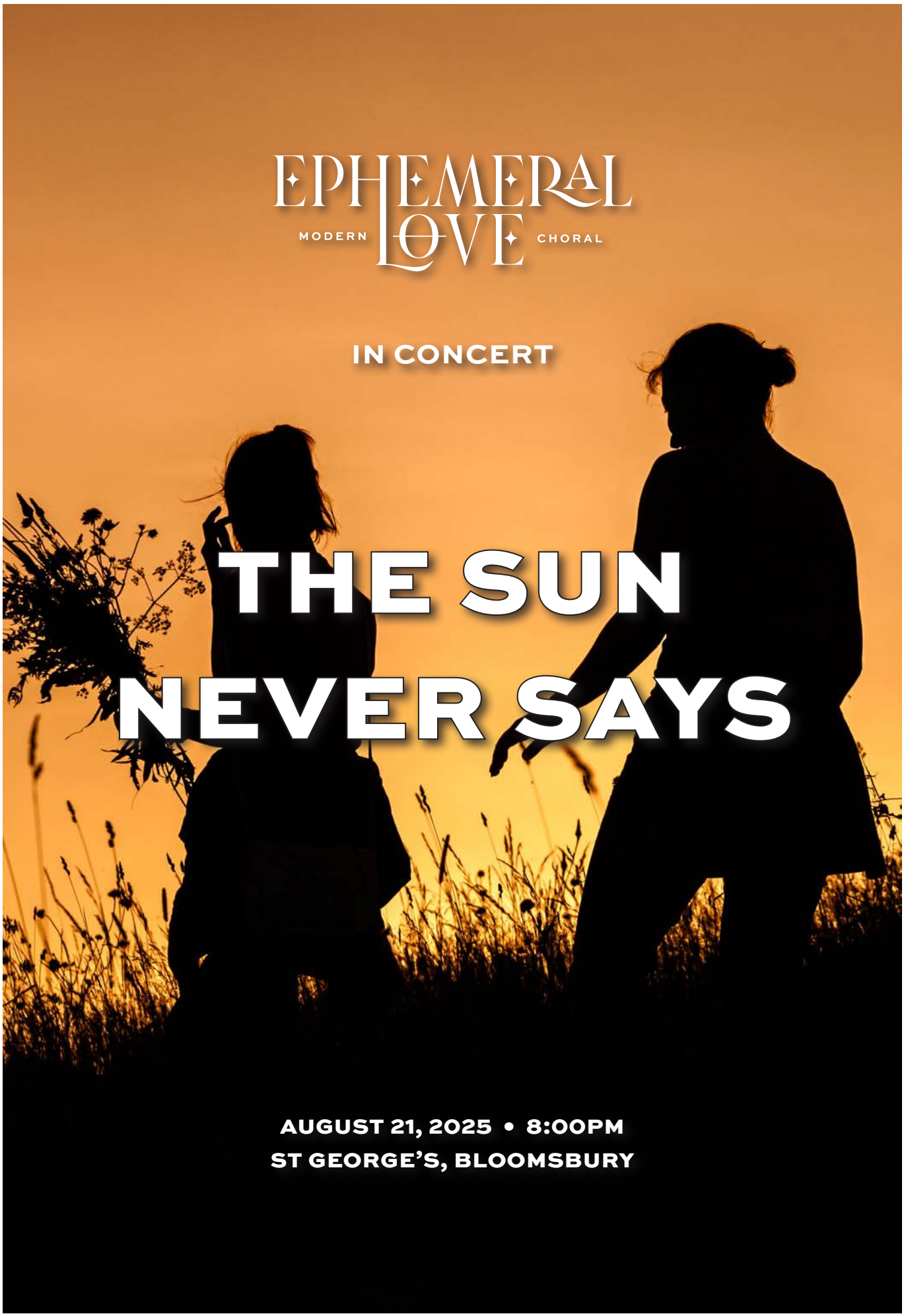
EPHEMERAL
MODERN LOVE CHORAL
IN CONCERT
THE SUN NEVER SAYS
AUGUST 21, 2025 • 8:00PM
ST GEORGE'S, BLOOMSBURY

NATURE'S FIRST GREEN IS GOLD,
HER HARDEST HUE TO HOLD.
HER EARLY LEAF'S A FLOWER;
BUT ONLY SO AN HOUR.
THEN LEAF SUBSIDES TO LEAF.
SO EDEN SANK TO GRIEF,
SO DAWN GOES DOWN TO DAY.
NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY.

ROBERT FROST, 1923

THE SUN NEVER SAYS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025 ST GEORGE'S, BLOOMSBURY LONDON

Tonight, we take the stage to sing the stories of the seasons—the light exuberance of spring, with its gentle innocence and naivete and a little mischief—the warmth and elegance of summer's generosity—nostalgia and closure of autumn's reflection—and winter's crisp quiet and reverence. As much as modernity works to flatten us into schedules and notifications and to-do lists, we're still deeply affected by the lengthening of days in the spring, twilight stretching longer toward the summer solstice, and the first clean breeze of autumn's air. Winter, so defined by Christmas, is a season of darkness and restoration, and the cycle begins again.

The performance tonight is arranged in two halves: the first, *Bloom & Light*, explores Spring and Summer, while *Dusk & Frost* takes us on a journey through Autumn and Winter. We ask that you hold your applause until the conclusion of each of the four sets.

We're lucky enough to hear the world premiere of *O Cyclamen*, written for Ephemeral Love by San Francisco-based composer Ilyas Iliya, who is with us tonight. Writing about the wild cyclamen that accompanied trips to the mountains in his native Lebanon, *O Cyclamen* is a reminder of not only the seasonal symbols around us, but of memories of childhood and, ultimately, home.

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TONIGHT

THE PROGRAM

BLOOM & LIGHT

I.

Celestial Spring

II. EXALTATION

Three Nocturnes

I. FLOWERING ALMOND TREE

II. QUIET RAIN

III. EARLY SPRING

Where The Earth Meets the Sky

II. THE PASTURE

CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

II.

BRIGHT MORNING STARS

SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT

THE SUN NEVER SAYS

DUSK & FROST

III.

SEGALARIAK

TO SEE THE SKY

O CYCLAMEN

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

IV.

ALL AND SOME

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

MIDWINTER SONG

THERE WILL BE REST

PLEASE HOLD YOUR APPLAUSE UNTIL THE END OF EACH SET OF PIECES.

WE THINK YOU'LL EXPERIENCE THE EVENING BETTER THIS WAY.

THERE WILL BE A SHORT PAUSE AFTER SET II.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

CELESTIAL SPRING,

F. Melius Christiansen

II. EXALTATION

Mellow music mingles in ev'ry mood of reawakening spring,
lingers like a beautiful balm of benediction, rises on wing, and impels my spirit to sing:
oh be joyful, sing to your maker, you, creator, who can adorn
hill and valley, lost and forlorn, with splendor richer, rarer than morn.
Soul, arise, you're heavenly born!

How can gladness ever borrow from the somber hues of sorrow,
when the springtime is here, the springtime?

No, when myriad hosts are bringing to the hills in happy singing,
the assurance of grace, then distrusts within surrender,
till the heart is touched and tender, like a heavenly face.

How can spirit bow in silence when the song is announcing the year on the highlands?

Mellow music rises with ev'ry scent of reawakening spring,
fragrantly ascending the heights, its stimulation sweetly to bring angelward on spiritual wing.
Oh be joyful, sing to your maker, let your grace bedeck and adorn
heart and hope and spirit forlorn. Like incense lit on altars of morn.

- Oscar Overby

THREE NOCTURNES

Hildor Lundvik

I. FLOWERING ALMOND TREE

Like a flowering almond tree, my love, my love so fair
Sing, oh wind, sing softly for me,
Tell her how much I care.

Only you, tenderest of morning winds, have our secret to bear.
Here I wait in the twilight 'neath the flowering almond tree.
Now that daylight has faded and gone, now will she come to me?

- Pär Lagerkvist; English text by Gunilla Marcus

II. QUIET RAIN

A quiet rain is falling on silent city streets.
The skies are veiled and hazy while through the twilight is pouring
a mild and muted light.

Oh, tender night, oh quiet melancholy of Spring.
The murmuring of the rain, so softly cries my heart,
the murmuring of the soft, slow rain.

- Vilh. Ekelund; English text by Gunilla Marcus

III. EARLY SPRING

Silhouettes of shining branches hang like glistening cobwebs.
Sounding in the silent valley there's a gentle murmur.
Clear the gentle murmur of a frozen well in February,
quiet as a well in winter.
Softly in the February twilight cry the heavens.

- Vilh. Ekelund; English text by Gunilla Marcus

WHERE THE EARTH MEETS THE SKY

Z. Randall Stroope

II. THE PASTURE

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(and wait to watch the water clear, I may):
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
that's standing by the mother. It's so young,
it totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

- Robert Frost

CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

traditional Scottish, arr. Sarah Rimkus

Charlie is my darling, the young chevalier.

'Twas on a Monday morning,
bright early in the year,
when Charlie came to our town,
the young chevalier.

As he was walking up the street,
the city for to view,
O there he spied a bonnie lass,
the windae peeking through.

Sae light's he jumped upon the stair,
and tirl'd at the pin;
and wha sae ready as hersel'
to let the laddie in.

He set his Jenny on his knee,
all in his Highland dress;
for brawly weel he ken'd the way
to please a bonnie lass.

It's up yon heathery mountain,
and down yon scroggy glen,
we daur na gang a-milking,
for Charlie and his men.

- Robert Burns

BRIGHT MORNING STARS

Spiritual, arr. Alice Parker, adapt. Susan LaBarr

Bright morning stars are rising,
bright morning stars are rising,
and day is a-breaking in my soul.

O where are our dear mothers?
They are sowing seeds of gladness,
and day is a-breaking in my soul.

O where are our dear fathers?
They have crossed the river shouting,
and day is a-breaking in my soul.

Bright morning stars are rising,
they are all by the streams a-dancing,
and day is a-breaking in my soul.

SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT

Morten Lauridsen

Sure on this shining night of star made shadows round,
kindness must watch for me this side the ground.

The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health.

High summer holds the earth. Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder
wand'ring far alone of shadows on the stars.

- James Agee

THE SUN NEVER SAYS

Dan Forrest

Even
after
all this time
the sun never says to the earth,

"You owe Me."

Look
what happens
with a love like that,
it lights the
Whole
Sky.

- Daniel Ladinsky

SEGALARIAK

Josu Elberdin

Sega festa hastera doa, goazen
It will begin the feast of harvest, let's go!

Segalariak bidean datoz,
Come, the cheerful reapers,
umore onez, tolosako larre zabalak
walking along the path, with the intention of working
lantzeko azmoz,
the wide meadows of Tolosa

Gaurko lehian jakingo dugu txapelduna nor den,
In today's contest we will all know who is the winner,
lagun koadrila denak zai daude, noiz hasiko den.
all the crew's friends, they are all waiting to begin.

Segak pikatu egin dituzte harri zorrotz zorrotzez,
They have sharpened the scythes with very sharp stones,
baserri aldeko belar danak ondo jaso ditezen
so that they can collect well all the herbs around the hamlet.

Pandero trikitri soinuak ta dantzari finak,
the sound of the tambourines, accordion and the good dancers
jai giroa osatzen dute inguru hauetan.
recreate the festive atmosphere in these places.

Gure sega festa orain hasi egingo da.
Our harvest feast now begins.
Sega festa has dadila!
Let the harvest now begin!

- traditional Basque

TO SEE THE SKY

Jocelyn Hagen

One by one, like leaves from a tree
all my faiths have forsaken me;
but the stars above my head
burn in white and delicate red,
and beneath my feet the earth
brings the sturdy grass to birth.

I who was content to be
but a silken-singing tree,
but a rustle of delight
in the wistful heart of night—
I have lost the leaves that knew
touch of rain and weight of dew.

Blinded by a leafy crown
I looked neither up nor down—
but the little leaves that die
have left me room to see the sky;
now for the first time I know
stars above and earth below.

- Sara Teasdale

O CYCLAMEN

Ilyas Iliya

O, O, O,
O Cyclamen, flower of the mountains,
why do you steal my heart when I see you among the rocks?

اوف، اوف، اوف
يا قَرْن الغَزَال، يا زَهْر الجْبَال
ليش بِتْسِرْقِي قَلْبِي لمّا بْشُوفِك بين الصُّخُور؟

CYCLAMEN'S RESPONSE:

I ask for nothing but a sip of water
from the first rain of autumn,
and I return to you the breath of childhood,
above the terraced hills, to the land of home

انا ما بَدّي غير شَرْبة مَيّ
من أوّل مَطَر الخَريف
وبْرُدّلك نَفَس الطُّفُولي
فوق الجْلال، لِتراب الدِّيار

- Ilyas Iliya

The cyclamen is a native wild flower in Lebanon. The composition and world premiere of O Cyclamen is the result of the creativity and generosity of the composer—a steadfast advocate for the power of music and text together, in the individual and collective voices of our singers, and in the mission of this ensemble. We are singing in English and Levantine Arabic, as spoken in the composer's first home country.

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

Stephanie Martin

Nature's first green is gold,
her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
but only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
so dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

- Robert Frost

ALL AND SOME

Olivia Sparkhall

Nowell sing we, both all and some,
now *Rex pacificus* is ycome.

Exortum est in love and lysse.
Now Christ His gree He gan us gysse,
and with his body us bought to bliss.

De fructu ventris of Mary bright,
both God and man in her alight,
out of disease He did us dight:

Puer natus to us was sent,
to bliss us bought, fro bale us blent,
and else to woe we had ywent:

Gloria tibi, ay, and bliss,
God unto his grace he us wysse,
the rent of heaven that we not miss:

- Anonymous, 15th Century

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

Eric Whitacre

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

- Robert Frost

In the spring of 2001, Eric Whitacre set Robert Frost's beloved poem to music. It was performed a few times before he was notified by the Frost estate that he was not allowed to use the poetry again for performance or publication. Devastated, he asked a friend, Charles Anthony Silvestri, to replace the Frost text with a newly-composed poem with the exact metrical structure as the original text. For 25 years, this was the only version available. With the poem now in the public domain, the original version, presented tonight, can finally be heard.

MIDWINTER SONG

Susan LaBarr

Snowflakes with softest breath descend
upon the downy earth:
In deep December do commend
a long-remembered birth.
In purest white a blanket falls
to swaddle leaf and limb,
while all the world in amber halls
lift up a cheerful hymn.

As on the eve of lore and song
glad tidings filled the air,
thus offer folk in happy throng
their carol-strains so fair.
While snow is falling, snow on snow,
across the star-lit land,
new winds of hope their echos blow
of ancient heavenly band.

Since sacred love should hope all things
today, as on that night,
let mortal hearts rejoicing bring
a spark of gladsome light.
For all who strive to live in love
alight with faith anew,
and lift our eyes to sun above
amid the dawning dew.

- Daniel Elder

THERE WILL BE REST

Frank Ticheli

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
over the roof-tops crowned with snow,
a reign of rest, serene forgetting,
the music of stillness holy and low.

I will make this world of my devising
out of a dream in my lonely mind.

I shall find the crystal of peace, – above me
stars I shall find.

- Sara Teasdale

OUR MUSICIANS

Nicola Beckley Margaret Bentley Victor Castillo-Ludbrook Gareth Edmond
Laoise Fleming Leah Gulley Camilla Jeppeson Iska Lupton James Quilligan
Lucy Robinson Alex Simpson Page Starr Duncan Tarboton
Sarah de Winter Ida Wrona Herbert Zielinski
Josh Lucas, cello Thomas Dilley, piano Ryan Connolly, artistic director

OUR NEXT CONCERT

Join us for **A MIDNIGHT CLEAR**, an exploration through the songs of Christmas and the shared narratives of the season. With all of its ubiquity, Christmas is still evocative—of nostalgia, of idealism and generosity, of love. You'll indeed recognize and sing some familiar carols, but there are some pieces we hope you appreciate as new favorites. We'll be joined by actor and director **SELINA CADELL**, a friend of the ensemble. And you'll hear a new carol, written just for Ephemeral Love by composer and conductor **ANDREW CAMPLING**.

Thursday, December 4, 2025 8:00pm French Protestant Church, Soho Square (W1D 3QD)

ephemerallove.org/event/a-midnight-clear/

CAROL WITH US!

Ephemeral Love will be hosting a Christmas Carol sing-a-long and fundraiser in mid-December at **THE SCOLT HEAD PUB** in Hackney (N1 4HT). Join us for an evening of drinks, food, and all the mirthful singing you can muster. Songbooks will be provided. Watch our website and social media for more information and how to reserve your place. It will be a popular night!

SING WITH US

We're always looking for singers to join us! If you're comfortable singing four part unaccompanied (a cappella) music, know your way around a choral score, and love working in a supportive, collaborative rehearsal environment making incredible music, we would love to meet you. We're looking to build a roster of singers to sing concerts throughout the year as their schedules allow. We have a short rehearsal calendar in order to allow singers to join us who may have busy schedules or other choral commitments to keep.

If you'd like to join our roster to be notified of our next audition dates, submit the form through our website. We will be in touch to confirm your audition with our Artistic Director. You can also reach out to us directly through our website.

ephemerallove.org/sing-with-us/

SUPPORT US

Tonight's concert is happening because of people like you—people who believe in the power of music and its vital place in the arts scene of London. Ticket sales only cover a fraction of what it takes to rehearse and perform a night like this, and every gift makes an impact.

Our singers give. Our conductor gives. Our friends and family give. This is truly a collective effort—and you're part of it.

We're **just £425** away from fully funding tonight's concert. If you can help close that final gap, your generosity will help bring more inspiring music to life—tonight and beyond.

justgiving.com/crowdfunding/the-sun-never-says

EPHEMERAL LOVE

MODERN CHORAL

Ephemeral Love is a new choral ensemble, bringing innovative programming and engaging concerts and events to the vibrant creative landscape of London. Founded from a deep love of choral repertoire of all genres, Ephemeral Love exists to foster artistic collaboration among singers that love choral music as much as we do, and want to invite audience members of all backgrounds into that experience. Our music can only be made with others, exists live only for a moment, and is best when shared with an audience.

Concerts should feel like wandering through a new place, discovering something interesting around every corner, something that you remember long after you've returned home. "This is an invitation to participate," says our manifesto.

We want to invite our singers and our audience into a choral experience that is indeed edifying: with poems and texts that challenge and entertain and invite thought, with choral textures as simple as a chant or a drone to the complexity of eight or more interwoven parts. With familiar songs and arrangements as well as inspiring new commissions.

Conductor Robert Shaw once said that the arts "express that which is beautiful and intelligent and noble about being human" and that, far from being an ivory tower of retreat from the world, that "they are a doing, a making." The result of that making is an intellectual and emotional connection, through music, that lasts, long after the music in the room is silenced. Ephemeral Love may be an unusual name for a chamber choir, but we hope it reminds our audiences that while a piece of music lasts mere moments, it touches us deeply, in profound and emotional ways.