

Beds of Roses

OPENING MUSIC
The Scent of the Garden

- ~ **Baha'u'llah** *from the Baha'i Writings*
- ~ *Hawaiian Prayer*
- ~ *Dammapada—Hindu Scriptures*
- ~ **Jalal al-Din Rumi** *Muslim Tradition*

MUSIC
Garden Paths

- ~ **Thomas Merton** *from Christian Tradition*
- ~ *Native American Prayer*
- ~ **Dan Custer** *Morning Meditation*
- ~ **Rabindranath Tagore** *Lotus Offering*
- ~ **Baha'u'llah** *Morning Prayer*

MUSIC
Garden of Man

- ~ *from the Quran*
- ~ **Lao Tzu**, *Tao Te Ching*
- ~ *Story of Richard St Barbe Baker*
- ~ **Roger White** *Richard St Barbe Baker*
- ~ **Abdu'l-Baha** *from the Baha'I Writings*

MUSICAL FINALE

MUSIC

The Scent of the Garden

How could such sweet and wholesome hours be
reckon'd but with herbs and flowers.

Andrew Marvell (1621-78)

From the Tablet of Ridvan

Hear Me, ye mortal birds!
In the Rose Garden of changeless splendour a Flower hath begun to bloom,
compared to which every other flower is but a thorn,
and before the brightness of Whose glory the
very essence of beauty must pale and wither.
Arise, therefore and,
with the whole enthusiasm of your hearts,
with all the eagerness of your soul,
the full fervour of your will,
and the concentrated efforts of your entire being,
strive to attain the paradise of His presence,
and endeavour to inhale the fragrance of the incorruptible Flower,
To breathe the sweet savours of holiness,
and to obtain a portion of this perfume of celestial glory.
Who so followeth this counsel will break his chains asunder,
will taste the abandonment of enraptured love,
will attain unto his heart's desire,
and will surrender his soul into the hands of his Beloved.
Bursting through his cage, he will, even as the bird of the spirit,
wing his flight to his holy and everlasting nest.

Baha'u'llah *From the Baha'i Writings*

I am the “I”
I come forth from the void into light.
I am the breath that nurtures life.
I am that emptiness, the hollowness.
Beyond all consciousness.
The I, the Id, the All.
I draw my bow of rainbows across the waters,
The continuum of minds with matters.
The invisible untouchable breeze.
The undefinable atom of creation.
I am the “I”

Hawaiian Prayer

I

As many kinds of wreaths can be made from a heap of flowers, so many good things may be achieved by a mortal when once he is born.

II

The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind, nor that of sandal-wood, or of Tagara and Mallika flowers; but the odour of good people travels even against the wind; a good man pervades every place.

Dammaṇḍa From Hindu Scriptures

The Truth Within Us

It was a fair orchard, full of trees and fruit.
And vines and greenery.
A Sufi there sat with eyes closed,
His head upon his knee,
Sunk deep in mystical meditation.
“Why, asked another, “do you not behold these
Signs of god the Merciful displayed around you,
Which he bids us contemplate?”
“The signs,” He answered, “I behold within;
Without is naught but symbols of the signs.”

What is all beauty in the world?
The image,
Like quivering boughs reflected in a stream,
Of that eternal Orchard which abides
Unwithered in the hearts of Perfect Men.

Jalal al-Din Rumi

MUSIC

Garden Paths

The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

CALLED OUT OF DARKNESS

The brightness of the eternal light is so great that we cannot see it,
and all other lights become darkness by comparison with it.

Yet to the spiritual man,
all other lights contain the infinite light.
He passes through them to reach it.
And as he passes, he no longer hesitates,
comparing one finite light with another,
one empirical object with another,
concept with concept.
Travelling with haste,
in the unerring security which transcends all objects,
instructed by the Spirit
Who alone can tell us the secret of our individual destiny,
man begins to know God as he knows his own self.
The night of faith
has brought us into contact with the Object of all faith,
not as an object but as a Person
Who is the centre and life of our own being,
at once His own Transcendent Self
and the immanent source of our own identity and life.

Thomas Merton

O Great Spirit,
Whose voice I hear in the winds,
And whose breath gives life to all the world,
hear me!
Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes
ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make
my hands respect the things you have made
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in
every leaf and rock.
I seek strength, not to be greater than
my brother, but to fight my greatest
enemy – myself.
Make me always ready to come to you with
clean hands and straight eyes.
So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my
spirit may come to you without shame.

Native American

Every morning is a fresh beginning. Every day is the world made new. Today is a new day. Today is my world made new. I have lived all my life up to this present moment, to come to this day. This moment—this day, is as good as any moment in eternity. I shall make of this day—each moment of this day—a heaven on earth. This is my day of opportunity.

Dan Custer

Lotus Offering

The lotuses had died in the cruel frost. One alone was still alive in the pond of Sudas, the gardener. He went to the palace to sell this lotus and met a rich merchant at the gate, who greatly admired it.

“I shall buy this lotus,” he said, and offer it to Buddha, who has come to this town. What price gardener?”

Sudas wanted a piece of gold. As the merchant was fumbling for the money, the King came out of the palace on his way to the Master. He saw the white lotus and exclaimed: “For Buddha I shall buy it. What price?”

“It has been sold for a piece of gold,” said the gardener. The king replied: “I offer you ten pieces of gold.”

“I offer twenty,” cried the merchant. They vied with each other to buy the flower. The price mounted up. The gardener listened and thought: “They want the lotus for the Master. How much more shall I get from Buddha himself?”

“Forgive me,” he said, his palms joined in supplication. “I will not sell this flower.” And he ran breathlessly to the palace where Buddha sat in peace and divine splendour.

Sudas saw him and stood transfixed. For awhile he could neither speak nor move. Then he threw himself at the Master’s feet and offered Him the lotus.

“What is your wish?” the Master asked, smiling. “Naught else but a speck of dust from thy feet,” said the eager voice of the gardener.

Rabindranath Tagore

I give praise to Thee, O my God, that Thou has awakened me out of my sleep, and brought me forth after my disappearance, and raised me up from my slumber. I have wakened this morning with my face set toward the splendours of the Daystar of Thy Revelation, through Which the heavens of Thy power and Thy majesty have been illumined, acknowledging Thy signs, believing in Thy Book, and holding fast unto Thy Cord.

I beseech Thee, by the potency of Thy will and the compelling power of Thy purpose, to make of what Thou didst reveal unto me in my sleep the surest foundation for the mansions of Thy love that are within the hearts of Thy loved ones, and the best instrument for the revelation of the tokens of Thy grace and Thy loving-kindness.

Do Thou ordain for me through Thy most exalted Pen, O my Lord, the good of this world and of the next. I testify that within Thy grasp are held the reins of all things. Thou changest them as Thou pleasest. No God is there save Thee, the Strong, the Faithful.

Thou art He Who changeth through His bidding abasement into glory, and weakness into strength, and powerlessness into might, and fear into calm, and doubt into certainty. No God is there but Thee, the Mighty, the Beneficent.

Thou disappointest no one who hath sought Thee, nor dost Thou keep back from Thee anyone who hath desired Thee. Ordain Thou for me what becometh the heaven of Thy generosity, and the ocean of Thy bounty. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

Baha'u'llah, from the Baha'i Writings

MUSIC

Garden of Man

What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving,
how express and admirable, in action, how like an angel .

Shakespeare *Hamlet*

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
Read, in the name of thy Lord!
Who created man from congealed blood!
Read, for thy Lord is most generous!
Who taught the pen!
Taught man what he did not know!

From the Chapter of Congealed Blood, Quran

Know the strength of man,
But keep a woman's care!
Be the stream of the universe!
Being the stream of the universe,
Ever true and unwavering,
Become as a little child once more.

Know the white.
Become the black!
Be an example to the world
Being an example to the world,
Ever true and unwavering,
Return to the infinite.

Know honour
Yet keep humility.
Be the valley of the universe!
Being the valley of the universe,
Ever true and resourceful,
Return to the state of the uncarved block.

When the block is carved, it becomes useful.
When the sage uses it, he become the ruler.
Thus, "A great tailor cuts little."

Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*

Richard St Barbe Baker (The Man Who Planted Trees)

Richard St Barbe Baker, O.B.E. was man of vision who foresaw and strove all his life for a return to a green Earth covered in trees and peopled by nations who lived in harmony. In 1931 Baker went to Palestine at the invitation of Sir John Chancellor, the Governor, to assist in establishing a tree planting program in the hope of uniting warring factions. He spent some time in Jerusalem, coordinating a meeting of the heads of the Arab, Hebrew and Catholic communities to plant trees under the banner of Men of Trees.

In 1979 Baker again visited the Holy Land this time to present a large variety of rare seeds for the beautification of the renowned Baha'i gardens on Mount Carmel. As a young reporter for the *Southeast Missourian* Sam Blackwell told the following story when he was asked who the most memorable person he'd ever interviewed was. "The name that immediately came to mind was Richard St. Barbe Baker.

"He was about to be honoured. The Redwood National Park, where 2,000-year-old redwood trees live in safety was being dedicated as a World Heritage Site, one of a few hundred places on Earth recognized for their global significance. Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Peru's Machu Picchu . . . are on the list too."

"St. Barbe Baker was staying in a cabin on the Smith River, the last wild river in Northern California. He was very old and frail. The young environmentalists taking care of him said I could speak with him as soon as he awoke. They treated him with respect and awe. "When he did wake up he could barely speak, and the words he said were difficult to understand. It didn't matter. He had a presence that made you happy to be in his company. His was a great soul.

"We went outside to take his photograph. Spontaneously, he did what people who scorn environmentalists make jokes about: He hugged a tree. I don't mean he put his arms around it. He hugged it like I hug my old friend Carolyn, like he never wanted to let go. I began to understand.

Richard St Barbe Baker, O.B.E.
by Roger White

Notes Toward Survival
You were parchment frail
quaintly exquisite as the courtesy accorded me
when you enlisted my pad and rusty Pitman
To record you notes.
Only your fingers looked young.
Slender and white as peeled twigs
they moved with a rosary-teller's nimble reverence
among the dry rustling seeds, to me
anonymous as lint or dust motes
till, devoutly sorting, dividing,
you named them, told their ancestries and lives,
coaxed into vision by excited words
groves and orchards and gardens.
Carmel would be greener for your conjuring.
You would have me convert to your benign obsession,
under your tutelage touch the dehydrated miracles,
package and label, recite like a novitiate
their names, mythical and gallant
as those of legendary conquerors.
Man must resuscitate his planet with trees,
his heart with faith. So you simplified
survival's creed. Your coniferous hope
sealed my discipleship. What Sahara
could resist your passion for verdancy?
Leaving your monkish intensity
a forest of images crowded my mind
thrusting zealously toward light.
Now I cannot see a leaf but think
love's task was ever reclamation.

"In the stillness of the mighty
woods, man is made aware of the
divine,"

St. Barbe Baker

O ye roses in the garden of God's love!
O ye bright lamps in the assemblage of His knowledge!
May the soft breathings of God pass over you,
may the Glory of God illumine the horizon of your hearts.
Ye are the waves of the deep sea of knowledge,
. In His bowers are ye the blossoms and sweet-smelling herbs,
in the rose garden of the spirit the nightingales that utter plaintive cries.
Ye are the birds that soar upward into the firmament of knowledge,
the royal falcons on the wrist of God.

. . . Ye must shine forth like the lightning,
and raise up a clamoring like unto the great sea.
Like a candle must ye shed your light,
and even as the soft breezes of God
must ye blow across the world.
. . . For ye are the life-laden winds,
ye are the Jessamine-scents from the gardens of the saved.

. . In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames;
in the sands of perdition,
be ye well-springs of the water of life,
be ye guidance from the Lord God.

Now is the time to serve,
now is the time to be on fire.
Know ye the value of this chance,
. . Thus let us scatter over every people
the treasured gems of the recognition of God,
Well is it with the doers of great deeds.

from Selections from the Writing of Abdul-Baha

MUSICAL FINALE
Please join us for refreshments