

- **TRACK 1 – Songs My Mother Taught Me**

The first track is an orchestral setting of Dvořák's touchingly beautiful, "Songs My Mother Taught Me", an apropos beginning to this homage to the lessons of harmony Allison's mother so deeply believes in. This piece was recorded in the composer's hometown of Prague.

- **TRACK 2 – "Song of Songs"**

Ukrainian composer Vasyl Barvinsky was held prisoner in a Russian gulag for over a decade beginning in 1948. While he was imprisoned, the entirety of his collection of manuscripts of his compositions were destroyed in a fire. Once freed, he spent the rest of his living days trying to recreate his life's work. His setting of the sensual biblical text from "Song of Songs" was originally set for soprano, violin and piano. We arranged it for full orchestra, solo harp, solo violin and celesta, in addition to maintaining Barvinsky's soaring melody for the soprano.

- **TRACK 3 – "Kaddish"**

Born to survivors of the concentration camps in WWII in the immediate aftermath of the war, composer Marianna Rosett grew up knowing there was some unspeakable sadness her parents were shielding her from. When she recognized a familiar-looking face in a picture of a young child, she started piecing together the pieces of the puzzle of her parents' unimaginably tortured background – including witnessing the murders of Marianna's never-to-be-met half siblings. "Kaddish" – the traditional Jewish mourning prayer was composed in memory of her "ghost brothers".

- **TRACK 4 – "Jephthah's Daughter"**

The album is proud to feature the first English-language recording of Amy Beach's long-lost setting of the biblical story of "Jephthah's Daughter". Beach hand-delivered her only manuscript of the score to her favorite soprano in France in the early 1900's. The soprano kept the handwritten masterpiece in a trunk for safekeeping until it was confiscated by the German army during WWI. Seemingly lost and forgotten to the world, it was only recently uncovered more than a century later. Allison had the handwritten manuscript transcribed and turned into a full orchestral score with parts that we were able to record for this album. Although one recording was recently released in French, this is the first time Amy Beach's English words can be heard, as she, herself, wrote them. The story is a tragic one. The great hero Jephthah is so overcome with gratitude for his recent victory in war that he vows to sacrifice the very next creature to walk out of his home. His grief is overpowering when he

watches his only child, his beloved daughter Jephthah, emerge from the house only moments later. This dramatic scene is her plea to protect her soul and watch over the remaining life of her devastated father.

• **TRACK 5 – “Morghe Sahar”**

The son of Iranian immigrants, composer Kian Ravaei has set a traditional Iranian folk song – “Morghe Sahar” in a most unusual setting. Arranged for soprano, alto flute, cello and piano, he shrouds a traditionally monophonic melody with an intense harmony, reflecting the sorrow of an oppressed people. He dedicates this arrangement to the memory of Jina Mahsa Amini and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.

• **TRACK 6 – “Invocation”**

Kim D. Sherman created a brand-new arrangement of her “Invocation” for this album. In it, she sets only one line of text: “Make peace on all your lands” in 15 different world languages. Kim walked around her diverse neighborhood of Washington Heights and asked the local shop owners how they would say the phrase in their language of origin. She recorded each one’s voice speaking the text so she could be sure to set each phrase idiomatically.

• **TRACK 7 – “Postscriptum”**

Born in Soviet Russia, composer Lera Auerbach offers her wordless “Postscriptum” to close this album. She describes it as a haunting nostalgic memory to something you think happened to you in your past, but didn’t. Allison thinks of it as a prayerful reminder that our work is not done. Maybe it never will be. But we must keep putting in our drops of goodness to the bucket if we have any hope for it to overflow.

The album is performed by Allison Charney, soprano and Benjamin Loeb, piano/conductor with Peter Seidenberg, cello; Kelly Hall-Tompkins, violin; Allison Loggins-Hull, alto flute; Kirsten Agresta Copely, harp; Gaye LeBlanc, harp and the National Symphonia Orchestra.

It was produced by Kitt Wakeley, Christina Giacona, Patrick Conlon, Jeff Keswin and Allison Charney.