

Texts for 10/5 concert (first half)

“At the River”, Gospel song by Robert Lowry (1864),
arranged by Aaron Copland

“Shall we gather by the river where bright angels feet
have trod, with its crystal tide forever flowing by the
throne of God? Yes, we’ll gather by the river, the
beautiful river; gather with the saints by the river that
flows by the throne of God.

Soon we’ll reach the shining river. Soon our pilgrimage
will cease. Soon our happy hearts will quiver with the
melody of peace.”

“Shenandoah”, Sea Chanty, arranged by Celius
Dougherty

“O Shenandoah, I hear you calling. Hio! you rolling river.
O Shenandoah, I long to hear you. Hio! I’m bound away,
‘cross the wide Missouri.

Missouri, she’s a mighty river. Hio! you rolling river.
When she rolls down, her topsails shiver. Hio! I’m bound
away, ‘cross the wide Missouri.

Farewell, my dearest. I'm bound to leave you. Hio! you rolling river. O Shenandoah, I'll not deceive you. Hio! I'm bound away, 'cross the wide Missouri."

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by Margaret Bonds, text by Langston Hughes

"I've known rivers: ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins. My soul has grown deep like the rivers. I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young. I built my hut near the Congo, and it lulled me to sleep. I looked upon the Nile, and raised the pyramids above it. I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans. And I've seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset."

"Dans la foret de Septembre" (In the September Forest) by Gabriel Faure, text by Catulle Mendes

"Foliage of deadened sound, resonant trunks hollowed by age; the ancient mournful forest blends with our melancholy. Oh, fir trees clinging to chasms, abandoned

nests in broken branches, burned out thickets, flowers without dew; you know well how we suffer!

And when men, that pale wanderer, weeps in the lonely wood, the shadowy mysterious laments greet him, likewise weeping. Good forest! With an open promise of exile that life implores, I come with a brisk step into your green depths. But a slender branch by the path, a reddish leaf brushes my head and quivers on my shoulder. For the aging forest, knowing that winter, when all withers, is already close for me as for her; she bestows on me the fraternal gift of its first dead leaf.”

“Fussreise” (A Walking Journey)

“With a freshly cut walking stick I embark early in the morning through the woods and over the hills. Then, as the birds in the branches sing and move, or as the golden cluster of grapes feels the delighted spirit of an early morning sun, so too my dear old Adam feels, as if for the first time, autumn and spring fever, inspired by God and never wasted; the first joys of Paradise.

After all, you are not so bad, old Adam, as the strict teachers have taught us. You love and praise as if Creation is eternally new, from our dear Creator and

Protector. If only my entire life would be spent, gently sweating, on such a morning walk!

“Ombra mai fu”, from XERXES, by G.F. Handel, text by S. Stampiglia

“Never was a shade, nor any plant, dearer to me or more lovely or sweet.”

“Sea Fever”, by John Ireland, text by John Masefield

“I must go down to the seas again; to the lonely sea and the sky. And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by. And the wheels kick and the wind’s song and the white sails shaking; and a grey mist on the sea’s face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied. And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying. And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life; to the gull’s way and the whale’s way, where the wind’s like a whetted knife. And all I ask is a merry yarn

from a laughing fellow-rover. And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over."

"Dover Beach" by Samuel Barber, text by Matthew Arnold

"The sea is calm tonight. The tide is full. The moon lies fair upon the straits. On the French coast the light gleams, and is gone. The cliffs of England stand, glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay. Come to the window; sweet is the night air!

Only from the long line of spray where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land, listen! You hear the grating roar of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling at their return, up the high strand, begin and cease, and then again begin. With trembling cadence slow, and bring the eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago heard it on the Aegean, and it brought into his mind the turbid ebb and flow of human misery. We find also in the sound a thought, hearing it by this distant northern sea. The sea of faith was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.

But now I only hear its melancholy, long, withdrawing
roar, retreating to the breath of the night wind, down the
vast edges drear, and naked shingles of the world. Ah
love, let us be true to one another! For the world, which
seems to lie before us like a land of dreams, so various,
so beautiful, so new, hath really neither joy, nor love, nor
light, nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.

And we are here as on a darkling plain, swept with
confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant
armies clash by night.”

“He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”, traditional
spiritual, arranged by Moses Hogan

“He’s got the whole world in His hands. He’s got you and
me, brother, in His Hands. He’s got you and me, sister, in
His hands. He’s got the little baby in His Hands. He’s got
the whole world in His Hands. He’s got mother and
father in His hands. He’s got the stars and moon right in
His hands. He’s got everybody in His hands. He’s got the
whole world in His hands.”

Texts for Environmental Voices (second half)

HOME by Joan Ross Sorkin

I hear the sound of fire
Crackling in the air
The wind, the flames
The breaking of timbers
Crashing everywhere

I see the color of ashes
Underfoot,
The gray, the black
The pile of nothingness
Of smoke turned into soot.

Seventy five years in a house
A home
My home
A lifetime of things, belongings
Gone because we failed to be stewards
Of the Earth
The elements swallowed us
The curse of easy money
Followed us
Seeped under our skin
The oil, the gas
Worthless brass
When compared to a house
A home
My home

I feel the memories of youth
Of middle age
Old age
Disappearing
I'm fearing
We can't go back
We squandered the riches we once had
A house
A home
A planet...
My home.

IN THE TWILIGHT OF A DYING CENTURY
By Emecheta Christian

In the twilight of a dying century,
We inherited a world on fire,
Glaciers weeping into rising seas,
Earth's fever climbing ever higher.
We watched in silence as smokestacks
Belched their poison into the sky,
While powerful people debated, denied,
Let precious decades slip by.

We are the children of a warming world,
Born in a legacy of change,
Arbitrary lines on maps and shades of skin
Suddenly seem strange.
In the face of Nature's fury, our differences fade away,
united by the struggle for survival day by day.

We grew up watching ancient forests fall,
Species vanish without trace,
Our wild spaces are now paved,
Concrete spreading at a dizzying pace.
In boardrooms high above the boulevards,
Rash decisions sealed our fate,
Those who saw only profit margins left us to suffocate.

From busy cities to remote islands,
We're all in this together,
Bound not by borders but by the air we breathe
And the storms we weather.
When hurricanes howl and wildfires rage,
Consuming all they touch,
Will the color of our skin or our birthplace matter much?

We came of age in a world of plastic seas and skies choked with smog, Pacifying
a planet sick and weary, stumbling through the fog.
While politicians argued over imagined racial divides,
Wur shared home burned and flooded, with nowhere left to hide.
We are the last generation. We must quell this tide.

MAMA, WHERE DID MY MOUNTAIN GO?
By Beatriz Isabel Pugeda

No caps to melt, no river flow.
My plastic eating friend the crow.
Mama, where did my mountain go?
Oh Mama, where did my mountain go?

Summer nights, skies red aglow.
Like wildfire, guilt will grow.
Mama, where did my mountain go?
Oh Mama, where did my mountain go?

Island father, sacred of snow!
Children's seeds, not worth to sow!
Island father, sacred of snow!
Children's seeds, not worth to sow!
Mama! Mama! Where did my mountain go?

I live an earth they will never know
I live an earth they will never know
Mama, where did my mountain go.

FENCE LINE
By Shannon Guthrie

There's a fence line in my neighborhood
That I follow every night.
I'm afraid I could follow it forever
Past ornamentals, a weedy thistle
Making fracture lines in the sidewalk
An invader, an agitator thriving
In the drought, flood, fire, storm

I walk along the fence line in my neighborhood
Past a stroller bearing red-cheeked twins
They're beautiful but all I can see
Is a red, the red line
On the graph of all our futures
All I can feel is the red flush of anxiety
What will their future be?

I turn back along the fence line
And wonder, does she, as a mother, also wonder
Am I irresponsible
To bring a child into a burning world?
Am I responsible
For decisions made decades before?

I watch the horizon glow at the end
Of the fence line in my neighborhood
Is it a burning red or the sanguine glow
Of a future just barely within reach?

Maybe the thistle has the right of it
2 degrees
Feels like everything and nothing at all.

A WORLD DESTROYED

By Fatoumata Juwara (student at the Boston International Newcomers Academy)

Climate change is happening
Faster and faster
Climate change is happening
Faster and faster
How? Why? "I don't know. I don't care," I hear.
First water bottles. Drink then throw. Did you recycle?
NO, what? NO.
See them on sidewalks.
Next to the trash can - Why?
See them on the playgrounds.
Don't.
How can you watch our planet die?
Bottles are plastics. Bottles are plastics
Bottles are plastics. Bottles are plastics
Plastics, destruction in the water our lifeline
Bottles are plastics. Bottles are plastics
Bottles are plastics. Bottles are plastics
Food chain then our plates oh yes it poisons
Never disappears, always lurking.
Climate change is happening
Bottles are being thrown every day.
Where do they go, where do they go?
Where will we go?

WE SAY "STOP"

by Rose Wagnac (student at the Boston International Newcomers Academy)

Stop!
Cutting trees, burning plastic
We say "Stop!"
Animals die, people get sick and die
We say "Stop!"
Us young people say,
"You need to stop cutting, oh, you need to stop!"
Us young people say,
"You need to stop destroying the animals' houses,
You need to stop destroying the animals' houses!"
We say, "Stop throwing trash in the ocean and killing fish!"
We say, "Stop hurting the earth and the animals, stop!"

Stop, stop, stop, stop!
Stop, stop, stop, stop!
Stop!