



“A hypnotic, haunting fable...*The Outer Edge of Youth* has both the solemnity and wonder of an oratorio and the heightened emotion wrung from the enhanced reality in which opera specializes...the music shimmers, soars, and settles...creating an ecstatic catharsis.”

*Washington Classical Review*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 23, 2022**

**On September 27**, Acis presents the world premiere recording of *The Outer Edge of Youth*, a contemplative and thought-provoking new choral opera from critically acclaimed composer, writer, and multimedia artist SCOTT ORDWAY. Set in a landscape inspired by the coastal redwood forests of Ordway’s native northern California, the work follows two boys on the cusp of maturity

who discover that they can understand the birds in the forest. Written as a response to the toxic masculinity in our culture, Ordway’s libretto deals with questions of love and friendship, the astonishing beauty of nature—and the tension between the immobilizing idealism of youth and an adult world rife with pain, inequality, and injustice. Building with slow, quiet determination toward a final scene of transfiguration and catharsis, *Youth* showcases Ordway at his finest, creating work that critics have called “haunting and beautiful” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), “soul-stirring” (*BBC Music*), and “arresting” (*Gramophone*).

The two vocal soloists take center stage. AMY BROADBENT, a soprano “with consummate poise, limpid clarity, and faultless intonation” (*Washington Classical Review*) is joined by EMILY MARVOSH, a contralto with “plum wine voice, that glorifies all it touches...staggeringly gorgeous” (*The Boston Globe*). ORDWAY accompanies them with a choir of soloists (THE THIRTEEN—“transfigures the listener,” (*The Washington Post*)) and an all-star quartet of low strings whose members also perform with the Berlin Philharmonic, A Far Cry, and other leading ensembles.

Commissioned by The Thirteen and its founder, American conductor MATTHEW ROBERTSON, the piece is another exciting achievement in the ensemble’s mission to reimagine vocal music’s vast potential: “When Scott and I first met to discuss this commission four years’ ago I immediately felt a kinship in his observations about masculinity in society, and his passionate focus on the natural world and the existential threat of anthropogenic climate change. Yet, mostly, I was struck by the concept’s childlike sincerity—from its opening ecstatic “hello’s!” to its heartfelt conclusion.” On her role in the production, virtuoso soprano AMY BROADBENT said, “Scott’s piece allows each of us, musicians and listener, to connect to our inner child, and being part of that was a really special experience.” Her fellow soloist, EMILY MARVOSH said, “I think the spirit of exploration and play that we discovered during rehearsals and performances also visits the listeners of this album...our crackerjack quartet of low strings provide the grounding for Scott’s trademark idiomatic vocal writing.”

GRAMMY®-nominated record producer, GEOFFREY SILVER, has previously collaborated with both THE THIRTEEN/ROBERTSON (“riveting... sung brilliantly,” *American Record Guide*) and ORDWAY (“a remarkable creation,” *Textura*), and this is the first time all three have worked together. Silver said, “This work really brings out the virtuosity of all involved, Ordway simply demands the best from his instrumentalists, singers, and conductor. So much of the drama relies on the vocal and performing abilities of the two protagonists, and Amy and Emily each brought their talent and depth of life experience to their roles in extraordinary and simply breathtaking ways. It was an honor to capture Matthew’s realization of that for the album and I have high hopes for it.”

The album drops on September 27 and is entered in this year’s classical vocal GRAMMY® awards.

PRESS CONTACTS

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ALBUM RELEASE DATE:

SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

DPK, covers, audio:

<https://www.acisproductions.com/ordway-outer-edge-of-youth-press-preview>

APPLE PREVIEW:

<https://apple.co/3LANLGC>

SPOTIFY:

<https://show.co/5uuwPxT>

**Acis**

THE THIRTEEN (thethirteenchoir.org)

The Thirteen is a professional choir and orchestra celebrated for reimagining the potential of vocal music from many periods. Praised for performing with “striking color and richness” that “transfigures the listener” (*The Washington Post*) and “a tight and attractive vocal blend and excellent choral discipline” (*American Record Guide*), for a decade the ensemble has been at the forefront of invigorating performances of masterworks ranging from early chant to world premieres and the centuries in between. Founder MATTHEW ROBERTSON has led the ensemble in more than two hundred concerts, two dozen concert tours, seven commercial recordings, and numerous world premieres. Noted for his “incisive tempos and dramatic pacing,” (*Washington Classical Review*) and “flowing lines and dramatic climaxes” (*Fanfare*), Robertson’s kaleidoscopic artistic vision has led to acclaimed performances of a vast and varied repertoire, often featuring inspired use of staging and multimedia.

SCOTT ORDWAY (scottordway.com)

Hailed as “an American response to Sibelius” by The Boston Globe, composer and multimedia artist SCOTT ORDWAY has become recognized for his thought-provoking large-scale works that blend music with text (frequently his own), photography, video, and theater. His widely-acclaimed work has been called “exquisite” (*New York Times*) and “sublime” (*Textura*), “hypnotic” (*BBC Music*) and “a marvel” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*). A native Californian, Ordway work explores the relationship between landscape, culture, and spirituality in the context of a changing climate.

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