

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a long white strapless gown with a large ruffled shoulder, stands in a lush garden. She is holding a violin and bow. A long white fabric is draped from her right arm, flowing through the air. The background is filled with green foliage and trees.

Beloved

ANNE AKIKO MEYERS

BILLY CHILDS

OLA GJEILO

ERIC WHITACRE

GRANT GERSHON

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

1. **BILLY CHILDS** 31:43

In the Arms of the Beloved (2023)

Anne Akiko Meyers, Violin
Billy Childs, Piano
Luciana Souza, Vocalist
Larry Koonse, Guitar
Carol Robbins, Harp
Dan Chmielinski, Bass
Christian Euman, Drums
Lyris Quartet
Grant Gershon, Conductor
Los Angeles Master Chorale

2. **ERIC WHITACRE** 4:18

Seal Lullaby (2024), arranged by Jonathan Newman

Anne Akiko Meyers, Violin
Grant Gershon, Conductor
Los Angeles Master Chorale

3. **OLA GJEILO** 5:18

Serenity (2024), arranged by composer

Anne Akiko Meyers, Violin
Grant Gershon, Conductor
Los Angeles Master Chorale

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World Premiere Recordings

Evergreen Studios - August 26 & 27, 2024

Executive Producer - Anne Akiko Meyers

Producer, Editing, Mixing - David Frost

Recording Engineer, Mastering, Atmos Mixing - Silas Brown

Assistant Engineers - Hannah Kacmarsky, Shade Tramp

Photography - Jamie Pham, Ayaka Sano

Design - Sean Marlowe

Gone to the Unseen - Rumi

At last you have departed and gone to the Unseen.
What marvelous route did you take from this world?

Beating your wings and feathers, you broke free from this cage.
Rising up to the sky you attained the world of the soul.
You were a prized falcon trapped by an Old Woman.
Then you heard the drummer's call and flew beyond space and time.

As a lovesick nightingale, you flew among the owls.
Then came the scent of the rose garden and you flew off to meet the Rose.

The wine of this fleeting world caused your head to ache.
Finally you joined the tavern of Eternity.
Like an arrow, you sped from the bow and went straight for the bull's eye of bliss.

This phantom world gave you false signs
But you turned from the illusion and journeyed to the land of truth.

You are now the Sun - what need have you for a crown?
You have vanished from this world - what need have you to tie your robe?

I've heard that you can barely see your soul.
But why look at all? - yours is now the Soul of Souls!

O heart, what a wonderful bird you are.
Seeking divine heights, Flapping your wings,
you smashed the pointed spears of your enemy.

The flowers flee from Autumn, but not you -
You are the fearless rose that grows amidst the freezing wind.

Pouring down like the rain of heaven
you fell upon the rooftop of this world.
Then you ran in every direction and escaped through the drain spout . . .

Now the words are over and the pain they bring is gone.
Now you have gone to rest in the arms of the Beloved.

Translation - Jonathan Star

Anne Akiko Meyers

Billy Childs' *In the Arms of the Beloved* conveys a profound message of hope, eternal love and resilience, and is especially poignant in the wake of the devastation from the fires that decimated the beautiful communities of Altadena and the Palisades. That this work is rooted in the very land—Southern California—that endured such hardship adds an extra layer of emotional depth, making it not just an incredible composition, but a collective expression of grief and renewal.

The collaboration of such remarkable artists—Billy Childs, Dan Chmielinski, Christian Euman, Grant Gershon, Ola Gjeilo, Larry Koonse, Lyris Quartet, Carol Robbins, Luciana Souza, Eric Whitacre and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, truly speaks to the power of community. Each of these musicians brings their own unique voice, yet together create a harmonious blend that resonates beyond sound. The music is a balm for the soul, a way to honor the bravery of the firefighters and frontline workers, the many families who've been affected by the fires, helping them process their pain and find moments of peace amidst the chaos.

Music has an incredible ability to transcend the immediate and become timeless. This piece elevates my spirit and soul and allows me to reflect and reminisce. It also reminds me of how sound can act like a bridge, connecting us not just to each other, but to something larger—whether that's the land, the shared human experience, or a collective healing.

This stunning music by Billy Childs, Ola Gjeilo, and Eric Whitacre feels like a beautiful gift—a way to transform tragedy into something redemptive, to carry the memory of those we've lost, and to honor the acts of courage and love that continue to surround us.

Billy Childs

When I was around 1 or 2 years old, I remember sleeping between my mom and my dad in their bed every night. They would put me under the covers while I lay between them and it would always get too hot for me. So every night, I would run my fingers through my mom's hair, and the soft, cool texture of it would relax and comfort me. These are my first clear memories of my mother: the feel of her hair every night when I lay with my parents. I also remember her voice when she read to me - the musical animation in it, the sense of wonderment in her voice, as though both she and I were discovering the developing plotlines of the stories together.

My mother was born Mable Carlotte Brown on March 7, 1922 in Wilmington, North Carolina. She and my father, Joseph Edward Childs, were both from Wilmington, and in fact first met in grade school at 6 years old; they grew up during the depression in Jim Crow south. Curiously, they never really told me the story of how they eventually fell in love, and I never really asked. I do know that she came with my father to Los Angeles in the early 50s (he attended UCLA) and there they got married. They both became teachers - my mom a first grade teacher, and my dad a junior high school teacher. For decades after mom retired, people would come up to me relating stories about how my mother changed their lives with her compassion, kindness, and skill as a teacher. This was one of the many things that made me so proud to be her son.

My mother was a very stoic and reticent when it came to discussing her own personal feelings, yet I *felt* a very strong connection to and love from her; the bond between us was unsaid, it was just a fact. And she was really funny, with a very dry, almost caustic sense of humor. One of my favorite things to do with her would be to watch movies together, especially the noir movies of the 40s and 50s. She especially liked George Raft and Humphrey Bogart, and would laugh at the hardboiled slang they used in those pictures. I also remember the everyday rides to school in the car with her, listening to the news on the radio and especially the clever commercials. I suppose my favorite memories regarding my mother are mainly of us laughing together.



In her later years, she developed pretty significant dementia and my sister, Joy, became her main caretaker. Sometimes she would stay with my family in Altadena. Two memories during this time have impacted me profoundly. The first is when, one day, she and I were listening to music on my stereo system. My mother had been a lover of baroque music and pretty conservative jazz during my whole life; she loved Handel, Haydn, Bach, Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges, etc. But on this particular day, I put on *Filles de Kilimanjaro*, the boundary pushing album by Miles Davis, followed by Bartók's *String Quartet #4*. In both cases, she sat utterly transfixed by the music and the journey it was taking her on; I believe that something about her dementia opened up another portal in her psyche where she could treasure music that she normally would have disliked.

The other meaningful event had to do with the stroke that eventually ended her time on earth. I managed to get to her bedside just before too late. I simply said, "I love you, mom." She said, "I love you too." These were the last words she uttered on this earth. She then slipped into a coma, never to wake up again. She died 5 days later, Aug 10, 2001.

In the Arms of the Beloved is a requiem in remembrance of my beloved mother, Mable Brown Childs. I look at the violin as the "voice" of my mother, the piano as *my* voice, and the choir as a shapeshifting sonic environment which sets the mood and tells the main story of the timeless Rumi poem (*Gone to the Unseen*), as interpreted by Coleman Barks. The poem, in my opinion, describes a beautiful way to look at death, therefore providing a means for me to process my mother's passing.

Eric Whitacre

Back in 2004 I received a call from a major film studio. The executives explained that they wanted to make an animated film based on Rudyard Kipling's *The White Seal*. It's such a beautiful story: classic, dark and rich Kipling. He begins with the mother seal singing softly to her young pup - *The Seal Lullaby*. I was so moved by the beautiful text and a simple, sweet song came to me for delivery to Disney.

I didn't hear from them for weeks. Did they hate it? Was it too melodically complex? Finally, I called them. "Oh," said the exec, "we decided to make *Kung Fu Panda* instead!!!"

So I sang it to my baby son every night to get him to go to sleep (success rate: less than 50%) before creating a choral arrangement of it. I couldn't have been more thrilled when Anne approached me to create this version for solo violin and strings with the help of Jonathan Newman.

Ola Gjeilo

Serenity is a work for choir and violin or cello from 2010, set to the beautiful *O Magnum Mysterium* text. The idea started with simply wanting to write something for choir and violin for the first time, which I had always wanted to do.

The piece is a slow moving meditation, with a big crescendo in the middle section, before ending in peacefulness like it started. Perhaps the main feature of *Serenity*, apart from the violin solo, is the choir's overlapping, fading chords, meant to create a sense of space and mystery.



ANNE AKIKO MEYERS, one of the world's most esteemed musicians, is a GRAMMY® Award winning violinist, recognized as a muse and champion of many of today's most important composers, collaborating closely and recording their compositions, and leaving a legacy of violin works for future generations.

Called “the Wonder Woman of commissioning” by *The Strad*, Anne has worked closely with some of the most important composers of the last half century, including Arvo Pärt, Einojuhani Rautavaara, John Corigliano, Arturo Márquez, Philip Glass, Michael Daugherty, Mason Bates, Adam Schoenberg, Billy Childs, Jakub Ciupinski, Ola Gjeilo, Morten Lauridsen, Wynton Marsalis, Somei Satoh and Eric Whitacre. She has appeared on The Tonight Show, Tiny Desk, Evening at Pops and Great Performances and has more made more acclaimed than 40 recordings, which are staples of radio and streaming platforms.

In 2021, Anne premiered *Fandango* by Arturo Márquez at The Hollywood Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel. Since then, *Fandango* has been performed with 16 orchestras in more than 40 performances and her live recording received two Latin GRAMMY® Awards: Best Classical Album and Best Contemporary Composition.

Anne has received the Avery Fisher Career Grant, Distinguished Alumna Award and an Honorary Doctorate from The Colburn School and is a member of the Asian Hall of Fame. She serves on the Board of Trustees of The Juilliard School and The Dudamel Foundation.

Anne performs on Larsen Strings with the Ex-Vieuxtemps Guarneri del Gesù, dated 1741, considered by many to be the finest sounding violin in existence. Please visit www.anneakikomeyers.com for more info.

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BILLY CHILDS received his bachelor of music in composition, under the tutelage of Robert Linn, in 1979. Since then Mr. Childs has composed for or collaborated with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, National Symphony, Anne Akiko Meyers, Kronos Quartet, Dorian Wind Quintet, Wynton Marsalis, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Leonard Slatkin, Ying Quartet, Lyris Quartet, Isidore Quartet, Rachel Barton Pine, Anthony and Demarre McGill, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming. Childs has been nominated seventeen times for a GRAMMY® Award, and has won six: two for best instrumental composition, two for best arrangement accompanying a vocalist, and two for best instrumental jazz album. He has also been awarded a Chamber Music America composer's grant, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, and a composers award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His works have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, and Disney Concert Hall. Please visit www.billychilds.com

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Grammy® Award-winning composer and conductor, **ERIC WHITACRE**, is among today's most popular musicians. A graduate of The Juilliard School (New York), his works are performed worldwide, and his ground-breaking Virtual Choirs have united well over 100,000 singers from more than 145 countries. His long-term relationship with Decca Classics has produced several no.1 albums which have enduring success. Eric is Visiting Composer at Pembroke College, Cambridge University (UK) and an Ambassador for the Royal College of Music in London.

A widely respected conductor, Eric has worked with the world's leading choirs, and with orchestras including the Minnesota Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. A charismatic speaker, Eric Whitacre has given keynote addresses for many Fortune 500 companies, in education and global institutions from Apple and Google to the World Economic Forum in Davos and the United Nations Speaker's Program. Please visit www.ericwhitacre.com for more info.

OLA GJEILO was born in Norway in 1978 and moved to the United States in 2001 to begin his composition studies at the Juilliard School in New York City. He lives with his wife Irene in Laguna Niguel, California.

Ola is an exclusive Decca Classics artist, and his Decca choral albums include “Ola Gjeilo”, “Winter Songs” & “Dreamweaver”, featuring Tenebrae, Voces8 and the Choir of Royal Holloway, as well as the solo piano albums “Night” & “Dawn”. His global streams have surpassed 250 million.

For more information, please visit www.olagjeilo.com or find Ola on his social media profiles.

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The GRAMMY® Award-winning **LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE** is the “the finest-by-far major chorus in America” (*Los Angeles Times*) and a vibrant cultural treasure. Hailed for its powerful performances, technical precision, and artistic daring, the Chorale is led by Grant Gershon, Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director; Associate Artistic Director Jenny Wong; and President & CEO Scott Altman. Its Swan Family Artist-in-Residence is Reena Esmail.

Created by legendary conductor Roger Wagner in 1964, the Chorale is a founding resident company of The Music Center and choir-in-residence at Walt Disney Concert Hall. The Chorale reaches over 175,000 people a year through performances at Walt Disney Concert Hall, its international touring of innovative works, and its collaborations with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and others.

The Chorale's discography includes the LA Phil's Deutsche Grammophon recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 8, for which the Chorale won a Best Choral Performance Grammy with the National Children's Chorus, Los Angeles Children's Chorus, and Pacific Chorale. The Chorale released *The Sacred Veil* by Eric Whitacre in 2020. Under Gershon's direction, the Chorale has released eight commercial recordings and is featured on the soundtracks of many major motion pictures, including *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* and *The Rise of Skywalker*.

The Chorale toured its productions of *Lagime di San Pietro* and Heinrich Schutz's *Music to Accompany a Departure*, both directed by Peter Sellars, earning rave reviews across the globe that cited the Chorale's performances as “painfully beautiful” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*), “transcendent” and “incomparably moving” (*Los Angeles Times*).

GRANT GERSHON, KIKI & DAVID GINDLER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, has been hailed for his adventurous and bold artistic leadership, and for eliciting technically precise and expressive performances from musicians. The Los Angeles Times has said the Chorale has become “the best-by-far chorus in America”; under Gershon, a reflection on both his programming and performances. In April 2022, Chorus America honored Gershon with the Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art in recognition of his career's work.

Gershon has led more than 200 Chorale performances at Walt Disney Concert Hall in programs encompassing a wide range of choral music, from the early pillars of the repertoire to contemporary compositions. He has led world premiere performances of major works by such composers as Michael Abels, John Adams, Louis Andriessen, Jeff Beal, Eve Beglarian, Billy Childs, Reena Esmail, Gabriela Lena Frank, Ricky Ian Gordon, Shawn Kirchner, David Lang, Morten Lauridsen, Steve Reich, Ellen Reid, Christopher Rouse, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Chinari Ung. Gershon is committed to increasing representation in the choral repertoire, and in 2020 he announced that the Chorale will reserve at least 50% of each future season for works by composers from historically excluded groups in classical music.



This record would never have been made without the tremendous efforts including...

Grant Gershon, Morten Lauridsen, Billy Childs, Ola Gjeilo, Eric Whitacre, Dan Chmielinski, Christian Euman, Larry Koonse, Lyrus Quartet, Carol Robbins, Luciana Souza, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Lisa Edwards, Kevin Koelbl, Susie McDermid, Soprano Singers, Tamara Bevard, Christina Bristow, Graycen Gardner, Kelci Hahn, Elissa Johnston, Caroline McKenzie, Alina Roitstein, Anna Schubert, Sumi Shin, Kathryn Shuman, Addy Sterrett, Suzanne Waters, Alto Singers, Lindsay Patterson Abdou, Garineh Avakian, Carmen Edano, Callista Hoffman Campbell, Sharmila G. Lash, Hannah Little, Sarah Lynch, Julia Metzler, Jessie Shulman, Niké St. Clair, Kristen Toedtman, Tracy Van Fleet, Tenor Singers, Casey Breves, Matthew Brown, Adam Faruqi, Dermot Kiernan, Shawn Kirchner, Joey Krumbein, Bryan Lane, Charles Lane, Michael Lichtenauer, Matthew Miles, Evan Roberts, Matthew Thomas, Bass Singers, Michael Bennett, Dylan Gentile, William Goldman, Abdiel Gonzalez, Scott Graff, James Hayden, Luc Kleiner, Chung Uk Lee, Ben Han-Wei Lin, Brett McDermid, Adrien Redford, Mark Edward Smith, David Frost, Silas Brown, Hannah Kacmarsky, Shade Tramp, Colbert Artists Management, Lee Prinz, 8VA Music Consultancy, Patricia Price, Matt Herman, Allison Van Etten, Austin Ward, Vanessa Briceño-Scherzer, Myles Weinstein, Meg Davies, Claire Long, Rich Capparella, Hector Almaguer, Katie Ferguson, Platoon, Jamie Pham, Ayaka Sano, Sean Marlowe, Jason Subotky

