

# ***Ascención***

**A Dramatic Ethno-historic Cantata for Mezzo-soprano, Piano, Chorus, and The Bells of Mission San Juan Bautista**

**Adapted from “The San Juan Report” of John Peabody Harrington**

**Music by Benjamin Boone**

**Book and Lyrics by Helene Joseph-Weil**

## **CAST**

Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes	Helene Joseph-Weil, Mezzo-soprano
Collaborative Pianist	Hatem Nadim
Ascención’s ancestral spirits	The Voices of the Fresno State University Choirs, Dr. Anna Hamre, Director
<i>MENU</i> Assistant	Valerie Salcedo
<i>FINAL JOURNEY</i> Soprano Soloist	Sarah Josephian
<i>THUNDERS</i> Bull Roarer Musician	Michael Downing

## **INVISIBLE CHARACTERS**

Maria Dionisia “Nicha” Mondragon, Ascención’s daughter.

John Peabody Harrington, renowned Smithsonian ethnologist who has come to take Ascención’s oral history. Harrington stays by her bedside from August 1929 until January 1930, when she dies.

Mutsun spirits and long-departed family members speaking through Ascención, as she shares lost tribal linguistic and cultural history on her deathbed.

Family and friends sitting by Ascención’s bedside, listening.

## **TIME AND LOCATION**

Early August 1929 until January 29, 1930.

272 Lane Street, Monterey, California , home of Maria Dionisia and José Mondragon.

## **PROGRAM**

Welcome by **Dr. Vida Samiian**, Dean,  
College of The Arts and Humanities

Introduction by **Dr. Martha Macri**  
Professor, Rumsey (Yocha-Di-Hi) Endowed Chair in California Indian Studies  
Native American Language Center, UC Davis Department of Native American Studies

**ACT I**

Scene I. WAITING

Scene II. ARRIVAL

Scene III. GENESIS

Scene IV: CELESTIAL STORIES  
Talking to the Moon  
Eclipse

Scene V. BASKETS

Scene VI. THUNDERS  
(The Brothers Who Became “trura” -Thunder)

Scene: VII. MENU

**INTERMISSION**

**ACT II**

Scene VIII. LAMENTATION

Scene IX. LONE MAN

Scene X. MIRACLE

Scene XI. PHOTOGRAPH

Scene XII. THE SAINT OF GILROY

Scene XIII. FINAL JOURNEY

Scene XIV. ELEGY: ASCENCIÓN SOLÓRSANO

**[PLEASE HOLD ALL APPLAUSE UNTIL THE END OF EACH ACT.]**  
**PART I**

**SCENE I. WAITING**

Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes (1854-1930), dying of cancer, desperately awaits the arrival of renowned Smithsonian ethnologist John Peabody Harrington at the Monterey home of her daughter, Maria Dionisia Mondragon. It is the early days of August 1929. Historical Amah-Mutsun background is introduced in this opening scene. Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes is one of the last of the Amah-Mutsun [San Juan/Costanoan] tribal band to retain complete fluency in the language and culture of her people. Mutsun phrases are used as she realizes she is going to die.

Projection:

- *Hummingbird*, a Mutsun bird of power, by Linda Yamane. Reproduced with the artist's permission.

## SCENE II. ARRIVAL

Ascención's joyful greeting when J. P. Harrington arrives is quoted – "Dios es muy grande ... He has come to save the language of the San Juaneños." Ascención used that term when referring to the Indians from the San Juan Bautista area. Her quoted phrase "dead and finished" recurs in later scenes, each time with a different sub-text. English translation of original Spanish by Dr. Manuel Peña.

Projection:

- John Peabody Harrington (1884-1961) Courtesy of The National Anthropological Archives of The Smithsonian Institution.

## SCENE III. GENESIS

The Mutsun story of The Great Flood evolves into pre-contact village life and Ascención's family/tribal lineage, as recorded in the Mission San Juan Bautista records.

Projection:

- Hawk, a Mutsun bird of power as related in the Flood story.

## SCENE IV: CELESTIAL STORIES

Two very short poems adapted from Ascención's recounting of Mutsun astronomy stories to Harrington:

*Talking to The Moon*

*Eclipse*

Projections: *Moonrise*. iStockphoto. Used with permission.  
*Solar Eclipse* at 70% phase. iStockphoto.

## SCENE V. BASKETS

Barbara Solórsano, Ascención's mother, instructs her young daughter on the art of Mutsun basketry. Harrington considered Ascención's knowledge of basketry to be one of the most important pieces of information he gathered from her. The author is deeply grateful to Linda Yamane and Manuel Peña for their contributions to the poem. Women's voices interweave Mutsun basket names in the choral selection that follows the poem.

Projections:

- Basket C. Hart Merriam received from Barbara Solórsano, 1902.

Courtesy of the C. Hart Merriam Basket Collection, UC Davis Department of Anthropology.

- Three baskets courtesy of the Mission San Juan Bautista Conservation Project, all donated by Tony Corona, Ascención's grandson, as being in her family. Photographed by Dr. Ruben Mendoza.
- "saawiy" . A black-berry basket made by Ascención Solórsano for Harrington, located at the National Anthropological Archives. Photo courtesy of Linda Yamane.

## **SCENE VI. THUNDERS: The Two Brothers Who Became "trura" - Thunder**

Ascención recounts a dramatic Mutsun story: the creation of "trura."

Projections:     1. *Autumn River in the Fog*,     iStockphoto. Used with permission.  
                      2. *Monster in the Sky*.             Artist's Rights Reserved

## **SCENE VII. MENU: Mama Earth's Organic Café**

Mother Barbara Solórsano and her young daughter Ascención pretend to have a restaurant that serves only pre-contact foods and the Mutsun diet according to the seasons. "For every food there is a season." Importance of the acorn and "pil" –now extinct- as well as fish, game, nuts, seeds berries, dark greens, insects, and myriad other indigenous foods. "A flowery carpet at Sargent rancheria-so many wild flowers before the Spanish brought in the sheep and cattle. There were also summer flowers in the field."  
[2:061:419a]

Projection:

- *Menu Cover* by Drew Tudman. Used with permission.

## **INTERMISSION**

## **SCENE VIII. LAMENTATION**

Ascención's spirits recount the captivity and death of their people and culture, the genocide of the California Mission Indians under Spanish, Mexican, and American rule. Thousands died not only from the cruel practices of their conquerors, but also from a drastic change in their indigenous diet when the native peoples were taken into the missions. Ultimately, it was the conquistadors' diseases, such as measles, small pox, and syphilis, to which the San Juan people had not immunities, that sent thousands of the captured tribes to early graves.

## **SCENE IX. LONE MAN**

The universal legend of Holy Man who walked amongst the tribal nations of the world, here given to introduce Ascención's belief in Christian spiritual teachings learned at Mission San Juan Bautista. This story was shared by Joseph M. Mondragon, Ascención's grandson.

Projection:     *Sunset*. Artist's rights reserved.

## **SCENE X. MIRACLE: The Story Of The Dead Woman And Her Suckling Babe**

A story Ascención heard from "an old Indian (almost 100 years old in 1890) who knew the Arabian night tales, but embroidered with Mexican and Indian variations." An almost identical story was told, in the late

1940's, to Helene Joseph-Weil by her aged Lebanese grandmother, Hesna Rohanna Yusef, a survivor of the 19<sup>th</sup> century genocide of the Maronite Christians.

Projection:

- *Sunlight From Above.* Artist's rights reserved.

## **SCENE XI. PHOTOGRAPH**

Ascención, with Maria Dionisia's help, dresses for Harrington's now famous photo. It was taken in early August 1929, when Harrington first arrived at Maria Dionisia Mondragon's New Monterey home to begin his historical work with Ascención. The black silk dress with the white lace collar, bought expressly for Ascención's burial dress, she brought with her from Gilroy. The poem is dedicated to Joseph M. Mondragon, on the occasion of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, September 24, 2006.

Projection: Doña Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes, August 1929,  
Photo by John Peabody Harrington,  
Used with permission of Joseph M. Mondragon and family.

## **SCENE XII. THE SAINT OF GILROY**

Doña Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes was a renowned "doctora," a healer, remembered as "The Saint of Gilroy." "God gives for all" she replied, when asked why she frequently did not ask for payment aiding the indigent and sick. In her own words, Ascención shares her spiritual beliefs. Harrington wrote that Doña Ascención interjected frequently "Everything is the will of God" throughout his months of working with her.

Projection:

- White roses from Ascención Solórsano's Gilroy home.  
Photographed in Joseph Mondragon's Pacific Grove garden by Bob Weil.

## **SCENE XIII. FINAL JOURNEY**

Over the tolling bells of Mission San Juan Bautista and ancestral spirits singing, Ascención prepares to die. "The spirit of Miguel Solórsano [her father] is sitting next to you and my dead children are at the door." She calls out to her parents in Mutsun, and her final words repeat the joyful cry "Dios es muy grande!" heard in Scene II *Arrival*. Ascención dies whispering those same words in Mutsun.

A historic first recording of the bells of Mission San Juan Bautista, taken in January 2007 by Vincent Keenan and Benjamin Boone, accompany Ascención's death scene. Spirits are also heard chanting a requiem from an 18<sup>th</sup> century missal found in the Mission San Juan Bautista archives. Rick Edge is the master bell ringer. Dr. John Karr transcribed the pneumatic missal notation into a modern edition.

Projection:

- The bell tower of Mission San Juan Bautista  
Photographed by Randy Vaughn-Dotta & used with permission.

## **SCENE XIV. ELEGY: *Ascención Solórsano***

John Peabody Harrington's elegy "Ascención Solórsano" is now engraved on a plaque next to her gravesite at Mission San Juan Bautista. Text of the poem is printed in this program.

## Projections:

- Historic photo of Ascención's open gravesite on the day of her funeral, February 1, 1930. Maria Dionisia Mondragon, Ascención's daughter, is one of the people pictured standing by the open grave. Over 5,000 people attended the revered *doctora's* funeral, the largest funeral in the history of San Benito County.
- Ascención's gravesite at Mission San Juan Bautista. Photo by Randy Vaughn-Dotta.
- Copy of J. P. Harrington's original poem, used by permission of The National Anthropological Archives.
- Harrington's photo of Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes.

## CONCERT PRODUCTION STAFF

Producers	Helene Joseph-Weil Benjamin Boone
Technical Director	Mark Stotzer
Lighting Design & Crew	Jennifer Sullivan Alex Rodriguez
Sound Engineer	Vincent Keenan
Mission San Juan Bautista bell recording	Rick Edge, master bell ringer Benjamin Boone Vincent Keenan
Sound design and pre-recorded music	Vincent Keenan Benjamin Boone
Poster & Program Cover Design	Arturo Pineda
Program	Alexis Holladay
Box Office	Becky Morris
House Manager	Natalie Meek
Stage Crew	John Gomes, Chuck Salanitro Amber Evans, Colleen Boyle
Photographic Assistance	Randy Vaughn-Dotta
Projections	Randy Vaughn-Dotta Dr. Robert Ware Helene Joseph-Weil
Costume Assistance	Kelly Pantzlaff Stephanie Bradshaw
Musical Preparation	Hatem Nadim
Choral accompanist & page turner	Joungmin Sur
Props	Fresno State Opera Workshop Brigid de Jong Theater Arts Department
Reception	Brigid and Rick de Jong Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Gamma Pi Colony
Videography	Don and Valerie Priest
California indigenous instruments	Rick Adams, Esak Heta Native Program

## NOTES FROM THE COMPOSER AND AUTHOR

### **Dr. Benjamin Boone writes:**

Ascención's story speaks to me on multiple levels. As a composer, her story provides me with an opportunity to express in music the full spectrum of human emotions, from grief to joy and from horror to elation. It also provided an opportunity to write music for a number of instruments -- including the San Juan Batista Mission bells. As a human being, Ascención's story provides me with a model of how profoundly "caring" and "compassion" can impact other's lives. As a *doctora* who alleviated anyone's pain and suffering, her primary values of peace, reconciliation, altruism and love challenge me to celebrate "difference" and work to achieve mutual understanding rather than resort to conflict or hatred. As an American, Ascención's recounting the Native Americans' genocide reminds me that our government has blood on its hands – and lots of it. Countless numbers have died and suffered at the hands of our government. I am saddened that many are suffering at this very moment and will continue to do so until we as a nation decide that human rights are more important than cheap goods, natural resources or a false sense of security. As a world citizen, Ascención's story speaks to me about the value of native cultures, and the glorious tapestry diversity provides, and it challenges me to respect all of the world's peoples – irrespective of their religious beliefs, color of skin, ethnicity or world view. This is what I have learned from Ascención while working on this piece. I invite you to listen to Ascención's words – and most of what you will hear are indeed her own words -- and see what she has to say to you....

### **Helene Joseph Weil writes:**

The completion and performance of the *Ascención* cantata is the realization of a vision I have been developing since 1988, now in collaboration with composer Benjamin Boone, Hatem Nadim, and Dr. Anna Hamre, my Fresno State Music Department colleagues. The cantata's sole intent is to honor the life and spirit of **Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes** (1854-1930), the last member of the California Amah-Mutsun (San Juan) tribal band to retain complete fluency in her people's language and culture. The cantata's book and libretto stem directly and almost exclusively from "The San Juan Report," Ascención's oral history imparted on her deathbed to Smithsonian ethnologist John Peabody Harrington, during the months of August [August 3] 1929 until her death on January 29, 1930. The photo projected of Ascención in her black silk "burial dress" was taken by Harrington in early August 1929, when he first arrived at the Mondragon home in New Monterey

Many parts of the text have been adapted or are quoted verbatim from Harrington's voluminous notes and letters. In addition, this writer's personal interviews, done in August 1996, with Ascención's last living, aged grandchildren supplied profound insight into the devastating effects of "the command of silence" forced on the California Mission Indians by their conquerors..

I first learned about this remarkable California Native American woman in an article by Prof. Larry Engleman that appeared in *This World* supplement to the *Sunday S. F. Chronicle/Examiner* on July 10, 1988. On that July Sunday morning, mesmerized by Harrington's photo of Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes and reading Engleman's article about the tragic history of her people-The Amah-Mutsun, I was so moved that it came to me, very strongly and clearly, I had to sing her story. How Ascención Solórsano a renowned "doctora" became known as The Saint of Gilroy for her benevolent works, how her work with Harrington preserved the language, culture, and customs of her people—these I felt were the ingredients for a dramatic musical presentation. This could be one way to honor her memory and



acknowledge the historic contribution she made working with Harrington for those last 6 months of her life. This goal I have pursued for almost 20 years: to develop, write, and perform a musical translation of the world and the woman preserved in *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in The Smithsonian 1907-1957, Vol. Two*, edited by Elaine Mills, Kraus International Publications.

The libretto attempts to capture not only diverse aspects of Ascención's memories, but also-and perhaps even more importantly- her warm personality, sharp wit, and amazing memory that shine through Harrington's pages. I would hope hearing Ascención's wonderful sense of humor, her devout spirituality, her compassion for her fellow man woven through each scene are as moving to the audience as are the pre-contact cultural practices and stories contained in the cantata.

These in turn are excerpted from thousands of pages of Harrington's notes on Mutsun language, pre-contact basketry, foods, plants, animals, native medicines and healing rituals, sacred ceremonies, Ascención's family, life at Mission San Juan Bautista, historical characters from the Gilroy/San Juan/Hollister areas, sexual practices, and the genocide of her people described in *SCENE IX: LAMENTATION*. Every possible topic relating to linguistic, ethnographic, ethno-historical, and ethno-botanical questions Doña Ascención answered on her deathbed, preserving for her family, her tribe, and the world what might have been lost forever. Her ancient story is still a contemporary one, relevant in an age when indigenous cultures, languages and environments are being annihilated under the guise of a global economy. It is material for a Wagnerian Ring-like opera cycle condensed into a two-hour concert.

Out of the deepest respect for Native American culture every attempt has been made to ensure no protocols were violated, no materials used inappropriately.

In grateful appreciation I wish to make personal mention of the following people who spent countless hours over the years contributing their expertise, encouraging the project, and listening:

- Joseph M. Mondragon, Ascención's grandson: For sharing vivid youthful memories of his grandmother and Harrington working together, for family history, for Ascención's white roses, and for being my inspiration and wise counselor.
- Dr. Benjamin Boone: For saying, "Yes, I can do it!" jumping at the idea in October 2005, and composing music that makes the words dance off the pages.
- Dr. Manuel Peña: For translations, anthropological and ethnographic expertise, editing the manuscript, and nurturing the vision over so many years.
- Hatem Nadim: For a long-awaited musical partnership and the patience of a saint.
- Dr. Anna Hamre: For weaving the cantata into the choirs' busy performance schedules and being a staunch believer.
- Dr. Sheri Tatsch, The J. P. Harrington Database Project, Department of Native American Studies, UC Davis, funded by the NSF: For being a constant guide and interpreter on the long journey through the Harrington files.
- Dr. Martha Macri, The J. P. Harrington Database Project, Department of Native American Studies, UC Davis, funded by the NSF: For believing in the project and taking me under her benevolent wings.
- Dr. Ruben Mendoza, Director, Mission San Juan Bautista Mission Conservation Project: For generously opening the Mission San Juan Bautista archives to the project, arranging

for recording the mission's bells, and photographing Ascención's baskets and mission missal scores.

- Dr. Robert Leopold, Director, The National Anthropological Archives: For providing the vital link to the Harrington Database project at UC Davis NALC.
- Dr. Vida Samiian, Dean, California State University Fresno College of Arts & Humanities: For remaining steadfast in her complete support for the project.
- Linda Yamane: For sharing her garden, her inspiring books and drawings, and refining "Baskets,"
- Irenne Zwierlein: For supporting the project in so many ways since 1994.
- Ed Ketchum: For sharing family history and healing words.
- Prof. Brigid de Jong: For coming to my rescue in countless ways, for the reception and the MENU cart.
- Quirina Luna: For invaluable Mutsun language and cultural expertise.
- Randy Vaughn-Dotta: For sharing the beauty of Mission San Juan Bautista and the environs through his photographs.
- Dr. Robert Ware: For generously sharing his keen eye for performance design and being the voice of reality.
- Vincent Keenan: For mission bells on a freezing cold January day and long days and nights of recording and mixing.
- Mark Stotzer: For "lights, camera, action!"
- Dr. John Karr: For modernizing missal chants.
- Dr. Chris Goldston: For linguistic support.
- Bob Weil: For hand-copying missal manuscripts, sharing the project's joys and frustrations, and years of infinite patience.
- Nadine Alexis Weil: For lifting me up when I'd stumble and fall.
- Robert F. Joseph: For confirming my instincts.
- Joan Schramm: For her California native plants garden.
- Sasha Khokha: For The KQED *California Report* and NPR *Morning Edition* coverage.
- Joshua Bear, Brian Lummis, Isaac Villanueva: For power points, alphabetizing, and assisting in countless other ways.
- Alexis Holladay: For going many extra miles to create the program.
- My voice students: For being patient with your teacher.
- Life-long friends who listened and cheered: Judith Monohan, Stephanie Steffey, Joan Schramm, Eunice Nemeth, Linda Carrasco, and Linda Morgan.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### HELENE JOSEPH-WEIL, LIBRETTIST AND MEZZO-SOPRANO

Helene Joseph-Weil is Professor of Music (Voice & Opera) at California State University Fresno, where she coordinates the solo vocal performance majors. Before coming to Fresno State University in 1987, she was Visiting Professor of Voice at the Hochschule für Musik "Mozarteum" in Salzburg, Austria. Other academic appointments included Stanford University and the International Institute for Chamber Music in Munich, Germany, where she taught German lyric diction and vocal techniques in support of master classes with Elly Ameling and K.S. Walter Berry.

The Fresno-based mezzo-soprano has collaborated with composer Dr. Benjamin Boone on creating *Ascención: A Dramatic Ethno-historical Cantata for Mezzo-Soprano, Piano, Chorus and the bells of Mission San Juan Bautista*, for which she has written the book and lyrics based on 20 years of research. The cantata is having its world premiere today, February 24, 2008, 3:00 p.m. in the Fresno State Music Department Concert hall. Joseph Weil is also preparing a series of voice/piano recitals with pianist Hatem Nadim, who is the collaborative pianist for the *Ascención* cantata.

An honors graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Helene Joseph-Weil earned her master's degree at San Jose State University and is a magna cum laude graduate of the Franz Schubert Institute in Baden-bei-Wien, Austria. She received grants for her musical studies from The Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, The Metropolitan Opera Studio, The Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship, Oberlin Alumni Foundation, and the Fromm Foundation. Her teachers include Phyllis Curtin, Thelma Votipka, Louise Toth, Lislotte Egger-Poetschke, Ellen Repp, Donald Stenburg, and Dietrich Erbelding. Additional studies on the German Lied and opera included extended studies with Viorica Ursuleac, Elly Ameling, Hans Hotter, Walter Berry, Jorge Demus, Erik Werba, Ernst Haefliger, and Rudolf Jansen.

The Metropolitan Opera Auditions winner has had a long, extensive, and diverse solo performing career in opera, oratorio, concert and recital that includes performances with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood Festival, Opera Society of Washington D. C, the Metropolitan Opera Studio, UC-Berkeley Contemporary Music Players, Scholar Opera, Cabrillo Festival, Chautauqua Opera, the Salzburg Landestheater, Ascoli Piceno Festival (Italy), and solo concerts at the Munich Gasteig. Joseph-Weil has soloed under the batons of Erich Leinsdorf, Julius Rudel, and Leonard Bernstein and has premiered new vocal works throughout Europe and the United States, including *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed* by Roger Sessions and the West Coast premieres of Berio's *Circles* and Babbitt's *Philomel*.

Joseph-Weil has been Artist/Teacher-in-Residence at the Ascoli Piceno Music Festival in Italy and was the Founding Co-Director of the Mozart Opera Studies Institute (MOSI) in Austria and San Francisco. Her teaching awards include Fresno State University Provost's Award for Academic Excellence in Teaching (2000), the Phi Kappa Phi University Artist Award (2003) and the 1999 Heart of the City Award from the Fresno First Baptist Church for her contributions to Fresno's cultural arts.

### BENJAMIN BOONE, COMPOSER

**Benjamin Boone** is an Associate Professor at California State University Fresno where he teaches music theory and composition. A Fulbright Senior Specialist Fellow to the Republic of Moldova, his compositions have been performed in over seventeen countries from Carnegie Hall to China, Japan, Australia, Africa and Europe. Boone's compositions appear on over sixteen CDs, garnering awards and honors from the International Society of Contemporary Music, the Olympia International Prize, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, the American Composers' Forum, *Billboard Magazine*, the National Association of Composers/USA, The American Music Center, the Fundación Valparaíso (Spain), Bayerischer Rundfunk Studio Franken - Bavarian National Radio, Meet the Composer/Southeastern Arts Federation, the Southeastern Composers' League, the Delius Foundation, the North Carolina Arts Council Fellowship, the Tennessee Arts Commission Fellowship, and the A\*deVantgarde Festival für Neue Musik, Munich. Boone's compositions are published by Latham Music, Alry Publications, Eighth Note Publications and Sentinel Dome. His research on the musical aspects of speech is mentioned in the leading encyclopedia of music, *Grove's*. With a wide variety of interests, Boone has also assisted a biologist with the infrasonic recording of rhinoceros vocalizations in Zimbabwe, served as a music business manager in New York City, and performed as a saxophonist throughout the United States and Europe.

Most recently, Benjamin Boone has received significant funding in support of his work on the *Ascención* cantata: the American Music Center Composer's Assistance Program and the American Composers Forum Subito Grant program. For more information, visit [www.BenjaminBoone.net](http://www.BenjaminBoone.net)

## **HATEM NADIM, PIANO**

Hatem Nadim was born in Cairo (Egypt) and, at the age of ten, started his formal music studies at the Cairo Conservatoire, where he completed his studies in solo piano with R. Yassa, V. Fedorovtzev and V. Samaliotow, and graduated with honors. Continuing his studies in Germany, Nadim was a scholarship holder at the Frankfurt Hochschule für Musik (University for Music.) He continued his post-graduate studies there with Professor Joachim Volkmann and Professor Rainer Hoffmann in chamber music and vocal accompaniment.

From 1989 to 1996 Nadim was a faculty member of the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz teaching solo piano. In 1989, Nadim became a faculty member of the Hochschule für Musik in Mannheim, Germany, as a collaborative pianist, chamber music coach and teacher of piano accompaniment. He has performed with many chamber music partners in concerts throughout Europe, the United States, Korea, and the Middle East. These partners include Leslie Parnas, Arto Noras, Michael Flaksman, Susanne Rabenschlag, Jean-Michel Tanguy, Michael Hasel, the Verdi Quartet, Hermann Voss, and Helene Joseph-Weil. He has also several recordings, his latest being *The Complete Mozart Violin Sonatas* with Susanne Rabenschlag, which was featured on a recent radio broadcast, as well as an interview with the two artists, in Germany. He is currently the staff collaborative pianist for Music Department at California State University Fresno.

## **DR. ANNA HAMRE, DIRECTOR OF CHOIRS**

As Director of Choral Activities at California State University, Fresno, Anna Hamre is in demand as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. She has worked with university, church, community choirs and school ensembles of all ages. She has been a guest conductor of a number of honor choirs, and several ensembles under her direction have been invited to perform at music conventions. Her various positions have given her the opportunity to premiere

numerous works, including conducting the American premiere of Philip Wilby's 2004 reconstruction of Mozart's *Mass in C* (Novello). She conducted the Fauré *Requiem* for MidAmerica Productions in Carnegie Hall February 2006. Her spring 2008 projects include serving on the adjudication staff for World Project's Pacific Rim Festival in Hawaii and conducting a California massed-choir concert in the Forbidden City Concert Hall in a Kingsway International choral tribute to the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

At Fresno State she is responsible for the management of the choral program, and she conducts the Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, and Community Chorus. She also teaches undergraduate conducting and graduate conducting and literature. Her honors include the Fresno Arts Council Horizon Artist Award (2007), the California Association for Music Education (CMEA) Choral Conductor Award (2006), the CMEA Central Section College/University Music Educator Award (2006), the Fresno-State College of Arts and Humanities Outstanding Teacher Award (2003).

Dr. Hamre holds a BA degree in vocal and instrumental music education from Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD; an MM degree in choral music from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley; and a DMA in choral literature and performance from the University of Colorado in Boulder.

She has written articles for state music magazines, the *International Choral Bulletin*, the *Choral Journal*, and *Spotlight on Teaching Chorus*. She has presented sessions for various choral-conducting and music-education organizations, and in March she will travel to Denver to lead a conducting workshop at the national convention of the Organization of American Kodály Educators. Masterworks Press of Olympia, WA publishes her music-literacy method, *The High School/University Sight-Singer*. She has served on the California state boards of both ACDA and CMEA, and she also holds membership in the College Music Society, National Collegiate Choral Organization, Chorus America, Southern California Vocal Association, Organization of American Kodály Educators, and the Fresno-Madera County Music Educators' Association.

### **VALERIE SALCEDO, MENU ASSISTANT**

Valerie Salcedo is a third year vocal performance major. An active member of Fresno State's Opera Workshop, Concert, Chamber, and Jazz choirs, Valerie performed in the Women's Ensemble for *Baskets*. Valerie is voice student of Professor Brigid de Jong and is a member of the Fresno County Youth Choir. She is of Native American descent.

### **SARAH JOSEPHIAN, SOPRANO SOLOIST FOR FINAL JOURNEY**

Sarah Josephian is a senior vocal performance major who has been active in the choral and Opera Workshop programs at Fresno State. A pupil of Helene Joseph-Weil, she performed in the Women's Ensemble for *Baskets*. Sarah will be performing for the Fresno Rogue Festival in the upcoming weeks and will be giving her senior recital in the coming fall 2008 semester.

### **MICHAEL DOWNING, BULL ROARER MUSICIAN FOR THUNDERS.**

Michael Downing is currently majoring in Percussion Performance at California State University, Fresno. He is a regular performer with the Bakersfield Symphony and also plays with the Fresno Philharmonic, Fresno Grand Opera, Merced Symphony, and Tulare Symphony. Michael has also played with the Music in the Mountains festival orchestra. In addition to school and performing, he maintains a private studio where he teaches both percussion and piano.

## APPRECIATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has taken people from all walks of life to bring *Ascención* to the concert stage. We extend our eternal gratitude to those listed below and to so many others for their rich contributions and support.

### LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Rick Adams  
Joshua Bear  
Dr. Robert Bettinger  
Dr. Barbara Bocek  
Colleen Boyle  
Stephanie Bradshaw  
Dr. Margaret Caywood  
Winston Chen  
Tony Corona  
Vincent Corona (deceased)  
Coyote Press, Salinas  
Alice Daniel  
Sonia Davis  
Isabelle Diaz  
Prof. Brigid de Jong  
Lisa Deitz  
Rick Edge  
Dr. Larry Engleman  
Amber Evans  
Gail Freeman  
Prof. Brent Foland  
Dr. Ken Froelich  
Dr. Melissa Gibson  
Dr. Chris Golston  
John Gomez  
David van Gullie  
Dr. Anna Hamre  
Shari Harder  
Richard Hart  
Dr. Thomas Hiebert  
Carrie Higuera (deceased)  
Alexis Holladay  
Dr. Don Henriques  
Prof. Brad Hufft  
Prof. Jeff Hunter  
Robert F. Joseph  
Dr. John Karr  
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Ed Ketchum  
Mel Ketchum

Tonia Ketchum (deceased)  
John Knox  
Sasha Khokha  
Alan Leventhal  
Robert Leopold  
Valentin Lopez  
Brian Lummis  
Quirina Luna  
Dr. Martha Macri  
Cece McAllister  
Diana Marcum  
Estrella Marez  
Dr. Ruben Mendoza  
C.Hart Merriam Museum, UC Davis Department of Anthropology  
Gwenna Merriman  
Dr. Randall Milliken  
Edna Mondragon  
Joseph Merced Mondragon  
Joseph Mondragon, Jr.  
Victor Mondragon (deceased)  
Judith Monohan  
Linda Morgan  
Hatem Nadim  
Francine Oputa  
Kelley Pantzlaff  
Dr. Manuel Peña  
James Perry  
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Gamma Pi Colony  
Arturo Pineda  
Prof. Don Priest  
Alex Rodriguez  
Sandy Ruehlow  
Valerie Salcedo  
Dr. Vida Samiian  
Joan Schramm  
Kathryn Hicks Solorsano  
Virginia Solorzano  
Mark Stotzer  
Jennifer Sullivan  
Dr. Sheri Tatsch  
Enrique Abadala Toral  
Dr. Martin Valencia  
Randy Vaughn-Dotta  
Isaac Villanueva  
Prof. Craig von Berg  
Kathy Wallace  
Dr. Robert Ware  
Nadine Alexis Weil  
Robert C. Weil  
Linda Yamane

Irene Zwielerlein

**The Voices of The Fresno State University Choirs, Dr. Anna Hamre, Director**

**The Fresno State Chamber Singers**

Mabe, Rebecca Heilmann  
Josephian, Sarah  
Matas, Katie  
Robinson, Katie  
Salcedo, Valerie  
Webster, Anne  
Day, Christin  
Evans, Amber  
Holmes, Rachel  
Lewis, Owedar  
Murray, Leigh  
Rector, Sarah  
Scurggs, Kelsie  
Henrickson, Jonathan  
Hensley, Benjamin  
Lummis, Brian  
McGee, Matt  
Smith, Gene  
Snyder, Timothy  
Villanueva, Isaac  
Dull, Ryan  
Bear, Joshua  
Fernandez, Adam  
Flores, Justin  
Howard, Timothy  
Kitterman, John  
Liggans, Corey  
Pelayo, Franc

**Women's Voices of the Fresno State Concert Choir**

**Sopranos**

Anukina Ayvaz  
Mickala Cheadle  
Rebecca Mabe  
Amy Jaynes  
Sarah Josephian  
Alyssa Maas  
Valerie Nevens  
Allison Nunez  
Alejandra Ramirez  
Sarah Rishel  
Valerie Salcedo  
Cassie Stolz  
Christina Stuhlmiller  
Cathia Tesone  
Anne Webster

**Altos**

Darice Barsoom  
Ashley Clemens



Christin Day  
Katie Engstrom  
Ashley Harper  
Amber Ike  
Nadia Ivanova  
Amanda Kehler  
Ashley Pielstick  
Jessica Pray  
Sarah Rector  
Amy Roy  
Amy Scott  
Evelyn Shu  
Rachael Watson  
Mary Pagendarm

**Members of The Fresno State University Opera Workshop,  
Prof. Brigid de Jong, Director**

Mickala Cheadle  
Christin Day  
Amy Jaynes  
Christina Stuhlmiller  
Cathia Tesone  
Valerie Salcedo  
Joshua Bear  
Andre Ennis  
Adam Fernandez  
Tim Howard  
Henry Islas  
Corey Liggans  
Brian Lummis  
Isaac Villanueva

**Members of Dr. Martin Valencia's class Graphic Design 148**

Jonathan Aguayo  
Leo Angeles  
Joel Beery  
Brittany Bianchi  
Leah Canseco  
Mario Elenes  
Michael Elwinger  
Jack Her  
Adam Huerta  
Rex Jones  
Evan Korn  
Chad McGovran  
Brian Menge  
Raul Morales  
Arturo Pineda  
Ramiro Ramirez  
Daniel Souza  
Josh Templeton  
Patrick Tran  
Joseph Verduzco

James Vizcarra

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**The Music Department Requests:**

No small children or babies be admitted to the performance. Families wishing to have their children with them may view the performance on the screen in the lobby.

No flowers be brought into the hall.

No cameras, cell phones photos or videos or recording of any kind will be permitted.  
Use of such interferes with the professional recording being made during the performance and violates copyrights.

Turn off all cell phones before the start of the performance.

The department and the performing artists thank you very much for complying with these house rules.

## “Stories always grow”

*A story always grows. It never remains the same. Though one wants to tell it the same as one heard it, one always puts in a word more or less. And there are many people in this world who are great gossips, they fix up a story very nicely, even if they don't know it. And still more so if it is a story of a religion, they always want to make the people believe more. And with time it changes more, so that when a story has passed through the lives of many people, surely it is already impossible to tell what story it is, for it is already changed fundamentally, and it is not recognized as the same story that it was earlier. And when the story is written or made into a book, it still is a story and nothing more, they only took the story which was growing, more or less, or took the turns that various people had given it and gathered them together pruning them off to make a single book. They say that when the story is written it is different, but to me it is the same, it is still a story.*

Ascención Solórsano de Cervantes to J. P. Harrington, “*The San Juan Report*” 02:059:78b



## Ascencion Solorsano

Where on the height beside the meadow  
The ancient church its vigil keeps,  
Enfolded in the kindly shadow,  
'Tis there a noble woman sleeps...  
Whose deeds of mercy were uncounted,  
Whose duty found her unafraid,  
Whose charities increased and mounted  
The more she found them poorly paid.

Born mid the past's bright-burning embers,  
She learned the ways of earlier times,  
Talked with a vanished folk's last members,  
And heard the belfry's pristine chimes.  
That lore of earlier horizon,  
Caught from her lips, shall not be lost--  
Her wisdom science now relies on,  
Her knowledge now is history's boast.

Let her be known in near and far land  
As one whose act was true as word;  
Let mercy grace her with its garland,  
And service bless her with reward;  
Let all who love the ancient history  
That once camped round the Mission spire  
Bless her who hath revealed its mystery  
And led us to its hidden fire.

John p. Harrington



