

*Spirited Conversations  
a service for Otago Arts Festival Week*



Sunday, 7th October 2012

at

7.00pm

**AN INTRODUCTION**

This service celebrates the intimate connection between the arts and religious faith. Every work of art is an act of faith, a gesture of hope against our mortality and the questions and anxieties that define us.

In this liturgy, three distinctive biblical texts express faith and hope against the perennial questions of humanity. These are readings that probe questions of suffering, of ultimate meaning and radical hope. In turn, against these texts, and in implicit ‘conversation’ with them, are readings from New Zealand authors – nearly all of whom have some association with Dunedin.

As is proper to any ‘conversation’, the connections, resonances and influences across and between these texts are for the attentive reader to discern. That discernment, like the texts themselves, is itself a work of the Spirit.

*Dean Trevor*

*All stand as the Choir enters*

**HYMN: ‘When in our music God is glorified’**

1) When in our music God is glorified,

and adoration leaves no room for pride,

it is as though the whole creation cried

Alleluia!

2) How often, making music, we have found

a new dimension in the world of sound,

as worship moved us to a more profound

Alleluia!

3) So has the Church, in liturgy and song,

in faith and love, through centuries of wrong,

borne witness to the truth in every tongue,

Alleluia!

4) And did not Jesus sing a psalm that night

when utmost evil strove against the Light?

Then let us sing, for whom he won the fight,

Alleluia!

5) Let every instrument be tuned for praise!

Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!

And may God give us faith to sing always

Alleluia!

*All sit*

**WELCOME**

**THE BIDDING** *The Dean*

E te whanau a te Karaiti, this night we gather to give thanks for this Otago Arts Festival and for the energy and vision of those who support it and all who work for it; we pray for all artists: for the musicians, painters, performers and writers whose craft and vision delight us and enrich our lives; we give thanks that their art extends our boundaries, questions and challenges us; and we remember with special gratitude those whose work has given us a truer understanding and deeper sense of place here in Otago and in Aotearoa-New Zealand. We pray also for artists who are discouraged and under stress; for those who feel unacknowledged and marginalized in our society and we pray for societies, patrons and policy makers that the arts may be better recognised and supported in our city and nation. Especially we come to give thanks that in the arts we recognise the brilliance and power of creation that comes from the source of all being, the Word incarnate, and gratefully acknowledge the powerful signs of His Spirit at work among us.

**READING 1** *Stuart Young, Associate-Professor, Theatre Studies, University of Otago*

A Reading from Job

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:   
‘Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?   
Gird up your loins like a man,  
   I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?  
   Tell me, if you have understanding.   
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!  
   Or who stretched the line upon it?   
On what were its bases sunk,  
   or who laid its cornerstone   
when the morning stars sang together  
   and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

‘Or who shut in the sea with doors  
   when it burst out from the womb?—   
when I made the clouds its garment,  
   and thick darkness its swaddling band,   
and prescribed bounds for it,  
   and set bars and doors,   
and said, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther,  
   and here shall your proud waves be stopped”?

‘Have you commanded the morning since your days began,  
   and caused the dawn to know its place,   
so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,  
   and the wicked be shaken out of it?   
It is changed like clay under the seal,  
   and it is dyed like a garment.   
Light is withheld from the wicked,  
   and their uplifted arm is broken.

‘Have you entered into the springs of the sea,  
   or walked in the recesses of the deep?   
Have the gates of death been revealed to you,  
   or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?   
Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?  
   Declare, if you know all this.

… ‘Can you draw out Leviathan with a fish-hook,  
   or press down its tongue with a cord?   
Can you put a rope in its nose,  
   or pierce its jaw with a hook?   
Will it make many supplications to you?  
   Will it speak soft words to you?   
Will it make a covenant with you  
   to be taken as your servant for ever?

**ANTHEM:** Thou, O God, art praised in Sion – *Malcolm Boyle* (1902-1976)

Thou, O God, art praised in Sion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem. Thou that hearest the prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come. Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest and receivest unto Thee. He shall dwell in Thy courts and shall be satisfied with the pleasures of Thy house, e’en of Thy holy temple. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stay’d on Thee: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Let the people praise Thee, O God, yea, let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase: and God shall give us His blessing.

Text: Psalm 65 (vv. 1, 2, 4) and Isaiah 26 (vv. 3, 4)

**READING 2:** *Lara Macgregor – Artistic Director, Fortune Theatre*

James K. Baxter *The Wide Open Cage, Act Two*

*(Saturday afternoon. Skully’s room. Skully alone at the window.)*

SKULLY It’s a bright day. Sails on the harbour and the wind shaking the pine trees on the hill. That’s where the couples go on a Saturday. There’s many a girl up there with her pants full of needles. … Ma Bailey’s hung her washing out. Poor old biddy. She deserves a gold medal. … You’re a bloody fool, Skully, cooped up here like a dog. Waiting for a woman and a drunk. Why wait for anyone? *(He walks to the table and picks up the skull.)* You’ve stopped waiting. What’s the answer, eh? You don’t know. Or if you do, you can’t tell. Dead bone. Dead, hollow bone. What’s Hogan to me and you? And Norah? (He walks back to the window.) Hogan’s my shadow. Hogan stops me forgetting the man I am. One drink and I’ll be Hogan. And Norah’s the tree with the golden apples on it. One touch and it withers to a stump.

*(He moves to the centre of the stage, with fists clenched at his sides.)*

Why did you make us? Why did you make us? Make us with a mind as big as the sky and a dirty hole to live in? When you made the sun and the moon, Jack Skully wasn’t there. When you made the flying fish and the bloody great whale, Jack Skully wasn’t even thought of. Except by you. You made him in your own time, and let him run wild and turn himself into a perambulating beer pump. And then you lifted him up and planted a new heart in his breast. I’ve cheated you a hundred times. Lying and bragging and humping. Forgetting all about you. *(He kneels.)* Give me a break, Father. Give me a break. I’m a bloody fool all right. You’re the boss. Tell me what to do.

**READING 3:** *Lisa Warrington, Associate-Professor, Theatre Studies, University of Otago*

Allen Curnow *CANST THOU DRAW OUT LEVIATHAN WITH AN HOOK?*

I

An old Green River knife had to be scraped

of blood rust, scales, the dulled edge scrubbed

with a stone to the decisive whisper of steel

on the lips of the wooden grip.

You now have a cloud in your hand

hung blue dark over the waves and edgewise

luminous, made fast by the two brass rivets

keeping body and blade together, leaving

the other thumb free for feeling

how the belly will be slit and the spine severed.

The big kahawai had to swim close

to the rocks which kicked at the waves

which kept on coming steeply steaming,

wave overhanging wave

in a strong to gale offshore wind.

The rocks kicked angrily, the rocks

hurt only themselves, the seas without a scratch

made out to be storming and shattering,

but it was all an act that they ever broke

into breakers or even secretively

raged like the rocks, the wreckage of the land,

the vertigo, the self-lacerating

hurt of the land.

Swimming closer

the kahawai drew down the steely cloud

and the lure, the line you cast

from cathedral rock, the thoughtful death

whispering to the thoughtless,

*Will you be caught?*

…

V

Fingers and gobstick fail,

the hook’s fast in the gullet,

the barb’s behind the root

of the tongue and the tight

fibre is tearing the mouth

and you’re caught, mate, you’re caught,

the harder you pull it

the worse it hurts, and it makes

no sense whatever in the air

or the seas or the rocks

how you kick or cry, or sleeplessly

dream as you drown.

*A big one! a big one!*

**ANTHEM:** Te Deum in C Major – *Benjamin Britten* (1913-1976)

We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship thee: the Father everlasting.

To thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens, and all the Powers therein.

To thee Cherubin and Seraphin: continually do cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty: of thy glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles: praise thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets: praise thee.

The noble army of Martyrs: praise thee.

The holy Church throughout all the world: doth acknowledge thee;

The Father: of an infinite Majesty;

Thine honourable, true: and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son: of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man: thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death: thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God: in the glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come: to be our Judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants: whom thou hast

redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints: in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people: and bless thine heritage.

Govern them: and lift them up for ever.

Day by day: we magnify thee;

And we worship thy Name: ever world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord: to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us: as our trust is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

**READING 4** *Stuart Young, Associate-Professor, Theatre Studies, University of Otago*

A Reading from John

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

**READING 5:** *Lara Macgregor – Artistic Director, Fortune Theatre*

Charles Brasch: *Indirections*

A fragment of very early puzzling over the nature of things has always remained with me. I was lying in bed at night wondering how everything began, trying to go back and back to the origin of existence. Earth, the sun, the stars, the universe itself, God who made it. Was He outside the universe? Then it was not everything, not universal. And if it was not, what existed outside it? Only God? Where and how then did He exist? And did He create Himself? How could He do so? But if that was impossible, either He had always existed, or someone else, something else, had created Him. At that always, or that other, my mind grew dizzy and was baffled, it drew back, to venture out on the same inquiry another day. I do not think I ever got farther than those vast shadows, or was able to penetrate that beginninglessness. And if existence had no beginning, if it always was and is, how should it come to an end? Must it not continue for ever?

*All stand*

**HYMN: ‘Come to us, creative Spirit’**

1) Come to us, creative Spirit,

in our Father's house,

every human talent hallow,

hidden skills arouse,

that, within our earthly temple,

wise and simple

may rejoice.

2) Poet, painter, music maker,

all your treasures bring;

craftsman, actor, graceful dancer,

make your offering:

join your hands in celebration!

let creation

shout and sing!

3) Word from God eternal springing,

fill our minds, we pray,

and in all artistic vision

give integrity.

May the flame within us burning

kindle yearning

day by day.

4) In all places and forever,

glory be expressed

to the Son, with God the Father

and the Spirit blessed.

In our worship and our living

keep us striving

for the best.

*All sit*

**READING 6:** *Patricia Payne – former Opera Singer, now artist*

Brian Turner: *Otago Peninsula*

There, beneath a portcullis of rain

lie the bones of time-rent men and women.

They lie awash in the slush

that saddened and sometimes defeated them.

Scabby hedges cling to the slopes

of hills yoked by sky.

Here the whole range of earth’s colours

sprawl on paddock, stone wall and crumpled sea.

Nothing is left untouched by sparse sunlight,

slanting rain, fists of wind punching

the ribs of the land. Here, under tough grasses

and the crust of sheep and cattle tracks

crumble the fondest dreams and prophecies.

No one came who stayed to conquer, no one came

who was not beaten down

or turned away for another time.

**ANTHEM:** Magnificat in F Major – *George Dyson* (1883-1964)

*All stand*

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.

He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*All sit*

**READING 7:** *Patricia Payne – former Opera Singer, now artist*

A reading from The Book of Revelation

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,  
‘See, the home of God is among mortals.  
He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be with them;   
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.  
Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,  
for the first things have passed away.’

**READING 8:** *Lisa Warrington, Associate-Professor, Theatre Studies, University of Otago*

Janet Frame: *Dunedin Poem*

Here I’ve gone down with the sun

written syllables till time has surprised me

with the fact of his consistency.

I love not you but the sun’s going down

so easily.

Soon will the days be dark? Will the mists come,

the rain blow from Signal Hill down Northeast Valley

that in winter lies in shadow?

I never remember the sun, in Northeast Valley.

The tramlines are torn from their sockets.

Things do not suffer as we supposed.

People suffer more than we supposed.

The buses tread softly, jerk to a stop, the doors slide open.

I climb in, traveling to where

down a long street lined with flowering cherry trees I walked

nineteen years ago

to stare at the waves on St. Clair beach.

**READING 9** *Stuart Young*, *Associate-Professor, Theatre Studies, University of Otago*

James K. Baxter: *The Ikons*

Hard, heavy, slow, dark,

Or so I find them, the hands of Te Whaea

Teaching me to die. Some lightness will come later

When the heart has lost its unjust hope

For special treatment. Today I go with a bucket

Over the paddocks of young grass,

So delicate like fronds of maidenhair,

Looking for mushrooms. I find twelve of them.

Most of them little, and some eaten by maggots,

But they’ll do to add to the soup. It’s a long time now

Since the great ikons fell down,

God, Mary, home, sex, poetry,

Whatever one uses as a bridge

To cross the river that has only one beach,

And even one’s name is a way of saying –

‘This gap inside a coat’ – the darkness I call God,

The darkness I call Te Whaea, how can they translate

the blue calm evening sky that a plane tunnels through

Like a little wasp, or the bucket in my hand,

Into something else? I go on looking

For mushrooms in the field, and the fist of longing

Punches my heart, until it is too dark to see.

**ANTHEM:** Nunc Dimittis in F Major – *George Dyson* (1883-1964)

*All stand*

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

*Please kneel or sit.*

**Prayers *(The Dean)***

*The Cathedral Choir leads the singing of the Lord’s Prayer in Maori*

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi

Kia tapu tōu Ingoa.

Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.

Kia meatia tāu e pai ai

ki runga ki te whenua,

kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.

Hōmai ki a mātou āianei

he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.

Murua ō mātou hara,

Me mātou hoki e muru nei

i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.

Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whakawaia;

Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:

Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha,

me te korōria, Āke āke āke. Āmine.

*All stand*

**OFFERTORY HYMN: ‘Immortal, invisible, God only wise’**

*During which a collection will be taken*

1) Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,

Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

2) Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,

Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;

Thy justice like mountains high soaring above,

Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

3) To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;

In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;

We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,

And wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.

4) Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light

Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;

All laud we would render, O help us to see:

'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

**BLESSING**

**ORGAN VOLUNTARY:** Paean – *Herbert Howells* (1892-1983)