



# MEG BRAGLE, MEZZO-SOPRANO AND RICHARD STONE, LUTE

Sunday, November 15 @ 7 PM

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## PROGRAM

"In darkness let me dwell" from <i>A Musicall Banquet</i> (1610)	John Dowland
"Hermitaño quiero ser" from the <i>Cancionero de Palacio</i> (1465)	Juan del Encina
"Forêts solitaires" from <i>Airs à deux et trois parties</i> (1678)	Sébastien Le Camus
"Solus cum sola"	John Dowland
"An die Einsamkeit" from <i>Die ausgesöhnnte Eifersucht oder Cephalus und Procris</i> (1690)	Johann Philipp Krieger
"So tired are all my thoughts" from <i>The Third Booke of Ayres</i> (1617)	Thomas Campion
"Sombre forêts" from <i>Airs de Ian Boyer parisien, mis en tablature de luth par luy mesme</i> (1621)	Jean Boyer
"My Selfe" from <i>Pavans, Galliards, Almains and other Short Aeirs</i> (1599)	Anthony Holborne
"O sweet woods, the delight of solitariness" from <i>The Second Booke of Songs and Ayres</i> (1600)	John Dowland
"O solitude" from <i>Comes Amoris; or, The Companion of Love... The First Book</i> (1687)	Henry Purcell
"Sans frayeur dans ce bois" from <i>Mercure Galant</i> (1680)	Marc-Antoine Le Charpentier

## PROGRAM NOTES

By Meg Bragle

When we look back at the beginning of the 21st century in the future, I imagine stories will be framed by life before the pandemic and life after. As the world came to a halt in the U.S. in early March, what I found most striking was the stillness. Living in a city, I am accustomed to traffic noise at all hours and the general hum of activity that is always under the surface. Those first few days and weeks, there was a feeling of suspension and tension, punctuated by fear and some grief, but also grace. As the days grew longer and the ground warmed under our feet, we were captivated by nature in all its variety, both destructive and beautiful. We had time, stillness and solitude to help us see (in many cases for the first time) what was on our doorstep. These are not original thoughts by any means and, in fact, the existence of music and poetry that expressed these feelings brought me comfort and helped me to feel less alone in these unsettling times.

Artists are often exhorted to seek solitude as a crucible for creativity. The French Romantic artist Eugène Delacroix wrote, “Nourish yourself with grand and austere ideas of beauty that feed the soul... Seek solitude.” Almost a hundred years later, the French-American artist Louise Bourgeois said, “Solitude, a rest from responsibilities, and peace of mind, will do you more good than the atmosphere of the studio and the conversations which, generally speaking, are a waste of time.” In an essay called *The Creative Process*, American novelist, playwright, essayist, poet and activist James Baldwin wrote, “Perhaps the primary distinction of the artist is that he must actively cultivate that state which most men, necessarily, must avoid; the state of being alone.”

But as spring turned to summer and autumn approached, I felt that too much solitude, or perhaps imposed solitude, can have a less positive effect. The balance between solitude and loneliness is delicate and Baldwin speaks to this as well: “Most of us are not compelled to linger with the knowledge of our aloneness, for it is a knowledge that can paralyze all action in this world.”

As I put this program together, I was very aware of my “aloneness” both from my musical community and from society at large and could sense the possibility of impending paralysis. The music of John Dowland was a balm and sparked a flicker of understanding across the centuries. He, too, had lived through a pandemic, as had most of the composers on the program, and what began as an academic exercise to seek out music on a timely theme became an unfurling of emotions that had been coiled within me for months.

The 19th century poet Robert Browning wrote, “Who hears music feels his solitude peopled at once.” It is my humble hope that our program gives you a chance to lessen your own solitude and that you find your own understanding and shared community with us tonight.

### On the Composers

**John Dowland** (1563-1626) was one of the most popular musicians of his time in England. Perhaps best known for his melancholy ayres, his personal motto, “semper Dowland, semper dolens” or “always Dowland, always doleful,” certainly supports that assertion. Indeed, as a result it can be hard to separate the idea from the man and his work. “In darkness let me dwell,” with text by Dowland, is a tour de force that creates a profound sense of isolation. The abandonment of the singer on the final note is both astonishing and heartrending as he quite literally paints a picture of isolation. “O sweet woods, the delight of solitariness,” with a text from Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*, looks back on a life of happiness from the seclusion of the woods. This earlier work, though still on a serious topic, doesn’t approach the pathos of “In darkness let me dwell,” but instead may be

alluding to the plight of the Earl of Essex, a one-time favorite of Queen Elizabeth who was sent away from court during times of disfavor. Only a few of Dowland's lute solos were published during his lifetime and the manuscripts that have survived have considerable variations. The title of the pavane, *Solus cum sola*, is a bit of a mystery itself. It could mean "alone with alone," but some have speculated that the combination of masculine and feminine forms of the word "alone" in Latin may be referencing the phrase "Solus cum sola non dicunt Ave Maria" or "a man and woman alone are not saying prayers (Ave Maria)."

**Thomas Campion** (1567-1620) and **Anthony Holborne** (1545-1602) were contemporaries of Dowland. Not much is known about Holborne's life, but we know that he was held in high esteem at court and that he had been in service to both Sir Robert Cecil and Queen Elizabeth I. Dowland himself dedicated the first piece in his *Second Book of Ayres*, printed in London in 1600, "to the most famous, Anthony Holborne." Holborne published two collections: *Cittarr Schoole* (1597) and *Pavans, Galliards, Almains and other Short Aeirs* (1599) from which "My Selfe" is taken. Campion was in many ways an ideal Renaissance man. Multi-talented, he was a poet and composer in addition to studying medicine in France for a time. He published five albums of Ayres from 1601 to 1617, a treatise on music, *A New Way of Making Four Parts in Counterpoint* (circa 1610), and poetry, *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* (1602). "So tired are all my thoughts" from his third book is a late work and characteristic of the world-weary tone of many of the pieces in this collection. The deceptively simple setting of the text highlights his mastery of subtle text painting and melodic structure.

The popularity of the air de cour began with a collection published in 1571 by the composer Adrian Le Roy (born c.1520). In the 17th century, the air de cour developed into one of the main genres of musical entertainment at the French court. **Jean Boyer** (c.1592-1648) was a gamba player and composer who worked for the Duke of Nemours and the Duke of Orléans. "Sombres forêts" from his 1621 collection of Aires shows us why he was well regarded for his sensitive and expressive settings of text.

**Sébastien le Camus** (1610-1677), like Boyer, was also a gamba player and composer. From 1640, he was attached to the courts of both Louis XIII and XIV, replacing Louis Couperin as ordinaire de la musique de la chambre after his death in 1661. Camus was celebrated for his "airs which express the words" but never published his own work. After his death in 1677, his son published *Airs à deux et trois parties (Two- and Three-Part Songs)* to ensure the legacy of his "veritable bass." "Forêts solitaires" uses a text by Henriette de Coligny de La Suze that describes a forest retreat and demonstrates his delicate and independent bass line and eloquent setting of the verse.

**Marc-Antoine Charpentier** (1643-1704) is known today as one of the greatest composers of the French baroque period. He was the only composer during the reign of Louis XIV to study in Italy and is believed to have worked with Giacomo Carissimi. His large body of compositions includes over 500 sacred pieces as well as a few theatre pieces and chamber music. "Sans frayeur dans ce bois" is one of several airs sérieux (a descendant of the earlier air de cour) Charpentier composed for the court. This dance-like piece incorporates an Italian ciaccona for the bass line that supports lyrics in traditional French style set in the solitude of the woods.

**Henry Purcell** (1659-1695), the English Orpheus, is perhaps best known for his ability to set the English language to music. Henry Playford wrote in his preface to *Orpheus Britannicus* that the composer had "a peculiar Genius to express the energy of English Words, whereby he mov'd the Passions of all his Auditors." The text of "O Solitude" is from Katherine Philips' (1631-1664) translation of "La solitude" by Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant (1594-1661). Philips was one of the more popular poets of the time and Purcell sets the words over a ground bass that he used two years earlier in the verse anthem "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust" (1682). The abundance of word painting and lavish harmonies combine to create one of his greatest compositions.

**Johann Philipp Krieger** (1649-1725) was Kapellmeister (conductor) in Weißenfels, the capital of the Duchy of Saxe-Weissenfels, from 1680 to 1725. He was considered one of the finest composers in Germany at the time and helped bring the court to cultural prominence. Responsible for both sacred and secular music, he wrote over 2,000 sacred cantatas and almost 20 operas, most of which have not survived. "Einsamkeit, du Qual der Herzen" comes from a volume of arias excerpted from his operas and it is an exemplar of his style in this genre. The strophic aria is based on a basso ostinato with a simple yet effective setting of a lament on solitude and longing.

The earliest music on this program is by the Spanish composer, poet and playwright **Juan del Encina** (1468-1529). He worked for the Duke of Alba, near Salamanca, where he produced lavish entertainments and wrote plays, poetry and music for the court. Encina is best known to musicians today for his works in the *Cancionero de Palacio*, an extraordinary collection of music gathered from the 1470's through the beginning of the 16th century that is an anthology of polyphonic music during the reign of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon. Approximately 60 of the 478 pieces in the *Cancionero* are by Encina and most of them are villancicos, a style of popular song that was derived from medieval dances. "Hermitaño quiero ser" is a lyrical and syllabic setting of a text where the isolation of a hermit's life is a way to escape emotional confusion and anguish.

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## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Translations by Richard Stone, with the exception of "Hermitaño quiero ser" which is by Tess Knighton

### "In darkness let me dwell"

In darkness let me dwell; the ground shall sorrow be,  
The roof despair, to bar all cheerful light from me;  
The walls of marble black, that moist'ned still shall weep;  
My music, hellish jarring sounds, to banish friendly sleep.  
Thus, wedded to my woes, and bedded in my tomb,  
O let me living die, till death doth come, till death doth come.

### "Hermitaño quiero ser"

Hermitaño quiero ser por ver, hermitaño quiero ser.	I want to be a hermit to see, I want to be a hermit.
Por probar nueva manera, mudar quiero mi vestir, porque en el traje de fuera desconozcan mi vevir; no mudaré mi querer; por ver, hermitaño quiero ser.	To try out a new way of life, I want to change my clothes, because by my appearance they won't know how I live; I will not change my love; to see, I want to be a hermit
Serán mis hábitos tales que digan con mi dolor: será el paño de mis males, será de fe la color y el cordón de padescer. Por ver, hermitaño quiero ser.	My clothing will be such that they remark on my suffering: it will be the outfit of my troubles, the color of loyalty and the braid of torment. To see, I want to be a hermit.

### "Forêts solitaires et sombres"

Henriette de Coligny, comtesse de la Suze (1618–1673)

Forêts solitaires et sombres,  
Où la fraîcheur, le silence et les ombres  
Se conservent malgré le jour;  
Ne sauriez-vous charmer le mal qui  
me possède?  
Et n'avez-vous point de remède  
Contre un cruel et malheureux amour?

You forests, lonely and shadowed  
where the cool, the silence, and the shade  
remain despite the day,  
can you not charm the illness that  
possesses me?  
And have you no remedy  
Against a cruel, unhappy love?

### "An die Einsamkeit"

Paul Thymisch (1656–1694)

Einsamkeit, du Qual der Herten,  
Du verderbst mir alle Lust.  
Will ich nur ein wenig schertzen  
Finden sich die größten Schertzen  
In der abgezehrten Brust!

Einsamkeit, du Qual der Seelen,  
du betrübst mich biß in Todt:  
Deine Pein ist nicht zu zehlen,  
wolt ich sie auch gleich verhehlen,  
kam ich in die größte Noth.

Einsamkeit, du Qual der Herten,  
halt mich doch nicht länger auf!  
Sihst du nicht die Herten schertzen  
mit den schönsten Liebes-Kertzen?  
Laß dem Glücke seinen Lauff.

Solitude, you affliction of our hearts,  
you ruin all pleasure for me.  
Though I wish to frolic just a little,  
the greatest pains show up  
in my wasted breast!

Solitude, you affliction of our souls,  
you will sadden me to my grave:  
Your anguish is boundless,  
though I wanted also to conceal it  
I came into the greatest misery.

Solitude, you affliction of our hearts,  
hold me back no longer!  
Do you not see the hearts at play  
with their beautiful lovers' candles?  
Leave the happy one to his own path.

### "So tired are all my thoughts"

So tired are all my thoughts, that sense and spirits fail:  
Mourning I pine, and know not what I ail.  
O what can yield ease to a mind  
Joy in nothing that can find?

How are my powers fore-spoke? What strange distaste is this?  
Hence, cruel hate of that which sweetest is:  
Come, come delight, make my dull brain  
Feel once heat of joy again.

The lovers tears are sweet, their mover makes them so;  
Proud of a wound the bleeding soldiers grow.  
Poor I alone, dreaming, endure  
Grief that knows nor cause, nor cure.

And whence can all this grow? E'en from an idle mind,  
That no delight in any good can find.  
Action alone makes the soul blest:  
Virtue dies with too much rest.

### "Sombres forêts"

Sombres forêts, noires vallées  
Séjour des âmes travaillées,  
Lieu du silence et du repos,  
Recevez ma voix languissante,  
Et par votre écho respondante  
Redites mes tristes propos.

Somber forests, black (dark) valleys,  
a sojourn for wrought souls,  
a place of silence and repose:  
receive my languishing voice,  
and with your responding echo,  
repeat to me my sad accounts.

Au bord des eaux je me retire,  
Où seul je conte mon martyre,  
Voyant couler l'eau et mes jours.  
Je m'y mire et me vois si blême,  
Que je ressemble la mort même,  
Et si pourtant j'aime toujours.

To the shore of these waters I withdraw,  
where, alone, I recount my suffering,  
seeing flow the water and my days.  
There I gaze on my reflection, and revealed so pale  
that I resemble death itself,  
and all the same I will always love.

Ores si mes amours je chante,  
Le plus sourd de vos bois enfante  
Une voix pareille à mes cris.  
Et si je pleure mon martyre,  
Soudain il me le vient redire,  
Cuidant soulager mes esprits.

Nowadays if I sing of my loves,  
the most deaf of you woods gives birth  
to a voice equal to my cries.  
And if I weep about my suffering,  
suddenly it occurs to me to repeat it,  
believing it will soothe my spirits.

Mais en vain toute cette peine,  
Car la déesse souveraine,  
Ce soleil que j'aime si fort,  
A tant de beautés et de grâce,  
Qu'absent de sa divine face  
Le seul trépas est mon confort.

But in vain all this sorrow,  
because the sovereign goddess—  
this sun that I love so strongly—  
possesses so much beauty and grace,  
that absent from her divine face  
death alone is my comfort.

**"O sweet woods, the delight of solitariness"**

Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

O sweet woods the delight of solitariness,  
O how much do I love your solitariness.  
From fames desire, from loves delight retir'd,  
In these sad groves an Hermits life I led,  
And those false pleasures which once I admir'd,  
With sad remembrance of my fall, I dread.  
To birds to trees, to earth, impart I this,  
For she less secret, and as senseless is.

O sweet woods the delight of solitariness,  
O how much do I love your solitariness.  
Experience which repentance only brings,  
Doth bid me now my heart from love estrange,  
Love is disdain'd when it doth look at Kings,  
And love low placed, base and apt to change:  
There power doth take from him his liberty,  
Here want of worth makes him in cradle die.

O sweet woods the delight of solitariness,  
O how much do I love your solitariness.  
You men that give false worship unto Love,  
And seek that which you never shall obtain.  
The endless work of Sisyphus you prove,  
Whose end is this, to know you strive in vain.  
Hope and desire which now your Idols be  
You needs must lose and feel despair with me.

O sweet woods the delight of solitariness,  
O how much do I love your solitariness.  
You woods in you the fairest Nymphs have walked,  
Nymphs at whose sight all hearts did yield to Love.  
You woods in whom dear lovers oft have talked,  
How do you now a place of mourning prove,  
Wanstead, my Mistres saith this is the doome,  
Thou art Love's Childbed, Nursery, and Tomb.

### "O Solitude"

Katherine Philips (1631 - 1664) translated from 'La solitude'  
by Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant (1594-1661)

O solitude, my sweetest choice:  
Places devoted to the night,  
Remote from tumult and from noise,  
How ye my restless thoughts delight!  
O solitude, my sweetest choice.  
O heav'ns, what content is mine  
To see these trees, which have appear'd  
From the nativity of time,  
And which all ages have rever'd,  
To look today as fresh and green  
As when their beauties first were seen.

O, how agreeable a sight  
These hanging mountains do appear,  
Which th' unhappy would invite  
To finish all their sorrows here,  
When their hard fate makes them endure  
Such woes as only death can cure.

O, how I solitude adore!  
That element of noblest wit,  
Where I have learnt Apollo's lore,  
Without the pains to study it.  
For thy sake I in love am grown  
With what thy fancy does pursue;  
But when I think upon my own,  
I hate it for that reason too,  
Because it needs must hinder me  
From seeing and from serving thee.  
O solitude, O how I solitude adore!

### "Sans frayeur dans ce bois"

Sans frayeur dans ce bois seule je suis  
venue,  
J'y vois Tircis sans être émue.  
Ah! N'ai-je rien à ménager  
Qu'un jeune cœur insensible est à  
plandre,  
Je ne cherche point le danger  
Mais du moins je voudrais le craindre.

### "Without fear in this wood"

Without fear into these woods alone I  
came,  
there I see Thyrsis, and was not stirred.  
Ah, can I bring nothing to bear?  
For a young heart without feeling is to be  
lamented.  
While I do not seek danger in the least,  
I would at least like to fear it.



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### **Meg Bragle** (Mezzo-soprano)

Widely praised for her musical intelligence and “expressive virtuosity” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), Meg Bragle has earned an international reputation as one of today’s most gifted mezzo-sopranos. A frequently featured soloist with Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists, she has made four recordings with the group, including Bach’s Easter and Ascension oratorios – the vehicle for her BBC Proms debut – and Bach’s *Mass in B Minor*. As a gifted early music specialist, Bragle has sung in North America and Europe with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Netherlands Bach Society, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Les Violons du Roy, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, American Bach Soloists, Apollo’s Fire, Arion Baroque and the Dunedin Consort.

Bragle has appeared with many symphony orchestras in the U.S. and Canada including Houston Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, Colorado Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, performing music ranging from Bach and Vivaldi to Mozart, Beethoven and Mahler. Her opera roles include Idamante in Mozart’s *Idomeneo*, Dorabella in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, Dido and the Sorceress in Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas*, Dardano in Handel’s *Amadigi di Gaula*, Amastre in Handel’s *Serse*, Speranza in Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*, Ippolita in Cavalli’s *Elena*, and Elpina in Vivaldi’s *La fida ninfa*.

Bragle is also an accomplished recording artist. In addition to those with the English Baroque Soloists, she has made several recordings with Apollo’s Fire including Mozart’s *Requiem* (Koch International Classics), Handel’s *Dixit Dominus and Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* (AVIE Records), Monteverdi’s *Vespro della Beata Vergine* (AVIE Records), and *L’Orfeo* (Eclectra Records). Other recordings include Bach’s *St. John Passion* with Arion Baroque (ATMA Classique), the collected works of Chiara Margarita Cozzolani (Musica Omnia), *Music of Medieval Love* with New York’s Ensemble for Early Music (Ex Cathedra Records), Toby Twining’s *Chrysalid Requiem* (Cantaloupe Music), Anthony Newman’s *Requiem* (Khaen World Music) and Aaron Copland’s *In the Beginning* with the late John Scott and the Men and Boy Choir of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue on their label. A new recording of Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater* with the Winter Park Bach Festival was released in the spring of 2019. Bragle is based in Philadelphia where she is Artist-in-Residence at the University of Pennsylvania.

### **Richard Stone** (Lute)

Lutenist Richard Stone has performed as soloist, accompanist and conductor worldwide. *The New York Times* called his playing “beautiful” and “lustrously melancholy,” while *The Washington Post* described it as having “the energy of a rock solo and the craft of a classical cadenza.” Notable solo engagements have included a two-season, nationwide tour of the Bach lute suites and performances of lute concerti in the Czech Republic at the Prague Spring International Music Festival, in Germany at the International Fasch Festival with Tempesta di Mare, which he founded and co-directs, in Boston with the Handel & Haydn Society, and in Cleveland with Apollo’s Fire. Commercial recordings include Johann Friedrich Fasch’s lute concerto, the world premiere release of the complete lute concerti of Silvius Leopold Weiss, lute suites by Weiss and new theorbo music by David Loeb. Stone has conducted from Orlando to Taipei, leading from the theorbo in repertoire from Monteverdi to Handel. He teaches baroque lute and theorbo at the Peabody Conservatory.

Stone is a highly regarded baroque vocal accompanist on lute, archlute and theorbo, and has accompanied many of today's best-known vocal artists including Christine Goerke, Lorraine Hunt, Julianne Baird, Christine Brandes, Jeffrey Thomas, Drew Minter and Nigel Rogers. He has also appeared with the Taverner Consort and Players, The Consort of Musicke, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of Saint Luke's, New Century Chamber Orchestra, Smithsonian Chamber Music Society, The Glimmerglass Festival, Apollo's Fire, the Handel and Haydn Society, New York Collegium and the Mark Morris Dance Group.

Stone's performances with Tempesta di Mare are carried regularly on National Public Radio's *Performance Today*. Recording and broadcast credits include Deutsche Grammophon, Chandos Records, Lyrichord, PGM Records, Musical Heritage Society, PolyGram Records, Vienna Modern Masters, ATMA Classique, Eklecta, Centaur Records, BIS Records, Chesky Records, NPR, Czech Radio 3 Vltava and the BBC.

Stone graduated with highest honors from SUNY at Purchase. He studied lute with Nigel North as a Fulbright Lusk Fellow at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London and with Patrick O'Brien at the Mannes School of Music in New York.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## November

- 19** Kun-Yang  
Lin/Dancers
- 20** *My Darling Vivian*

## December

- 4** *Two Beats  
One Soul*
- 10** Martha Graham  
Dance Company
- 17** Sullivan Fortner



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