

SOUND FROM THE BENCH

Music by **Ted Hearne**
conducted by **Donald Nally**

Performed by ***The Crossing***

Katy Avery	Michael Jones
Jessica Beebe	Heather Kayan
Karen Blanchard	Mark Laseter
Steven Bradshaw	Chelsea Lyons
Colin Dill	Maren Montalbano
Micah Dinger	Rebecca Myers
Robert Eisentrout	Becky Oehlers
Allie Faulkner	Daniel Schwartz
Ryan Fleming	Rebecca Siler
Joanna Gates	Daniel Spratlan
Dimitri German	Elisa Sutherland
Steven Hyder	Jason Weisinger

with instrumentalists

Taylor Levine, electric guitar
James Moore, electric guitar
Ron Wiltrout, drums/percussion

lighting design by **Bruce Steinberg**
sound design by **Garth MacAleavey**
text for *Sound from the Bench* by **Jena Osman**

produced by **Beth Morrison Morrison Projects**
creative producer **Beth Morrison**
general manager **Jecca Barry**
production manager **James Fry**
associate producer **Mariel O'Connell**
company manager **Liene Camarena Fogele**

Produced in association with The Crossing
Special Thanks to Frederick Morrison and Catherine Lord
Sound from the Bench, an album recorded by Ted Hearne, Donald Nally and The Crossing and produced by Nick Tipp, will be released next month on Cantaloupe Music. See cantaloupemusic.com for more details.

PROGRAM

Consent (2014)

Ripple (2012)

Privilege (2010)

1. motive/mission
2. casino
3. burning tv song
4. they get it
5. we cannot leave

[Break]

Sound from the Bench (2014, rev. 2016)

1. How to throw your voice
2. Mouth piece
3. (Ch)oral argument
4. Simple surgery
5. When you hear

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

TED HEARNE (b. 1982, Chicago) is a Los Angeles-based composer, singer and bandleader noted for his “voracious curiosity” (NewMusicBox), “tough edge and wildness of spirit,” and “fresh and muscular” music (The New York Times), who “writes with...technical assurance and imaginative scope” (San Francisco Chronicle). The New York Times included *The Source* on its list of the best classical vocal performances of 2014, and (along with *The New Yorker* and *The Nation*) of the best albums of 2015. *Law of Mosaics*, Hearne’s 30-minute piece for string orchestra, was recently performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony, and was named one of *The New Yorker*’s most notable albums of 2014 by Alex Ross. Hearne performs with Philip White as the vocal-electronics duo R WE WHO R WE, belongs to the composer collective *Sleeping Giant*, and his most recent collaboration paired him with legendary musician Erykah Badu. An active recording artist, his albums *Katrina Ballads*, *The Source* and *Outlanders* are available on New Amsterdam Records. *Sound from the Bench*, his 40-minute cantata challenging the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* ruling, will be released on Cantaloupe Records (March 24) with three other topical choral works, performed by *The Crossing*. Ted Hearne is the recipient of the Gaudeamus Prize and the New Voices Residency from Boosey and Hawkes. He recently joined the composition faculty at the University of Southern California. Recent and upcoming works include commissions from the LA Philharmonic, *eighth blackbird*, *A Far Cry*, *Ensemble dal Niente*, and *Roomful of Teeth*.
www.tedhearne.com

Donald Nally (conductor) is the John W. Beattie Chair of Music and Director of Choral Organizations at Northwestern University. He conducts the internationally recognized new-music ensemble, *The Crossing*, in Philadelphia. He has held distinguished tenures as chorus master for Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, The Spoleto Festival (Italy), Opera Philadelphia and the Chicago Bach Project; he has served as music director for Cincinnati’s Vocal Arts Ensemble and as guest chorus master to the Grant Park Symphony Chorus, the Philharmonia Chorus of London, and The Latvian State Choir. *The Crossing* has commissioned over fifty new works and has sung at Disney Hall with the LA Philharmonic, Carnegie Hall with the American Composers Orchestra, the Kennedy Center, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art; this summer it will again return to the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). His ensembles have received Chorus America’s Margaret Hillis Award twice: *The Crossing* in 2015 and *The Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia* in 2002.

The Crossing is a chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and dedicated to new music. Formed by a group of friends in 2005 in Philadelphia, the ensemble has since grown exponentially, commissioning over half of its repertoire and receiving awards and critical acclaim internationally. *The Crossing* works with some of the world’s leading compositional voices, including David Lang, Caroline Shaw, Ted Hearne, Lewis Spratlan, John Luther Adams, and David T. Little. They are nominated for a 2017 GRAMMY® award in the category of best choral performance for their recording of Thomas Lloyd’s *Bonhoeffer*. Highly sought after for

collaborative projects, the group's first residency was at the Spoleto Festival in Italy in 2007; it has since performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, Rolling Stones, and the Prism and Jack Quartets. The Crossing has appeared at such venues as the Kennedy Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and Lincoln Center. The Crossing has several recordings on the Innova, Albany, Navona, and ECM labels. The Crossing won the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence from Chorus America, which has also awarded the ensemble several ASCAP Awards for The group also participates in an annual weeklong residency at the Big Sky Choral Initiative at Montana's Warren Miller Performing Arts Center.

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Taylor Levine (guitarist) is a performer of composed and improvised music. In addition to his electric guitar quartet Dither, he has been found performing with Signal Ensemble, Kronos Quartet, Marc Ribot, Tyondai Braxton, Lee Ranaldo, Erykah Badu, Bang On A Can, Nels Cline, Eighth Blackbird, Blarvuster, Newband, Weasel Walter, New York City Opera, New World Symphony, London Sinfonietta, BBC Orchestra, and Wordless Music Orchestra. He studied at The Manhattan School of Music and The Amsterdam Conservatory. Taylor currently resides in Brooklyn, where he can often be found building a variety of electronic circuits.

James Moore (guitarist) is a versatile guitarist, multi-instrumentalist and composer. A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, he has been active in New York since 2006, earning the titles of "local electric guitar hero" by Time Out New York and "model new music citizen" by the New York Times. James is a founding member of the electric guitar quartet Dither, and performs in an eclectic array of ensembles including his acoustic group The Hands Free and the rock band Forever House. James's first solo recording, John Zorn's The Book of Heads, was released on Tzadik in 2015. Other recent projects include playwright Richard Maxwell's theater productions Neutral Hero and The Evening; choreographer Susan Marshall and composer David Lang's

collaborative dance work PLAY/PAUSE; and the upcoming production of Mason Bates's The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs with Santa Fe Opera.

Ron Wiltrout (percussionist) is a percussionist based in Charleston, South Carolina. He performs regularly throughout the Southeast with ensembles whose styles range from jazz and salsa to free improvisation to avant-garde and contemporary classical music. An avid performer of new music, he has premiered pieces by Ted Hearne, Michael Pisaro, Sam Sfirri, Mustafa Walker, Andy Akiho, Sean Friar, Philip White, and Nathan Koci. Ron is devoted to exploring the use of unconventional percussion and extended techniques. He co-leads multiple jazz groups and is the leader and originator of the band Rad Western. Ron has performed with Lewis/Gregory/Wiltrout, Garage Cuban Band, Lee Barbour, Tommy Gill, Brad Moranz, The Asphalt Orchestra, The Charleston Latin Jazz Collective, Duda Lucena, Kopaja, Katrina Ballads, The Charleston Jazz Orchestra, and the Opposite of a Train. www.ronwiltrout.com

Ian W. King (Lighting Designer), is a graduate of Ohio University's theatrical design program. Recent local designs include: From the Sea to Somewhere Else (Flotsam Jetsome), The Body Politic (Juventas), Saturday Night/Sunday Morning (Lyric Stage), Hidden Faces of Courage (OWL), Reel to Reel, Dreambook (FPTC), El Gato, La Hija De Rappaccini, Der Vampyr (OperaHub), Chalk, Girls' Sports and I.N.A.M.M.(Fresh Ink Theatre), Boxer Shorts (Brown Box Theatre), Turn of the Screw (Simple Machine), The Farnsworth Invention (Flat Earth Theatre), Three, C.O.T.E. (Boston Public Works) and The Polish Joke (Titanic Theatre Co.) and work in the Illumious Project at Fenway. He is also a co-artistic director with Fort Point Theatre Company.

Garth MacAleavey (Sound Designer) - Cutting his teeth as an audio engineer on the New York City contemporary music scene since 2008 (le Poisson Rouge, VIA, BMP, MATA), Garth specializes in sound design and concert amplification for both traditional and experimental music performance. An avid musician since his youth, Garth's career in audio was strongly influenced by his time as a student of avant garde percussion at UCSC under the tutelage of Willie Winant. This coupled with music department's emphasis on contemporary and experimental music set him on the path he is on today: Tech Director and chief audio engineer at NYC's National Sawdust. Garth's recent credits include: the sound design for "FLEXN" with Peter Sellars at the Park Avenue Armory, The Hubble Cantata at the Prospect Park Bandshell for Celebrate Brooklyn and David Lang's Anatomy Theater/BYC's Silent Voices for Prototype 2017.

Beth Morrison Projects (BMP) identifies and supports the work of emerging and established composers, taking the form of opera-theatre, music-theatre, multi-media concert works, and new forms waiting to be discovered. Founded in 2006 to support the work of these composers and their multi-media collaborators, Beth Morrison Projects encourages risk-taking, creating a structure for new work that is unique to the artist and allows them to feel safe to experiment and push boundaries.

Noted as "the edge of innovation (Opera News)," Beth Morrison Projects "is a contemporary opera mastermind (Los Angeles Times)" and "it's own genre. (Opera News)." Projects have been performed in numerous premier venues around the world including Brooklyn Academy of

Music, Disney Hall, The Barbican, Lincoln Center, The Walker Art Center, The Beijing Music Festival, The Holland Festival, and more.

Current and upcoming projects include works by composers Todd Almond, Ted Hearne, David Lang, David T. Little, Zhou Long, Matt Marks, Paola Prestini, Ellen Reid, Kamala Sankaram, Sarah Kirkland Snider, Missy Mazzoli, Nico Muhly, Scott Wheeler and more, with directors Michael Counts, Julian Crouch, James Darrah, Rachel Dickstein, Daniel Fish, Bob McGrath, Kevin Newbury, and Paul Peers.

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FROM THE COMPOSER

Consent (2014)

text by Ted Hearne, culled from the following sources:

love letters I wrote in 2006

love letters my father wrote in 1962

The Catholic Rite of Marriage

Traditional Jewish Ketubah (Wedding contract)

text messages by Trent Mays and Lucas Herrington,
used as evidence in the Steubenville Rape Trial, 2013

NOTE:

"The purpose of these untranslated and mystical utterances was to sidestep the Devil and to reach God directly."

- Teju Cole, in an essay about *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* and the tradition of "speaking in tongues."

"There is a gestalt that orders things together, and if you pull back further, there's another order there; the things are arranged the way they are for some reason, it might not be a rational reason, but there is a reason."

- David Byrne, regarding his album with Talking Heads, *Speaking in Tongues*

The Yale Choral Artists asked me to write *Consent* as a companion piece to Thomas Tallis's motet *Loquebantur Variis Linguis*, in which the composer sets the text "the apostles spoke in different tongues."

The ideas expressed in the quotes above — that to communicate with the holy spirit one had to bypass language entirely, and that the patterns of language reflect the power structures that created it — set me on a journey to explore language that might have a duplicitous role in my own life.

TEXT:

i want you

i want to

i want you

i want to

i want you

i want to

I do.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you
It will be good, we can do it, and we need it.

It can be taken from me - even from the shirt on my back.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you
It will be good, we can do it, and we need it
I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security -

It can be taken from me - even from the shirt on my back.

I do.

I just took care of your daughter.

* * *

Declare your consent
The missing you hurts
You'll be in it soon
What a way to feel
Who gives this woman

* * *

i want you
i want to

All of it shall be mortgageable -

I just took care of your daughter

and bound as security -

she said you could take a picture

i want you
i want to

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe

she was so in love with me that night

I ask you to state your intentions

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security -

it can be taken from me, even from the shirt on my back -

during my lifetime and after this lifetime,

this day and forever.

I just took care of your daughter and made sure she was safe

she said you could take a picture

she looks dead lmao

* * *

I do.

I was thinking penetrating thoughts about you

It will be good, we can do it, and we need it.
I miss you too, in a heart-aching kind of way
I'm really looking forward to adding to it

All of it can be mortgageable and bound as security -
it can be taken from me - even from the shirt on my back -
during my lifetime and after this lifetime
this day and forever

How have you been holding out on me with that picture for so long?
she said you could take a picture
oh i am looking at all my pictures of you

You don't even want to know what I'm imagining you doing right now
she was so in love with me that night

Declare your consent before God

I just took care of your daughter when she was drunk

* * *

This original amount, I accept upon myself and my heirs after me -
It can be paid from the best part of my property and possessions
that I own under all the heavens.

All of it shall be mortgageable and bound as security -
it can be taken from me - even from the shirt on my back -
during my lifetime and after this lifetime -
from this day and forever.

even from the shirt on my back
she said you could take a picture
I refuse to get excited

Will you accept children lovingly from God?

Declare your consent before God and the church.

I felt knowing what was right
she looks dead lmao
i just took care of your daughter
but i also know we are equal to almost any...
she said you could take a picture
Who gives this woman?

***Ripple* (2012)**

NOTE:

Ripple uses as its text just one sentence from one of the 400,000 internal military cables known as the Iraq War Logs. It is part of a cable that describes an incident that took place on July 22, 2005, wherein an American military officer opened fire on an unidentified vehicle that was driving toward a checkpoint in Fallujah. As the cable plainly states, "The marine

from Post 7 was unable to determine the occupants of the vehicle due to the reflection of the sun coming off the windshield." The occupants were a family of Iraqi civilians - a mother was killed, her husband and two children badly injured.

TEXT:

I. The marine that engaged from Post 7 was unable to determine the occupants of the vehicle due to the reflection of the sun coming off the windshield.

II. due to the

III. of the sun

IV. The marine that engaged

V. determine

VI. the reflection of the sun

VII. occupants

VII. The marine that engaged from Post 7 was unable to determine the occupants of the vehicle due to the reflection of the sun coming off the windshield.

***Privilege* (2010)**

NOTE:

Privilege is a collection of five short pieces I wrote for the San Francisco-based choir Volti, inspired by an interview I saw in 2009 between Bill Moyers and David Simon (creator of *The Wire* and *Treme*). Moyers asked Simon, "why do we tolerate such gaps between rich and poor?" It's a question I realized I had no good answer for (still don't), and wrote this piece in response to that feeling.

TEXT:

1. motive/mission

motive/mission

you were always fair

you were almost always kind

weren't you?

you always reached out your hand

you almost always refused to lie

didn't you?

you wouldn't close your shining eyes

would you?

(Ted Hearne)

2. casino

it's almost like a casino
you're looking at the guy winning,
you're looking at the guy who pulled the
lever
and all the bells go off
and all the coins are coming
out of a one-armed bandit
and you're thinking
that could be me.
i'll play by those rules.

(David Simon, from a 2009 interview with
Bill Moyers)

3. burning tv song

flashing window
empty street
burning tv song
flashing window
empty street
burning tv song
flashing window
empty street
burning tv song

Sound from the Bench

text: Jena Osman

NOTE:

Sound From the Bench is cantata for chamber choir, two electric guitars and drums, with a libretto by Jena Osman. It was co-commissioned by Volti and The Crossing.

why these texts?

Sound From the Bench is a reaction to Jena Osman's incredible book "Corporate Relations," a collection of poems that follows the historical trajectory of corporate personhood in the United States. The five movements combine language taken from landmark Supreme Court Cases with

stay

(Ted Hearne)

4. they get it

we pretend to need them
we pretend to educate the kids
but we don't
and they're not foolish
they get it

(David Simon)

5. we cannot leave

we cannot leave
this land of our ancestors
on this earth
we are being killed by the monster
on this earth
shuku shuku
oh, mother, it's leaving me behind!
i want to get on the train
to get on the train in the morning
i want
oh, mother, it's leaving me behind!

(traditional Xhosa, translated by Patiswa
Nombona and Mollie Stone)

words from ventriloquism textbooks.

I was instantly drawn to Osman's work because of its rich intertextuality: she appropriates a variety of texts from diverse sources and assembles them into a powerful bricolage. I strive toward a similar polyphony of oppositional voices and perspectives in my music, and to bring the chaotic forces of life into the work itself. It was this impulse, and the unabashedly political tone of Osman's poetry, that made me want to set some part of "Corporate Relations" to music.

why electric guitars?

Sound from the Bench is built around the tension between the human voice and electric guitar. The electric guitar can sound like literally anything. Through circuitry, programming, and analog and digital manipulation, the pitches and rhythms a guitarist plays can be utterly transformed, erasing all human touch. It speaks through an amplifier and could easily drown out any voice. These cyborg-esque qualities contrast the human voice, both in its inescapable limitations and the complex differences found in every individual vocal timbre.

what does "no mouth" mean?

No mouth is Osman's paraphrase of the central reasoning behind the majority in *Bellotti v. First National Bank*, the 1978 case upon which *Citizens United* is based: because corporations don't have a literal mouth, they cannot literally speak, therefore advertising is their only available method of communication and must be considered speech (and is entitled to First Amendment protections as such).

The phrase the very heart, also found in the second movement, is excerpted from Justice White's dissent in this case: "It has long been recognized, however, that the special status of corporations has placed them in a position to control vast amounts of economic power which may, if not regulated, dominate not only the economy but the very heart of our democracy, the electoral process."

about the third movement

The central movement sets words from the oral argument to *Citizens United*. My brain started firing when I realized this poem of Jena's was a literal erasure of the Supreme Court document – every phrase appeared in order, and in a position approximating the horizontal spot it appeared on the page. When I printed out the full 83-page oral argument and blacked out every phrase that Jena hadn't included, the remaining words jumped out at me and started to take on new meanings and inferences. That strange, new energy helped propel the decontextualized text into music.

The time at which the phrases appear approximate and in some way preserve the place at which they appear in the original document. The music between Osman's text, that which fills the "blank pages," sometimes includes a quote from Thomas Tallis's motet *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* (the text is: "The Apostles spoke in different tongues – Alleluia.") Aside from loving this music, I liked the image of our Justices as apostles.

"personhood"

What could this word even mean when it is applied to non-human things? The courts have systematically granted constitutional rights to corporations since the Civil War - we concede that a corporation can "speak" even though it has no mouth – and these rights have come at the expense of both the private citizen and the government.

"a corporation is to a person as a person is to a machine

*friends of the court we know them as good and bad, they too are sheep
and goats ventriloquizing the ghostly fiction*

a corporation is to a body as a body is to a puppet

*putting it in caricature, if there are natural persons then there are those
who are not that, buying candidates. there are those who are strong on
the ground and then weak in the air. weight shifts to the left leg while
the propaganda arm extends."*

(Jena Osman, from *Corporate Relations*)

- program notes by Ted Hearne, with passages after Eric Howerton's review of
Corporate Relations for "The Volta Blog"

TEXT:

1. how to throw your voice

Inhale.

Take a deep breath.

Draw in as much air as possible.

Don't sound obvious.

Avoid gasping.

Raise your tongue.

Position the back of your tongue so it touches your soft palate.

When the mouth is closed the tongue comes in close contact with the roof

A curtain of flesh, the soft palate

The throat and mouth in distinct chambers.

Exert pressure.

Let out a groan.

The ventriloquial drone.

culled from "How to throw your voice"
(www.wikihow.com/Throw-Your-Voice)

and *Ventriloquism* (1906) by Charles Henry Olin
by Jena Osman and Ted Hearne

2. mouth piece

No mouth.

The very heart.

adapted from *First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti*
435 U.S. 765 (1978)
by Jena Osman

3. (ch)oral argument

a narrowly tailored remedy to that interest.

Apostoli

—to use the words of one Justice, that is ventriloquist-speak.
I would say that it is more like surrogate speech.

Apostoli

JUSTICE GINSBERG: Who is the "you" ?

Apostoli

people think representatives are being bought, okay?

Apostoli, Alleluia.

the line dissolves on practical application.

Apostoli

it is said the distinction requires the use of magic words
the words of the statute were "any person,"

Apostoli

as if we have an unbroken amount of years

we gave some really weird interpretations

— the Earth is not —

CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why don't you tell us now.

We will give you time for rebuttal.

[Laughter]

JUSTICE SCALIA: Don't keep us in suspense.

[Laughter]

they want winners

if it has to lose, the answer is yes

they want winners

presumably as a poison pill

they want winners

individuals are more complicated than that

we couldn't sever it based on the language

there is no place where an ongoing chill is more dangerous

these corporations have a lot of money

variis linguis Apostoli, Alleluia.

we get to that when we get there.

you are not talking about the railroad barons and the rapacious trusts

they wear a scarlet letter that says "C"
but it is a nightmare that Congress endorsed.

is that a yes?

is that a yes?

culled from *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*,
558 U.S. 310 (2010)
by Jena Osman

4. simple surgery

What I thought was a sudden chip in
the metal was actually a drop of
water one foot in the front of the
metal, my eye joining the two in a
simple surgery

from *The Character* by Jena Osman

5. when you hear

when you hear that distant sounding drone,
you know you have your mouth as it should be

culled from *Ventriloquism* (1906) by Charles Henry Olin
by Jena Osman