

UNQUIET

JEFF BEAL
THE SALVAGE MEN

ERIC WHITACRE, CONDUCTOR
ERIC WHITACRE SINGERS
LIVE AT UNION CHAPEL, LONDON

TRACK LISTING

THE SALVAGE MEN

1. A VERY LONG MOMENT 06:01

2. SPIDERWEB 05:05

3. VIRGA 05:48

4. AGE 04:00

5. SALVAGE 06:44

JEFF BEAL



Jeff Beal is an American composer of music for film, media, and the concert hall. With musical beginnings as a jazz trumpeter and recording artist, his works are infused with an understanding of rhythm and spontaneity. Steven Schneider for the New York Times wrote of “the richness of Beal’s musical thinking...his compositions often capture the liveliness and unpredictability of the best improvisation.” Beal’s seven solo CDs, including **Three Graces**, **Contemplations (Triloka)**, **Red Shift (Koch Jazz)**, and **Liberation** (Island Records) established him as a respected recording artist and composer.

Beal’s eclectic music has been singled out with critical acclaim and recognition. His score and theme for Netflix drama, **House of Cards**, have earned him several Emmy Awards, most recently in 2015. Other scores of note include his dramatic music for HBO’s acclaimed series **Carnivale** and **Rome**, as well as his comedic score and theme for the detective series, **Monk**. Beal composes, orchestrates, conducts, records and mixes his own scores, which gives his music a very personal, distinctive touch.

Beal’s commissioned works have been performed by many leading orchestras and conductors, including the St. Louis (Marin Alsop), Rochester, Pacific (Carl St. Clair), Frankfurt, Munich, and Detroit (Neeme Jaarvi) symphony orchestras. **The Salvage Men** is his first choral piece written for the Eric Whitacre Singers and the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

ERIC WHITACRE



Photo Credit: Marc Royce

Grammy-winning composer and conductor Eric Whitacre is one of the most popular musicians of our time. His concert music has been performed throughout the world by millions of amateur and professional musicians alike, while his ground-breaking Virtual Choirs have united singers from over 110 different countries.

As conductor of the Eric Whitacre Singers he has released several chart-topping albums including 2011's best-selling **Light & Gold**. A sought after guest conductor, Eric has conducted choral and instrumental concerts around the globe, including sold-out concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Minnesota Orchestra. In addition to several collaborations with legendary Hollywood composer Hans Zimmer, he has worked with British pop icons Laura Mvula, Imogen Heap and Annie Lennox.

A charismatic speaker, Eric has given keynote addresses for many Fortune 500 companies and global institutions including Apple, Google, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the United Nations Speaker's Programme and two main stage TED talks. A graduate of the prestigious Juilliard School of Music, this year Eric completed a five year term as Visiting Fellow and Composer in Residence at Cambridge University, UK.

ERIC WHITACRE SINGERS



The Eric Whitacre Singers have established themselves as one of the finest ensembles of our day. This professional choir draws in audiences with a wide spectrum of age, interests and backgrounds, performing Monteverdi and Bach to Whitacre, Lauridsen and Britten. They received exceptional and unanimous praise from critics and won a Grammy award for Best Choral Performance for their debut album, **Light & Gold** on Decca/Universal.

Their second album, **Water Night** went straight to no. 1 in the classical iTunes and Billboard charts and also features the London Symphony Orchestra, Hila Plitmann and Julian Lloyd Webber. In November 2014, they released their first EP on vinyl featuring Eric Whitacre's choral arrangement of Depeche Mode's **Enjoy the Silence**.

The Eric Whitacre Singers have performed on national TV and regularly record in Abbey Road and Angel Studios. They made their BBC Proms debut in 2012 in a programme which included a collaboration with singer/songwriter Imogen Heap. In May 2013, they performed at a ceremony honoring Archbishop Desmond Tutu at London's Guildhall as he was presented with the 2013 Templeton Prize Laureate and came together with fellow performers, world-renowned vocal artist Annie Lennox and the vibrant London African Gospel Choir. The choir made its debut US tour in 2013, with concerts in Washington's Strathmore Center, Boston's Symphony Hall, Philadelphia's Kimmel Center and New York's Lincoln Center. Recent collaborative performances include British soul artist Laura Mvula, legendary film composer Hans Zimmer & accordionist Ksenija Sidorova.

Soprano

Alice Gribbin
Ali Hill
Sophie Jones
Gwen Martin
Amy Wood

Alto

Helen Brookes
Hannah Cooke
Rose Martin
Chloe Morgan

Tenor

Ben Alden
Matthew Howard
Nick Madden
Gareth Treseder

Bass

Nick Ashby
Alexander Learmonth
Greg Skidmore
Edmund Saddington
Simon Whiteley

NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

Oscar Wilde was sentenced to two years of hard labour at Reading Gaol prison in London, after he was prosecuted and convicted for his love affair with another man. This imprisonment had a devastating effect on Wilde's health and spirit. Wilde died in Paris soon after his release from prison, at the age of 46. **De Profundus** (from the depths) is the poignant letter Wilde wrote from prison, reflecting on the horrors of imprisonment, the nature of human suffering and our chosen response. Wilde's choice was to write.

I was first exposed to this deeply moving letter in 2007, while scoring the documentary **Wilde Salome** for director Al Pacino. Several scenes in the film featured his reading from **De Profundus** and portrayal of Wilde's arrest and last days in Paris. At the very same time we were working on this project, I found myself in the midst of an unexpected health crisis, which eventually led to a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. Wilde's **De Profundus** came at the beginning of a journey in learning how to live gracefully with an uninvited guest. Thankfully, my disease remains mostly in remission, but I deal with neuropathic pain and other issues that those living with a chronic illness intimately understand. Music is more than a vocation, it is an integral part of my daily life, as composing, listening to and performing music lessens pain and energizes me.

The lyrical beauty of **De Profundus** gave me the original impetus for a choral work. His words provided an entry point into this meditation on suffering and catharsis. However, it was in the poetry of Kay Ryan I found a wholly fresh, contemporary view on the themes of transformation and our chosen response to pain. Ryan's writing style is very different from Wilde's. She does not use the personal voice, and avoids confession.

Her poetry has a circular quality to it. A revelatory line at the end of Ryan's poetry often invites the listener to reflect back to the beginning, once a poem is finished. Ryan often will recite her brief poems twice in readings, to allow listeners this understanding. I find her poetry to have a deeply musical quality, not unlike the da capo aria.

I began working on the choral settings while visiting Paris during the spring of 2014. Aimlessly wandering the streets of the Left Bank with my wife, we came across an entry to a building that looked familiar. I soon realized we had stopped in front of L'Hotel — the hotel where Wilde had spent his final days on earth. I had just begun setting Wilde's text to music, and here we were, most unexpectedly, at his doorstep. These patterns in music, poetry and life might be viewed as signposts, encouragements, divine coincidences. It is our choice which makes them so.

The music of Eric Whitacre has always been a personal and spiritual touchstone for me. I can't imagine a better artistic partner to bring this first performance to life. I am eternally grateful to Eric, and this fantastic ensemble of artists for their exquisite first performance. Equally, I'm forever grateful to Kay Ryan for giving me her permission to set some of her poems to music.

Jeff Beal

TEXTS

A VERY LONG MOMENT

OSCAR WILDE

Suffering is one very long moment.
We cannot divide it by seasons.
We can only record its moods, and chronicle their return.
With us time itself does not progress.
It revolves. It seems to circle round one centre of pain.

The paralyzing immobility of a life
every circumstance...
after an unchangeable pattern,
There is nothing that stirs in the whole world of thought
to which sorrow does not vibrate
in terrible and exquisite pulsation.
Where there is sorrow there is holy ground

SPIDERWEB

KAY RYAN

From other
angles the
fibers look
fragile, but
not from the
spider's, always
hauling coarse
ropes, hitching
lines to the
best posts
possible. It's
heavy work
everyplace,
fighting sag,
winching up
give. It
isn't ever
delicate
to live.

VIRGA

KAY RYAN

There are bands
in the sky where
what happens
matches prayers.
Clouds blacken
and inky rain
hatches the air
like angled writing,
the very transcription
of a pure command,
steady from a steady
hand. Drought
put to rout, visible
a mile above
for miles about.

TEXTS

AGE

KAY RYAN

As some people age
they kinden.

The apertures
of their eyes widen.

I do not think they weaken;
I think something weak strengthens
until they are more and more it,
like letting in heaven.

But other people are
mussels or clams, frightened.

Steam or knife blades mean open.

They hear heaven, they think boiled or broken.

SALVAGE

KAY RYAN

The wreck
is a fact.

The worst
has happened.

The salvage trucks
back in and
the salvage men
begin to sort
and stack,
whistling as
they work.

Thanks be
to God—again—
for extractable elements
which are not
carriers of pain,
for this periodic
table at which
the self-taught
salvagers disassemble
the unthinkable
to the unthought.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive Producers

Claire Long & Meg Davies, Music Productions Ltd
musicprods.co.uk

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Audio: Recording & Post Production

Floating Earth
floatingearth.com

Audio: Editor, Mixing, Mastering

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