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CANTATA SINGERS

MARCH 1-31, 2012
CELEBRATING
THE 5th ANNUAL

FESTIVAL OF
Women
IN THE ARTS

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



EVENTS AND VENUES THROUGHOUT THE TWIN TIERS
AND SOUTHERN FINGER LAKES REGION

Why is collaboration and cooperation in a community and the resulting camaraderie important? Collaboration allows for mutual exchange, to see further, share ideas, extend knowledge, and to build upon that which then becomes possible.

This is what the Festival has strived to do since its inception. As we celebrate the 5th Annual Festival of Women in the Arts, we give great thanks to all collaborating partners, supporters, sponsors and donors. What has been accomplished would not have been possible without the work of many.

The Cantata Singers president, Susan Nagle, and director, Will Wickham, donate unending hours of service to the Festival. As treasurer of The Cantata Singers Felix Kapron maintains the critical financial data, and along with his wife, Rita Rhodes, willingly offers support wherever needed. The Cantata Singers secretary, Kathy Lovell, goes the extra mile in helping with Festival mailings.

Ideas and inspiration always arise at Festival planning meetings. Wonderful folk like Gary Chollet, Barb Luther, Ann Welles, Kerry Lippencott, Jackie Satterlee, Jackie Knitter, Vicie Rolling, and others have given something special to the Festival in the process. There are those who work behind the scenes offering their skill and expertise, and for that, special thanks goes to Judy Sheasley and Kayla Alexander. Thank you Ginnie Lupi, Executive Director of the ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes for offering personal insight and guidance as the Festival moves forward.

For help in promoting the word of the Festival, we thank; Howell Liberator & Associates, Steele Memorial Library, Chemung Canal Trust Company, 171 Cedar Arts Center, Corning Museum of Glass, Elisabeth Madden and Grapevine Distribution, Jennifer Herrick and Elmira Downtown Development, Glenora Wine Cellars, Pam Yunis and GCP Discount Liquors and Wine.

Reciprocity between those who give and those who receive benefits everyone. Without each other, the Festival wouldn't be possible. Thank you to all who have helped in some capacity.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Festival, or would care to help in any capacity, please visit cantatasingers.com and contact an officer, or email cantatasingers@gmail.com.

Many thanks,
Susan Nagle & Will Wickham - Festival of Women in the Arts

Help improve our festival. Leave your feedback at our online survey at cantatasingers.com. It only takes a few minutes, and the artists and organizations truly want to hear your thoughts.

Program information accurate as of 1/10/12 printing. Please visit cantatasingers.com for updates.

The Cantata Singers

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William & Shirley Brodginisky • Elmira Regional Art Society • Karen Ginther
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Please Join Us! If you like to sing we'd love for your voice to join with ours!
Rehearsals are Sunday evenings, 6:00 - 8:30 pm at St. Matthew's Episcopal
Church parish hall, 408 S. Main St., Horseheads, NY. For more information contact
director Will Wickham at (607) 796-5034 or check us out at
www.cantatasingers.com

2012 Festival of Women in the Arts events!

Opening event - Salute Your Favorite Woman In History

presented by the Chemung County Council of Women, including the **5th Annual Festival of Women in the Arts Gala Opening Reception**, Chemung Valley History Museum, 415 East Water St. Elmira, Thursday, March 1, 6 - 8:30 pm, Free

Elmira Regional Arts Society presents **Circle of Artists - An Exhibit of members art work**, hung around the Labyrinth at Trinity Episcopal Church, 304 North Main St., Elmira, enter from First Street just at the rear of the church. For more information call 607-215-1356. Saturday March 3, 10 am - 4 pm, Free

Christine Baze, One Story, Classically Trained Pianist Triumphant Cancer Recovery, Through Classical Covers and Original Songs, 171 Cedar Arts Center, Cedar St., Corning, Saturday, March 3, 7 pm, \$

Women, Nature and Peace, The Cantata Singers, and the winner of the Young Performers Competition. Music by Gwyneth Walker (seven movements based on the writings of Thoreau) and "Prayers from the Ark" with text written in German-occupied Paris by Carmen Bernos de Gasztold, First Presbyterian Church of Horseheads, 2943 Westinghouse Rd., Sunday, March 4, 3 pm, Free

Vicie Rolling: **Airport Elocutions: Early American Poetry as Spoken Word**, Elmira Corning Regional Airport, Big Flats, Monday March 5, shows at 2:40 and 4:30 pm, Free

Breaking Trail: Remarkable Women of the Adirondacks, book talk by Professor Louise Sullivan-Blum of Mansfield University Southeast Steuben County Library in the Laura Beer Community Room, 300 Nasser Civic Center Plaza, Tuesday, March 6, 6 pm, Free

Ellen Tifft Retrospective: Poetry Reading and Reminiscences sponsored by ARTiculation, Tifft Lounge in the Campus Center at Elmira College, Wednesday, March 7, 4:30 pm, Free

Zonta Club of Elmira: **Readings by Women Who Write**, Zonta House Elmira, at the corner of West 1st St. and Foster Ave., Elmira, Thursday March 8, 7 pm, Free

100 Years of the Girl Scouts, 2012 marks the centennial anniversary of the Girl Scouts. Pat Silvernail, with the Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, will trace the history of the program in the Chemung Valley and United States. Chemung Valley History Museum, 415 East Water St., Elmira, Thursday, March 8, 7 pm, Free

Meet Your Local Women Authors: Guided Panel Discussion of Southern Tier Writers, local women authors discuss their work. Steele Memorial Library, 101 E. Church St., Elmira, Saturday, March 10, 10 am - 12 pm, Free

The Importance of Women's History, workshop led by musician

Peggy Lynn and author Sandra Weber, Benjamin Patterson Inn Corning, Saturday, March 10, 2 pm, Free

Remarkable Women of the Adirondacks in Songs and Stories, Valley Folk presents musician Peggy Lynn and author Sandra Weber at 171 Cedar Arts' Drake House, 155 Cedar St., Corning, Saturday, March 10, 7:30 pm, Jam session at 6 pm, \$

Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes and Youth Orchestra side-by-side, music by Wagner, Brahms and others. Featuring the winner of the 2011 Hertzog Concerto Competition and Chorus of the Southern Finger Lakes, Clemens Center, Elmira, Sunday, March 11, 4 pm \$

Vicie Rolling: **Airport Elocutions: Early American Poetry as Spoken Word**, Elmira Corning Regional Airport, Big Flats, Monday March 12, shows at 2:40 and 4:30 pm, Free

Piecemaker Quilters presents **Nine Block Variations**, lecture and demonstration of the most basic traditional patchwork block by Pat Wainwright, Tuesday, March 13, 11 am, Free. Piecemaker Quilters also present **Sweater Reuse**, with Eve Goebel, Tuesday, March 13, 12:30 pm, \$5 fee. Both at the Elmira Heights Legion, 236 Prescott Ave.

Exploring Counted Cross Stitch, with the Chemung Valley Embroiderers' Guild of America. Showing the basics: how to choose material and thread, how to read a chart, how to begin a design on a blank piece of material, with plenty of discussion of all beginners questions. Let's get you started on a life long love of cross stitching!!! To reserve a free starter kit please call Joan Robertson before March 1 at 607-742-8494, Steele Memorial Library Auditorium, 101 East Church St., Elmira Wednesday, March 14, 6 - 8 pm, Free

The Clemens Women, behind every great man is a woman. In Mark Twain's case, however, there were several women - his mother, sister wife and three daughters. Kerry Lippincott, education coordinator, will explore the lives of the Clemens' women. Presented by the Chemung Valley History Museum 415 E. Water St., Elmira, Thursday, March 15, 7 pm, Free

The Great Mother, art exhibit opening reception, Franklin Street Gallery 209 North Franklin St., Watkins Glen, March 16, 5 - 8 pm, Free

Dearly Departed, a comedy written by David Bottrell and Jessie Jones, presented by Elmira Little Theatre, directed by Shari Paige-Rich. In the Baptist backwoods of the Bible Belt, the colorful and dysfunctional Turpin family proves that living and dying in the South are seldom tidy and always hilarious. Production dedicated to the memory of Clare Reidy, who was originally scheduled to direct the show. Show time and ticket information from the Clemens Center box office, 734-8191. Clemens Center, Elmira, March 16 - 18, \$

Journeys, a concert by Bella Voce, explores life's travels, spiritual



physical, life to death, death to new beginnings, changes of the season and nature in rest and transition. Journeys features music by Michael McGlynn, local composers Scott Tucker and Dominick DiOrio, among others. For information Contact: Doreen Alsen, (607) 342-1004 or dalsen@twcny.rr.com, La Tourelle, 1150 Danby Rd (Rt 96B), Ithaca Sunday, March 18, 4 pm, \$



While Angels Weep: The Creative Process, Kathleen Huddle, sponsored by the American Association of University Women, Community Arts of Elmira, Lake and East 2nd Sts., Wednesday, March 21, 7 pm, Free

4th Annual Sage Daughters of the Muses Poetry Reading: Honoring the Memory of Clare Reidy, poetry reading and musical interlude honoring an original Sage Daughter. Light refreshments. Arnot Art Museum, 235 Lake St., Elmira, Thursday, March 22, 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Free

America the Beautiful: Women and the Flag, discussion of the role of women in the history of these United States. Chemung Valley History Museum, 415 East Water St., Elmira, Thursday, March 22, 7 pm, Free

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Art Opening & Reception, for Tricia Wright and Joanna Manousis painter and mixed media artist Tricia Wright presents her **Reflective Veil** series along with additional new works. **Solo Exhibition** by Joanna Manousis, known for her innovative glass work. Exhibit A, 41 East Market St., Corning, Friday, March 23, 5:30 - 8 pm, Free

Chemung Valley Fiber Arts Guild: Coil Basket Workshop, Steele Memorial Library, 101 East Church St., Elmira, Saturday, March 24, 1 pm, Free

Festival of Women in the Arts Sunday Spectacular, choral performances by The Cantata Singers and Crystal Chords, dance ensembles and solo acts along with displays of work from many Festival events. Clemens Center, Elmira, Sunday, March 25, 3 pm, Free

Elmira Keyboard Ensemble, the ensemble was formed in 2007 and first performed for Thursday Morning Musicales in Elmira. The group specializes in piano duets, piano/organ duets and music for multiple hands. First Presbyterian Church, 1054 West Clinton St., Elmira, March 25, 7 pm, Free

Dressmaking in Elmira, 1880-1917, at the turn of the century dressmaking was one of the main occupations for women in Chemung County. Casey Lewis, a graduate student in Cooperstown, examines

Elmira's dressmakers. Chemung Valley History Museum, 415 East Water St., Elmira, Thursday, March 29, 7 pm, Free

Ongoing Events

Talitha Botsford: Elmira's Lady of all the Arts, an exhibition of Talitha Botsford's works will be presented March 1 - 31 at the Chemung Valley History Museum, 415 East Water St., Elmira, Monday - Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm, \$

Women Artists in the Rockwell Museum of Western Art Collection, a self-guided tour will highlight four pieces of artwork created by women artists. Visitors will learn about their artistic beginnings, their inspirations and how personal connection has an important role in determining their subject matter. Rockwell Museum of Western Art, Cedar St. Corning, March 1 - 31, daily 9 am - 5 pm, Free

Rita Rhodes Arts on Display: Sculptural Appalachian Egg Baskets & Ostentatious Jewelry, Steele Memorial Library 101 East Church St., Elmira, March 1 - 31, Monday - Thursday 9 am - 9 pm; Friday & Saturday, 9 am - 5 pm, Free

Good Works: Charitable Projects by Chemung Valley Fiber Arts Guild, a display of projects done by the guild in conjunction with various organizations of Chemung County. Steele Memorial Library, 101 East Church St., Elmira Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 9 pm; Friday & Saturday 9 am - 5 pm, Free

Art by Elmira College Alumna Jaqueline Satterlee, Gannett-Tripp Library Foyer, Elmira College, March 5 - April 2, daily 9 am - 9 pm, Free

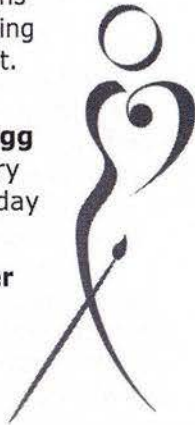
Barbara Blumer: In Their Studios; Treacy Ziegler: From Confinement/The Waiting, the exhibitions celebrate living, local women artists, both are one-person shows. Arnot Art Museum, 235 Lake St., Elmira, March 6 - May 4, Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 5 pm Saturday, 12 - 5 pm, Free

The Great Mother, art exhibit, Franklin Street Gallery, 209 North Franklin St., Watkins Glen, March 16 - 31. Gallery hours: Monday & Wednesday 12 - 6 pm; Friday, 12 - 7 pm; Saturday, 10 am - 7 pm; Tuesday & Thursday by chance or appointment, Free

Art Exhibit: Tricia Wright and Joanna Manousis. painter and mixed media artist Tricia Wright presents her **Reflective Veil** series along with additional new works. **Solo Exhibition** by Joanna Manousis, known for her innovative glass work. Exhibit A, 41 East Market St., Corning, Friday, March 23 - May 18 Thursday & Friday, 11 am - 6 pm; Saturday & Sunday, 2 - 6 pm; also open by chance or appointment, (607) 259-1008, Free



For more information and events use your QR code reader or browse to www.cantatasingers.com





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presents

Ellen Tiftt Speaks: A Life in Poetry

**Remembering Elmira's premier
poet with readings of her work.**

March 21, 2012

5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

**Tiftt Lounge, Campus Center
Elmira College**

Reception following

A Note from the Cantata Singers President

Why do we value music? We value it because it shapes the way in which we see our world. Music is intrinsic to our life. It moves us, gives us energy, soothes the soul, eases pain, offers escape, enriches our lives and minds, and heals. Music is creativity in its purest form. It hasn't one single value, but rather has many. It is the foundation of every aspect of our lives.

The Cantata Singers work year round to bring a full season of music to you, our patrons, and to provide the community with the ever-popular Festival of Women in the Arts. It is our hope to continue to fulfill our mission of making unique contributions to the musical life and artistic enrichment of the Twin Tiers.

Please consider making a contribution to The Cantata Singers or The Festival of Women in the Arts. We appreciate and offer our heartfelt thanks for your continued patronage and support.

Most sincerely,
Susan Nagle, President

Your tax-deductible donation can be made by check to The Cantata Singers, P.O. Box 952, Elmira, NY 14902; or at our website cantatasingers.com under Support Us. You will be listed in all concert programs of the season under your level of support. You will receive a receipt. Please enclose your employer's matching gift form, if applicable.

Sustainer: \$500 Benefactor: \$250 Patron: \$100 Sponsor: \$50 Donor: \$25

Women, Peace and Nature

Part I: Looking for Peace

Prayers from the Ark - - Ivor Davies (1901 - 1971)

Poetry of Carmen Bernos de Gazstold
Preceded by a dramatic prologue
Dramatic Personel

Narrators: Susan Tanner, John Koons

Anne Frank: Allison Anthony

Voices from the Occupation:

Sarah Schlueter-Eisman, Amber Lester

Kate Nagle, Megan Quackenbush

The Poet: Vicie Rolling

Et in Terra Pax - - Nancy Bloomer Deussen (1931 -)

Piano – Frances McLaren

- - Intermission - -

Part II: Looking Ahead

La Campanella - - Franz Liszt (1811 - 1886)

Piano – Ben Pawlak

Winner of The Cantata Singers

2012 Young Performers Competition

Part III: Of Nature and Peace

Two Works of Composer Gwyneth Walker (1947 -)

Acquaintance with Nature – Text taken from the writing of

H. D. Thoreau

Piano – Frances McLaren

Clarinet – Dr. David Wetzel

Henry David Thoreau – Irving Cook

Tree of Peace – Text adapted from the poem “O Brother Man,” by

John Greenleaf Whittier

Piano - - Frances McLaren

Prayers from the Ark

Noah’s Prayer (sung)

Solo – S. Hartney

The Prayer of the Dog (recited)

The Prayer of the Little Bird (sung)

The Prayer of the Little Pig (recited)

The Prayer of the Foal (recited)

The Prayer of the Cat (sung)

The Prayer of the Mouse (sung)

The Prayer of the Owl (recited)

The Prayer of the Ant (recited)

The Prayer of the Raven (sung)

The Prayer of the Dove (sung)

Acquaintance with Nature

Prologue

Remember Thy Creator

I Seek Acquaintance With Nature

Tenors – B. Brodginiski, D. Perry, G. Tucker

I Perceive the Spring in the

Softened Air

Mornings

Dry, Hazy June Weather

Dew on the Cobwebs

The First Star is Lit

Soprano soli- S. Nagle, R. Fitzgerald, Alto soli – P.

Peters, K. Trexler; Bass soli – J. Ponzi, D. Rosplock;

Tenor soli – B. Brodginiski, D. Perry, G. Tucker

Epilogue

Program notes

“Whether women composers are different from men is perhaps one of those endless nature-versus-nurture type debates that can only divide people. What I’d like to suggest instead is that history has placed women composers in a prime position, if they choose to take advantage of it, to exert a healing influence on the tortured music of this late 20th century. Many have so chosen, and we have much cause to be grateful to them.” (Kyle Gann – 1998)

And there can be no themes so in need of the healing power of the woman’s voice than peace and nature. The early years of the twentieth century gave us “the war to end all wars” and, ironically, much more war, including World War II and the holocaust buried deep within. Along with industrial development and exponential expansion that continues to carry on since the latter half of the 1800’s, both nature and peace continue to be under heavy attack even as the promise of the 21st century becomes more history than hope.

Our ability to sing or even read the charming poetry that comprise the “Prayers from the Ark” is nearly as miraculous and unlikely as the eventual publication of the writings of Anne Frank. Rumer Godden, who crafted the translation from the original French to English, has this to say about the poems. “I came upon them by accident and was instantly caught by their charm, but do not be alarmed; the charm has nothing to do with whimsy: Carmen de Gasztold has seen too much of the seamy side of life to be a sentimental animal lover – ironically, she has little use for pets. In her world a dog is to guard the house, a horse to work its strength out for its master, a pig to be eaten, and there is an economy and sense about her work that is typically French; it is the truthfulness of the prayers, especially as it reflects on us, unthinking humans, that causes pain.”

It is in being mindful of the difficult young life, lived under threat of the rising Nazi party in nearby Germany, of growing up a troubled child in a troubled household, and of eventually being pressed into service for an occupying enemy in the most troubled of

The Cantata Singers

Music Director Will Wickham

Rehearsal accompanist Frances McLaren

Soprano

Ruth Bruning

Robin Fitzgerald

Susan B. Hartney

Cathy Hogan

Kathy Lovell

Joy McFarland

Susan Nagle

Linda Peters

Alto

Phyllis Bishop

Loueda Bleiler

Dee Dunkley

Martha Horton

Frances McLaren

Pat Peters

Cora Range

Ruellene Seymour

Katie Trexler

Tenor

Bill Brodginiski

Michael Hartney

Felix Kapron

Tom McCloskey

Richard Perry

Gary Tucker

Bass

Hilary T. Godard

Ronnie Joseph

Stephen Nagle

Joe Ponzi

David Rosplock

Women, Peace and Nature – Cantata Singers & friends – Program & Texts

times that we can truly grasp what the poet, the translator and the composer are trying to tell us: There is whimsy and charm in the world, to be sure. But there also exists the darker willingness of humankind to trod or climb over anyone to achieve a given goal, no matter how noble or nefarious. Most importantly, let these poems and this music be the proof that prayers, especially those offered humbly by the lowest of us, are still the best weapon to achieve peace.

“Et in Terra Pax” was composer Nancy Bloomer-Duessen’s response to the terror attack in New York City that began the current century. Ms. Bloomer-Duessen says this about the work: “Since the attacks of 9-11 I had contemplated composing a work to express the wish that so many of us had and still have, namely, the wish for world peace. Even though, in light of the facts, it was an unrealistic wish I felt that perhaps, in my own small way, I could shine a small light in the darkness. I selected the text from the Mass Ordinary because it expresses exactly what I wanted to say: ‘Et in terra pax’—‘and peace on Earth.’”

Henry David Thoreau was most certainly the western hemisphere’s original environmentalist. His exploration of personal inner nature and mother nature during two short years at Walden Pond has left a trail that, so far, stretches 158 years long. That such a talented and insightful composer as Gwyneth Walker should set his thoughts to music is truly a gift that we are thrilled to share on this program. Walker’s insight into Thoreau, both the actual text and the man behind the text, helps her to create music that is at times rich and dramatic and at times light playful, but always carries the text as ably as Walden Pond carries the reflection of gently floating clouds on a bright, calm summer day. A stronger statement supporting the “green” movement anywhere in the world would be hard to come by. Who else but a woman...

How better to tie the themes of nature and peace together than Walker’s “The Tree of Peace”. According to the composer “The final sentence of the original poem becomes the focal point of this work, returning many times: “Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.” It is our hope that the creative women represented in this program might have indeed planted the “seed of a tree of peace” in every one of us.

Will Wickham, 4 March, 2012 - - Soli Deo Gloria!

The Cantata Singers offer special thanks to Maureen Costello and the Zonta Club of Elmira, Reverend Jonathan Knight and the staff and people of First Presbyterian Church of Horseheads, and the Young Actors Workshop

Prayers from the Ark

1) Song: Noah’s Prayer

Lord,
What a menagerie!
Between Your downpour and these animal cries
one cannot hear oneself think!
The days are long,
Lord.
All this water makes my heart sink.
When will the ground cease to rock under my feet?
The days are long.
Master Raven has not come back.
Here is your dove.
Will she find us a twig of hope?
The days are long,
Lord.
Guide your Ark to safety,
some zenith of rest,
where we can escape at last
from this brute slavery.
The days are long,
Lord.
Lead me until I reach the shore of Your covenant.
Amen.

2) Recitation: The Prayer of the Dog

Lord,
I keep watch!
If I am not here
who will guard their house?
Watch over their sheep?
Be faithful?
No one but You and I
understands
what faithfulness is.
They call me, “Good dog! Nice dog!”
Words...

I take their pats
and the old bones they throw me
and I seem pleased.
They really believe they make me happy.
I take kicks too
when they come my way.
None of that matters.
I keep watch!
Lord,
do not let me die
until, for them,
all danger is driven away.

Amen

3) Song: The Prayer of the Little Bird

Dear God,
I don't know how to pray by myself
very well,
But will You please
protect my little nest from wind and rain?
Put a great deal of dew on the flowers, many
seeds in my way.
Make Your blue very high,
Your branches lissome;
let Your kind light stay late in the sky
and set my heart brimming
with such music that I must sing, sing, sing...
Please Lord.

Amen.

4) Recitation: The Prayer of the Little Pig

Lord,
their politeness makes me laugh!
Yes, I grunt!
Grunt and snuffle!
I grunt because I grunt
and snuffle
because I cannot do anything else!

times that we can truly grasp what the poet, the translator and the composer are trying to tell us: There is whimsy and charm in the world, to be sure. But there also exists the darker willingness of humankind to trod or climb over anyone to achieve a given goal, no matter how noble or nefarious. Most importantly, let these poems and this music be the proof that prayers, especially those offered humbly by the lowest of us, are still the best weapon to achieve peace.

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The days are long,
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Lord,
I keep watch!
If I am not here
who will guard their house?
Watch over their sheep?
Be faithful?
No one but You and I
understands
what faithfulness is.
They call me, “Good dog! Nice dog!”
Words...

I take their pats
and the old bones they throw me
and I seem pleased.
They really believe they make me happy.
I take kicks too
when they come my way.
None of that matters.
I keep watch!
Lord,
do not let me die
until, for them,
all danger is driven away.
Amen

3) Song: **The Prayer of the Little Bird**

Dear God,
I don't know how to pray by myself
very well,
But will You please
protect my little nest from wind and rain?
Put a great deal of dew on the flowers, many
seeds in my way.
Make Your blue very high,
Your branches lissome;
let Your kind light stay late in the sky
and set my heart brimming
with such music that I must sing, sing, sing. . .
Please Lord.
Amen.

4) Recitation: **The Prayer of the Little Pig**

Lord,
their politeness makes me laugh!
Yes, I grunt!
Grunt and snuffle!
I grunt because I grunt
and snuffle
because I cannot do anything else!

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All the same, I am not going to thank them
for fattening me up to make bacon.
Why did You make me so tender?
What a fate!
Lord,
teach me how to say

Amen

5) Recitation: **The Prayer of the Foal**

O God! the grass is so young!
My hooves are full of capers.
Then
why does this terror start up in me?
I race
and my mane catches the wind.
I race
and Your scents beat on my heart.
I race,
falling over my own feet in my joy,
because my eyes are too big
and I am their prisoner:
eyes too quick to seize
on the uneasiness that runs through the whole world.
Dear God,
when the strange night
prowls round the edge of day,
let Yourself be moved by my plaintive whinny;
set a star to watch over me
and hush my fear.

Amen

6) Song: **The Prayer of the Cat**

Lord,
I am the cat.
It is not exactly that I have something to ask of You!
No--
I ask nothing of anyone--
but,
if You have by some chance in some celestial barn,
a little white mouse,
or a saucer of milk,
I know someone who would relish them.
Wouldn't you like someday
to put a curse on the whole race of dogs?
If so I should say,

Amen.

7) Song: **The Prayer of the Mouse**

I am so little and grey,
dear God,
how can you keep me in mind?
Always spied upon,
always chased.
Nobody ever gives me anything,
and I nibble meagerly at life.
Why do they reproach me with being a mouse?
Who made me but You?
I can only ask to stay hidden.
Give me my hunger's pittance
safe from the claws of that devil with green eyes.

Amen.

8) Recitation: **The Prayer of the Owl**

Dust and ashes!
Lord,

I am nothing but dust and ashes,
except for these two riding lights
that blink gently in the night,
color of moons,
and hung on the hook of my beak.
It is not, Lord, that I hate Your light.
I wail because I cannot understand it,
enemy of the creatures of darkness
who pillage Your crops.
My hoo-hoo-hooooo
startles a depth of tears in every heart.
Dear God,
one day,
will it wake Your pity?

Amen

9) Recitation: **The Prayer of the Ant**

Lord,
I am always made out to be wrong;
a fable to the whole world.
Certainly I hoard
and make provision!
I have my rights!
And surely I can take a little joy
in the fruits of all my work
without some sob singer
coming to rob my store?
There is something in Your justice
that I scarcely understand,
and, if You would allow me to advise,
it might be thought over again.
I have never been a burden to anybody,
and, if I may say so,
I manage my own business very well.
Then,
to the incorrigible improvidence
of some people,
must I, for all eternity, say

Amen

10) Song: **The Prayer of the Raven**

I believe,
Lord,
I believe!
It is faith that saves us, You have said it!
I believe the world was made for me,
because as it dies --
I thrive on it.
My undertaker's black
is in keeping with my cynical old heart.
Raven land is between You and that life down there,
for whose end I wait to gratify myself.
"Aha!" I cry. "Avant moi le deluge!"
What a Feast!
I shall never go back to the Ark!
To the Ark...
Oh! let it die in me-
this horrible nostalgia

Amen.

11) Song: **The Prayer of the Dove**

The Ark waits,
Lord,
The Ark waits on Your will,

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and the sign of Your peace.
I am the Dove,
simple
as the sweetness that comes from You.
The Ark waits,
Lord;
It has endured.
Let me carry it
a sprig of hope and joy,
and put, at the heart of its forsakenness,
this, in which Your love clothes me,
Grace immaculate.
Amen.

Et in terra pax

Et in terra pax hominibus, *And on earth peace to all people,*
Laudamus te, Benedicimus te. *Praise you, Lord, Bless you, Lord.*

Acquaintance with Nature

Prologue

Narrator: I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I do not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear, nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.

Remember Thy Creator

Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth.
Rise free from care before the dawn and seek adventures.
Let the noon find thee by other lakes,
And the night overtake thee everywhere at home.
Grow wild according to thy nature.
Let the thunder rumble.
Take shelter under the cloud.
Enjoy the land, but own it not.

I Seek Acquaintance with Nature

I want to go soon and live away by the pond,
where I shall hear only the wind whispering among the reeds.
It will be enough if I shall leave myself behind.
I seek acquaintance with nature, to know her moods and her manners.
I wish to know an entire heaven and an entire earth!

I Perceive the Spring in the Softened Air

I perceive the spring in the softened air.
Looking through the transparent vapors,
all surfaces look more vivid.
The hardness of winter is relaxed.
I do not know that the woods are ever more beautiful,
or affect me more. How silent are the footsteps of spring!
I perceive the spring in the softened air, ah!

Mornings

There are from time to time mornings,
both in summer and winter, mornings,
when especially the world seems to begin a new.
Mornings!

The world has been recreated in the night.
Mornings of creation, I call them.
It is the poet's hour, the poets hour,
Mornings when we are newborn,
we who have the seeds of life in us.
Mornings!

Dry, Hazy June Weather

It is dry, hazy June weather.
We are more of the earth, farther from heaven these days.
We are getting deeper into the mists of the earth.
The season of hope and promise is past;
already the season of small fruits has arrived,
the season when berries are ripe.
The prospect of the heavens is taken away,
and we are presented with only a few small berries.

Dew on the Cobwebs

Everywhere there is dew on the cobwebs,
little gossamer veils, or scarfs as big as your hand.
They were dropped from the fairy shoulders
that danced on the grass last night,
Dew.

The First Star is Lit

Every day a new picture is painted and framed,
held up for half an hour,
in such lights as the Great Artist chooses,
and then withdrawn,
and the curtain falls.
And then the sun goes down,
and the long afterglow gives light.
And then the damask curtains glow along the western
window.
And then the first star is lit, and I go home.

Epilogue

Narrator: Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in.
I drink at it,
but while I drink I see the sandy bottom
and detect how shallow it is.
Its thin currents slide away,
but eternity remains.
I would drink deeper,
fish in the sky,
whose bottom is
pebbly with stars.

The Tree of Peace

O, my sister and my brother, all who walk upon this earth,
fold to your hearts each other.
Where mercy dwells, the peace of the Lord is there.
To live rightly is to love one another
each kindness a gift, each deed a prayer.
Listen, listen to one another.
Walk with reverence in the steps of those who have gone
before, where forgiveness and wisdom has stood.
So shall the wide earth become a temple,
each loving life a psalm of gratitude
where forgiveness and wisdom has stood.
Listen, listen to one another.
Then shall all shackles fall.
The violence of war over the earth shall cease.
Love shall tread out the fire of anger,
and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.