

Vasken Ohanian

# Eve

For Solo Soprano and Piano

1. God's World
2. Eve
3. The Garden

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## Text

### 1. God's World by Edna St. Vincent Millay

O World, I cannot hold thee close enough!  
    Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!  
    Thy mists, that roll and rise!  
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag  
And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag  
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!  
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,  
    But never knew I this;  
    Here such a passion is  
As stretcheth me apart, —Lord, I do fear  
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year;  
My soul is all but out of me, —let fall  
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

### 2. Eve by Ella Higginson

Close to the gates of Paradise I flee;  
    The night is hot and serpents leave their beds,  
    And slide along the dark, crooking their heads, —  
My God, my God, open the gates to me!

My eyes are burning so I cannot see;  
    My feet are bleeding and I suffer pain;  
    Let me come in on the cool grass again—  
My God, my God, open the gates to me!

I ate the fruit of the forbidden tree,  
    And was cast out into the barren drouth;  
    And since – the awful taste [in] my mouth!  
My God, my God, open the gates to me!

### Eve (continued)

Am I shut out for all eternity?  
    I do repent me of my one black sin,  
    With prayers and tears of blood...  
    Let me come in!  
My God, my God, open the gates to me!

Let me come in where birds and flowers be;  
    Let me once more lie naked in the grass  
    That trembles when the long wind-ripples pass!  
Lord God, Lord God, open the gates to me!

### 3. The Garden by Jones Very (ed. Vasken Ohanian)

I saw the [place] where our first parents dwelt;  
And yet it wore to me no face of change,  
For while amid [the] fields and groves, I felt  
As if I had not sinned, nor thought it strange;

My eye seemed but a part of every sight,  
My ear heard music in each sound that rose;  
Each sense forever found a new delight,  
Such as the spirit's vision only knows;

Each act some new and ever-varying joy  
Did my [Mother's] love for me prepare;  
To dress the [place] my ever fresh employ,  
And in the glorious whole with [the world/Her] to  
    share;

No more without the flaming gate to stray,  
No more for sin's dark stain the debt of death to pay.

**Duration:** c.a. 11:00

## Composer's Note:

The inspiration for *Eve* originated in a late-night poetry binge, after coming across Ella Higginson's poem of the same name. The poem left me realizing that the Judeo-Christian creation story is almost always told from a cold, aloof perspective. It never really goes into the motivations and emotions of the two human beings (whether real or imaginary) involved, Adam and Eve. If we do, it seems that it's always from Adam or a male-lead religious organization's perspective.

I wanted to take this song cycle as an opportunity to try to reimagine the Judeo-Christian creation story from Eve's perspective. *Eve* begins with "God's World" encompassing the innocence and wonder of the Garden of Eden, a seemingly perfect place. "Eve" is a depiction of the fall from grace, full of horror, confusion, and perhaps even feelings of being betrayed by the divine. The final song, "The Garden", shifts the perspective to a modern woman who is reflecting on the aftermath of Eve's experience. We take the opportunity to remember the oppression that followed the fall from grace, and look ahead to the road, paved by the mothers who came before us, to a brighter future.

## About the Composer:

As a composer and conductor, Vasken Ohanian is known for the expressivity in his music making. He strives to compose music that is relevant to the human experience, often incorporating elements of his Armenian heritage in his compositions. He is a former winner of the *Annual Kris Getz Composition Competition* and a recipient of the *Dean Emeritus Luis Costa Award for Music*. As a conductor, he formerly served as Co-director and Resident Conductor for the 4th Annual *Hot Air Music Festival*.



Vasken Ohanian received his Bachelor of Music in Composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying under Elinor Armer. He holds a double Master of Music in Composition and Choral-Conducting from the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music, studying with Dr. Martin Herman (Composition) and Dr. Jonathan Talberg (Choral-Conducting).

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VAOMusi  The logo graphic consists of a vertical bar, a stylized 'B' character, and three horizontal lines to the right of the 'B'.

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facilitate page turns.

# 1. God's World

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)

Vasken Ohanian (b. 1990)

Meraviglioso con moto ♩ = 92

*mp*

O world, I

Meraviglioso con moto ♩ = 92

*mp*

*simile*

3 *f* *mf*

can - not hold thee close e - nough! Thy winds, thy

*mf*

6 *mp*

wide grey skies! Thy mists, that

*mp sub.*

### God's World

9 *f* *p*

roll and rise! The

12 *cresc.*

woods, this au - tumn day that ache and sag

*p cresc.*

15 *f*

and all but cry with

18 *ff*

co - lour!

*ff* R.H.

### God's World

20 *mp* *p*

That gaunt crag to

*mf* *mp*

8ba

23 *mp*

crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!

3 *mp*

26 *f*

World, World, I can - not get thee

*cresc.* *f*

29 *ff*

close enough!

*ff* *dim. poco a poco*

### God's World

31 *mp*

Long have I known a

34

glo - ry in it all, But ne - ver knew I this:

37 *p*

Here such a pas - sion is as

40 *mp* *p*

stretch - eth me a - part.



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God's World

poco rall.....

52 *f*

me. \_\_\_\_\_

*poco rall.....*

*p sub.*

Poco meno mosso

54

*p*

Let fall \_\_\_\_\_ no burn - ing leaf; \_\_\_\_\_ pri - thee \_\_\_\_\_ let no

Poco meno mosso

57

bird \_\_\_\_\_ call. \_\_\_\_\_

60

molto rall. e morendo.....

molto rall. e morendo.....

## 2. Eve

Ella Higginson (1861-1940)

Vasken Ohanian (b. 1990)

*Agitato con fuoco* ♩ = 132

*Agitato con fuoco* ♩ = 132

*f* *p sub.* *p sub.* *p sub.*

*p cresc.*

4

*f* *p*

8 *poco rit.....* *poco rit.....*

*sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Eve

11 A tempo

Musical score for measures 11-13. The vocal line begins with a rest in 3/4 time, then continues in 2/4 time with the lyrics "Close to the gates of". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *p* and *p sub.* with triplets in the piano part.

14

Musical score for measures 14-16. The vocal line has lyrics "Par - a - dise I flee; My God, my God, o - pen the gates to me! The". The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns and chords. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*.

17

Musical score for measures 17-19. The vocal line has lyrics "night is hot and ser-pents leave their beds, and slide a - long". The piano accompaniment features a more active eighth-note pattern. Dynamics include *cresc.* and *p*.

20

Musical score for measures 20-22. The vocal line has lyrics "the dark, crook - - ing their heads, My". The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns. Dynamics include *cresc.*

Eve

23 *f* *mp* *p*

God, my God o - pen the gates to me!

26 *p sub.*

My eyes are burn - ing so

29 *mf* *mf*

I can - not see; My God, my God,

31 *mp* *p*

o - pen the gates to me! My feet are bleed - ing and I

Eve

34 *mf dim.*

suf - - fer pain, Let me come in on the

37 *p*

cool grass a - gain, My God, my God o - pen the gates to

40 *mp* *poco rit.*..... *Agitato* ♩ = 58

me!

*mp dim.*

*p*

44 *molto accel.*.....

*mp*

*p*

(8)

Eve

48 **Prestissimo** ♩ = 208  
*p cresc. poco a poco* accel.....

I ate the fruit of the for - bid - - den tree and

**Prestissimo** ♩ = 208 accel.....

*cresc. poco a poco*

(8)

52 (♩ = ca. 160)

was cast out in - to the bar - ren drouth,

(♩ = ca. 160)

(8)

55 **f**

and since, the aw - ful taste in my mouth!

**f**

(8)

60 **allarg.**.....

My God, My God, o - pen the gates to me!

**allarg.**.....

(8)

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Eve

Presto ♩ = 176

77 (♩ = ca. 192) rall..... *ff*

God, My God, My God, My God,

Presto ♩ = 176

(♩ = ca. 192) rall..... *ff*

*ff* 3 3 3 3

allarg.....

80

My God, My God,

allarg.....

3 3 3 3

Pesante, liberamente

Patetico ♩ = 108

83 *fff*

O - pen the gates to me!

Pesante, liberamente  
colla voce

Patetico ♩ = 108

*fff*

*f* 3 3 3

non staccato

*mf*

Eve

86 *mp*

Let me come

89 *mp* *morendo poco a poco*.....

in \_\_\_\_\_ where birds and flow - ers be; \_\_\_\_\_

*p* *morendo poco a poco*.....

93 *mp*

Let me once more lie na - ked \_\_\_\_\_ in the grass that

Eve

96 *p*

trem - bles\_ when the long wind - rip - ples pass\_ Lord God, Lord

99

God, o - pen the gates\_ to

morendo.....  
102 *n*

me.

morendo.....

*ppp*

8ba\_... ] lunga

### 3. The Garden

Jones Very (1813-1880)

Vasken Ohanian (b. 1990)

Sereno ♩ = ca. 54

The first system of the score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a whole note rest followed by a half note G4. The middle staff is the piano accompaniment, beginning with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a melodic line in the right hand. The bottom staff is the bass line, starting with a whole note rest. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked as *Sereno* with a quarter note equal to approximately 54 beats per minute. A *lunga* marking is present in the piano accompaniment.

4 *p* *Dolce espressivo* ♩ = 60

I saw the place where our first par - ents dwelt;

*Dolce espressivo* ♩ = 60

*Red.*

The second system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line starts with a whole note rest, followed by a half note G4, and then a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line. The tempo is marked as *Dolce espressivo* with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. A *Red.* (ritardando) marking is present in the piano accompaniment.

8 rit.....A tempo

And yet it wore to me no face of

rit.....A tempo

The third system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line starts with a whole note rest, followed by a half note G4, and then a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line. The tempo is marked as *rit.....A tempo*. A triplet of eighth notes is present in the vocal line.

### The Garden

12 *poco string.....*  
*mp*

change, for while a - mid the fields and

*poco string.....*  
*mp*

16

groves, I

*cresc.*

19

felt, I felt as if

3

### The Garden

21  $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$   
*f*

I had not sinned

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$   
*f*

23 *mp*

nor thought it strange;

*mp*

25 *(mp)* string. poco a poco .....

My eye seemed but a

string. poco a poco .....

### The Garden

27 *mf*

part of ev - ery sight, My

*cresc.*

29 *mf* *p*

ear heard mu - sic in each

*mf dim.* *p*

31 *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

sound that rose; Each sense for - ev - er

*cresc. poco a poco*

### The Garden

33 *(mf)*

found a new de - light such as the

35 *Vivo* ♩ = 88

spir - it's vi - sion on - ly knows;

37 *Grandioso* ♩ = 80 *molto rall.*..... *ff*

Each act - some new and ev - er - var - y - ing joy,

*molto rall.*..... *ff*



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### The Garden

Dolce ♩ = 56

50

place my ev - - er fresh em - -

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line for measures 50 through 53. The music is in a key of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Dolce' with a quarter note equal to 56 beats. The lyrics are 'place my ev - - er fresh em - -'. The melody is simple and lyrical, with a long note on 'ev' and a dotted note on 'er'.

Dolce ♩ = 56

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for measures 50 through 53. The piano part is in the same key and time signature as the vocal line. It features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano).

54

ploy, and in the glo - rious whole with the  
\*with

rit.....  
mp

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line for measures 54 through 57. The tempo is marked 'rit.' (ritardando) and the dynamics are 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The lyrics are 'ploy, and in the glo - rious whole with the \*with'. The melody continues with a similar lyrical style.

8va

rit.....

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for measures 54 through 57. It includes an 8va (octave) marking above the right-hand staff. The piano part continues with the same accompaniment style as the previous section.

58

world to share; No more with - out the  
Her

Sereno ma cambiato ♩ = ca. 52

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line for measures 58 through 61. The tempo is marked 'Sereno ma cambiato' with a quarter note equal to approximately 52 beats. The dynamics are 'p' (piano). The lyrics are 'world to share; No more with - out the Her'. The melody is more rhythmic and includes a rest for the word 'Her'.

(8)

p

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for measures 58 through 61. It includes an 8va (octave) marking above the right-hand staff. The piano part continues with the same accompaniment style as the previous section.

\*Alternate text option

The Garden

62

flam - - ing gate to stray, \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ more \_\_\_ for sin's dark

66

*molto rall.*.....*A tempo* *morendo*.....

stain \_\_\_ the debt of death to pay. \_\_\_

*molto rall.*.....*A tempo* *morendo*.....

*ppp*

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