PROGRAM NOTES

The Wheel and Circles are pieces that were commissioned in 1996 by the Concord Chorus of Massachusetts to commemorate their 50th anniversary. Two poems by Wendell Berry that were related in theme were chosen to set for mixed chorus. Circles, titled by the author Song (4) dedicated to Guy Davenport, and The Wheel, dedicated to Robert Penn Warren.

Berry's poem extols the circles of the seasons and the cycles of life. The circle, we are told, is the most perfect geometric form, having no beginning or end. If you look at the Circles score you will see that the notes for women's voices gradually curve up and then down, while on the staff below the men sing in a curve down and then up, so that the two staves put together form a visible circle.

The opening line of The Wheel, "At the first stroke of the fiddler's bow," evokes the music of my childhood in rural California when my parents still danced the traditional steps of the reel and square dance to the shout of the caller.

The Wheel and Circles are metaphors for life with its ever-evolving dance in time and unending cycle of birth, death, rebirth, and life. The poet Wendell Berry tells us "only music keeps us here." It is through music we are brought to a more clear vision of our divine source.

—Dave Brubeck

Dave Brubeck (1920–)

A jazz pianist who is noted for his improvisational skills, Dave Brubeck is also the composer of many fully-notated works, including choral, hymns, orchestral, chamber music, ballet suites, a string quartet, solo pieces for piano, violin & voice, and large-scale works for chorus and orchestra. He has been designated a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress and a "Jazz Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more information, please visit alfred.com.
Commissioned in 1996 by the Concord Chorus of Massachusetts to commemorate their 50th anniversary.

The Wheel

Poem by WENDELL BERRY

SSAATTBB, Accompanied

Music by DAVID BRUBECK

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At the first stroke of the fiddle bow the danciers rise from their seats. Then bow to their partner and promenade.

At the first stroke of the fiddle bow.

From their seats, bow to their partner and promenade.

From their seats.
gradual accel

do si do and away we go. All join hands and circle right.

Swing your partner through the night. Wheel your partner round and round.

gradual accel
Swing your partner off the ground.  

The dance begins

Ye haw
V.S.A.T.

dance and the song call each other to be.

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

Soon they are one rapt in a single rapture, so that even the

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

twang twang a twang twang twang twang a twang twang

Gradual ritard

so that even the

Gradual ritard

so that even the
night, ev en the
night, has its clar i ty, and time is the wheel that
brings it round. With a
tempo
Joyous

--

brings it round. With a Grand Ritard
notes optional

brings it round, and time is the wheel that brings it round. With a

brings it round, and time is the wheel that brings it round. With a
do si do and a way we go. We will

Boom ching ching boom ching ching ching boom ching

dance the hoe down hoe down ho. With

Boom ching ching boom ching ching ching boom ching

-- -
do si do and go.

We will dance the hoe down. We will dance 'til the fiddler puts down his bow. Dance to the fiddler, ching ching ching ching ching. Boom ching ching boom ching ching boom ching.
nev er stop.
Boom ching ching boom ching ching boom ching
nev er stop.
Boom ching ching boom ching ching boom ching

Dance to the fid dler

Boom ching ching boom ching
Dance to the fid dler

Boom ching ching boom ching

And they danced all night by the

Boom ching ching boom ching
And they danced all night by the

Boom ching ching boom ching

And they danced all night by the

Boom ching ching boom ching

And they danced all night by the

Boom ching ching boom ching

And they danced all night by the

Boom ching ching boom ching

And they danced all night by the
light of the moon and they all danced together to the fiddler's tune.

At the first stroke of the fiddle bow

Zing zang zing zang a zing zing zing zing zing
Reflective

plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk - a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk - a plunk plunk plunk - a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk
plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk

In this rap - ture the dead re - turn.
Sorrow is gone from them.
plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk a plunk plunk They are light.

They are light. plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk a plunk plunk

plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk a plunk plunk and turn with them in the steps of the living

plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk and turn with them in the steps of the living

plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk and turn with them in the

plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk

They

plunk plunk a plunk plunk plunk plunk a plunk plunk a plunk plunk
Slightly slower
Espressivo
of the song, in the sweet enclosure of the song. Timeless is the wheel.

of the song, in the sweet enclosure of the song. Timeless is the wheel.

of the song, in the sweet enclosure of the song, Timeless is the wheel.
of the song, that brings them round.

Time less is the wheel that

wheel that brings them

Time less is the wheel that

wheel that brings them

Time less is the wheel that

wheel that brings them

Time less is the wheel that

wheel that brings them

Time less is the wheel

Brings them round.

Grand Ritard

Brings them round.

Grand Ritard