

# MUSIC ACCORD

## LIBBY LARSEN *You* (2018)

### Program Notes

In his landmark book, *Keeping Together in Time*, William McNeill convincingly states that it's our natural condition, as humans, to create and sustain human community. We share feelings, we keep together in time through coordinated movements, like dancing, making music, marching, group exercising, attending community events, celebrating birthdays and holidays, we create groups, clubs, political parties, religious affiliations... All these human efforts, and more, are powerful forces in holding us together.

Yet, we are alone, ultimately, living the paradox of being alone together. *YOU* – is a musical essay on the human condition of being alone together. It's about us and we are its theme. *YOU* are the subject and recipient of its message. Cantus is our essay's narrator. For the libretto, I identified nine words which describe being alive – You, here, now, who, are, where, know, need, love – and used them to frame questions about being human: Am I fated?; What is my meaning?; I need!; Am I safe?; Am I secure?; What is the center of my spirit? Then, drawing on poetry of Emily Dickinson and Edna St. Vincent Millay as muses for these questions (Dickinson's *You cannot put a Fire out* – fate, I'm *Nobody* – Who are You? – meaning, *Wild Nights!* – need; and Edna St. Vincent Millay's *First Fig* and *Thursday* – security), I created a loose narrative for my essay – I am unconditionally alive...I feel out of control...Who am I?...I need physical human contact...I need security...what is security?...I am security.

I am so grateful to Music Accord for providing the opportunity to partner with the members of Cantus in the process of creating this new work. It has been a rich and rewarding fabric of creativity! –Libby Larsen, 2018

### You

Composer: Libby Larsen

Instrumentation: men's vocal octet

Premiering Artists: Cantus

Duration: 16'

#### Publisher Contact

Libby Larsen Website

[https://libbylarsen.com/as\\_works](https://libbylarsen.com/as_works)

#### Artist Contact

Cantus website

<https://www.cantussings.org/contact-us/>

Libby Larsen



Cantus

### About Music Accord

Comprised of top classical music presenting organizations throughout the United States, Music Accord is a consortium that commission new works in the chamber music, instrumental recital and song genres. The Consortium's goal is to create a significant number of new works and to ensure presentation of these works in venues throughout this country and, if the occasion arises, internationally. Music Accord awards commissions principally to performers who are US citizens or reside in the US and assists these performers in selecting composers who are United States citizens or who reside in the United States.



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