

Ned Rorem



Ned Rorem



Rorem at the American Academy in Rome
PHOTO: MARY MARSHALL

Born in 1923,
Richmond, Indiana

Ned Rorem, a titan of American classical music, turns 100 on October 23, 2023. We present this guide to his vast catalog—from chamber works, symphonies, and operas to a staggering trove of over 500 songs. Each work is a testament to Rorem’s trademark wit and charm, as well as his masterful craftsmanship.

The following pages include works published by Boosey & Hawkes, Peermusic Classical, Edition Peters, E. C. Schirmer, and Theodore Presser Company. View [page 43](#) for publisher contact information.

🔊 **Listen to our Ned Rorem playlist on [Spotify](#).**

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Rorem in Paris, 1953

An Introduction to the Music of Ned Rorem

By Frank J. Oteri

Ned Rorem has been hailed in *Time* magazine as “the world’s best composer of art songs” and the more than 500 he has composed thus far are treasured by singers, pianists, and listeners around the world. But in addition to his extremely prolific output in that medium, Rorem has made highly significant contributions to just about every other musical idiom as well—from intimate solo instrumental and chamber music compositions to symphonies and operas—and those contributions have garnered accolades ranging from a GRAMMY Award to the Pulitzer Prize.

For eight decades, Rorem has been steadfastly crafting individualistic music filled with exuberant rhythmic energy and shimmering with hauntingly beautiful melodies without any concern about passing compositional fads. As a result, the body of music he has created is now timeless.

Although various places he has lived have left an indelible mark on him (the expansive fields of his native state of Indiana, the awe-inspiring skyscrapers of Chicago where he grew up, the nostalgic charm and frivolity of Paris where he spent a formative decade when he was in his 20s, and the relentless freneticism of his eventual and current home, New York City), he has forged these diverse geographical inspirations into a sound world that is universal in its scope and its humanity.

For eight decades, Rorem has been steadfastly crafting individualistic music filled with exuberant rhythmic energy and shimmering with hauntingly beautiful melodies.

But the greatest influence on Rorem has been language, hence his lifelong devotion to crafting songs. He has put melodies and harmonies to the words of some of the most important poets from past centuries—Shakespeare, Spenser, Browning, Tennyson, Yeats, Whitman—as well as some of his own celebrated contemporaries: Frost, Cummings, Roethke, O’Hara, Ashbery, Plath, Bishop, and Gertrude Stein, to name only a few.

His 1997 evening-length song cycle *Evidence of Things Unseen*, a magnum opus in his vocal oeuvre comprising a total of 36 songs for four voices and piano, is based on texts by a total of 24 different authors. But his symbiotic fusion of music and literature reaches its culmination in his two full-length operas which are both based on classic plays and each created in collaboration with a major librettist: *Miss Julie* (1965, Kenward Elmslie from August Strindberg) and *Our Town* (2005, J. D. McClatchy from Thornton Wilder).

A formidable writer in his own right, Rorem is the author of 16 books that range from collections of poignant music criticism (which have earned him three ASCAP-Deems Taylor Awards) to five volumes of provocative diaries that openly and fearlessly chronicle his experiences in society as a gay man. The diaries garnered wide international attention and positioned Rorem as an early pioneer of the gay rights movement.



Rorem, December 1965
PHOTO: WILLIAM GALE
GEDNEY

Rorem insists that it is impossible for music to have any meaning when it is on its own and that his compositions not involving texts must therefore, by their nature, be non-representational. Yet Rorem's non-vocal works communicate on a subconscious emotional level that is beyond language. Admittedly, works like his dazzling virtuosic Piano Sonata No. 2 composed for Julius Katchen, the occasionally turbulent Picasso-themed String Quartet No. 4 written for the Emerson Quartet, the dazzling Violin Concerto which was first performed by Jaime Laredo and has been recorded by both Gidon Kremer and Philippe Quint, or the often unabashedly theatrical Symphony No. 3 premiered by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, are ultimately completely abstract. But their harmonic inventiveness and rhythmic drive still convey effective and highly satisfying narratives.

His orchestral composition *Eagles* (1958) obviously cannot convey the specificity of the Walt Whitman poem that inspired it, but the music's evocation of that poem's depiction of a dalliance between two swirling birds makes it an extremely exciting concert opener. Rorem's admiration for a tragic novel by Julien Green yielded another piece completed that same year (on a single day!) entitled *Pilgrims*, a hauntingly evocative short work just for strings. Similarly, *Lions (A Dream)* (1963) with its blurry harmonic and timbral combinations as well as its unexpected jazz tinges very persuasively conveys its dream-like origins and is again an ideal repertoire choice to begin an orchestra program. All of these compact symphonic utterances demonstrate as clearly as any of his songs, Rorem's mastery of the miniature.



Rorem with Leonard Bernstein, who recorded Rorem's Violin Concerto with the New York Philharmonic and soloist Gidon Kremer.

PHOTO: ANDREW FRENCH

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Yet Rorem has also given us an extremely generous array of more substantive orchestral works including the challenging *Air Music* for which he won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1976. Though his three numbered symphonies all date from the 1950s, he created an additional symphony for string orchestra in the mid 1980s.

But perhaps Rorem's most significant body of music involving an orchestra has been his more than a dozen concertos. While he has made formidable contributions for the most popular solo instruments—violin, cello, and piano (several works including a concerto solely for left hand), Rorem has frequently been drawn to less common solo voices and his advocacy for their soloistic potential through his carefully crafted music has given players of those instruments new opportunities—e.g., English horn, flute, organ, harpsichord (the charming 1946 *Concertino da Camera*, his earliest), and his Mallet Concerto: a magical 2003 work written for and premiered by percussion virtuoso Dame Evelyn Glennie in which the solo instrument switches in each movement.

Though all of these works continue a centuries-old tradition of pitting individuals against a larger group, Rorem eschews the conventional format of three hefty movements (usually fast-slow-fast) in favor of a larger number of shorter movements which offer even greater opportunities for contrast, not just through tempo differences but also by isolating specific combinations of instruments.



The composer and his cat
PHOTO: HARRY BENSON



Top: Rorem with members of the Curtis Institute of Music Orchestra, 1993
PHOTO: DAVID SWANSON

Bottom: Ned Rorem, 2002
PHOTO: R. BENCHLEY

Rorem's unusual way of constructing many of his long-form pieces for orchestra carries over into his chamber music compositions as well. His *Diversions* for brass quintet notably includes movements for a variety of subsets of the ensemble as does, perhaps most surprisingly, his *Eleven Studies for Eleven Players*, which includes a movement just for the two percussionists—the only all-percussion music Rorem has ever composed.

Like an idiosyncratic novelist who is somehow able to construct compelling narratives through chains of lyric poems, Rorem fashions extremely effective sonic arcs in this manner. The analogy is actually not particularly far-fetched—Rorem subtitled his 21-minute 1977 composition *Sunday Morning*, a “poem in eight parts for orchestra.” The result is always music with a constant variety and a great deal of dramatic intrigue. And no matter what forces he is writing for, Rorem's music always sings.



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Opera



Roem's eight published operas, including chamber and one-act operas, are rooted in his love of great literature. He has worked with texts by Gertrude Stein in *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters*, poetry by Jean de la Fontaine in *Fables*, and classic plays in his two full-length operas: *Miss Julie*, based on the play by August Strindberg, and *Our Town*, based on the play by Thornton Wilder.

Our Town
World premiere production
at Indiana University, 2006
PHOTO: RIC CRADICK /
COURTESY OF IU JACOBS
SCHOOL OF MUSIC OPERA
THEATER

“Our Town asserts without a doubt the genius of both composer and playwright ... Rorem’s operatic version is a masterpiece of American music.”

—Theater Jones



Our Town
Guildhall School of Music
and Drama, 2012
PHOTO: CLIVE BARDA

Evening-Length Operas

Our Town

(2005) 120'

Opera in three acts

Text J. D. McClatchy, based on the play by Thornton Wilder

Scoring Major roles: 2S, 2M, 3T, Bar, B;
Minor roles: S, 4T (from chorus)

Mixed chorus; 2.1.2.1-2.1.0.0-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Rorem’s setting of Thornton Wilder’s masterpiece *Our Town* employs a stylistic voice that cuts across Americana, transatlantic modernism, and Gallic lyricism. Written with librettist J. D. McClatchy, the three-act opera uses chamber orchestration and transparent scoring, making it well suited for young voices. “Emily’s Aria” at the end of the opera is a powerful standalone piece, and has become a staple among recitalists.

“Mr. Rorem’s adaptation of August Strindberg’s one-act play ... makes for taut and persuasive musical drama.”
—The New York Times



Miss Julie, Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater, 1994
COURTESY OF THE MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Evening-Length Operas (cont'd)

Miss Julie

(1964-65; rev. 1979) 90'

Opera in one act

Text Kenward Elmslie, based on the play by August Strindberg

Scoring 2S, S, M, 2T, BBar; chorus

2.2.2.2-3.2.2.0-timp.perc-guitar-harp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Miss Julie, Rorem's first full-length opera, presents a compelling, tightly knit story in 90 minutes, featuring Strindberg's unforgettable anti-heroine—the jaded daughter of a count, who behaves recklessly during a Midsummer Eve celebration in Sweden.

Miss Julie was given its world premiere by New York City Opera, and has been recorded by both the Manhattan School of Music Opera Theatre and the Curtis Opera Theatre.



“Rorem’s music wraps itself around you. He has the gift for letting poetry sing, and he knows the human voice—the warmth and the timbres, and how to bring them out in exactly the right place.”

—Susan Graham



Top: Susan Graham
PHOTO: DARIO ACOSTA

Bottom: Miss Julie
Curtis Institute of Music, 2003
PHOTO: PETE CHECCHIA / COURTESY
OF CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC



Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters
 Encompass Opera Theatre, 2012
 PHOTO: RICHARD TERMINE/
 THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

Chamber Operas

Fables

(1971) 25'

Five very short operas

Text Poems by Jean de La Fontaine

Scoring At least 2 singers, mimes ad lib; pft

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

These five short operas, based on the wry fable poems of Jean de La Fontaine (translated to English by Marianne Moore), may be presented together or as five independent pieces.

Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters

(1968) 35'

Opera in three acts with piano accompaniment

Text Gertrude Stein

Scoring 2S, M, T, Bar; pft

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Roem artfully sets Gertrude Stein's 1943 murder mystery play as a compact 35-minute drama, which can be staged using a single set.

Bertha

(1968) 25'

Opera in one act

Text Kenneth Koch

Scoring M, 5 singers (high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, and low) doubling roles; small chorus (optional); pft

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Bertha depicts the rise and decline of the mad, bloodthirsty Queen Bertha of Oslo, and examines the negative consequences of absolute monarchy.



SUGGESTED LISTENING

Our Town

Monadnock Music, Gil Rose
New World NW80790

Miss Julie

Manhattan School of Music Orchestra
and Singers, David Gilbert
Newport Classic 85605

Curtis Opera Theatre, David Agler
Albany Records TROY761-62

**A Childhood Miracle / Three Sisters
Who Are Not Sisters**

Magic Circle Opera Orchestra,
Ray Evans Harrell
Newport Classics 85594

Chamber Operas (cont'd)

Hearing

(1966-76) 22'

Five scenes for four singers and seven instrumentalists

Text Poems by Kenneth Koch, dramatized by James Holmes

Scoring S, M, T, Bar;

0.0.1.0-0.1.0.0-perc-pft-1.1.0.0.1

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

This dramatic song cycle in five scenes stars four singers (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and baritone) who perform songs on themes of nature and love, culminating in the wildly exuberant "Hearing."

The Robbers

(1956) 28'

Melodrama in one scene

Text Ned Rorem, after Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Pardoner's Tale"

Scoring T, lyrBar, BBar; 1.1.2.1-1.0.0.0-timp.perc-pft-1.1.1.1.1

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Rorem's music for *The Robbers*, a tale of murder and greed, is "colored by that curious and oh-so-French juncture of impressionistic chord extensions and ancient modal gestures" (*The New York Times*).

A Childhood Miracle

(1952) 33'

Opera in one act

Text Elliott Stein; story suggested by Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Snow Image"

Scoring S, 2M, CA, T, BBar;

1.1.1.1-2.1.0.0-perc-pft-1.1.1.1.1

(optional db)

Published by Peermusic Classical

A Childhood Miracle sets Hawthorne's tale about two sisters who conjure a snowman to life.

Orchestra



To Mr. Ned Rorem with best wishes -
Philadelphia, Dec. 1. 1957. Eugene Ormandy.

Characterized by exuberant rhythmic energy and hauntingly beautiful melodies, Rorem's orchestral music has been championed by orchestras across the US, with acclaimed recordings by the New York Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and The Louisville Orchestra. From masterful miniatures to more substantial symphonies, his works are curiously structured, often favoring numerous shorter movements that offer a wide-ranging, colorful palette of moods, tempos, and timbres.

Notably, Rorem has written over a dozen concertos (four piano concertos alone) that feature an impressive array of instruments—well suited for spotlighting orchestra principals, including the Flute Concerto (premiered by Jeffrey Khaner and The Philadelphia Orchestra) and the English Horn Concerto (premiered by Thomas Stacy and the New York Philharmonic). Though not a concerto, *Lions (A Dream)* intriguingly spotlights a jazz quartet in the midst of the orchestra to great effect; it was recorded by the Branford Marsalis Quartet with the North Carolina Symphony.

Rorem, Eugene Ormandy, and The Philadelphia Orchestra in rehearsal for Rorem's *Design* in 1957, autographed by Eugene Ormandy
PHOTO: ADRIAN SIEGEL COLLECTION / THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES



Rorem, Eugene Ormandy, and pianist Jerome Lowenthal looking at a score of Rorem's Piano Concerto No. 3, 1972
PHOTO: ADRIAN SIEGEL COLLECTION / THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES

Full Orchestra

Waiting

(1996) 2'

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.2.2.0-perc(3)-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Fantasy and Polka

(1989) 8'

Scoring 2.picc.2.corA.3.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(5)-pft-strings

(Fantasy alone: 2.picc.2.corA.3.2-4.3.0.0-strings)

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Frolic

(1986) 2'

Scoring 3.3.3.2-4.4.3.1-timp.perc(2/3)-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sunday Morning

(1977) 19'

Poem in eight parts for orchestra

Scoring 3.3.3.3-6.3.3.1-timp.perc-harp-mandolin(ad lib)-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Air Music

(1974) 20'

10 variations for orchestra

Scoring 3(=picc).3.4.3-4.3.3.1-perc-harp-cel-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes



Winner of the Pulitzer Prize



SPOTLIGHT ON AIR MUSIC
1976 Pulitzer Prize Winner in Music

“Air Music feels as fresh as when it won the Pulitzer.”

—The New York Times, 2018

Premiered by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 1975, *Air Music: Ten Variations for Orchestra* exemplifies Rorem’s fixation on the miniature. Each movement features different chamber groupings of musicians, unveiling colorful, rich timbre combinations that build to an impressive structure.

Listen to Louisville Orchestra’s recording of *Air Music*, alongside other Rorem classics *Design* and *Eagles*, on Albany Records.

Full Orchestra (cont’d)

Lions (A Dream)

(1963) 14’

for orchestra with jazz quartet

Scoring solo quartet: sax-perc-pft-db;

3(III=picc).2.corA.2.Ecl.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Eagles

(1958) 9’

Scoring 2.picc.2.corA.2.Ebcl.

bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-harp-cel(pft)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Symphony No. 3

(1958) 24’

Scoring 2.picc.2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-harp-cel-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Symphony No. 2

(1956) 18’

Scoring 2(II=picc).2(II=corA).2.2-2.1.0.0-timp.perc-harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Design

(1953) 18’

Scoring 2(II=picc).2.2.2-4.2.2.0-timp.perc-harp-cel-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Symphony No. 1

(1940) 27’

Scoring 2.2.2.2-4.2.2.0-timp.perc-harp-strings

Published by Peermusic Classical

“All of Rorem’s music, vocal or orchestral, has a natural, flowing melodic quality that is immediately likable by both listeners and musicians—a rare quality. His orchestrations are masterful, and his music is instantly recognizable as Rorem’s.”

—José Serebrier, Conductor



**José Serebrier and Rorem in rehearsal
at the Curtis Institute, 1984**
PHOTO BY I. GEORGE BILYK

Chamber Orchestra & Wind Ensemble

Triptych

(1992) 10'

Three pieces for chamber orchestra

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

String Symphony

(1985) 23'

for string orchestra

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

A Quaker Reader

(1976) 30'

Suite of eight movements

(originally for organ, arranged by Rorem for chamber orchestra)

Scoring 2(II=picc).2(II=corA).2.2-

2.1.1.0-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Solemn Prelude

(1973) 2'

for brass

Scoring Brass: 4.3.3.1

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Ideas

(1961) 13'

Scoring 1.1.1.1-2.1.1.0-timp.perc-

harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Eleven Studies for Eleven Players

(1959-60) 25'

Scoring 1(=picc).1(=corA).1.0-

0.1.0.0-perc(2)-harp-pft-1.0.1.1.0

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Pilgrims

(1958) 6'

for string orchestra

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Traffic

(1958, arr. 2002) 2'

for concert band

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sinfonia for 15 Wind Instruments

(1956-57) 9'

Scoring 2.picc.2.corA.4.2.dbn-

2.0.0.0-timp-perc-pft(cel)

Published by Edition Peters

A page of musical notation for a chamber orchestra and wind ensemble. The score is written on multiple staves, showing various instruments and their parts. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte) and 'marcato'. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is arranged in a traditional orchestral layout, with strings on the left and winds on the right. The page is numbered 19 at the bottom right.



Concertos

Mallet Concerto

(2003) 24'

Scoring 1.1.1.1-1.1.1.0-strings(6.5.4.3.2)

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Flute Concerto

(2002) 25'

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp-harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Cello Concerto

(2002) 25'

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp-harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Double Concerto

(1998) 33'

for violin, cello, and orchestra

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.2.0.0-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Concerto for English Horn

(1991-92) 23'

Scoring 2(II=picc).2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp.perc(4)-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Piano Concerto No. 4 for Left Hand and Orchestra

(1991) 25'

Scoring 2(II=picc).2.2.2-2.2.0-timp.perc(3)-cel-harp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Organ Concerto

(1985) 30'

Scoring 2hn.tpt.trbn-timp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Violin Concerto

(1984) 22'

Scoring 1(=picc).1.2.1-0.1.0.0-timp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Remembering Tommy

(1979) 28'

for piano, cello, and orchestra

Scoring 2(II=picc).2(II=corA).2.2-2.2.2.0-timp.perc-harp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Assembly and Fall

(1975) 25'

for oboe, trumpet, timpani, and viola and orchestra

Scoring 3.3.3.3-4.2.3.1-timp.perc-harp-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Piano Concerto No. 3 in Six Movements

(1969) 23'

Scoring 2.picc.3(III=corA).3(III=Ebcl,asax).2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(6 or 7)-harp-cel-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Water Music

(1966) 17'

for clarinet, violin, and orchestra

Scoring 1(=picc).1(=corA).0.1-1.0.0.0-perc-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Piano Concerto No. 2

(1951) 20'

Scoring 2(picc).2.2.2-2.1.0.0-timp.perc-harp-strings

Published by Peermusic Classical

Concertino da Camera

(1946) 17'

for harpsichord and chamber orchestra

Scoring fl.ob.bsn-cornet-vln.vla.vlc

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

SUGGESTED LISTENING

NAXOS BOX COLLECTION

José Serebrier Conducts Ned Rorem: The Art of Sound

Three Symphonies

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
Naxos 8559149

Piano Concerto No. 2 / Cello Concerto
Simon Mulligan, piano; Wen-Sinn Yang, cello;
Royal Scottish National Orchestra
Naxos 8559315

Flute Concerto / Violin Concerto
Jeffrey Khaner, flute; Philippe Quint, violin;
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
Naxos 8559278

Ned Rorem: Orchestral Music String Symphony / Sunday Morning / Eagles

Atlanta Symphony, Robert Shaw,
Louis Lane
New World NW80353



GRAMMY Award for Best Orchestral
Performance, 1989

Ned Rorem Premiere Recordings Design for Orchestra / Eagles / Air Music

The Louisville Orchestra, Peter Leonard,
Robert Whitney, Gerhardt Zimmermann
Soundmark Records 48121

Rorem: Double Concerto for Violin and Cello / After Reading Shakespeare

Jaime Laredo, violin; Sharon Robinson, cello;
IRIS Orchestra, Michael Stern
Naxos 8559316

Ned Rorem: Piano Concerto for Left Hand / Eleven Studies for Eleven Players

Gary Graffman, piano; Symphony
Orchestra of the Curtis Institute of Music,
André Previn
New World NW80445

American Spectrum: Rorem, Lions

Branford Marsalis Quartet; North
Carolina Symphony, Grant Llewellyn
BIS Records BIS-SACD-1644

20th Century Harpsichord Concertos Rorem, Concertino da Camera

Jory Vinikour, harpsichord; Chicago
Philharmonic, Scott Speck
Cedille Records CDR 90000 188

Orchestra with Voice

11 Songs for Susan

(2007) 20'

for mezzo-soprano and orchestra

Text Paul Goodman, Andrew Glaze, William Blake, David Bergman, Theodore Roethke, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson

Scoring 2.2.2.2-1.1.0.0-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

"Emily's Aria" from Our Town

(2005) 4'

for soprano and orchestra

Text J. D. McClatchy

Scoring 2.1.2.1-2.1.0.0-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

More than a Day

(1995) 20'

For soprano or countertenor and small orchestra

Text Jack Larson

Scoring 2(I,II=picc).2.2.2-

2.1.0.0-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Swords and Plowshares

(1990) 40'

Four solo voices (SATB) and orchestra

Text Arthur Rimbaud, Lord Byron, W. H. Auden, W. B. Yeats, Archibald MacLeish, E. A. Robinson, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Denise Levertov, Psalm 133

Scoring 3(III=picc).3(III=corA).3.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(4)-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

After Long Silence

(1982) 24'

for soprano, oboe, and strings

Text 10 different English poets

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Schuyler Songs

(1987) 25'

Eight poems for soprano and orchestra

Text James Schuyler

Scoring 2(=picc).2.2.2-

1.1.0.0-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Six Irish Poems

(1950) 18'

for medium voice and orchestra

Text George Darley

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.0.0.0-perc-harp-strings

Published by Peermusic Classical

Sun

(1966) 26'

Eight poems for high voice and orchestra

Text King Ikhnaton, Lord Byron, Paul Goodman, William Blake, Robin Morgan, William Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, and Theodore Roethke

Scoring 2.picc.2.corA.2.asax.2.dbn-4.3.2.1-timp.perc-harp-cel-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Poèmes pour la paix

(1953) 13'

for medium voice and strings

Text Jehan Regnier, Pierre de Ronsard, Olivier de Magny, Jean Daurat, and Jean Antoine de Baif

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Choral Music



Rorem's music for choir represents some of the finest American works in the genre—his catalog contains a vast treasure trove of warmly melodic anthems, canticles, motets, and hymns. The following pages include selected highlights of his choral catalog.

Choirs will recognize many of the lyrics Rorem uses in his works; he has given several well-known sacred and traditional texts a refreshing new perspective with his expressive settings. His secular choral works draw on a broad array of elegant poetry, from *A Whitman Cantata* to *Five Armenian Love Songs*, and *Three Songs of Baudelaire*, which was commissioned for the BBC Singers.

Leonard Slatkin leads the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Chorus, and soloists in the world premiere of Ned Rorem's *Goodbye My Fancy* on November 8, 1990, in Orchestra Hall
PHOTO: JIM STEERE / COURTESY OF CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, ROSENTHAL ARCHIVES



Leonard Slatkin, Margaret Hillis, Rorem, John Cheek, and Wendy White acknowledge applause after the premiere of *Goodbye My Fancy*, 1990
 PHOTO: JIM STEERE / COURTESY OF CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, ROSENTHAL ARCHIVES

Chorus with Orchestra

Goodbye My Fancy

(1988) 48' | Oratorio for alto and baritone soloists, mixed chorus, and orchestra

Text Walt Whitman

Scoring 3(III=picc).3(III=corA).3.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3)-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

An American Oratorio

(1983) 44' | for tenor solo, mixed chorus, and orchestra

Text various 19th-century American authors

Scoring 3(III=picc).3(III=corA).3.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Little Prayers

(1973) 31' | for soprano and baritone soloists, chorus, and orchestra

Text Paul Goodman

Scoring 2.2.2.2-4.2.2.0-timp.perc-harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Letters from Paris

(1966) 25' | for chorus and orchestra

Text Janet Flanner

Scoring 1.1.1.1-1.1.1.0-timp.perc-harp-cel-pft-harmonium-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Poet's Requiem

(1954-55) 22' | for soprano solo, chorus, and ensemble

Text Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, Jean Cocteau, Stéphane Mallarmé, Sigmund Freud, Paul Goodman, and André Gide

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.1.1.0-timp-harp-pft-strings

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

A Sermon on Miracles

(1947) 6' | for unison chorus, solo voice, and strings

Text Paul Goodman

Published by Boosey & Hawkes



SUGGESTED LISTENING

Sing My Soul: Choral Music of Ned Rorem

CONCORA, Richard Coffey
Larry Allen, organ and piano; David Westfall
and Carol Allen, piano
Albany TROY 307

**With A Poet's Eye—New American
Choral Music**

Rorem, *Pilgrim Strangers*
Chanticleer
Chanticleer Records CR-8804

**Fast cats and mysterious cows—Songs
from America**

Rorem, *What Is Pink?*
American Boychoir, James Litton
Virgin Classics

Chorus with Ensemble

Present Laughter

(1993) 12' | for mixed chorus, brass quartet, and piano

Text William Shakespeare, John Donne, William Blake, and Ben King

Scoring 2tp.t.hn.trbn-pft

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Te Deum

(1986-87) 10' | for mixed chorus, brass, and organ

Text *Book of Common Prayer*

Scoring 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, organ

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Homer

(1986) 20' | Three scenes from *The Iliad*, for mixed chorus with eight instruments

Text Based on Homer's *The Iliad*

Scoring flute, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, piano, violin, viola, cello

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Whitman Cantata

(1983) 21' | for male chorus and wind ensemble

Text Walt Whitman

Scoring 4hn.4tp.t.3trbn.tuba-4timp

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

**Lift up Your Heads
(The Ascension)**

(1963) 21' | for chorus and wind ensemble

Text John Beaumont

Scoring 2.2.2.2-2.3.3.1-timp

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Two Psalms and a Proverb

(1962) 3' | for mixed chorus and string quartet

Text Proverbs 23:29-35

Published by E. C. Schirmer

Seventieth Psalm

(1943) 4' | Anthem for chorus and wind ensemble

Text Psalm 70

Scoring 1.1.1.1-2.0.0.1

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

“Rorem’s choral works are beautifully crafted, with idiomatic melodic lines, natural word-setting (Rorem rarely repeats words or phrases unless the writer does), piquant harmonies, and inhabiting a completely individual sound world.”

—Choir & Organ

Chorus with Piano or Organ

Two Shakespearean Poems

(2008) 4' | for mixed chorus and piano

Text William Shakespeare

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Afternoon on a Hill

(2006) 8' | for children’s chorus

(two-part treble chorus) and piano

Text Edna St. Vincent Millay, Edwin

Arlington Robinson, William Blake,

Walter Savage Lando

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Sonnets

(2005) 11' | for mixed chorus

and piano

Text Elizabeth Bishop, Percy Bysshe

Shelley, John Donne, and William

Shakespeare

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Introits

(1999) 6' | for mixed chorus

and keyboard

Text Isaiah 9:12, Joel 9:25,29,

Psalm 100, Revelations 5:13

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Exaltabo Te, Domine

(1995) 5' | for mixed chorus

and keyboard

Text Psalm 30

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place

(1994) 5' | for mixed chorus

and keyboard

Text Psalm 84

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Love Alone

(1989) 6' | for men’s chorus

and piano (four-hands)

Text Paul Monette

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

What Is Pink?

(1987) 10' | Six songs for

treble chorus and piano

Text Christina Rossetti, Vachel

Lindsay, William Jay Smith, Edna

St. Vincent Millay, and Edwin

Arlington Robinson

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Death of Moses

(1987) 5' | for mixed chorus

and organ

Text Old and New Testament

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Give All to Love

(1981) 5' | for two-part mixed

chorus and piano

Text Ralph Waldo Emerson

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Hymns

(1973) 8' | for mixed chorus

and keyboard

Text Traditional, Godfrey Thring,

John Oxenham

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Three Motets

(1973) 7' | for mixed chorus

and organ

Text Gerard Manley Hopkins

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Praises for the Nativity

(1970) 5' | for four solo voices

(SATB), mixed chorus, and organ

Text Book of Common Prayer

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

He Shall Rule from Sea to Sea

(1967) 5' | for mixed chorus

and organ

Text Psalms

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Miracles of Christmas

(1959) 17' | for mixed choir and organ

Text Ruth Apprich Jacob

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Corinthians

(1953) 9' | for mixed chorus

and organ

Text Biblical

Published by Edition Peters

Two Holy Songs

(1951) 4' | for mixed chorus and

piano or organ

Text Psalm 134, 150

Published by Peermusic Classical



Rorem with teacher and mentor Virgil Thomson (at the piano), composer William Flanagan, and soprano Phyllis Curtin, 1960
PHOTO: I. GEORGE BILYK

Chorus a Capella

Ode to Man

(2005) 6' | for mixed chorus

Text from Sophocles' *Antigone*;
translated to English by Philip Barnes

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Five Armenian Love Songs

(1987) 7' | for mixed chorus

Text Nahapet Kuckak

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Seven Motets for the Church Year

(1986) 15' | for mixed chorus

Text from the *Liber Usualis*

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Three Poems of Baudelaire

(1986) 20' | for mixed chorus

Text Charles Baudelaire, translated
to English by Richard Howard

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Madrigals

(1948) 7' | for mixed chorus

Text Sappho

Published by Theodore Presser Company

Pilgrim Strangers

(1984) 20' | for six male voices

Text Walt Whitman, from
"Specimen Days"

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Three Choruses for Christmas

(1978) 6' | for mixed chorus

Text Thomas Hardy, Traditional,
Muhlenberg

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Missa Brevis

(1973) 14' | for four solo voices

(SATB) and mixed chorus

Text Liturgical

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

In Time of Pestilence

(1973) 7' | Six short madrigals

for mixed chorus

Text Thomas Nashe

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Canticles, Sets 1 & 2

(1971-72) 16' | for mixed chorus

Text English settings of
liturgical songs

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Proper for the Votive

Mass of the Holy Spirit

(1966) 9' | for unison chorus
and organ

Text Liturgical

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sing, My Soul, His

Wondrous Love

(1955) 2' | for mixed chorus

Text Anonymous 19th-century text

Published by Edition Peters

From an Unknown Past

(1951) 10' | for mixed chorus

Text various anonymous authors,
John Dowland, William Shakespeare

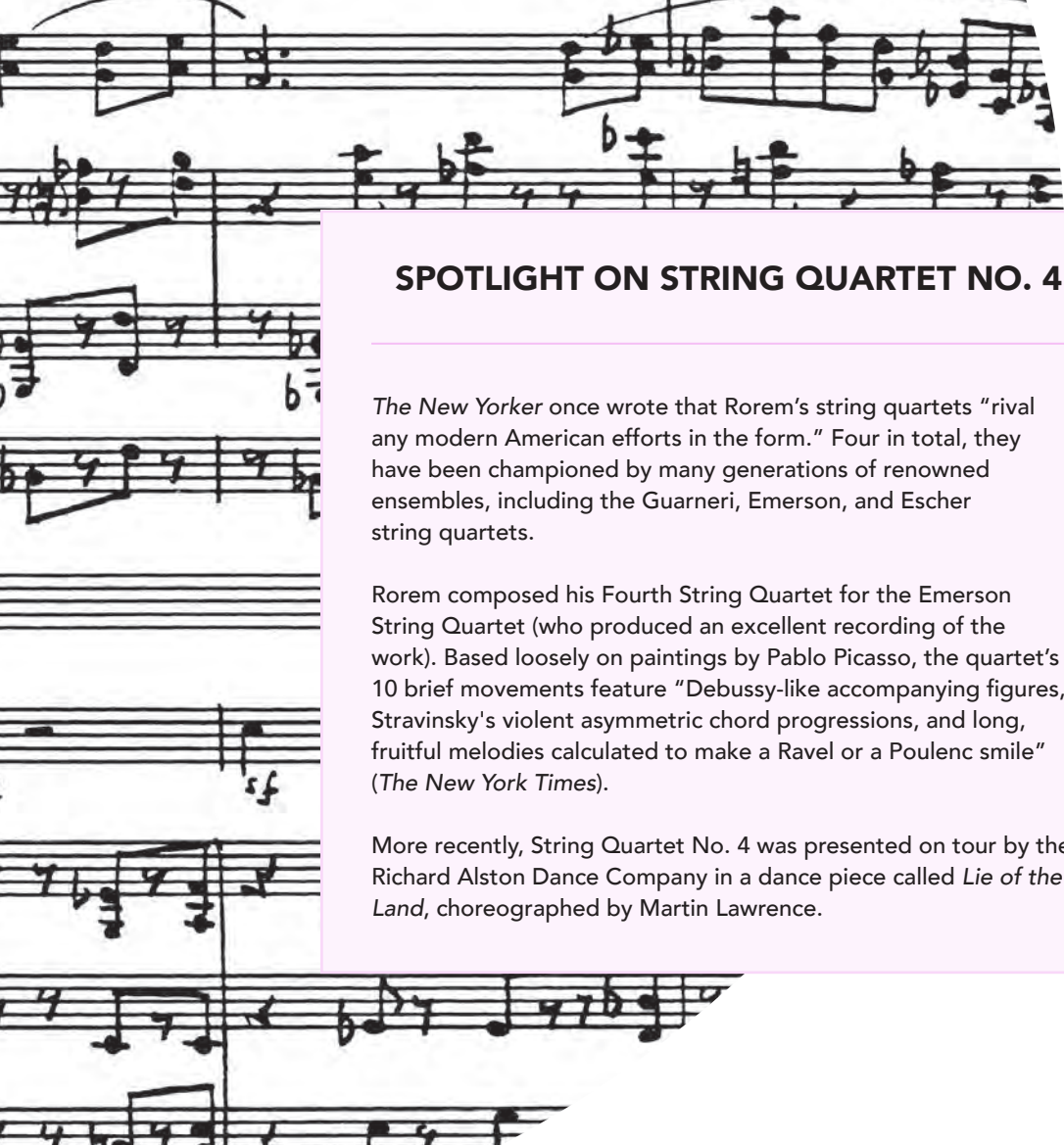
Published by Peermusic Classical

Chamber Music



Roem has an ear for unusual instrument combinations, whether bringing together intriguing groups of instruments—for example, *Lovers* for harpsichord, oboe, cello, and percussion, or *Winter Pages* for clarinet, bassoon, violin, cello, and piano—or carving out unexpected subsets of musicians within a traditional ensemble, like in *Diversions* for brass quintet, which features a playful array of duos, trios, and quartets in 14 movements.

Roem in rehearsal at the Curtis Institute, where he both attended as a student and later taught as a professor, 1984
PHOTO: I. GEORGE BILYK



SPOTLIGHT ON STRING QUARTET NO. 4

The New Yorker once wrote that Rorem's string quartets "rival any modern American efforts in the form." Four in total, they have been championed by many generations of renowned ensembles, including the Guarneri, Emerson, and Escher string quartets.

Rorem composed his Fourth String Quartet for the Emerson String Quartet (who produced an excellent recording of the work). Based loosely on paintings by Pablo Picasso, the quartet's 10 brief movements feature "Debussy-like accompanying figures, Stravinsky's violent asymmetric chord progressions, and long, fruitful melodies calculated to make a Ravel or a Poulenc smile" (*The New York Times*).

More recently, String Quartet No. 4 was presented on tour by the Richard Alston Dance Company in a dance piece called *Lie of the Land*, choreographed by Martin Lawrence.

String Quartets

United States

(2001) 20'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

String Quartet No. 4

(1994) 25'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

String Quartet No. 3

(1991) 25'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

String Quartet No. 2

(1950) 20'

Published by Peermusic Classical

Trios

Lullaby

(2006) 3'

for two violins and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Pas de Trois

(2002) 22'

for oboe, violin, and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Spring Music

(1991) 27'

for piano trio

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

End of Summer

(1985) 18'

for violin, clarinet, and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Trio

(1960) 18'

for flute, piano, and cello

Published by Edition Peters



Rorem in rehearsal at Other Minds Festival, 2003
PHOTO: JOHN FAGO

Duos

Six Variations

(1995) 14'

for two pianos

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Dances

(1984) 15'

for cello and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Romeo and Juliet

(1977) 20'

Nine pieces for flute and guitar

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Book of Hours

(1975) 20'

for flute and harp

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Night Music

(1972) 24'

for violin and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Day Music

(1971) 24'

for violin and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sicilienne

(1950) 5'

for two pianos

Published by Peermusic Classical

Dance Suite

(1949) 18'

for two pianos

Published by Boosey & Hawkes



Speaker icon **SUGGESTED LISTENING**

Ned Rorem: *Winter Pages / Bright Music*

Bridgehampton Chamber Music
Festival Ensemble
New World NW80416

Ned Rorem: *String Quartet No. 4*

Emerson String Quartet
Deutsche Grammophon 4535062

Spring Music

Beaux Arts Trio
Philips 438866

Ned Rorem: *Sun / String Quartet No. 3*

Mendelssohn String Quartet
Newport Classic 85657

Ned Rorem: *Day Music / Night Music*

Jaime Laredo, violin; Ruth Laredo,
piano; Earl Carlyss, violin; and
Ann Schein, piano
Phoenix PHCD123

Ned Rorem: *Chamber Music with Flute*

Mountain Song / Romeo and Juliet / Trio for flute, cello, and piano / Book of Hours / Four Prayers
Fenwick Smith, flute; David Leisner,
guitar; Ronald Thomas, cello; Mihae Lee,
piano; Ann Hobson Pilot, harp
Naxos 8559674

New American Classics

Rorem, *Diversions*

Brass Ring
Crystal Records 564

Mixed Chamber

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

(2004) 13'
for piano quartet
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Unquestioned Answer

(2002) 10'
for flute, two violins, cello,
and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Nine Episodes for Four Players

(2001) 23'
for clarinet, violin, cello,
and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Diversions

(1990) 25'
for brass quintet
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Fanfare and Flourish

(1988) 5'
for two trumpets, two trombones,
and organ
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Bright Music

(1987) 22'
for flute, two violins, cello,
and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Septet "Scenes from Childhood"

(1984-85) 22'
for oboe, horn, piano, and
string quartet
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Winter Pages

(1981) 36'
for clarinet, bassoon, violin,
cello, and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Lovers

(1964) 17'
10 scenes for harpsichord,
oboe, cello, and percussion
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Ensemble with Voice

How Like a Winter

(2013) 10'

for mezzo-soprano, double bass, and piano

Text based on sonnets by William Shakespeare

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sound the Flute

(2004) 2'

for high voice, recorder, and keyboard

Text William Blake

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Aftermath

(2001-02) 29'

for medium voice, violin, cello, and piano

Text 12 different authors

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Two Sermons

(2001) 7'

Two pieces for solo voice, clarinet, violin, double bass, and piano

Text John Donne

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Songs of Sadness

(1994) 30'

for voice, guitar, cello, and clarinet

Text Mark Strand, James Merrill, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Burns

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Auden Poems

(1989) 32'

for tenor and piano trio

Text W. H. Auden

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Santa Fe Songs

(1980) 25'

for baritone, string trio, and piano

Text Witter Bynner

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Serenade on Five English Poems

(1975) 18'

for mezzo-soprano, violin, viola, and piano

Text John Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Thomas Campian

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Last Poems of Wallace Stevens

(1971-72) 24'

for voice, cello, and piano

Text Wallace Stevens

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Ariel

(1971) 17'

for soprano, clarinet, and piano

Text Sylvia Plath

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Dialogues

(1954) 18'

for two voices and two pianos

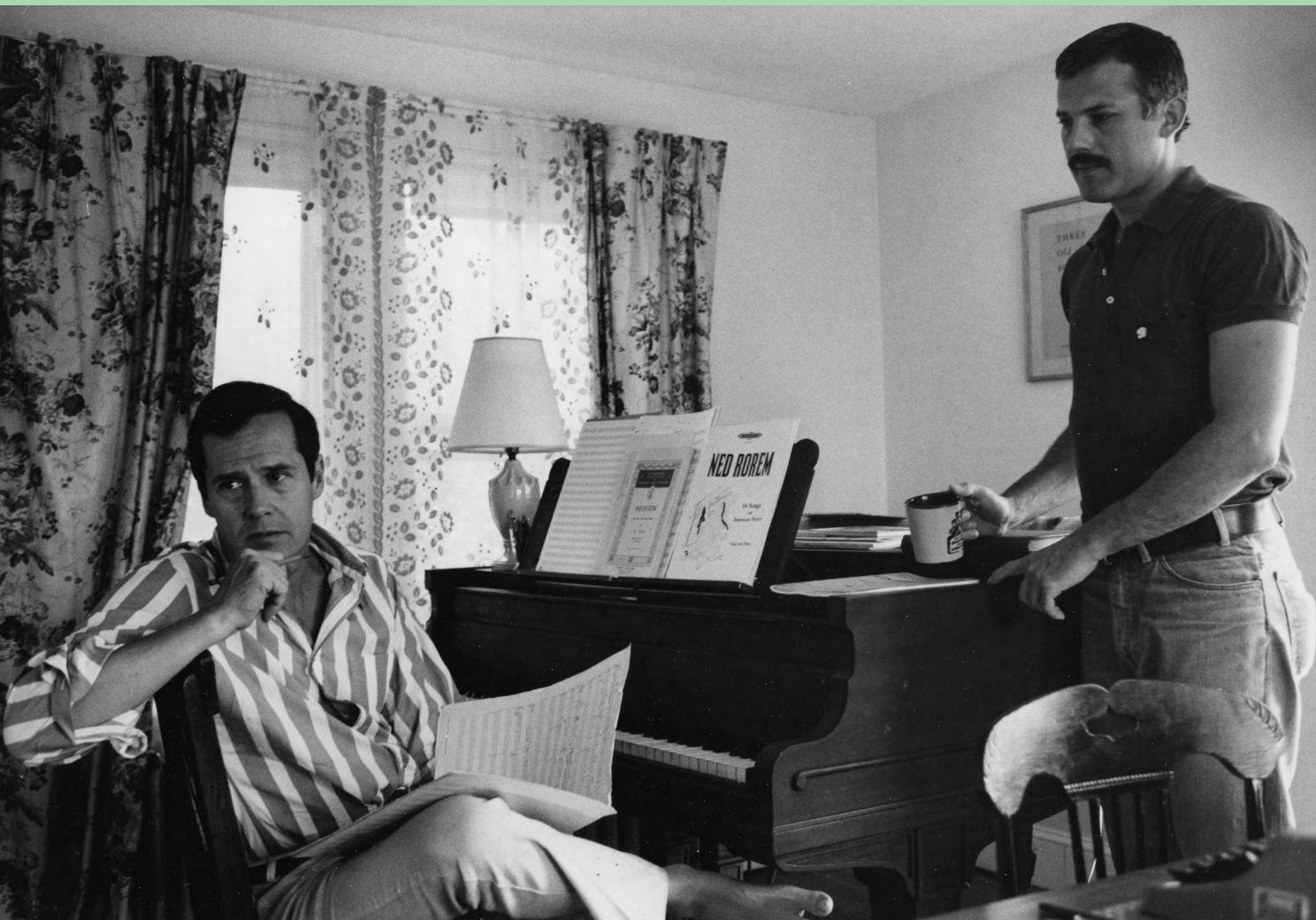
Text Frank O'Hara

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

"Ned Rorem has stuck to his tonal guns throughout half a century of stylistic upheaval. Whatever the genre, vocal or instrumental, his music tends to sing sweetly, tartly, assertively, wryly, forcefully in a manner that makes instant contact with his listeners."

—Musical America

Solo Instrumental



A remarkably gifted pianist, Rorem has composed a wealth of solo keyboard works across his career, including three piano sonatas, eight etudes, and a dazzling *Toccata* that *The New York Times* proclaimed “belongs in the rotation of encores.” Rorem also frequently wrote charming miniatures for piano or organ that he gifted to loved ones, including his partner, organist James Holmes.

Rorem’s catalog of solo string and wind music contains many gems, including the stunning *tour de force* cello suite *After Reading Shakespeare*, written for Sharon Robinson.

Rorem and his longtime partner, organist James Holmes, for whom he composed many solo keyboard works

PHOTO: HARRY BENSON



Rorem with teacher and mentor Aaron Copland at Tanglewood, 1946
PHOTO: HERBERT KUBLY

Piano

Piano Album I & II

Publication in two volumes featuring suites and miniatures
Includes *Recalling*, *Six Friends*, and *Soundpoints*

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Two Odes for Lenny Forever

(2016) 1'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Song and Dance

(1986) 4'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Eight Etudes

(1975) 20'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Piano Sonata No. 3

(1954) 15'

Published by Edition Peters

Barcarolles

(1949) 10'

Published by Edition Peters

Second Piano Sonata

(1949) 14'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Piano Sonata No. 1

(1948) 13'

Published by Edition Peters

Toccata

(1948) 5'

Published by Edition Peters

A Quiet Afternoon

(1948) 11'

Published by Peermusic Classical

Organ & Harpsichord

Organbook I-III

Publication in three volumes, including *Magnificat* and *Stabat Mater*

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Six Pieces for Organ

(1997) 22'

for organ solo

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Views from the Oldest House

(1981) 22'

for organ solo

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

A Quaker Reader

(1976) 30'

for organ solo

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Spiders

(1968) 2'

for harpsichord solo

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Pastorale

(1949) 6'

for organ solo; Andantino from Symphony No. 1, arranged for organ by Rorem

Published by Peermusic Classical

Fantasy and Toccata

(1946) 4'

for organ solo

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Strings

Nocturne for Double Bass and Piano

(2007) 3'

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Autumn Music

(1996-97) 9'

for violin and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Dances

(1984) 15'

for cello and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

After Reading Shakespeare

(1980) 21'

for solo cello

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Suite for Guitar

(1980) 12'

for solo guitar

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Three Slow Pieces

(1978) 10'

for cello and piano

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sky Music

(1976) 18'

for solo harp

Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Sonata for Violin and Piano

(1954) 19'

Published by Edition Peters

"I conceive all music ... vocally. Whatever my music is written for—tuba, tambourine, tubular bells—it is always the singer within me crying to get out."

—Ned Rorem



SUGGESTED LISTENING

Ned Rorem: *Piano Album I / Six Friends*

Carolyn Enger, piano
Naxos 8559761

Ned Rorem: *The Three Piano Sonatas / Piano Works, Volume 2*

Thomas Lanners, piano
Centaur Records 2874 & 2980

Organ Works of Rorem and Pinkham *Organbook I / Organbook II / Organbook III*

Delbert Disselhorst, organ
Arkay Records 6123

Organ Works of Ned Rorem *A Quaker Reader / Views From the Oldest House*

Catharine Crozier, organ
Delos DE3076

Orbit: *Music for Solo Cello Rorem, After Reading Shakespeare*

Matt Haimovitz
Pentatone PTC 5186542

Winds

Four Prayers

(2006) 11'
for flute and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Colors

(2003) 8'
for clarinet and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Cries and Whispers

(2000) 5'
for trumpet and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

An Oboe Book

(1999) 19'
for oboe and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Picnic on the Marne

(1983) 16'
for alto saxophone and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Mountain Song

(1949) 3'
for flute and piano
(flute part may also be played
by oboe, violin, or cello)
Published by Peermusic Classical

The Songs



One can hardly mention Ned Rorem's name without thinking of his immense catalog of over 500 art songs. *The New Yorker* writes: "The songs are, indeed, among the best in the contemporary canon, showing Rorem's uncanny ability to breathe notes into words while leaving a poet's thoughts intact." They reveal his fondness for American Romantic poets of the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Wallace Stevens, Paul Goodman, and Emily Dickinson.

The following pages include highlights of Rorem's song collections, from the beloved cycle *Poems of Love and the Rain* to his magnum opus *Evidence of Things Not Seen*, as well as *Women's Voices*—a setting of texts written by several American and English women. For more songs by Rorem, go to [boosey.com/Rorem](https://www.boosey.com/Rorem).

Pianist Jerome Lowenthal (standing), Rorem, and soprano Phyllis Curtin, 1973
PHOTO: EUGENE COOK



**Phyllis Curtin and
Rorem, 1968**
PHOTO: EUGENE COOK

**Ned Rorem: Song Album,
Volumes I-III**

Publication in three volumes of songs
for solo soprano or tenor and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Ned Rorem: 50 Collected Songs

A representative collection of songs,
available in both high or medium/low
voice and piano
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Another Sleep

(2000) 40'
Collection of 19 songs (in memory
of James Holmes)
Text 14 different authors
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Evidence of Things Not Seen

(1997) 95'
36 songs for four solo voices
(S,A,T,Bar) and piano
Text 24 different authors
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Four Songs

(1986) 8'
for medium or high voice and piano
Text Frank O'Hara, Paul Goodman,
15th-century anonymous
Published by E. C. Schirmer

Nantucket Songs

(1978-79) 18'
Collection of 10 songs
Text Theodore Roethke, William
Carlos Williams, Edmund Waller,
Christina Rossetti, Walter Savage
Landor, and John Ashbery
Published by Boosey & Hawkes



SPOTLIGHT ON EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN

“One of the musically richest, most exquisitely fashioned, most voice-friendly collections of songs I have ever heard by any American composer.”

—New York Magazine

This evening-length song cycle for four singers (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and baritone) with piano is Rorem’s magnum opus in the genre. Premiered by The New York Festival of Song at Carnegie Hall in 1998, the cycle comprises 36 poems by 24 writers arranged into three sections—“Beginnings,” “Middles,” and “Ends”—that outline a lifespan of experience, from youthful optimism to mature experience and ending with a final contemplation of death.

Women’s Voices

(1975-76) 22’

11 songs for soprano and piano

Text Elinor Wylie, Christina Rossetti, Anne Bradstreet, Mary Leigh, Mary Sidney Herbert, Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, Adrienne Rich, Emily Dickinson, Queen Anne Boleyn, Lola Ridge, and Charlotte Mew
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

War Scenes

(1969) 13’

for medium-low voice and piano

Text Walt Whitman, from “Specimen Days”
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Flight for Heaven

(1952) 18’

Cycle of 10 songs for bass and piano

Text Robert Herrick
Published by Theodore Presser Company

The Lordly Hudson

(1947) 3’

for voice and piano

Text Paul Goodman
Published by Theodore Presser Company

Poems of Love and the Rain

(1963) 28’

Cycle of 17 songs for mezzo-soprano and piano

Text Donald Windham, W. H. Auden, Howard Moss, Emily Dickinson, Theodore Roethke, Jack Larson, E. E. Cummings, and Kenneth Pitchford
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

Six Songs for High Voice

(1953) 14’

Text Robert Browning, 16th-century anonymous, and John Dryden
Published by Edition Peters

King Midas

(1961) 20’

Cantata for voices and piano

Text Howard Moss
Published by Boosey & Hawkes

The Resurrection

(1952) 11’

for voice and piano

Text Matthew 27:62-66, 28
Published by Peermusic Classical

Cycle of Holy Songs

(1951) 10’

for voice and piano

Text Psalm 134, 142, 148, and 150
Published by Peermusic Classical

“Frankly, it’s incomprehensible why any American singer wouldn’t have a smattering of Rorem’s songs in his or her repertoire.”

—NPR

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Songs of Ned Rorem

Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano; Malcolm Martineau, piano; Ensemble Oriol
Erato 8573-80222

Ned Rorem: Selected Songs

Carole Farley, soprano; Ned Rorem, piano
Naxos 8559084

Songs of Ned Rorem

Charles Bressler, tenor; Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Gianna d’Angelo, soprano; Donald Gramm, bass; Regina Sarfaty, mezzo-soprano; Ned Rorem, piano
Other Minds Records OM 1009-2

Ned Rorem: Women’s Voices / Some Trees / Six Songs / The Nantucket Songs

Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano; Katherine Ciesinski, mezzo-soprano; Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Beverly Wolff, contralto; Donald Gramm, baritone; Ned Rorem, piano
New World Records NWCR657

Ned Rorem: Poems of Love & the Rain / From an Unknown Past / Four Madrigals

Beverly Wolff, mezzo-soprano; Ned Rorem, piano; Modern Madrigal
Phoenix USA 108

Hearing: 32 Songs of Ned Rorem

Rosalind Rees, soprano; Kimball Wheeler, mezzo-soprano; Max Galloway, tenor; Ron Hilley, baritone; Instrumental Ensemble, Gregg Smith
Premier PRCD 1035

Rorem: Evidence of Things Not Seen

Monique McDonald, soprano; Delores Ziegler, mezzo-soprano; Rufus Müller, tenor; Kurt Ollmann, baritone; Steven Blier, Michael Barrett, pianos
New World NW80575

Ned Rorem: On an Echoing Road

Prince Consort; Alisdair Hogarth, piano and director
Linn Records CKD342





Rorem at his apartment
in New York, 1992
PHOTO: NANCY LEE KATZ

“Rorem’s strengths lie in his uncanny facility with language, his deep understanding of the texts, and his ability to compose fluid, eminently singable vocal lines. Singers favor his evocative music because his songs feel comfortable in the voice. Listeners feel involved because the texts are clear and communicative, their emotions heightened by the music.”

—Carole Farley, Soprano

Abbreviations

Scorings in this brochure are listed in full or are a combination of the below abbreviations. The standard order of scoring instrumentation is as follows:

fl.ob.cl.bn—hn.tpt.trbn.tuba—perc—other—vlnI.vlnII.vla.vlc.db

Woodwinds

picc	piccolo
fl	flute
ob	oboe
corA	cor anglais (English horn)
cl	clarinet (in A or B-flat)
Ebcl	clarinet in E-flat
bcl	bass clarinet
bn	bassoon
dbn	double bassoon or contrabassoon
asax	alto saxophone

Brass

hn	horn
tpt	trumpet
trbn	trombone

Percussion

perc	percussion
timp	timpani

Other

cel	celesta
pft	piano

Strings

vln	violin
vla	viola
vlc	cello
db	double bass or contrabass

Voices

S	soprano
M	mezzo-soprano
A	alto
CA	contralto
T	tenor
Bar	baritone
lyrBar	lyric baritone
BBar	bass baritone
B	bass

Publishers

Boosey & Hawkes has been Ned Rorem's exclusive publisher since 1966. Earlier works are published by Peermusic Classical, Edition Peters, E. C. Schirmer, and Theodore Presser Company. For further information and programming resources for specific works, please contact the appropriate publisher:

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A black and white photograph of a room. In the foreground, a dark wooden chair is positioned. To the right, a portion of a dark piano is visible. The background features a radiator and floral wallpaper. A framed picture hangs on the wall to the left. The overall atmosphere is quiet and artistic.

*“I compose for my own necessity,
because no one else makes quite
the sound I wish to hear.”*

—Ned Rorem

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