



# Hours

by Cecil Price Walden





[WWW.ALBANYRECORDS.COM](http://WWW.ALBANYRECORDS.COM)

ALBANY RECORDS U.S.  
915 BROADWAY, ALBANY, NY 12207  
TEL: 518.436.8814 FAX: 518.436.0643

ALBANY RECORDS U.K.  
BOX 137, KENDAL, CUMBRIA LA8 OXD  
TEL: 01539 824008

© 2024 ALBANY RECORDS MADE IN THE USA

**WARNING: COPYRIGHT SUBSISTS IN ALL RECORDINGS  
ISSUED UNDER THIS LABEL.**

COMPACT  
**disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO



# the cycle

When Alice-Anne Light and I started this journey together in 2018, we had no idea where it would take us. In the midst of a time of turmoil and grief, we were granted the opportunity to create a major song cycle, but were lost as to what we wanted to say. While still in the unmooring, I saw Paul Schrader's *First Reformed*. The film casts Ethan Hawke as Reverend Toller, the pastor of a small congregation, who finds himself increasingly distraught and radicalized after the suicide of a local environmental activist he had been counseling. Sitting in the theater, I felt the acid and ache of despair and grief flood my veins. I watched the film over and over, comforted by the shared experience of grief. I realized I had not been able to talk to God. I realized how alone I had felt.

I wanted to know how people had talked to God throughout the centuries, at a time when I had no idea how to start. Needing a guide, I turned to the idea of the Book of Hours- an exact guide for how and when to pray. After a year of immersing myself in writers that I believe were talking to God, I assembled the document that became *hours*. The piece is a journey through a "dark night of the soul", what Inayat Khan called, "a total annihilation of all that you believed in and thought that you were." The descending four-note motif that leads us through the piece undergoes that annihilation: it is the sinking feeling of grief, the nakedness of receptiveness, the murmuring whimper of tears. The four notes are a prayer hoping for an answer.

Prayer has come to be called many things: The Secret, manifesting, etc. It can be as long as praying the rosary, or as simple as what Anne Lamott calls the three essential prayers: "Help, Thanks, Wow." All of this, for me, boils down to one common need: the desire to open oneself and become part of a larger system, to look outside ourselves for hope, to find the annihilation that transforms into answers to why and how.

In *First Reformed*, Reverend Toller writes in his journal: "The desire to pray itself is a type of prayer. How often we ask for genuine experience when all we really want is emotion."

This piece is about the desire to pray.

Cecil Price Walden  
November, 2023







# the artists

Cecil Price Walden (b. 1991) writes music “of powerful emotional intensity and passion...that is almost impossibly gorgeous.” (Journal of Singing)

A life-long Southerner, Price draws on the rich musical, literary, and culinary legacies of the place to create work that is both familiar and new. Commissioned by the Southern Foodways Alliance in 2011, their cantata “Leaves of Greens” led Southern Living Magazine to name them a “Hero of the New South,” (March 2012). “Sacred Spaces,” commissioned by Bruce Levingston for the Bicentennial of Mississippi, received premieres at the opening of the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and Carnegie Hall.

Price studied music, gender studies and Southern studies at the University of Mississippi. They live in Oxford, Mississippi, with their miniature schnauzer, Sally.



Mezzo-soprano Alice Anne Light is known for her expressive, limpid singing and sound technique across a wide variety of repertoire. She is a frequent performer on the opera stage, in musical theater, and in recital. Light specializes in premiering new works by living composers and shifting the paradigm of the traditional art song recital by cultivating interdisciplinary arts experiences for her audiences. She is particularly interested in the intersection of visual and musical art forms in both live performance and gallery installations.

Alice Anne Light holds degrees from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music, the University of Mississippi, and Harding University. She currently serves on the faculty of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX where she resides with her husband and two dogs, Hildegard and Bernstein.



Artist and performer Kristy Kristinek's passion for art began at a young age and has evolved into a career focused on capturing the essence of movement through her unique painting style. Her work has been featured in galleries around the US; she continues to push the boundaries of what is possible with her chosen materials through memory and documentation of movement captured by imbalanced parallels of the performer and the audience.

How do we document a “stage” through painting?

What is left behind?

We can experience this memory through gesture and abstraction. The movement becomes captured through non-traditional painting materials such as wood stains and fabric dyes which reconnect us with the physical elements of the “stage” and “costume”.

Kristy Kristinek holds degrees from Texas Tech University, a BFA in 2012 and an MFA in 2015 in Painting. She currently serves on the faculty at South Plains College as an Assistant Professor of Fine Arts and Gallery Director on the main campus in Levelland, TX. She resides in Anton, TX with her husband and son.





# texts and translations

## i. morning (Emily Dickinson)

Will there really be a "Morning"?  
Is there such a thing as "Day"?  
Could I see it from the mountains  
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like Water lilies?  
Has it feathers like a Bird?  
Does it come from famous places  
Of which I have never heard?

Oh some Scholar! Oh some Sailor!  
Oh some Wise Men from the skies!  
Please to tell a little Pilgrim  
Where the place called "Morning" lies!

## ii. sorrows (Louise Clifton)

who would believe them winged  
who would believe they could be

beautiful who would believe  
they could fall so in love with mortals

that they would attach themselves  
as scars attach and ride the skin

sometimes we hear them in our dreams  
rattling their skulls clicking

their bony fingers  
they have heard me beseeching

as i whispered into my own  
cupped hands enough not me again

but who can distinguish  
one human voice

amid such choruses  
of desire

Lucille Clifton, "sorrows" from The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton. Copyright © 2008 by Lucille Clifton. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of BOA Editions, Ltd., All rights reserved.

## iii. an end (Sara Teasdale)

I have no heart for any other joy,  
The drenched September day turns to depart,  
And I have said good-bye to shat I love,  
With my own will I vanquished my own heart.

On the long wind I hear the winter coming--  
The window-panes are cold and blind with rain;  
With my own will I turned the summer from me,  
And summer will not come to me again.

## iv. why (Frances Quarles)

Why dost thou shade thy lovely face? Oh, why  
Does that eclipsing hand so long deny  
The sunshine of they soul-enliv'ning eye?  
Without that light, what light remains in me?  
Thou art my life, my way, my light; in thee  
I live, I move, and by thy beams I see.  
Thou art my life; if thou but turn away  
My life's a thousand deaths: thou art my way;  
Without thee, Lord, I travel not, but stray.  
My light thou art; without thy glorious sight  
Mine eyes are darken'd with perpetual night.  
My God, thou art my way, my life, my light.  
And yet thou turn'st away thy face, and fly'st me;  
And yet I sue for grace, and thou deny'st me;  
Speak, art thou angry, Lord, or dost thou try'st me?  
Unscreen those heavenly lamps, or tell me why  
Thou shad'st thy face; perhaps thou think'st no eye  
Can view those flames, and not drop down and die.  
If that be all, shine forth, and draw thee nigher;  
Let me behold and die, for my desire  
is Phoenix-like to perish in that fire.  
Death-conquered Laz'rus was redeem'd by thee;  
If I am dead. Lord, set death's prisoner free;  
Am I more spent, or stink I worse than he?  
Thou art the pilgrim's path, the blind man's eye,  
The dead man's life; on thee my hopes rely;  
If thou remove, I err, I grope, I die.  
Disclose thy sunbeams; close thy wings and stay;  
See, see how I am blind, and dead, and stray,  
O thou, that art my light, my life, my way.

## v. cántico espiritual (Juan de la Cruz)

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ¿Adónde te escondiste,              | Where did you hide,                             |
| amado, y me dejaste con gemido?     | Beloved, leaving me moaning?                    |
| Como el ciervo huiste,              | Like the deer you fled,                         |
| habiéndome herido;                  | having hurt me;                                 |
| salí tras ti, clamando, y eras ido. | I went out crying after you, and you were gone. |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Pastores, los que fuerdes           | Shepherds, who are strong                        |
| allá, por las majadas, al otero,    | who go there through the sheepfolds to the hill, |
| si por ventura vierdes              | if by chance you see                             |
| aquél que yo más quiero,            | the one I love the most,                         |
| decidle que adolezco, peno y muero. | Tell him that I suffer, languish, and die.       |

## vi. passage i







### vii. midnight on the great western (Thomas Hardy)

In the third-class seat sat the journeying boy,  
And the roof-lamp's oily flame  
Played down on his listless form and face,  
Bewrapt past knowing to what he was going,  
Or whence he came.

In the band of his hat the journeying boy  
Had a ticket stuck; and a string  
Around his neck bore the key of his box,  
That twinkled gleams of the lamp's sad beams  
Like a living thing.

What past can be yours, O journeying boy  
Towards a world unknown,  
Who calmly, as if incurious quite  
On all at stake, can undertake  
This plunge alone?

Knows your soul a sphere, O journeying boy,  
Our rude realms far above,  
Whence with spacious vision you mark and mete  
This region of sin that you find you in,  
But are not of?

### viii. ubi sunt (traditional liturgical text)

Ubi sunt qui ante nos      Where are those who, before us,  
In mundo fuere?          existed in the world?

### ix. du. nachbar gott (Rainer Maria Rilke)

Du, Nachbar Gott, wenn ich dich manches Mal  
in langer Nacht mit hartem Klopfen störe,  
so ists, weil ich dich selten atmen höre  
und weiß: Du bist allein im Saal.  
Und wenn du etwas brauchst, ist keiner da,  
um deinem Tasten einen Trank zu reichen:  
ich horche immer. Gib ein kleines Zeichen.  
Ich bin ganz nah.

Nur eine schmale Wand ist zwischen uns,  
durch Zufall; denn es könnte sein:  
ein Rufen deines oder meines Munds-  
und sie bricht ein  
ganz ohne Lärm und Laut.

Aus deinen Bildern ist sie aufgebaut.

Und deine Bilder steh'n vor dir wie Namen.  
Und wenn einmal in mir das Licht entbrennt,  
mit welchem meine Tiefe dich erkennt,  
vergeudet sichs als Glanz auf ihren Rahmen.

Und meine Sinne, welche schnell erlahmen,  
sind ohne Heimat und von dir getrennt.

You, neighbor God, if sometimes I bother you  
In the night with my loud knocking,  
I only do so because I can't hear you breathe  
and know: you are alone in that large hall.  
And when you need something, there is no one there  
To place a drink into your reaching hand:  
I am always listening. Give a little sign.  
I am very near.

There is only a thin wall between us,  
Just by chance; because it could be: a small cry  
from your mouth or from mine-  
and it tears down  
without any noise or sound.

The wall is built from your images.

And your images stand in front of you like names  
And when in me the light arises  
Within my soul begins to recognize you,  
Lavishing as gleam on its frame.

And my senses, which so quickly become feeble,  
are without a home and divorced from you.

### x. de profundis (traditional liturgical text)

De profundis clamavi      Out of the depths I cry  
ad te Domine              to you, oh God.

### xi. passage ii









## xii. spring torrents (Sara Teasdale)

Will it always be like this until I am dead?  
Every spring must I bear it all again--  
With the first red haze of the budding maple boughs,  
The first sweet-smelling rain?

Oh, I am like a rock in the rising river  
Where the flooded water breaks with a low call,  
Like a rock that knows the cry of the waters  
And cannot answer at all.

## xiv. oh llama de amor viva (Juan de la Cruz)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| ¡Oh llama de amor viva<br>que tiernamente hieres<br>de mi alma en el más profundo centro!<br>Pues ya no eres esquivo<br>acaba ya si quieres,<br>¡rompe la tela de este dulce encuentro! | Oh living flame of love,<br>You that tenderly wound<br>The deepest center of my soul!<br>Since you are no longer harsh,<br>Please complete your task:<br>Rend the veil of this sweet encounter! |
|---|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| ¡Oh cauterio süave!<br>¡Oh regalada llaga!<br>¡Oh mano blanda! ¡Oh toque delicado<br>que a vida eterna sabe<br>y toda deuda paga!<br>Matando, muerte en vida has trocado. | O gentle cautery!<br>O delightful wound!<br>O soft hand! O delicate touch,<br>Which tastes like eternal life<br>And pays every debt!<br>Killing me, you have changed death to life. |
|---|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| ¡Oh lámparas de fuego<br>en cuyos resplandores<br>las profundas cavernas del sentido,<br>que estaba oscuro y ciego,<br>con estraños primores<br>color y luz dan junto a su querido! | O lamps of fire,<br>in whose glow<br>The deep caverns of sense<br>Which was formerly dark and blind,<br>Now with strange excellence<br>Give both warmth and light to their loved one! |
|---|---|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| ¡Cuán manso y amoroso<br>recuerdas en mi seno<br>donde secretamente solo moras,<br>y en tu aspirar sabroso<br>de bien y gloria lleno,<br>cuán delicadamente me enamoras! | How meekly and lovingly<br>You wake in my breast<br>Where you secretly dwell alone,<br>And with your delicate breathing,<br>Filled with goodness and glory,<br>How delicately you enamor me! |
|--|--|

## xiii. prayers of steel (Carl Sandburg)

Lay me on an anvil, O God.  
Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.  
Let me pry loose old walls.  
Let me lift and loosen old foundations.

Lay me on an anvil, O God.  
Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.  
Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.  
Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.  
Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into whiter stars.

## xv. let there be new flowering (Louise Clifton)

let there be new flowering  
in the fields let the fields  
turn mellow for the men  
let the men keep tender  
through the time let the time  
be wrested from the war  
let the war be won  
let love be  
at the end

Lucille Clifton, "let there be new flowering" from The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton 1956-2010.  
Copyright © 1974, 1987 by Lucille Clifton. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on  
behalf of BOA Editions, Ltd., All rights reserved.

## xvi. dona nobis pacem (traditional liturgical text)

dona nobis pacem      grant us peace





## CONTACT US

@hoursthecycle

hoursthecycle@gmail.com



## **Production Team**

Producer: Anthony J. Maglione

Sound Engineer: Will Crain, BRC Studios

Editing Mixing and Mastering: Will Crain, BRC Studios

Liner Notes: Alice Anne Light

Artwork for Album: Kristy Kristinek

This album was recorded on location at BRC Audio Productions,  
1933 N 10th St., Kansas City, Kansas on January 9-11, 2023.

This album was recorded on a Yamaha C7 Grand piano.

## **This project was made possible with funding from:**

Texas Tech University

Texas Tech University College of Visual and Performing Arts

Texas Tech University School of Music

## **We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for their mentorship through this process:**

Dr. Andrew Stetson, Director of the School of Music, Texas Tech University

Nancy Maria Balach, Chair of the Department of Music, University of Mississippi

Living Music Resource

Sara Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies

Julia Aubrey, Director of the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts

Anthony J. Maglione

Dr. Jos Milton





Cecil Price Walden  
composer and pianist

Alice Anne Light  
mezzo-soprano

Kristy Kristinek  
artist

# hours

TROY 1976

COMPACT  
**disc** **Albany**  
DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDS

©2024 ALBANY RECORDS MADE IN THE USA

WARNING: COPYRIGHT SUBSISTS IN ALL  
RECORDINGS ISSUED UNDER THIS LABEL.