

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday, February 25, 2021 1:15 pm

Live streamed from The Church of the Transfiguration in New York City  
to [midtownconcerts.org](http://midtownconcerts.org), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com)

### *The New Consort*

*Madeline Apple Healey Pamela Terry Nathan Hodgson  
Brian Mummert Jonathan Woody*

### *Arianna/Jeremiah: Voices in Lamentation*

**Lamento d'Arianna, "Lascatemi morire"**  
from *Il sesto libro de madrigali*, 1614

Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

**Lamentations of Jeremiah a5**

Robert White (1538–1574)

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## **Program Notes** by Brian Mummert, artistic director

A half-century ago, when Elisabeth Kübler-Ross introduced her model of the five stages of grief, she could hardly have known that most of the world would spend the last year careening wildly among them – plus a few more of our own invention (the “ironic fatalism” stage seems to be where Twitter, at least, has spent the majority of the pandemic). In a world accustomed to ever-increasing interconnectedness, we have found ourselves suddenly cut off – from the touch of our loved ones, from opportunities for spontaneous in-person interaction, from the chance to make music together without concerns for risk mitigation. Each of these becomes its own small grief, with a mourning process that seems to begin anew each time regulations change or new viral variants emerge.

In the face of these challenges, and as we move into Lent, I've been listening nonstop to versions of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which text forms the backbone of Christian Tenebrae services surrounding the judgment and crucifixion of Jesus during Holy Week. The setting we present today by Robert White, in particular, is full of unexpected cadences and tonal shifts, capturing my sense of constantly-deferred relief. White knew this feeling all too well: he was killed in 1574 by one of the many waves of plague that swept through London in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Looking outside the sacred tradition, I knew nobody was equipped to evoke an ever-shifting emotional landscape like Claudio Monteverdi. His *Lamento d'Arianna*, first created as an operatic aria but published in a five-voice arrangement in 1614, feels in moments like the furious Facebook post we've all written and deleted this year. Whether the targets of our ire are friends flying mask-less to Puerto Vallarta or politicians deferring blame for their failures, I can't help seeing reflected in all of us the series of cruel realizations that Ariadne undergoes after being abandoned by her lover Theseus on the island of Naxos.

A final note: while eliminating all risk is impossible even under normal circumstances, The New Consort has endeavored through a combination of masking, distancing, and testing to ensure the safest possible environment for our singers. We hope that you, as we have, find some catharsis in engaging with this music, and that next season we can look around and feel inspired to sing again music of rebirth, reconnection, and joy.

## **About the Ensemble**

Winners of the American Prize in Chamber Music, THE NEW CONSORT, a project-based, solo-voice ensemble directed by baritone Brian Mummert, was founded in 2015 and has quickly made embracing stylistic contrasts an integral part of the ensemble's identity: from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary & non-classical works, nothing is off-limits. By drawing diverse works into conversation, The New Consort attracts new audiences to classical music and encourages them to forge connections with unfamiliar genres of musical expression. The ensemble has appeared in venues including Trinity College, Cambridge; The Walters Art Museum's First Fridays series; The Bach Store, an New York City pop-up concert hall; Music Under the Stars (Connecticut); Spectrum New York City; and at churches and schools throughout the Northeast. Members of The New Consort have appeared as soloists and conductors with some of the world's best-respected ensembles from Carnegie Hall to Kuala Lumpur, but relish the opportunity that the ensemble presents to collaborate as chamber musicians. Forthcoming projects include the release of *Subtler Than Light*, the ensemble's debut recording featuring music of the *Dow Partbooks* and the world premiere recording of Rosáa Crean's *Watchtower Psalms*; *The Arch Sessions*, a set of videos and pop-up concerts presented under bridges in New York City's public parks; and the North American recorded premiere of Ben Rowarth's *The Turn*, a piece that grows out of and recontextualizes Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*, for Pegasus Early Music in May. More information at [www.thenewconsort.org](http://www.thenewconsort.org), and follow us: @thenewconsort

## Lamento d'Arianna

Poetry: Ottavio Rinuccini

Lasciatemi morire!

E chi volete voi, che mi conforte

in così dura sorte,

in così gran martire?

Lasciatemi morire.

O, Teseo mio -

sì che “mio” ti vo' dir,

che mio pur sei,

benchè t'involi, ah! crudo, a gl'occhi miei -

volgiti, Teseo mio -

O Dio, volgiti indietro,

a rimirar colei

che lasciato ha per te la patria e'l regno,

e'n questa arena ancora

(cibo di fere dispietate e crude)

lascierà l'ossa ignude!

O Teseo mio,

se tu sapessi, O Dio,

oimè, come s'affanna

la povera Arianna:

forse pentito

rivolgeresti ancor la prora al lito;

ma con l'aure serene

tu te ne vai felice - ed io qui piango.

A te prepara Atene

liete pompe superbe; ed io rimango,

cibo di fere dispietata e crude,

in solitarie arene.

Tu l'un' e l'altro

tuo vecchio parente stringerai lieto;

ed io più non vedrovi

o madre, o padre mio.

## Arianna's Lament

Translation: Robert Hollingworth

Leave me to die!

For even if you wanted to, how could you  
comfort me

in such harsh misfortune,

in such great suffering?

Leave me to die!

O my Theseus,

yes, I still want to call you mine

for mine you still are,

even though you have turned, (ah, cruel one)  
away from my eyes.

Turn back, my Theseus,

(ah heavens), turn back

to look again upon she

who abandoned for you her homeland and her  
throne,

and is still on this shore,

the prey of wild beasts, harsh and cruel,

who will leave her bones laid bare.

O my Theseus,

if you knew, (ah heavens)

alas, how suffers

your poor Ariadne,

perhaps you would repent

and turn back the prow of your ship to the shore:

but with fair winds

you sail joyfully away - and I remain here  
weeping.

For you Athens is preparing

festivities with great ceremony; and I am left

as prey of wild beasts, harsh and cruel

on these lonely shores.

You will happily embrace

both your aged parents

while I will never again see

my mother and my father.

Dov'è la fede  
che tanto mi giuravi?  
Così ne l'alta sede  
tu mi ripon de gl'avi.  
Son queste le corone  
onde m'adorni il crine?  
Questi li scettri sono?  
Queste le gemme e gl'ori?  
Lasciarmi in abbandono  
a fera che mi stracci e mi divori?  
Ah, Teseo mio: lascerai tu morire  
(in van piangendo aita)  
la misera Arianna, ch'a te fidossi  
e ti die'gloria e vita?

Ahi! che non pur risponde!  
Ahi! che più d'aspe sord'a miei lamenti!

O nemi, o turbi, o venti  
sommergetelo voi dentro a quell'onde!  
Correte Orchi e Balene,  
e de la membra immonde  
empiete le voragini profunde!  
Che parlo? ah! che vaneggio misera?

Oimè, che chieggio?  
O Teseo mio -  
non son quell'io  
che'i ferì detti sciolse:  
parlò l'affanno mio,  
parlò il dolore,  
parlò la lingua sì - ma non già'l core.

Where is the faithfulness  
which so strongly you swore to me?  
Where is the lofty throne  
on which you swore to seat me?  
Are these the wreaths  
which were to adorn my head?  
Are these the sceptres?  
Are these the jewels and golden ornaments?  
You abandon me  
for wild beasts to tear and devour.  
O my Theseus, are you leaving to die  
(vainly crying for help)  
the wretched Ariadne, who trusted you  
and to whom you owe your fame and your life?

Alas, he does not even reply.  
Alas, he is deafer than a snake to my  
complaining.  
O thunderclouds, tempests, winds,  
drown him in the waves!  
Rush to him, sea-monsters and whales  
and with his foul limbs  
fill the chasms of the deep.  
What am I saying? Ah, am I raving, wretched  
woman?  
Alas, what am I asking?  
O my Theseus,  
I am not myself  
while wild beasts threaten me:  
It was my deprivation that spoke,  
my pain.  
My tongue spoke, yes - but not my heart.

## Lamentations of Jeremiah

**Text: Lamentations 1:8-13**

HETH.

Peccatum peccavit Hierusalem, propterea instabilis facta est: omnes qui glorificabant eam spreverunt illam: quia viderunt ignominiam eius: ipsa autem gemens et conversa retrorsum.

TETH.

Sordes eius in pedibus eius: nec recordata est finis sui. Deposita est vehementer: non habens consolatorem. Vide Domine afflictionem meam: quoniam erectus est inimicus.

JOD.

Manum suam misit hostis ad omnia desiderabilia ejus, quia vidit gentes ingressas sanctuarium suum, de quibus præceperas ne intrarent in ecclesiam tuam.

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

CAPH.

Omnis populus ejus gemens, et quærens panem; dederunt pretiosa quæque pro cibo ad refocillandam animam. Vide, Domine, et considera quoniam facta sum vilis!

LAMED.

O vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus! quoniam vindemiavit me, ut locutus est Dominus, in die iræ furoris sui.

MEM.

De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis et erudit me: expandit rete pedibus meis: convertit me retrorsum: posuit me desolatam tota die maerore confectam.

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

**Translation: King James Version**

HETH.

Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

TETH.

Her filthiness is in her skirts; she remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter. O Lord, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself.

IOD.

The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things: for she hath seen that the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.

CAPH.

All her people sigh, they seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve the soul: see, O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile.

LAMED.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

MEM.

From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.

**NEXT WEEK: Four Nations Ensemble**  
*Vivaldi in Paris*