

ANIMA MUNDI PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

The
Heart of Humanity
Concert Series

2020-21 Season

Six Feet Apart

Stories of Resilience and Transformation

Music composed by
Ethan Gans-Morse

Poetry written, collected,
and curated by
Tiziana DellaRovere



ANIMA MUNDI
PRODUCTIONS

541-833-3066

HumanityTickets.com



Six Feet Apart

Stories of Resilience and Transformation

Concert Sponsor: Mary Jane Morrison

Music by Ethan Gans-Morse

Poetry written, collected, and curated by
Tiziana DellaRovere

With special guest poets

Anis Mojgani
Kim Stafford

And students of Mara Liechty at H.B. Lee
Middle School in Portland, Oregon

Story collection assisted by Kira Lesley of the
Southern Oregon Historical Society

Artwork by Betty LaDuke

Music direction by Fahad Siadat

Featuring HEX Vocal Ensemble

And the Brightwork Ensemble
Aron Kallay, Piano
Maggie Parkins, Cello
Shalini Vijayan, Violin

Video direction, editing, and design
by Camilla Tassi

Edited and mixed by Aron Kallay

Mastered by Scott Fraser, Architecture

HEX VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Lindsay Abdou

Saunder Choi

Sharon Kim

Fahad Siadat

Amanda Achen

David Conley

Ben Lin

Ariana Stultz

Maria Elena Altany

James Hayden

Molly Pease

Chloe Vaught

Elizabeth Anderson

Laurel Irene

Edmond Rodriguez

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Meg Kaufman & Norm Bornstein*

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The Jackson County Cultural Coalition*

The Oregon Arts Commission "Arts Build Communities" Grant

This production is part of our 2020-21 Heart of Humanity concert series.
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PROGRAM

Six Feet Apart: Stories of Resilience and Transformation Poetry written and curated by Tiziana DellaRovere

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Six Feet Apart

poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

II.

Introvertigo

poetry by Kim Stafford

III.

Picking Grapes: Anahí

poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

IV.

The Other Side of the Street: Kayla

poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

V.

How Many of Us...

poetry by Anis Mojgani

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poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

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poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

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poetry by H.B. Lee Middle School students;
edited and curated by Tiziana DellaRovere

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Epilogue

poetry by Tiziana DellaRovere

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I. Six Feet Apart

by *Tiziana DellaRovere*

Six feet apart.
Between us,
An ocean of stillness,
Caves of smoky crystals.

Six feet apart,
The space between
Is full of longing.

In all that silence,
I fly with the red-tailed hawk,
I hear the songs of the trees,
And feel the beating of your love.

Mother, father, daughter, son.
Six feet apart, dear friend,
The winds have changed direction.

A gauze covers your face,
But I see the color of your eyes
Leaping forward
To touch my soul,
To nestle in my heart.

II. **Introvertigo**

by Kim Stafford

They inflict an infection chart—zigzag line
fevering a mountain that peaks somewhere you
can't see. Did the air grow thin, did light brighten
to halo everything? They feed you numbers, tally
beds in ICU, count breathing machines that cross
state lines like contraband. When did heart so yearn
for touch, skin on fire? They say scrub your hands,
go forth in mask and gloves, practice distance, shelter,
lock and trust. Wasn't I already invisible enough?

It's no wonder, in the night your native introversion
may be magnified, as in anguish you plummet deep
into confusion, your bed turning slowly, an old LP
the needle sips for song or whimper, secret shames
and hidden loves.

Friend, embrace this distillation, seek the winnowing,
seize the essential nub of character and verve you
grew from. Shun the trappings you no longer need.
This world hungers for exactly who you are.

III. Picking grapes: Anahí

by Tiziana DellaRovere

Maria Elena Altany, soloist

The leaves are falling,
The grapes are ripe,
Anahí, put your rubber boots on,
Your children are hungry.

Uvas, uvas, uvas...
Gracias por las uvas.

Cabernet Sauvignon, a mouthful of aromatic complexity,
Polished textures,
Inebriating notes of florid potpourri,
Elegant.
I drink to you!

Don't touch anything.
"Mamá, is the world going to end?"
Anahí, put your mask on,
Step into the mud of the fields.
You have no time to watch the sunrise,
Your children are asking for food.

Uvas, uvas, uvas...
Dame más uvas.
Pinot Noir, sultry, spicy,
Smooth like silk on the tongue.
Ruby nectar,
A succulent flavor of cherries and truffles.
Sophisticated.
I drink to you!

continued

Two meals a day, they let Papá go.
“Mamá, I’m hungry.”
Drink, my child,
Water takes away the hunger.

Anahí, fill your bucket with grapes.
One bucket, \$1.25
Two buckets, \$2.50
Three buckets, \$3.75

*Uvas, uvas, uvas,
Corta las uvas.*

Breathe through the mask, cut, cut!
Cut and breathe.
Wrap a rag around your finger.
No puedes parar.
Don’t stop, Anahí.
Cut, bend, drop.
Ten buckets, ten tickets, twelve dollars and fifty cents.

Merlot, Barbera, Rosé, Bordeaux,
Dolcetto, Montepulciano,
Immerse your senses in the redolent aromas.
I drink to you.

My shoulders are bent,
My back is twisted,
“Mamá, are we all going to die?”
No, *mi amor*, we’re going to live,
One more day,
Closer together

IV. The other side of the street: Kayla

by Tiziana DellaRovere

Lindsay Patterson Abdou, soloist

I am the other.
Can you see the color of my skin?
Now that the store windows are closed shut,
The streets are empty,
And your mouth is covered with a gauzy screen,
You have time, time, time,
Plenty of time to pay attention.

Now you know how it feels
To walk outside and risk your life
With every breath you take,
With every street you cross.
Now that you have time to pay attention,
Can you see the color of my skin?

I am the other.
I stand on the other side of the street,
Because you put me there,
When all I wanted was to eat together
to celebrate children of color.

Racism does not exist, you said,
Why don't you come here right now, you said,
I'll shoot you in the face, right now, you said.
You revved your motorcycles and drowned out
my voice.

One step, two steps, three steps,
Closer and closer to you,
Closer to the rifle you carry in your hand,

continued

Closer to your side of the street.
Can you see me now?
I'm Kayla. I went to school with your children.
Do you want to shoot me in the face?

I heard a son saying to his mother,
We're on the wrong side of the street.
They crossed to my side,
And I was there, waiting
To embrace them.
Can you see me now?
Can you see the color of my skin?

How many of us and for how long have been preparing ourselves for this
without even knowing that's what we were doing

2020. The year of no touch

My heart is under the sand

When anyone crosses the beach to kiss the sea
wherever they land

I feel it

But touch my hand and perhaps
I will feel it and maybe
I will not

It may depend on how much saltwater is in your arms
how many birds rest themselves upon your waves
what your tantric relationship is to the tantrum of the sky and its largest nickel

We are not stranded temporarily

We are not stranded properly

We are not in the waiting room
waiting
for the doors to open
back on the old world we are cut off from

That world is gone

VI. Unhoused: Tink

by Tiziana DellaRovere

Laurel Irene, soloist

I am a nature fairy.
I dye my hair purple.

I braid trees,
They grow near, and make me a home.

There was a family once.
We ate Peace Meals together.
Has everybody found a place to sleep outside?

“Stay humble, or be humbled.”
Scatter,
COVID put the fear into people,
Scatter far away,
Scatter.

The birds miss people more than we do.
The Great Fire came and burned down Burger King
Where all the blackbirds hung around,
And now, they follow me to the cemetery.
They hear my voice.

Burning, burning, everything
But the two braided trees,
Still standing there, alone.

continued

I used to feed stray dogs,
But now the deer is losing weight,
And the silver squirrel is turning brown.

Has anybody seen my friend?
Burning, burning.
The one with the patch over his eyes, and his son?

I play music by the creek with my little friend.
He sits on this rock and flutters his wings.
I feel lost without the trees.

We really need to start loving each other.
Love, truth, and compassion.
I'm not kidding you.
Things are coming down.
Freedom is priceless.
Seeds are free.

VII. Ashes: Shawna & Matthew

by Tiziana DellaRovere

David Conley and Elizabeth Anderson, soloists

I asked you to cut my hair
And gave you fair warning:
I don't tie knots.
I spread ashes.
*"Mother, you prayed for me to walk again.
You prayed for a miracle that God would not give you."*

You put a handful of white dust in my hand,
Your angel child
Your love,
Your Amanda.
*"Mother, butterflies are not meant to be caught.
They're meant to fly away."*

I took her where she could never go with her
own two legs.
I rode my motorcycle to the high desert.
And set her free.
She flew over the meadows and the streams,
And her ashes spoke to me of you.
*"Mother, you like to think you're an island.
Let him be your ocean."*

He is my True North.
He takes me off my ledge.
He is my best decision.

continued

I narrated doubts to myself.
I told stories of sabotage and fear.
I don't tie knots,
I never will.
But, please, don't leave.

Who knew
He would come to be my best friend,
My firm foundation,
My miracle?
God knew, Amanda knew.

For now, just for now,
In these times of danger and isolation,
In this world without embrace,
Shelter with me.
We'll build a new room in my house.

When the great fire came,
Amanda's ashes still glowing in my hand,
Our home burned to the ground.
Ashes to ashes.
We lost everything.
Only our love remained.

You are my last frontier,
No other would I prefer to you.
I cannot stand another second not being married to you.

continued

We are in union, bonded by love.
Bonded and insured.

A happy day, the smoke cleared up,
The sun came out.
The vows were ready.
He wrote a page. She wrote a book.

The wedding cake, the white dress, the DJ,
The flowers, his children, her children,
All came together.
From nothing to eternity.
All on Zoom, a splendor for all to see.

Amanda, you would be here today
If heaven wasn't so far away.
*"Mother, heaven is all around you.
Here, now, you're breathing the sweet scent of heaven."*

VIII. The Half Stuck Inside

By H.B. Lee Middle School students Daniela, Javier, Moo Law, Janiya, and "anonymous"

compiled and edited by Tiziana DellaRovere

The tide will turn.
Never give up.

I was a boy of eleven
When school closed and summer arrived.
A dull and tedious summer.
Next thing I know,
Seventh grade has started online!
I was thinking,
“I will fail. I’m a dense little boy
Who will never do good,
And I’ll let my family down.”
Not good for my mental health.

The tide will turn.
Never give up.
Because that’s just the place
Where the tide will turn.

I feel I'm falling from the sky
With no one to help me fall from this high.
COVID-19 makes you sick.
I can prove it. I caught it.
Cough, vomit, headache.
I’m going to die.
My mother always by my side,
The one I trust and love.
I didn’t die, I didn’t die.

continued

The tide will turn.
It doesn't matter how slowly you go.
Never give up.

I lost my friends due to not talking.
Online school is harder than real school.
I have to hope I do good
Without anybody to guide me.
I worry for my family and friends
If they ever catch the virus.
Other than school, I have become more lazy.

The tide will turn
As long as you don't stop.
Never give up.
It doesn't matter how slowly you go.

I am a kid. I should just relax.
But is it wrong to be thinking?
Too much thinking has got me sinking.
I mean, racism is growing.
People still fight during the pandemic.
With all my pain and suffering,
Should I fight another fight,
Or stay happy for tonight?
I feel like a part of me has died
And the other half is stuck inside.

The tide will turn.
You will want to stop.
Don't stop.
Never give up.

continued

Since COVID-19,
Life has been complicated
For me and my family.
Like, my father and brother
Were stuck in Thailand for five months.
Like, you have to check everything when you go out.
Mask: check.
Bag: check.
Locked door: check.
Check, check, check.
It takes forever.
Especially when mom forgets something
And we have to check all over again.
 Mask: check.
 Bag: check.
 Locked door: check.
 Check, check, check.

Another thing is troublesome.
Cafes are closed!
Me being the kind of kid
Who brings a whole giant sandwich from Best Baguette to school.
The best sandwich I've ever had in my whole life.
I wonder how long it will be
Until I see my precious sandwich again?
But there are actually a few fun things to do:
Like, annoying your sibling
Because they ate your McDonald's two years ago,
Or watching Anime.
I have a whole list of episodes...
Actually, lemme tell you,
Like, *The Promised Neverland*, *Blue Exorcist*, *Banana Fish*,
Your Lie in April, *I Want to Eat Your Pancreas*,
Et cetera, et cetera.

continued

As you can see, COVID is the root of my problems.
What is there to do but watch anime?
All nine hundred episodes of it!
(sigh)

The tide will turn,
The tide will turn.
Never give up.
There is no failure except in no longer trying.

IX. Epilogue

by Tiziana DellaRovere

Six feet apart.
Six feet apart, dear friend,
The winds have changed direction.

And now, I see your face,
Your heart on my heart,
Leaping forward,
Your hand in my hand,
Into a world of new creations.