five soloists (Soprano I and II, Alto, Tenor, and Baritone), a chorus with a substantial men's section, and an accomplished organist. The instrumentation is unusual requiring harp, flute, two percussionists and handbells. The soloists can be drawn from the choir if they are accomplished singers. The baritone solo stays consistently in the upper register and requires a certain degree of skill from the singer. The same can be said of the tenor solo. The range of the women's soli lies in the middle to upper middle register. They are shorter in length than the tenor and baritone soli, but they also require a level of skill and projection that will allow these passages to be heard over the choir and instruments.

Each movement is through composed. A study of the score reveals the divisions that occur according to the changes of the text. Many of the sections are separated by instrumental interludes making the movements easy to divide into teaching units. Because new material is presented, the transitions between sections can be challenging to learn. The individual sections can seem unrelated during the learning process.

The tessitura and the leaps in the disjunct melodies that are common throughout the piece require stamina and agility. The choir's vocal production should be round, full, and well supported. Bright vowels allow the choir to be heard over the instruments. Except for the third movement, the texts are full of wonder and praise. The texts in the

first, second and fourth movements have a quality of childlike discovery of something new. Movement three, “The Defiance,” requires the tenors and basses to sing with a heavier sound production reflecting the angry mood of the text. The piece is best paired with other works of a spiritual or contemplative nature. *Discovery and Praises* is not conceived as a piece for liturgical use even though Susa calls it an Easter cantata. Church choirs who routinely sing advanced repertoire will find this piece satisfying in the context of a concert outside the regular worship experience. College choirs and community choruses will find this piece both challenging and rewarding to perform.

### **Summary**

Conrad Susa’s music is accessible to performers and audiences with a wide range of musical knowledge. While his compositional style is based on traditional tonal models, he uses non-traditional harmonic and melodic gestures. These elements combine to create choral pieces of great beauty with enough challenge to maintain the interest of seasoned performers. Susa’s pieces that have been published have gained popularity among choral conductors and performers. It is the hope of this study to facilitate awareness of *Discovery and Praises* and allow it to become a popular choice for choirs and audiences.

*Discovery and Praises* is a pastiche of influences and inspirations from works by Mahler, Webern, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky. The first version of the work reflects the efforts of an emerging composer searching for his unique voice. Susa stated, “It served its purpose in sort of lifting me out of the bathtub of my childhood and dumping me in the

sandbox of life, but it never dried me off exactly.”<sup>31</sup> The most recent version represents the work of a mature composer while keeping the core elements of the early composition. Susa puts his own voice into the piece especially in the instrumental accompaniment. The orchestration has evolved from full orchestra using strings to the addition of electric guitar in the 1970 revision and settling with the organ, harp, flute, percussion and handbells in the 1986 revision. *Discovery and Praises* has not been published because Susa feels that the piece “never quite worked.”<sup>32</sup> The composer may hold this opinion because he drew inspiration from other composers. While the influences are clear, musicians have borrowed from each other since ancient times. He uses thematic material as a point of embarkation, but he transforms the source material into music that is uniquely Susa. The version from 1986 seems to be a cohesive unit in this author’s mind and in the mind of Gregory Colson, who commissioned the piece. The ancient texts juxtaposed with the musical influences from the last decade of the nineteenth century and various periods of the twentieth century combine to create a choral cantata that deserves more attention.

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<sup>31</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

<sup>32</sup> Susa, interview with the author.

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APPENDIX A  
Interview with Conrad Susa  
Recorded June 5, 2012

KEITH WALKER: I would like to begin with some general questions about *Discovery and Praises*. I know that the piece was composed originally in 1966, with a revision in 1970, and the final version being completed in 1986. Can you describe the differences among those three versions?

CONRAD SUSA: The work grew up in a very “higgledy-piggledy” kind of way. At that age when I started the work, I was very concerned that I had not written a large work. So I thought maybe a choral work would help where I would have a text at least to sort of get me going. I have a hard time being drawn to instrumental music for some reason. I don’t know why. When I do my theatre music, I don’t have any trouble at all, but when it comes to doing anything of my own, I prefer having a text to set. So I gathered a number of texts and settled on the idea of the Caedmon to start. I was pleased that it was the first known poem in English, and that makes it one of our earliest poems. I thought since this is my earliest big work, I will start with Caedmon. And then looking through my book, which was an anthology of poems, I came upon the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* which I knew, and I thought well that’s a little further along by this time. That poem was actually by a poet who was fourth century or something like that. Wipo, whoever Wipo was. I really like that poem. I always have since I was a little choirboy. I did a kind of

translation, which I think is better than the one they normally give. “Death and Life, their conflict have resolved,” seems to me a very clear statement of what happens. “Death and Life, the King of Death reigns living” or whatever it is. Then I decided it would be interesting to have an instrumental work in the middle of it, like the Mahler symphonies. They are sort of mish-mashes of instrumental and choral things. They are always built around a theme of some sort, and I was working in Mahlerian dimensions at that point. He was a big influence at the time. I put off what it was going to be. Then I realized that what I was struggling with was a sermon by St. Augustine called... basically it was about how we experience God without any sensations, how that’s done. And closing, I thought the St. Patrick was kind of jolly and nice. So I was going to write a Mahler symphony by me, and that is why there is so much Mahler in it. There is a lot of the Mahler Third in the *Victimae Paschali*, for example. I would say there is a lot of Stravinsky’s ... who went underground? She became the seasons, right on the tip of my tongue. [Demeter and Persephone]. Stravinsky wrote a beautiful work with narrator and ballet. The daughter of Ciries goes underground because she ate some of the seeds and becomes Pluto’s queen. I was interested in a seasonal explanation of birth and death as an aspect of the changing of the seasons and the growing of the plants. That also showed my interest in Joseph Campbell. Do you know Joseph Campbell?

KW: I don’t

CS: He is somebody you should look at. He is able to tie the myths of different countries and show their similarities. He shows Tibetan myths and Christian myths and show all are explainable in terms of the other. And also more miraculously in our dreams and this is your own. We frequently dream the same thing other people dream. And what a witch

doctor dreams, he dreams the dreams of his community. That is how he is able to lead it. A president, ideally, dreams the dreams of his country. It should enter into his dream life like those frightening dreams of Abraham Lincoln where he was on a rudderless ship. And it terrified him. He had that dream the night before he was assassinated. It was a repeating dream. Anyway, the dreams frequently contain answers to questions we did not ask. And so I wanted the work to be multi-faceted. It couldn't be a Christian work with all that stuff going on even though St. Patrick appears at the end and blesses the world because he finds it jolly. This gave me a lot to do as a composer and I tried ... now the great difficulty was to try and unify all these styles, which I never completely did. But I thought that the orchestration would do that. That didn't work the first time. I orchestrated for the wrong ensemble, and that sort of happened the [second] time when we had sort of a rock orchestra. I thought well maybe it is something else. And that middle section proved to be the biggest problem because it was a narration over an organ background. It was the "discovery". The other poems were all praises. And what the "discovery" was that God is some how in us. That was achieved by St. Augustine in one of his sermons. It's a very interesting sermon, but it is incomprehensible. We had a radio announcer read it and no one understood a word of it. Greg [Colson] didn't understand a word of it. I barely understood it, and I thought this isn't going to go. How can you have a work try and explain something and have it be incomprehensible? So I yanked that and we'll just not have it; so the work should technically just be called *Praises*. But there is something about "discovery" in the first poem where they discover the new world, "the world in its beauty," and so forth. I thought, well, that will have to suffice; that very

slender little thread. My problem being that I was stuck with a title that was better than the work or at least as far as I felt.

The third revision involved taking a look at the texts again, deciding they were all right, finding new ways of unifying the music, and of extending the last piece so that it did not sound so much like the Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms*, which it does anyway. Sort of, and yet it doesn't. It does and it doesn't, you know. It's as if Stravinsky and I ate at the same table. But I didn't have any more words. St. Patrick did not give me any more words. So, I just made up the last verses of that "keep us from harm and sudden death." I found more things that the Lord would be useful for. I should have said things like high taxes; then, it would have turned into a revue of some sort. They were written quite purposely and without any strain. They came to me quite logically. You told me you liked those words in particular. I thought they were logical from the point of view of where the poem was going. "Protect me from things that do me harm; I want to die and wake in the city beside you." That seemed to be a very nice image. So that's how the poem went. I did the final version without hearing it until Greg did it on the California Tour [Georgia Tech Chorale, 1990]. That was quite a nice performance of it.

Typically, Greg commissions a particular orchestration: dah dah dah plus harp. So the very next thing that happens is he calls me, he says, "Conrad, I can't find a harp anywhere. Is it alright if I substitute a piano?" I said, "NO! You picked a G\*\*damn harp. I didn't." He says, "Well, what about the tour? If I go on a tour, I can't afford a harp." I said, "If you can't afford a harp, don't tell me about it. I will never give you permission to substitute anything for the harp because that is what I wrote it for, but if

you have to take something else, don't tell me because you won't get it! You picked the harp. I didn't."

KW: And I seem to remember that he found a harpist in each of the cities where we performed.

CS: Oh, I am sure he did. That is basically the story of that work. I did keep writing until I thought it was finished.

KW: The 1970 version of it. I have come across some information that there was a performance of it at Duke [University] with Benjamin Smith conducting, I believe. Can you tell me anything about that performance?

CS: I have a very hazy picture of that. Benjamin Smith was somebody I had always wanted to meet. He was a good friend of Greg's, and Greg said, "Wait till you meet Ben." I hated him. I was just chemically so turned off by him, and by everything he did, and by all his ideas about everything. I felt...somebody phonier than Greg. Greg seems like the soul of honesty compared to this guy. And I think that is one of the reasons Greg liked him, because they had sort of Clintonesque oil going between them. He was perceived to be a good musician, don't get me wrong, but I just couldn't stand him. And then we wanted to do this version and include an electric guitar and we flew that man down from Connecticut. He played very well. We had a radio announcer do the St. Augustine sermon over the music, and that poor soul was so far off. He couldn't read the back of a recipe box. [Speaking in a monotone] "He spoke like this, and then this happened, and then there was this [upward inflection], and then it rained, and we're getting better weather..." I just about died. I felt sorry for him because he really didn't want to do it. We both convinced him he could. I was wrong. [Inaudible] That was the

most radical production in a way of the productions. I came to realize that it was not going to be a rock piece with a sacred text. It was the height of those kinds of things. My work was an un-happening, I suppose.

KW: The John Donne poem that is the third movement.

CS: Oh, yes. I forgot about that.

KW: What drew you to that particular poem?

CS: I had always liked that poem. That's a tremendous poem. It's the greatest piece of literature in the work, and I thought this poem doesn't need me, but I'd love to set it. It doesn't need to be set to music at all, and actually it took a lot of guts for me to set it. It's also the most Mahlerian of the settings. It has some Webern, some quotations from the Six Orchestra pieces. I thought that was another style of mine that I could write in, but I didn't go that way. There I was trying to write a work, and all these different styles, they were all genuine. I could have any of those roads. Of course, the question is which road would it be? It had to be something finally that was based on my honesty with myself, not my attempt to make an effect in music or do what some great master did or anything of the kind and be something I stood behind and be something that came from me.

KW: I noticed at the end of the second movement [actually the third movement] that you have a dedication to someone important in your life, Jack Cecil.

CS: Jack Cecil was a boy in Greg's choir in Nashville. I find out he was dying of cancer. I don't think he outlived that particular year [1966]. I'll never forget sitting on a sofa talking to somebody and eating I don't know what and drinking I don't know what. Jack was on a sofa, right there [gesturing to a nearby sofa] and he was talking to us all too, and

every once in a while he had this kind of staggering wince. I asked Greg, “What is wrong with Jack?” “It’s cancer. It’s eating him up.”

KW: Wow! That second movement is such a lovely tribute.

CS: He was in Greg’s choir at the time. I wanted to be able to honor him with something.

KW. Having sung the piece, I had seen the dedication and had never heard that story before.

CS: Jack Cecil was a beautiful boy. That helped. He was the first of a number of dedications that appear in my music. Generally, they are somebody who died. I found it appropriate to dedicate that movement to him. It does not mean anything to the audience to know that, but there it is. What history.

KW: It makes for good program notes.

CS: That’s followed by the John Donne. See, I didn’t want to dedicate that one to him.

KW: I can understand that.

CS: The awesomeness of that “from . . . death, much pleasure then from Thee much more must flow and soonest our best me with Thee do go...” Awesome! Ending on a C-sharp or something. It turns out that voice is in the baritone. That characteristic hollow color couldn’t have been a better note than that. “Rest of their souls...” John Donne was such a shit, but he wrote great poems.

KW: What I have read, he seems a bit stern.

CS: If you go to Ireland to the cathedral of St. Patrick’s, his tomb is there. The effigy is a sort of statue wrapped in gauze. It is a frightening image. He was dean there along with the guy who wrote *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift. The Handel *Messiah* was rehearsed



about two doors away for the first time. I don't know if it was performed at St. Patrick's church or not.

KW: Other than the Tech performances and the one at Duke, are you aware of any other performances of *Discovery and Praises*?

CS: No. I never tried to have the piece published. It served its purpose in sort of lifting me out of the bathtub of my childhood and dumping me in the sandbox of life, but it never dried me off exactly. It was too uneven and in a way, uncharacteristic of me. So I didn't then nor still do seek to have it performed. I don't know what to make of it. I sound like everybody but me. There isn't a note that sounds like me in there except the parts that sound like other people. The very opening is very Susaesque and I still use that kind of opening. It taught me a lot of things that I didn't know at the time, having to write the work teaches you technique. You have to come up to express what the text is doing. It's a big one.

KW: It is definitely a big piece and having sung it... That brings up another question. The only other two pieces of yours that I have sung are *Christmas Garland* and your *Benediction* that you wrote for the '90 Tech tour. Do you tend to set pieces particularly for men's voices consistently in the upper register? That is one of the things that I have noticed.

CS: Do I write too high?

KW: When I first sang it, that was one of my objections, but I had not been trained. Now that I am a trained singer those notes are much easier to negotiate, but as an untrained singer, baritones will complain especially maintaining that tessitura.

CS: I don't think I go above D.

KW: No, you didn't. I have had baritones and bass sections complain if you take them above A.

CS: Well, basses I can imagine...

KW: Volunteer groups...

CS: Complained about it because they lose their quality and it's hard for them.

Baritones should not be afraid to go up to D. Maybe I listen to too Handel.

KW: He has a tendency to keep us a little high as well.

CS: It is the reason the music has brilliance. If you write too low, the music doesn't have brilliance.

KW: True. Good point.

CS: Also, it's too relaxed because everybody is very comfortable. It frequently doesn't have the kind of edge intention that you want it to have. So you have to write up and make them work hard so that the work has intensity. You don't want to write it too high, of course. You say, *Christmas Garland*?

KW: Yes. It has been a few years since I have done it. I don't remember that one being as high except in spots. Again, it helps create the brilliance and I did not go back and look at the score before I came over.

CS: I don't remember being high in *Christmas Garland* because I wanted to make it as easy as possible so that it could be sung with audience. Well, if it's a little high, they have to work.

KW: I know, for me, now as a trained baritone, I find that I tend to enjoy singing that register a little more than I did before I formally trained. I think a lot of that depends on the training level of the singers in the group.

CS: That's true. I am used to professional singers, and they have never balked at this.

KW: I know pretty much of the students at Georgia Tech back when we were doing this [*Discovery and Praises*], we had minimal formal training, if any as singers other than church choir or some with private lessons here and there, but none of use were formally classically trained at that point. It created some interesting challenges.

CS: I think if you sing a lot of Handel and Baroque music you find that the baritone is a little higher.

KW: True. It is.

CS: Because it is a different kind of sound that it's producing. It is more agile and light sound. If I am commissioned to write a new piece for a group, I usually try and find out what their range is and then go ahead and write. All the works that I have written have their reasons for being that way. I really don't know.

KW: Something that I read in the dissertation that Gilbert Jackson did some years ago [1984] that is a survey of your choral music, you stated that you tend to write for the text. It was a comment that you made at that point. Obviously, any good composer would do that if he or she is going to be successful.

CS: It is amazing how many composers don't or how oblivious they are frequently of the power of a text. I generally memorize the text, and I try to work it out grammatically if it's a complex text, and you try to find the elements you have to balance like in "Death Be Not Proud." You get a sense that it is only half of the equation of what is being said. The things that happen, "death shall die..." Wow! That is going to create some problems.

There is one piece I set; it talks about Mary being the empress of hell. “Noel, Noel, Noel,”—something about carry the bell. It sings that Mary when Jesus dies will become the empress of hell. So he says, what’s that all about. That’s not in the Bible. Well, the idea is that he goes to hell to bring up the souls of the faithful. It means he establishes his dominion on that area of purgatory, I guess. As his mother, if she was up until then Queen of Heaven, then she becomes Empress of Hell. It falls into her lap. It is not anything she would have sought. “Oh, God, Jesus, I don’t want anything like that. I don’t like those people.” “Well, Mom...” The family squabbles. It’s all so silly.

KW: The four texts that you chose for *Discovery and Praises*, they are all sort of religious in nature, but they are obviously not Biblical, not scriptural. Was there some sort of spiritual connection to these texts?

CS: Oh sure. I always have a spiritual connection to all the texts I write. I think that the Bible...if you are going to set text from the Bible, you have to believe the Bible. I’m not interested in the Bible. I find that a very stuffy book. I find the kind of wayward religiosity you find in St. Patrick and all those crazies so much more refreshing and interesting and “happy-making.” To get tied up in the Bible means that you believe it. For a composer, it’s a book. I don’t think I can set what I believe because quite frankly I work very hard not to believe anything. It has taken me all my life to do it, but I think there is some truth to that. Served not with a grain of salt; I don’t take it trivially. I treat it with the respect it requires, I believe, but I don’t take it on myself. I don’t owe those texts anything.

KW: To me the four texts in *Discovery and Praises* are very reflective of humankind's struggle just to live a life, and with all the foibles that are attached to that is just day-to-day living.

CS: Yes, you can say it is the peril of walking through the woods. It is. It's just downright ordinary in a way, the texts. They are very down to earth texts. They are not metaphysical in any way. Even the Donne, which is fairly far off, only seems so because of its grammar, not because of what it's actually saying. I think that chorus that have, like Greg's choruses, confronted my texts... "Well, Mr. Susa, you did it again. You set me something that I don't understand at all." Well try to understand it by opening [Inaudible]... Read it!

KW: Exactly. And I think that has been part of my journey with this piece because I was twenty when I first sang it.

CS: And the texts were....

KW: They were a little heavy; especially...I grew up in a very small town and was moderately well read. I had a wonderful high school English teacher who exposed us to a lot of things given the limitations of an academic year. And four years of having had him, there are only so many works that you can teach. They [the texts] were a bit challenging and as I have gotten older and the more I read these texts, and especially as I am working on this paper, I find that I am discovering some things about both the texts and myself that are quite interesting.

CS: Well, I am flattered to hear that. Those texts will lead you into... There is a lot of English literature that is just unknown: St. Patrick and the stuff from the sixth century and the fifth century. There are several anthologies of that stuff. It is beautiful literature.

It leads into Shakespeare. There is a book you ought to get called *Limits of Art* edited by Huntingdon Cairns.

KW: I have encountered that name recently.

CS: I don't know what else he has done. I don't even know if this is in print any more.

You can get it in used bookstores. I try and give it to my pupils whenever I find it. It takes you from the ancient Greeks clear through to modern times. It has fragments from texts that are chosen by critics and it's the critic's favorite line from say Shakespeare, for example. The line in Shakespeare, "Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, pray sir, undo that button..." The most staggering repetition in history followed by a line that leaves you at the very peak of greatness or something like that... What could follow that line?

What is happening in Lear is holding his daughter "thou't come again, never, never"

Those are heartbeats. "Pray sir, I believe he is having a heart attack..." The whole book is full of revelations you wish you had known before. You will want to read the complete works of the poets you like. What else can I tell you?

KW: Those are the main questions I had for you. It has been a pleasure. Thank you.

APPENDIX B  
Interview with Greg Colson  
Recorded January 18, 2013

KEITH WALKER: Can you tell how the commission for this piece came about?

GREG COLSON: The Nashville?

KW: Yes, the original.

GC: In 1966, the Ford Foundation sent Conrad to Nashville as a composer in residence. That was a new program they had and they were sending a few young men out to cities and fortunately there were people in town who knew what a composer in residence could do. He needed music to write and places to perform it. My church [St. George's Episcopal Church] was doing a major series of concerts every month. We had done *B-minor Mass*, *Missa solemnis*, Brahms *Requiem*—that was the first piece I ever conducted. It had built up to be a very popular program. So I have the opportunity to start commissioning pieces. The first things that he did for us were the carols. He did *Three Mystical Carols*, and I have forgotten the collections. These were all picked up and published by E.C. Schirmer or ECS as it is now. Some of the became popular—*Adam Lay in Bondage*, *I Sing of a Maiden*—and some of these really got some play. So obviously, it was time to think about giving him a major composition. So we talked about various things, and Conrad is a very metaphysical person. He knows so much about nature, and cosmos, and words and is a Shakespeare expert. We talked about this and that and the other and he came up with this idea of *Discovery and Praises*," which was to be something about nature, creation of the world, and then phrases of praise. We

had a chance to work with the Nashville Symphony, which we did almost each month. It was all with orchestra. It developed into a five-movement cantata. The first movement was the duet between a baritone and tenor soloist about omnipotent God. The second movement was the “Alleluias” which was Easter—“All Christian Men Should Now Rejoice,” etc. The third one was a poem by—was it John Donne?

KW: The 1986 version is the John Donne poem “Death Be Not Proud.”

GC: That was for men only and ended in this astonishing, astonishing “Death Thou Shalt Die,” with every bell ringing and the end of the world. Then he interpolated a long instrumental movement, which I have very little memory of, because I never conducted it. He conducted the premier. The last movement was “I arise today,” which we sort of did creation, then death, then resurrection. Well, resurrection was the second one. As it developed, we did the premiere, and then as I was leaving St. George’s in Nashville to move to Atlanta, for my farewell concert were going to do the *Glagolitic Mass* by Janáček, and it turns out the singers wanted to do things that we had done. We did seven movements of B-minor Mass, and *Discovery and Praises* omitting the orchestral movement. For this, Conrad undoubtedly did some revisions because he never left anything alone. This was fine except for me in doing seven movements of the B-minor Mass out of sequence; my tempo for the “Cum Sancto” was outrageous. [He demonstrates an impossibly quick tempo] The choruses’ eyes went up in their heads and the orchestra looked at me like... and by George they did it. It was the most wrong, most astonishing performance that movement has ever had, but they hit every note. So advice to you, if you are every doing mass movements out of sequence, practice the transitions of tempo. I must have conducted the *D&P* as we call it, in that concert because I think



Conrad must have been there. That was the way that sort of developed at St. George's in Nashville.

Well, my friend Ben Smith who was the director of the Duke Chapel, and Ben was that colleague who everything he did that was a success, he would recommend to me and vice versa. Everything that he recommended and I did was a success and vice versa. So we had this wonderful relationship of trying and helping each other. Well, he loved *D&P*. He talked to Conrad about this and Conrad had spent that summer with Stravinsky—Ford Foundation thing. He got wonderful Foundation support when he was first starting out. He then decided to revise it and do the obligatory Stravinsky. So it went 3/4, 7/8, ...all this irregular rhythm, and just completely ruined the piece that he had done for us. Ben hated it. I am not sure at this stage if he ever did it.

KW: I have actually found a record that it was performed in May 1970 at Duke Chapel.

GC: Okay, well they did it, but then he burned it. I fussed at Conrad about this because to me the piece was imperfect but still it was indicative of his talent, and has some of the most wonderful measures of music every written. That ending with "Sweet Lord, come heal us..." I can't do it without tearing up. We had the full orchestra for that. He made a reduction for Georgia Tech because we were going to tour with it. He made a reduction for just percussion and organ. To do this, Sue Goddard [accompanist for the Georgia Tech Chorale] had to take the score and make an organ part. He never really printed an organ/keyboard part. She, of course, had learned all the notes from teaching the choral parts. Nobody else would have done what Sue did for Conrad and for me. So we did it then in lieu of a tour in 1986. We didn't tour that year, but we did tour with it the next

year because I remember the “Death Be Not Proud” bass drum hit scaring little, old ladies everywhere we performed it.

KW: We actually did not tour with it until 1990.

GC: That was for the centennial.

KW: Yes. We did it in 1986 at Northside Drive United Methodist Church in March of 1986 according to my research, going back and looking at old files. We did not tour with it until 1990 when we went to California.

GC: That’s right. The 1990 tour. See, you know more about it than I do. The point was that that version became much more accessible because you do not have to have the full orchestra, and it allowed the voice parts to become a little more transparent. As far as I know, he made no major note changes in that. Obviously, in rehearsal we found misprints and made corrections. Do you remember if the Chorale sang from memory?

KW: I don’t think we did.

GC: I don’t think we did, either. On tour, we usually did sing from memory, but the kids hated it. The irony there is they would fuss about it and all this, and we’d have a party and they would sing every piece on the program unaccompanied and with no notes. That was a battle we fought. So the piece became to me one of the most important commissions I made. We had done probably twenty commissions with Conrad, and then every piece that he wrote for anybody else we tried to do. One of the most stunning pieces if you have an opportunity is *Midnight Clear*, which he wrote for the San Francisco Symphony. You know about that?

KW: I’ve run across the name.

GC: It's a simple concept. The pianist is discouraged with man's inhumanity to man. So he just sits there and starts plunking, and off in the distance angels start singing "Gloria." He is startled, but he listens. He starts playing with the angels. The music grows and it is just getting more and more heavenly. All at once a quartet in Dickens drag comes in singing "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear."

KW: How fun.

GC: This goes on with the angels singing "Alleluia," "Gloria"; the pianist "Rachmaninov-ing" all over the place, and the quartet singing with their lanterns. It's a short piece, but it's a stunning concept and piece. So when you get established...

KW: Yes.

GC: It will really be something to look at. I loved the fact that in my file which now is all scattered; I had all of the autographed originals with his signature. One that he dedicated to Betty [Elizabeth Colson], my wife, he wrote "Now you can be a cover girl." He was very good about dedications. He is very punctilious about getting all the wordings just right. His manuscript, as you know, is not the best in the world. It is indecipherable sometimes. I think, to me a thrill if I may digress, is any Herbert Howells piece that I have been able to do with the manuscript is perfect. His manuscript is so beautiful, and since I did the American premier of *Hymnus Paradisi*, which is one of the five greatest works of the twentieth century. I got to live with that beautiful manuscript. Just an aside as a contrast with Conrad.

He has a unique sense of orchestration, and in pieces that he wrote for brass, they are stunning. I am digressing and skipping around. I believe that the *D&P* got just the two exposures at Tech, the 1986 concert and the 1990 tour.

KW: Yes.

GC: We did that on that tour we sang at All Saint's [Presbyterian], Beverly Hills, which was Fred Astaire's church, and we sang at... Where did we start?

KW: Grace Cathedral [San Francisco].

GC: Grace Cathedral. How could I forget that? That's right. We had to have a different harpist in each town. So we had to rehearse at Grace Cathedral; we were given thirty minutes before the concert for Sue to set up that incredible organ. We were doing the Boulanger *Psalm Twenty-four*; all of this ambitious stuff. So we had just a run-through with the harpist. It was a pretty good performance and Conrad was there. Then we did All Saint's, Beverly Hills. Then we did St. Paul's Cathedral in San Diego, which had an old organ, but it was very satisfying. I believe that is the one we recorded. We also had commissioned the *Benediction*, which was with the choir circling around the congregation singing a benediction. The thrill at San Francisco was that as we finished that last "Amen" the verger was in the bell tower and started ringing the bells all over San Francisco in the key that we ended in.

KW: Wow! I had forgotten about that.

GC: That was a special thing. So he [Susa] heard the San Diego performance too, because that's where he lived. He was dividing his time then from Eureka Street in San Francisco to Jay Bird Lane in San Diego because he was composer-in-residence for the Old Globe Theatre, which was a major Shakespeare endeavor. We got to visit him there and see performances and tour around with him. That was great fun.

Back to *Discovery and Praises*. I think that the ending of the third movement, as we would call "Death Be Not Proud" [The Defiance], with then end of the world and all

the noise, and that first distant “Alleluia” at the rebirth of the new world is one of the most stunning concepts I have ever heard.

KW: I agree.

GC: Of course, he decided to make it kind of a rhumba. That was a little strange, and unfortunately, his text sense did not get messed up, but in the “glow of...” I’ve forgotten the words...the intense part of the last movement... the words are jumbled so much.

KW: Oh, the “Swirl of fire...”

GC: “Swirl of fire...” and with all the bells clanging. It’s a stunning sound, but there is no way that an audience could detect what we are saying, but we always had the words printed. The last section, I think he had been influenced by the *Symphony of Psalms* of Stravinsky, which is madness and dissonance, and all at once you get the Laudate. It is so consonant and so beautiful. So after all of this death and destruction, then dance, dance, dance, and new world and all of that to get to that “Sweet Lord, come heal us” with just handbells and little tapping on things. That text he made up. That to me is some of the dearest in all 500 works that I have conducted. That really is one of the high spots.

KW: The one thing that I have noticed, the two performances that we have done—the 1986 and the 1990—the very ending “Amen” in the score, he has rest on the downbeat of those measures. You chose to put the Amen on the downbeat. What was your thinking behind that?

GC: It was a little difficult for the chorus to make the transition. He changed that Amen every time. It was unsettled. What I wanted and told him I wanted a Lili Boulanger

ambiguous harmony. So that is what we arrived at. I'm not sure I didn't write that Amen. Either that or the *Benediction*. They have similar "Amens."

KW: They do.

GC: Which, of course, made the *Benediction* perfect to go with *D&P*. I would always recommend since you've got the handbells there. I believe that in the church where we were performing with the choir in the back... Well, you weren't in the back at the end of *D&P*. It just seemed to help to have "chord—Amen; chord—Amen; Amen." That was just for clarification.

KW: As far as conducting the piece, what challenges did you find in preparing to conduct it? Can you talk a little bit about that?

GC: The recitative that is the first movement and the ending of the last movement is not tricky to conduct, but have to get that "pah-tahm"; so you have to have just the right upbeat to get the harp and the percussion on that "pah-tahm." You have to get yourself out of the way. I worked on that. In the second movement, I don't remember any particular conducting chore there. The third one is more difficult because it ranges around, follows the text, and the organ part is very weird. Of course, as you know, I did less conducting because of Sue [Goddard]. There was no need to conduct her because I always just followed her. She was always the loudest, especially in Grace Cathedral. I was a hundred feet behind her. There was nothing to do except have her start. She and I had this unique sense of unanimity. What, as you know, I tried in conducting to simplify. That came about early in my conducting because I'm tall and these arms. Somebody said, "You don't need to swoop the great eagle." Then I learned that you don't need to double, both hands. One hand and one finger could do because what you are doing is

superimposing your thought process on the group. That doesn't take a lot of fingers and wrists and all. I learned a lot in conducting technique from Wilhelm Ehmann, who was considered the great Bach expert of the world. I worked with Helmut Rilling. His idea was if he let it go, the chorus and orchestra knew that it was okay. Otto Werner Müller, I worked with him at the University of Oklahoma. I learned the most valuable thing about giving a little dial, which lets everybody know exactly where you beat is. That roundness, I recommend. I learned a lot from him that summer even though we did not think so.

KW: Sometimes you don't appreciate those experiences until later.

GC: Rilling, we heard him in Bruges do a *B-minor Mass* and they had just returned from thirty performances of it on tour. The chorus sang from memory, and most of the orchestra [played from memory]. He did not like the soloist they had hired for him. So on the day before he rehearsed eight hours and on the day of they rehearsed four hours. What he did was he "killed" his first oboe and his cellist, and his first trumpet. They just barely survived. Apparently union doesn't apply. If he didn't like it, he just stopped. If he liked it he went on. They were so attuned to him, but we can't do that in this country. I went then, later to a session with him at Indiana University, and with non-union musicians he was not nearly as successful because his way of working was foreign to them.

Back to specifically, in the big movement; what would be properly the fourth movement. By then he just eliminated the orchestral movement. I don't remember why.

KW: He told me after the 1970 performance, he just didn't feel like that it worked and felt that it was unnecessary so he cut it.

GC: That's basically true and I never learned it. He conducted the premier. In the fourth movement there are changes of tempo that are abrupt. If you have time with the chorus, they are not problematical. I don't remember any strategic conducting problems.

KW: How much influence did you have over the instrumentation for this piece?

GC: The orchestral version was predicated by using the Nashville Symphony more or less as they were because I was using symphony players once a month. They were making as much from me as they were [at the Symphony]. My church was a social parish, and they were proud to have me do this outstanding program as long as they did not have to come. Since the public came in droves, it was an interesting situation. I don't remember any of that first conversation about instruments.

KW: You raise an interesting point about this that I was not aware of. The original version in 1966 was it done with strings or was it the organ, harp, flute, percussion and handbells that are present in the 1986 version?

GC: In 1966?

KW: Yes.

GC: Was that the Nashville?

KW: The 1966 was the Nashville performance.

GC: I believe it was still with orchestra. We had the *B-minor Mass* orchestra there. So we would have had strings, and brass.

KW: I guess the organ part for 1986 was a reduction.

GC: Right. In fact it may not have used organ.



KW: I thought I had seen something that referenced you playing the organ. I did actually go to Nashville and go through the *Nashville Banner* archive trying to dig you up.

GC: Did you get the St. George's book?

KW: I haven't yet.

GC: The most interesting thing there is my annual report to the parish always said we have no budget, but here is what we did: *B-minor Mass, Missa solennis*, etc. We were out selling anything we could to pay for those. I had a rare deal. The union allowed me to take up an offering even though we had trust fund money, which was against the rules. The man at the union was a buddy. We also had sponsors. I have lost in my hard drive the reviews. I had a scrapbook of reviews from Nashville, which you could wallpaper a bathroom with, and they were wonderful. In my last four years at St. George's we did fifty-four major works. That really was my coming to age. The Ph. D. I'll never have.

KW: I think that falls under equivalent experience.

GC: Also, I found a cassette of the Brahms *Requiem* that was my first piece ever to conduct. The story on that was, and this is good advice, the choir worked on it a year. We worked on the fundraising for a year. We had forty in the choir and forty in the orchestra. I had two very good soloists who were members but paid. I coached it with Alex Simpson in Atlanta and one or two times with Shaw. So before I stood up to do that first rehearsal, I had spent a lifetime with that piece. The shocking thing was that the first cellist was right here [gesturing the position on his right] under me, and after the dress rehearsal we were taking the chairs up, he had smoked six cigarettes during that rehearsal. I was so intense I did not even notice it.

Can you imagine? I was pleased to find the old recording and it was decent. That's aside. It always seemed that I learned the pieces as I taught them because I am not a very introverted student. I do a lot of aural learning. If I can't think the tunes, where are we? Oddly enough in that respect, the Verdi *Requiem* turned out to be one of the easiest pieces I have ever done because all you do is learn the tunes and one follows the other.

KW: Is there anything else you would like to add for *Discovery and Praises*?

GC: I hope I can come to your performance, but I am not sure. I would give anything to be able to do the complete *D&P* one more time and a *B-minor Mass* one more time, but I don't have the resources. I think you have seen the difficulties because you lived the piece. I am so delighted that it struck you as something worth basing your whole research and your degree on. I will certainly want a recording. It would be wonderful if Conrad and I could both be carried in on stretchers. I think the instrumentation works wonderfully well because of the percussion—you have to have good percussionists. I am trying to think if there were any interventions that I had to make for something that was un-singable. A characteristic of Conrad is he every now and then will take a word like “grief” or “trouble” and make it ugly just to sort of highlight the emotion involved. His two pieces that we commissioned that I think are among his best are the two pieces that go with *Singet dem Herrn* and he wrote *Sing to the Lord* then *Komm, Jesu, Komm* in which he decided instead of taking [singing] “Du bist”—you are the truth, the light—he took “I am the way, the truth, the light” and he tied it then to go into a hymn-like thing. He picked up an old hymnal not knowing that it hadn't been used for a hundred years, and took a Pentecost hymn, “Our Blest Redeemer,” and wrote...the choir kept singing the other text. So you have a hymn and his hymn going on with the oboe doing *Veni creator*

*spiritus*. It is almost imperceptible to the listener, but it is an incredible effect. In the *Sing to the Lord*, he goes into that lovely seven-beat rhumba that he is so fond of. Now that was difficult to conduct. If you have not studied those pieces, you need to because they would be the most comparable commissions to *D&P*.

KW: Greg, Thank you so much.

APPENDIX C  
Programs



“SONGS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”

KEITH H. WALKER, *conductor*

in

Doctoral Conducting Recital

University Chorus  
Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., *piano*  
Christopher Jacobson, *organ*

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 • 4:15 PM • St. Andrews Baptist Church

Sing a Mighty Song	Daniel E. Gawthrop (b. 1949)
O quam gloriosum	Tomas Luis Victoria (1548-1611)
Richte mich, Gott	Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847)
Chichester Psalms	Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)
	John Neely Gaston, <i>countertenor</i>
Kasar mie la gaji	Alberto Grau (b. 1937)
Earth Song	Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)
Caledonian's Air	arr. James Q. Mulholland (b. 1935)
O Whistle and I'll Come to Ye	arr. Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)
Loch Lomond	arr. Jonathan Quick (b. 1970)
Tshotsholoza	arr. Jeffery L. Ames (b. 1969)

*Mr. Walker is a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting. This recital was coached by Alicia Walker and is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
School of Music

## Summer II Chorus

Alicia W. Walker and Keith H. Walker, *conductors*  
Frances Webb, *pianist*

Serena Hill LaRoche, soprano  
Kelsey Harrison, mezzo-soprano  
Walter Cuttino, tenor  
Michael LaRoche, baritone

Missa Brevis in C, KV220 ("The Sparrow")

*by*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

+++++

Requiem

*by*

Gabriel Fauré

USC School of Music Recital Hall  
Sunday, July 29, 2012, 4:00 PM  
Tuesday, July 31, 2012, 7:30 PM

BENEDICTUS

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Osanna in excelsis.*

AGNUS DEI

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, dona nobis pacem.*

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, grant us Thy peace.

**Requiem**

**Gabriel Fauré**  
(1845-1924)

INTROIT AND KYRIE

*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.  
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion,  
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.  
Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.  
Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.*

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,  
and may perpetual light shine on them.  
Thou, O God, art praised in Sion,  
and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.  
Hear my prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.

OFFERTORY

*O Domine Jesu Christe! Rex gloriae!  
Libera animas defunctorum de poenis inferni  
et de profundo lacu!  
Libera eas de ore leonis,  
ne absorbeat eas tartarus,  
ne cadant in obscurum:  
Hostias et preces tibi Domine laudis offerimus: tu suscipe  
pro animabus illis quarum hodie memoriam facimus.*

Lord Jesus Christ! King of glory!  
Deliver the souls of the departed from the pains of hell  
and from the bottomless pit!  
Deliver them from the lion's mouth,  
neither let them fall into darkness  
nor the black abyss swallow them up;  
Hear our prayer and let our cry come unto thee; God our  
Father, bow thine ear: we pray this day for all the souls  
departed; O remember them, Lord we pray. Grant them,  
Lord, deliverance from death unto life, we pray thee,  
as of old Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.

*Fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam,  
quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.*

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth!  
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

SANCTUS

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth!  
Pleni sunt caeli et terra Gloria tua.  
Osanna in excelsis.*

Blessed Jesu, Lord, grant them rest, everlasting  
rest.

PIE JESU

*Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem, sempiternam  
requiem.*

AGNUS DEI

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona eis requiem.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona eis requiem sempiternam.  
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,  
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.  
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis,  
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
grant them rest.  
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
grant them everlasting rest.  
May eternal light shine on them, O Lord,  
with Thy saints forever.  
Grant the dead eternal rest, O Lord,  
and may perpetual light shine on them,  
with Thy saints forever, because Thou art merciful.

#### LIBERA ME

*Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa tremenda: Quando caeli movendi sunt, et terra: dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem. Tremens, tremens factus sum ego et timeo, dum discussio venerit, atque ventura ira.*

*Dies illa, dies irae, calamitatis et miseriae, dies magna et amara valde.*

*Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis.*

Deliver me, Lord, from death eternal, on that day of terror, when the heavens and earth shall quake, when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire. I am seized by trembling, and I fear until the judgment should come, and I also dread the coming wrath.

O that day, day of wrath, day of calamity and misery, Momentous day, and exceedingly bitter.

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

#### IN PARADISUM

*In Paradisum deducant te Angeli: in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres, et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem. Chorus angelorum te suscipiat, et cum Lazaro quondam paupere aeternam habeas requiem.*

May the angels lead you into paradise; may the Martyrs welcome you upon your arrival, and lead you into the holy city of Jerusalem. May a choir of angels welcome you, and with poor Lazarus of old, may you have eternal rest.

## USC Summer II Chorus

Alicia W. Walker and Keith H. Walker, conductors

Frances Webb, accompanist

#### Soprano

Brittany Ashley  
Rebecca Cunningham  
Melissa Dugan  
Bethany Encina  
Cheryl Felder  
Dorothy Garone  
Donna Howser  
Susan Kelly  
Pat Minor  
Chungyul Park  
Sonye Rhym  
Leigh Roberson  
Zelia Stroy  
Alicia Walker

#### Alto

Beth Anderson  
Sharon Ewing  
Ann Johnson  
Nancy Johnson  
Tammie Jones  
Jessica Kross  
Karen Lumpkin  
Shirley Grace McGuinness  
Kelsey McIntyre  
Samantha Nahra  
Joanna Paulman  
Sarah Scharfe  
Karen Williams

#### Tenor

Andrew Bozard  
Xavier Carteret  
Hou-Yin Chang  
Devin Davis  
Tommy Fitzgerald  
William L. Lundy  
Bob Marino  
David Roof  
Chuck Roundy  
Matt Sickles  
Anh Nguyen Vu  
Thomas J. White  
Malcolm Willoughby

#### Bass

Jim Adams  
Robert Arcovio  
Bob Bly  
Craig Coelho  
Stephen Crowell  
Jim Ewing  
Donald Griggs  
Tim Hall  
Julein Kaprino  
Jay Leeper  
Christopher Leysath  
Johannes Linnan  
C. Joseph Long  
Arthur Lumpkin  
Tom Matrone  
David Scharfe  
Adam Steele  
James E. Thompson  
Keith H. Walker  
Josh Wentz  
Jim Weston  
Brad Wilson

*The performance conducted by Keith H. Walker is in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting. Mr. Walker is a student of Dr. Alicia Walker.*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
School of Music

**Graduate Vocal Ensemble**  
**KEITH H. WALKER, conductor**  
in  
**DOCTORAL CONDUCTING RECITAL**

***“INTO THE VINEYARD”***

**Caleb Houck, piano accompanist**

**Thursday, October 11, 2012**  
**6:00 PM • Recital Hall**

Simile est regnum caelorum

Francisco Guerrero  
(1528-1599)

Missa “Simile est regnum caelorum”

Tomás Luis de Victoria  
(1548-1611)

- I. Kyrie
- II. Gloria
- III. Credo
- IV. Sanctus
- V. Benedictus
- VI. Agnus Dei

*(over)*





UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
School of Music

Kantata No. 144, "Nimm, was dein ist, und gehe hin" J.S. Bach  
I. Chorus "Nimm, was dein ist" (1685-1750)  
II. Aria (Alto) "Murre nicht"  
III. Chorale "Was Gott tut"  
IV. Recitativo (Tenor) "Wo die Genügsamkeit regiert"  
V. Aria (Soprano) "Genügsamkeit"  
VI. Choral "Was mein Gott will"

Brianna Valencia, *soprano*  
Sharon Matchett, *mezzo soprano*  
Dustin Ousley, *tenor*

Briana Leaman, *oboe d'amore*

Macarena Lopez Perez-Bryan, *violin I*  
Ronnie Crisp, *violin II*  
Sarah Steeves, *viola*  
Elizabeth Gergel, *cello*

Conciliation

Thomas McKenney  
(b. 1938)

*Mr. Walker is a student of Dr. Larry Wyatt.  
This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*

Graduate Vocal Ensemble  
KEITH H. WALKER, conductor

in

DOCTORAL LECTURE RECITAL

DISCOVERY AND PRAISES  
BY  
CONRAD SUSA

John Holloway, accompanist

Tuesday, February 12, 2013  
6:00 p.m.

School of Music Recital Hall

Discovery and Praises

- I. The Source
- II. The Redemption
- III. The Defiance
- IV. The Confession

Conrad Susa  
(b. 1935)

Mari Hazel, Soprano  
Karyn Minor, Soprano  
Anna Young, Mezzo-soprano  
Dustin Ousley, Tenor  
Lawrence Abernathy, Tenor  
Eddie Huss, Organ  
Nina Brooks, Harp  
Diane Kessel, Flute  
Jim Lindroth and Daniel Vu, Percussion  
Wesley Ringers, Shandon United Methodist Church, Handbells

Mr. Walker is a student of Dr. Larry Wyatt. This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.

## Graduate Vocal Ensemble

### **Soprano**

Lekeatra Daniels  
Mari Hazel  
Virginia Herlong  
Shie Kanton  
Karly Minacapelli  
Karyn Minor  
Brianna Valencia

### **Tenor**

Lawrence Abernathy  
David Guthrie  
Jaston Hawes  
Tommer Hesseg  
Christian Miller  
Ryan Namkoong  
Dustin Ousley

### **Alto**

Stefanie Brown  
Anna Young

### **Bass**

Cody Jones  
Morgan Maclachlan  
Joshua Wentz  
Jim Weston  
Larry Wyatt

Texts for *Discovery and Praises*  
by  
Conrad Susa

Doctoral Lecture Recital  
Keith H. Walker  
February 12, 2013

Wesley Ringers, Shandon United Methodist Church  
Diane Bruner, David Coward, Cynthia Dew, Winnie Guffee, Pam Speas

I. "The Source"  
Caedmon's Hymn  
Caedmon (active c. 657-680)

Now must we praise the Master of heaven,  
The might of the maker, the deeds of the Father, the thought of His heart,  
He, Lord everlasting, established of old the source of all wonders  
Creator all holy, He hung the bright heaven,  
a roof high upreared o'er the children of men.  
The King of mankind then created for mortals the world in its beauty,  
The earth spread beneath them, He Lord everlasting, omnipotent God.

II. "The Redemption"  
*Victimae Paschali Laudes*  
Wipo of Burgundy (c. 995-c. 1048)

Alleluia!  
All Christian men should now rejoice in honor of the Paschal Lamb.  
The Lamb hath redeemed his sheep.  
The guiltless Christ before his Father has ransomed all sinners.  
Death and Life their conflict have resolved.  
The dead Lord of Life reigns living.  
Tell us, Mary, what have you seen on the way?  
The sepulcher of the living Christ, and Glory of the Risen One, I saw.  
Angelic witnesses, the napkin and the linen cloth, I saw.  
Christ my hope, both risen.  
He has gone before thee to Galilee!  
We know in truth that Christ the Lord is risen from the dead.  
Thou victorious King, have mercy, O Lord! Have mercy.  
Alleluia!

III. "The Defiance"  
"Death Be Not Proud"  
John Donne (1573-1631)

Death, be not proud,  
Though some have called Thee mighty and dreadful,  
For Thou art not so;  
For those whom though thinkst Thou dost overthrow  
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst Thou kill me.  
From rest and sleep, which but Thy pictures be,  
Much pleasure then, from Thee much more must flow;  
And soonest our best men with Thee do go.  
Rest of their bones and soul's delivery  
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings and desperate men,  
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell  
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well  
And better than Thy stroke  
Why swell'st Thou then?  
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,  
And death shall be no more.  
Death, Thou shalt die.

IV. "The Confession"  
"The Deer's Cry"  
St. Patrick of Ireland (385-461)  
Additional words by Conrad Susa (b. 1935)

Alleluia!  
I arise today: Through a mighty strength  
Through the invocation of the Trinity. Through belief in the threeness,  
The oneness of the maker of all things.  
I arise today through the strength of Christ's birth,  
Through the strength of his baptism.  
Through the strength of his crucifixion, and his burial,  
Through the strength of his resurrection and his Ascension,  
Through the strength of his descent for the judgment of Doom.  
I arise today: Through the strength of heaven,  
Blaze of sun, Glow of Moon, Swirl of fire, rush of wind, depth of sea, might of rock.  
I arise today: Through the strength of God to pilot me.  
God's might, to uphold me, God's wisdom, to guide me,  
God's eye, to lead me, God's ear, to hear me,  
God's word, to teach me, God's hand, to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me. God's host to save me from temptations of vices,  
from all those who wish me ill, Near or far, alone or in a multitude.  
I summon these powers between me and evil  
against cruel forces that tear my body and soul,  
against all knowledge that ruins my soul.  
Christ keep me safe from harm and sudden death,  
from fear, from hunger, from loss of healing grace.  
Christ with me, Christ for me, Christ Jesus all around.  
While I think, while I work, while I sing, or dance or laugh,  
while I sleep, while I dream, while I die to wake in Thee.  
Sweet Lord, come heal us, come calm and soothe our souls.  
We praise and bless Thee, and call upon they love forever. Amen!

ECS Publishing Corporation  
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March 11, 2013

Keith H. Walker  
DMA Candidate  
University of South Carolina

Dear Keith,

We hereby grant you permission to include in your dissertation on Conrad Susa's "Discovery and Praises", the examples listed below:

Movement 1: mm. 10-11

Movement 2: mm. 5-6, 88-90, 100-106

Movement 3: mm. 1-13, mm. 45-53 (tenor/bass line), mm. 73-80

Movement 4: mm. 78-82, 174-177

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