



The Edgar Allan Poe House & Museum in Baltimore presents



Poe Is Woe / Woe Is Poe: *A Concert Experience*

a Really Spicy Opera/Empressa Ensemble co-production

October 15, 2025 @ 7 PM
Carroll Mansion, Baltimore

Letter from Frances Sargent Osgood, March 1, 1845

Katrina Atsinger, *reader*

Frances Scott Osgood (1811-1850)

“Poe’s Song” (2024)

David Evans, *tenor*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

Music: Basil Considine (b. 1981)

“To the River” (2025)

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

Music: Basil Considine (b. 1981)

“Israfel”, from 2 Poems, Op. 8 (1908)

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

Music: Edgar Stillman Kelley
(1857-1944)

“Fathom the Bowl for Poe” (2025)

David Evans, *tenor*

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Lyrics: Basil Considine (b. 1981)

Music: Traditional Sea Shanty

“Like the Gloom of Night Retiring” (c. 1815-1817)

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: ?

Music: Henry Rowley Bishop
(1787-1856)

“To Frances S. Osgood” (1845)

Basil Considine, *reader*

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

“Valentine to Edgar Allan Poe, Saturday February 14. 1846”

Katrina Atsinger, *reader*

Virginia Clemm Poe
(1822-1847)

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“A Dream Within a Dream” from *Four Poems: Set to Music for Voice and Piano*, op. 15 (1906)

David Evans, *tenor*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)
Music: Charles Martin Loeffler
(1861-1935)

“Beloved! Amid the Earnest Woes!” from *5 Poe Songs*, Op.41 (1901)

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)
Music: Bertram Shapleigh
(1871-1940)

“Soon May Arthur Gordon Pym Come!” (2025)

Basil Considine, *baritone*

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

David Evans, *tenor*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

Lyrics: Basil Considine (b. 1981)
Music: Traditional
New Zealand Sea Shanty

***The Isle of the Fay* (2025)**

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

David Evans, *tenor*

Libretto & Music: Jodi Goble
(b. 1974)
*After Edgar Allan Poe’s last,
unfinished short story.*

“Thank God, I Glory in Thy Love!” (1849/1850)

Katrina Atsinger, *reader*

Frances Scott Osgood (1811-1850)

“Farewell to Poe” (2025)

Elissa Edwards, *soprano*

Junghoon Park, *piano*

David Evans, *tenor*

Basil Considine, *baritone*

Lyrics: Basil Considine (b. 1981)
Music: Traditional
British Sea Shanty

About the Performers

Katrina Atsinger (orator) is an instructor in Rhetoric and English Literature at the United States Naval Academy. She has enjoyed collaborating with Elissa to curate and perform the literary elements of her boutique concerts at the Historic Hammond Harwood House in Annapolis. She wrote and performed the libretto for Ballet Theatre of Maryland’s original production of *Macbeth*. Seasonally, she loves to produce and direct for high school theatre. As a young performer in the UK, Katrina completed the Guildhall Drama and Speech examinations. She holds a Bachelor of English Literature and Language from The University of Oxford, and a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts from St. John’s College, Annapolis.

Basil Considine (host) is an award-winning playwright, composer, and opera director. A passionate developer of new works for the stage, he has curated more than two dozen world premieres and authored more than a dozen plays,

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musicals, and operas. Named one of *Musical America* Magazine's Top Movers & Shapers for 2018, he is a multi-racial artist of Chinese and Caucasian descent; his musical and stage works have been performed on three continents, and broadcast on national television. He wrote the libretto to the opera *Meow and Forever* (2023), one of the most-produced new American operas of the past three years.

Basil is the artistic director of the Minneapolis-based opera company Really Spicy Opera, an alum of Nautilus Music Theater's Composer-Librettist Studio, and the 2021-2022 U.S. Fulbright Faculty Scholar to Madagascar. He holds a degree in vocal and piano performance from the University of San Diego, a master's in sacred music from the Boston University School of Theology, and a double PhD in Music and Drama from BU. He is on the faculties of Abilene Christian University and the George Washington University. <http://basilconsidine.org>

Elissa Edwards (soprano) is a critically acclaimed singer specializing in the vocal chamber music and opera of the 17th and 18th centuries. As the Artistic Director of the Empressa Ensemble, she designs and presents historically informed boutique concerts for historic houses, museums, and other organizations. She serves on the faculty of the National Cathedral in Washington, DC and the The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Her training includes studies at the Royal College of Music, London and performance degrees from Boston University (BM) and University of York, UK (MA).

Elissa's contributions to the field of music have been recognized in numerous awards and grants, including the Maryland State Individual Artist's Award, as well as awards from the Maryland State Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library. <http://elissaedwards.com>

David Evans (tenor) is an experienced interpreter of music from the 18th century and before. Solo appearances include Bach's *Mass in B minor* with Choralis at National Presbyterian Church (2025), as well as Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (2024) and Handel's *Messiah* (2023) with Choralis at Capital One Hall in Tysons, VA. With Boston Early Music Festival, David's performance credits include Desmarest's *Circé* (2023), Francesca Caccini's *Alcina* (2018, 2023), Campra's *Le carnaval de Venise* (2017), and Handel's *Almira* (2013); he joined BEMF's directorial team for productions in 2015 and 2016 and was Assistant Stage Director for Versailles: Portrait of a Royal Domain (2019). David performs frequently with Washington Bach Consort and has been a core member of the choirs of St. John's, Lafayette Square; Washington National Cathedral; and Church of the Advent, Boston. David holds a Master of Music in Historical Voice Performance from Boston University and a Bachelor of Music in Composition from Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Junghoon Park (collaborative pianist) is an award-winning soloist and music director, and the principal keyboardist at Calvary United Methodist Church in Annapolis, MD. He has performed internationally and earned recognition at prestigious competitions, including the Paderewski Competition and the New York Piano Festival. Recognized as a Rising Star in 2018 for his interpretation of Earl Wild's Etude No. 4, he continues to captivate audiences with his expressive artistry. He received the Special Honors Award at the 2016 Paderewski Competition and was a top-12

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finalist at the 2017 New York Piano Festival. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where he studied under Drs. Audrey Andrist and Alon Goldstein.

Junghoon has appeared at major events such as the National Music Festival, Wonderlic Competition, and the International Keyboard Institute Festival. He has performed with Camerata Baltimore—most notably presenting Margaret Bonds' *The Ballad of the Brown King*—and musicians from the U.S. Naval Academy.

About the Writers

Henry Rowley Bishop (1787-1856) was a highly successful composer, writing more than 80 operas, light operas, and other stage works. His songs were so popular that they were often excerpted from their original stage productions and presented as entr'actes and encores, and – for concerts – featured prominently in advertisements. "Like the Gloom of Night Retiring" was so popular in London that it became one of the standards by which newly featured sopranos were judged, with liberal comparisons to the stars of past years appearing in newspapers for more than 50 years after the song's premiere.

Jodi Goble (b. 1974) writes text-based, character-driven music fueled by her extensive background as a vocal coach and song-specialist collaborative pianist. Her compositions have been performed across the United States and internationally, and featured on National Public Radio. She won the Iowa Music Teachers Association Commission Competition in 2013 and took first prize in the National Association of Teachers of Singing Art Song Competition in 2024 for her song cycle *Sea Creatures*. She also placed as a NATS ASCA finalist in 2008, 2017, 2020, and 2021, as the honorable mention winner in 2015, and won second prize in 2016. She was recently named as an American Prize 2025 national finalist for the Charles Ives Vocal Chamber Music Composition Award for *Sea Creatures* and the Thomas Putsche Memorial Award in Opera/Film/Dance Composition for *Meow and Forever*. Her art songs are published in anthologies by New Music Shelf and North Star Music.

Ms. Goble's recent commissions include works for Seaglass Theater, Really Spicy Opera, I the Siren, Voices of the Pearl, the Durward Ensemble, and Laura Strickling's GRAMMY-nominated *40x40 Project*. Her works have recently been performed at the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago's Spring Lieder Lounge, the ASEAN Festival of Contemporary Music, Calliope's Call, Songfest, the National Opera Center in New York City, the Fondation des États-Unis in Paris, San Francisco Opera's Atrium Sessions, Jordan Hall, Ames Town and Gown, Omaha Under the Radar, the Art Song Preservation Society of New York, and the Savannah V.O.I.C.E. Festival, for which she is Composer-in-Residence. Ms. Goble is Full Teaching Professor in Voice at Iowa State University, the official pianist for the Simon Estes Roots and Wings Community Concert Series, and the official accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Guild Auditions in Iowa. <http://jodigoble.com>

Edgar Stillman Kelley (1857-1944) was born in Sparta, Wisconsin and musically educated in Chicago and Stuttgart, Germany. A noted conductor, composer, and professor, he was for many years the Dean of the Department of Composition and Orchestration at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. His popular musical settings of literary classics brought him considerable international renown, with performances of his most popular pieces numbered in the thousands each. He wrote at least four settings of Poe's work – much-performed song settings of "Eldorado" and "Israfel", another setting of "The Sleeper", and the symphonic poem *The Pit and the Pendulum*, which was commissioned by the Portland Symphony Orchestra.

Bertram Lincoln Shapleigh (1871-1940) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and became a physician, pianist, composer, and music editor. Like Poe, who he idolized, Shapleigh had something of a restless heart, lived in Europe, and pursued a dizzying array of professional interests. By the time he settled in Washington, DC in 1917, he was one of the most influential figures in American music. Some of his most-performed works inspired by Poe include a song setting of *Eldorado* and the cantata *The Raven*.

<i>Reminiscences of Edgar A. Poe (1849)</i> I was summoned to the drawing-room by Mr. [Nathaniel Parker] Willis to receive him [Poe]. With his proud and beautiful head erect, his dark eyes flashing with the electric light of feeling and of thought, a peculiar, an inimitable blending of sweetness and hauteur	in his expression and manner, he greeted me, calmly, gravely, almost coldly; yet with so marked an earnestness that I could not help being deeply impressed by it. From that moment until his death we were friends, although we met only during the first year of our acquaintance.
<i>Song (1827/1829)</i> I saw thee on thy bridal day— When a burning blush came o’er thee, Though happiness around thee lay, The world all love before thee: And in thine eye a kindling light (Whatever it might be) Was all on Earth my aching sight Of Loveliness could see. That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame— As such it well may pass— Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame In the breast of him, alas! Who saw thee on that bridal day, When that deep blush would come o’er thee, Though happiness around thee lay, The world all love before thee.	<i>To the River (1829)</i> Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow Of crystal, wandering water, Thou art an emblem of the glow Of beauty -- the unhidden heart -- The playful mazziness of art In old Alberto’s daughter; But when within thy wave she looks -- Which glistens then, and trembles -- Why, then, the prettiest of brooks Her worshipper resembles; For in my heart, as in thy stream, Her image deeply lies -- The heart which trembles at the beam Of her soul-searching eyes.

***Israfel* (1831)**

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
 “Whose heart-strings are a lute”;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
 Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
 In her highest noon,
 The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
 While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
 Which were seven,)
 Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
 And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
 By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
 Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
 Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
 Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
 Which we worship in a star. Therefore, thou
 art not wrong,
 Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
 Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
 With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
 With the fervour of thy lute—
 Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
 Is a world of sweets and sour;
 Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
 Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
 Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
 A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
 From my lyre within the sky.

***O Fathom the Bowl for Poe* (trad + 2025)**

Come all you bold heroes,
Attend to my song—
I'll sing in the praise
of good brandy and rum.
Here's a clear crystal fountain
Over England shall roll:
Give to me the punch ladle,
And I'll fathom the bowl.
I'll fathom the bowl!
I'll fathom the bowl—

Come lovers of writing,
Attend to my song.
I'll sing in the praise
Of good Edgar Allan Poe.
Here's a dark tale of horror
Over New York shall roll:
Give to me the punch ladle,
And I'll fathom the bowl.
I'll fathom the bowl!
I'll fathom the bowl—

Virginia Clemm Poe, “[Valentine to Edgar Allan Poe],” manuscript, February 14, 1846

Ever with thee I wish to roam —
Dearest my life is thine.
Give me a cottage for my home
And a rich old cypress vine,
Removed from the world with its sin and
care
And the tattling of many tongues.
Love alone shall guide us when we are there
—
Love shall heal my weakened lungs;
And Oh, the tranquil hours we'll spend,
Never wishing that others may see!
Perfect ease we'll enjoy, without thinking to
lend
Ourselves to the world and its glee —
Ever peaceful and blissful we'll be.

***Like the Gloom of Night Retiring* (1849)**

Like the gloom of night retiring,
When in splendour beams the day,
Hope again my heart inspiring,
Doubt and fear shall chase away!

When in splendour beams the day,
Hope again my heart inspiring,
Doubt and fear shall chase away!

Life shall yield its sweetest treasure
When our plighted faith we seal;
Care, not one dear drop of pleasure
From our cup of joy shall steal!

Like the gloom of night retiring,
When in splendour beams the day,
Hope again my heart inspiring,
Doubt and fear shall chase away!

<i>A Dream Within a Dream (1849)</i> Take this kiss upon the brow! And, in parting from you now, Thus much let me avow — You are not wrong, who deem That my days have been a dream; Yet if hope has flown away In a night, or in a day, In a vision, or in none, Is it therefore the less gone? All that we see or seem Is but a dream within a dream.	I stand amid the roar Of a surf-tormented shore, And I hold within my hand Grains of the golden sand — How few! yet how they creep Through my fingers to the deep, While I weep — while I weep! O God! Can I not grasp Them with a tighter clasp? O God! can I not save One from the pitiless wave? Is all that we see or seem But a dream within a dream?
<i>To F— (1845)</i> BELOVED! amid the earnest woes That crowd around my earthly path— (Drear path, alas! where grows Not even one lonely rose)— My soul at least a solace hath In dreams of thee, and therein knows An Eden of bland repose.	And thus thy memory is to me Like some enchanted far-off isle In some tumultuous sea— Some ocean throbbing far and free With storms—but where meanwhile Serenest skies continually Just o’re that one bright island smile.
<i>The Isle of the Fay (2025)</i> LA FÉE <i>(walking, mysteriously along the shore)</i> Ah! Ah! Ah!	EDGAR ALLAN POE <i>(Enters. He does not see LA FÉE – his attention is on the beautiful landscape.)</i> I love to regard the dark valleys, The grey rocks, the silent smiling waters, The slumber-sighing forests, And the proud, Proud and watchful mountains

	That look down on us all. Their form, the most perfect, Their handmaiden the moon, Their sov'reign the sun. Their life is eternity, their joy is in knowledge, And their destiny is lost in immensity.
Ah! Ah! Ah! <i>(She approaches POE curiously, staying just out of his sight.)</i> La solitude est une belle chose; <i>[Solitude is a beautiful thing.]</i> Mais il faut quelqu'un pour vous dire <i>[But do you need someone to tell you]</i> Que la solitude est une belle chose? <i>[that solitude is a beautiful thing?]</i> La solitude est une belle chose; <i>[Solitude is a beautiful thing.]</i> Mais il faut quelqu'un pour vous dire <i>[But do you need someone to tell you]</i> Que la solitude est une belle chose? <i>[that solitude is a beautiful thing?]</i>	<i>(musing, he starts to feel LA FÉE's presence)</i> Mountain locked upon mountain... Sad rivers, melancholy tarns... Writhing and sleeping, all within all.
	I threw myself upon the turf to doze. So blended bank and shadow there, That each seemed pendulous in air. And in the east, whelmed in blackest shade, <i>(POE begins to discern LA FÉE.)</i> And in the east, whelmed in blackest shade,

	Sombre, beautiful, peaceful gloom, Sad, solemn and spectral shapes, Mortal sorrow and untimely death, Wrapped in clambering rosemary, Rosemary and rue.
<i>(LA FÉE reveals herself.)</i> La musique! <i>[The music!]</i> La musique! <i>[The music!]</i> La seul des talen[t]s <i>[The only of the talents]</i> qui jouissent de lui même, la musique. <i>[Which pleases me equally: music.]</i> Tous les autres veulent des témoins, <i>[All the others want witnesses.]</i> La musique! La musique! <i>[The music! The music!]</i>	<i>(Transfixed.)</i>
La musique! <i>[The music!]</i> Tous les autres veulent des témoins, <i>[All the others want witnesses.]</i> La musique! <i>[The music!]</i> La musique! <i>[The music!]</i>	If ever island were enchanted, This is she, One of the few gentle Fays that remain. I see her fairy form glide So solemnly over the water, In a fragile canoe, with a phantom oar, Among the green tombs of her dead.
<i>(LA FÉE approaches and circles POE, calmly yet sadly.)</i>	

J'ai l'esprit de joie; j'ai l'esprit de la mort. <i>[I have the spirit of joy; I've the spirit of death.]</i> Je travers mon hiver, je travers mon été. <i>[I traverse my winter; I traverse my summer.]</i> Mon siècle est bref, mon siècle s'estompe. <i>[My century is brief, my century fades.]</i> Je suis un an plus près de la mort. <i>[I am one year away from dying.]</i>	
J'ai l'esprit de joie; <i>[I have the spirit of joy]</i> J'ai l'esprit de la mort. <i>[I've the spirit of death.]</i> Je travers mon hiver, je travers mon été. <i>[I traverse my winter; I traverse my summer.]</i>	She is the spirit of joy, And the spirit of death. She passes through her winter and summer.
Mon siècle est bref, <i>[My century is brief]</i> Mon siècle s'estompe. <i>[my century fades.]</i> À chaque tour...Je suis un an... <i>[With each turn...I am a year....]</i> Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!	Her age is brief. It fades away. She is a year closer to death. Again and again, she circles the island, While the sun rushes down to its slumber. A darker shade falls from her With each issuing into the light.
<i>(slipping away)</i> Ah! Ah!	<i>(realizing what is happening)</i> And is whelmed in the water, Whelmed in the blacker shadow. <i>(despairing)</i>

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!	She passes with her boat Into the ebony flood. I behold her no more, No more, No more.
<i>Soon May Gordon Pym Come (2025)</i> There once was a sailor that put to sea, and the name of the sailor Arthur Gordon Pym; his ship was called the Ariel; it was nearwrecked in a storm. Soon may a rescue cue come to bring salvation, warmth, and rum. Soon then when the storm has calmed he'll take his leave to shore. A whaling ship came sailing by, and stopped against the captain's wish; poor Pym was hauled aboard and then decided to keep mum. Soon did his rescue come and brought salvation, warmth, and rum. Soon then when the storm had calmed he went back to the shore. That wasn't enough for Gordon Pym, he stowed away on the whaler Grampus; but mutiny soon fell and then a bloodbath swept the decks.	<i>Farewell to Poe (2025)</i> Farewell and adieu to Poe from us laddies, Farewell and adieu to you, from Baltimore! For we've received orders to prep for the Black Cat Ball; but we hope in a short Cat time to see you again. We will rant and we'll roar like old Fortunado, we'll rant and we'll roar from behind a brick wall, until we strike soundings in the deep of old Poe's home. From B' more to Washington is thirty-five miles! We hove our ship to with the wind from southwest, boys, We hove our ship to for our friend Gordon Pym! Poor Pym and Dirk Peters had many adventures, but we hope in a short Cat time to see them

Now there's no rescue come, except by their own mortal hands; and then when the fighting stoppedm he had survivor's guilt. Again at sea went Gordon Pym, in Southern Seas he pushed his oar; until an island they explored, and the natives went to war. Oh, how the victims cried, by savage blows they lost their lives; oh, how the victims died, but Gordon Pym survived!	again. We will rant and we'll roar like old Fortunado, we'll rant and we'll roar from behind a brick wall, until we strike soundings in the deep of old Poe's home. From B' more to Washington is thirty-five miles!
<i>Thank God, I Glory in Thy Love (1850)</i> Thank God, I glory in thy love, and mine! And if they win a warm blush to my cheek, It is not shame—it is a joy divine, That only there its wild bright life may speak. From that most sacred and ecstatic hour, When, soul to soul, with blissful thrill we met, My love became a passion, and a power, Too proud, too high, for shame or for regret. Come to me, dearest, noblest!—lean thy head, Thy gracious head, once more upon my breast; I will not shrink nor tremble, but, instead, Exulting, soothe thee into perfect rest.	I know thy nature, fervent, fond, yet strong, That holds o'er passion an imperial sway; I know thy proud, pure heart, that would not wrong The frailest life that flutters in thy way; And I, who love and trust thee, shall not I Be safe and sacred on that generous heart? Albeit, with wild and unavailing sigh, Less firm than thou, I grieve that we should part! Ah! let thy voice, in dear and low replies, Chide the faint doubt I sooner say than think; Come to me, darling!—from those earnest eyes The immortal life of love I fain would drink!

<http://spicyopera.com>

<http://empresa.org/>

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