

As from the pow'r of sacred lays  
The spheres began to move,  
And sung the great Creator's praise  
To all the blessed above,  
So, when the last and dreadful hour  
This crumbling pageant shall devour,  
The trumpet shall be heard on high,  
The dead shall live, the living die,  
And music shall untune the sky.

John Dryden, from *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1687)

Musica, Dei donum optimi,  
trahit homines, trahit Deos.  
Musica truces mollit animos  
tristesque mente erigit.  
Musica vel ipsas arbores  
et horridas movet feras  
Cunctisque solatia prestans.

*Music, gift of the highest God,  
attracts mortals, it attracts the gods.  
Music calms angry souls  
and uplifts sad spirits.  
Music even moves the very trees  
and the wild beasts,  
affording solace to all.*

anonymous; translation by Ron Jeffers

When asked to write a work for The Rose Ensemble's 20th Anniversary Season, I looked for a text that would resonate with this special occasion, perhaps something regal that might tie in with the earlier concerts - The Last Queen of Hawaii, King Louis IX – or something to help "crown" the May Day celebration. But I kept coming back to music: "Music, gift of the highest God," music with the power to "untune the sky," music that refreshes and gives us strength, "affording solace to all."

duration: c. 4:30

First performance by The Rose Ensemble, Jordan Sramek, Artistic Director  
May 1, 2016, Ordway Concert Hall, Saint Paul, MN