

# Bob Becker Ensemble Concert

## Texts

### *Never in Word*

Text by Conrad Aiken

Music will more nimbly move  
than quick wit can order word  
words can point or speaking prove  
but music heard

How with successions it can take  
time in change and change in time  
and all reorder, all remake  
with no recourse to rhyme!

Let us in joy, let us in love,  
surrender speech to music, tell  
what music so much more can prove  
nor talking say so well:

Love with delight may move away  
Love with delight may forward come  
Or else will hesitate and stay  
finger at lip, at home,

But verse can never say these things;  
only in music may be heard  
the subtle touching of such strings,  
never in word.

*To Immortal Bloom*

Text by Conrad Aiken, edited by Bob Becker

The first note, simple; the second note, distinct;  
The third note, harsh; the fourth, an innuendo;  
The fifth, a humble triad; and the sixth –  
Suddenly – is the chord of chords, that breaks  
The evening; and from evening calls the angel,  
One voice divinely singing.

So the twilight  
Deepens the hour from rose to purple; so  
One bell-note is the death-note, and completes  
The half-remembered with the soon-forgotten.  
The threes and fives compute our day; we move  
To doom with all things moving.

It is this instant when hell and heaven  
Arch in a chord of glory over madness;  
The world's a rose which comes this night to flower:  
This evening is its light. And it is we,  
Who, with our harmonies and discords, woven  
Of myriad things forgotten and remembered,  
Urge the vast twilight to immortal bloom.

*Cryin' Time*

Text by Sandra Meigs, edited by Bob Becker

I was up inside the canyon  
when I saw your smilin' face.  
Never plant the seed,  
if you're expectin' grace.  
Cryin' time. It's cryin' time.  
Cryin' time again.

In the rocks I see your face,  
but then a river floods the place.  
The rock's so tall  
that I'm just nothin'.  
Muddy water's changin' all I know.  
Cryin' time. It's cryin' time.  
Cryin' time again.

A rock so high  
nothin' can climb it.  
Not even a bird  
can fly to find it.

And down the cliffs  
to the river falls.  
Risin' water breakin' through the walls.

And takin' back  
all it left behind.  
Takes it back,  
so I can't find you.

With the drop of a hat  
or a key down a grate,  
I lost you like that,  
through a slip of fate.  
Cryin' time. It's cryin' time.  
Cryin' time again.

I went to the river  
and thought I'd jump in.  
Your smilin' face stopped me. Again.  
Smilin' face, or cryin' time.  
It's sure to make me feel alive.

Beyond the hill. Beneath the clock.  
Beside my bed. On the canyon walk.  
I know you won't mind,  
if it's cryin' time.  
Cryin' time.  
Cryin' time again.

*Clear Things May Not Be Seen*

Text by Conrad Aiken, selected and edited by Bob Becker

To the wild night which everywhere awaits you  
and the deep darkness full of sounds  
to the deep terror in which shines for a moment  
a single light, far off, which is suddenly quenched  
this is the meaning for which you seek a phrase  
this is your phrase.

Into the gulf between bellsound and waiting and bellsound and then  
the unfilled silence which sets a term to time  
into the void the opening of the eye  
into the eye the entrance of wild light  
and the slow forgetting of the night  
the dreams shifted from left to right  
the hand moved  
the cloud broken by the sun  
the light broken by rain  
the sea broken by pouring water

into that nameless space  
while the hand yet is still  
let the division come  
let the pure separation come

let the division come  
in this serene bewilderment this leaving  
of the half known for the half known  
before there is conceiving or believing  
or with self knowledge the eyes are done  
or the hands remember each other  
while yet our south and north are sleeping  
let us both stay and go forth,  
let this be our home, our keeping.

Twilight is spacious, near things in it seem far,  
And distant things seem near.  
Now in the green west hangs a yellow star.  
And now across old waters you may hear  
The profound gloom of bells among still trees,  
Like a rolling of huge boulders beneath seas.

Now, unless persuaded by searching music  
Which suddenly opens the portals of the mind,  
We guess no angels,  
And are contented to be blind.  
Let us blow silver horns in the twilight,  
And lift our hearts to the yellow star in the green,  
To find perhaps, if, while the dew is rising,  
Clear things may not be seen.