

# The Passion of Anne Frank



## Libretto

**The Passion of Anne Frank  
a new oratorio in two acts  
with original lyrics and music**

**A world premiere and free performance at  
Ramón C. Cortines High School of Visual and Performing Arts  
Presented by the Los Angeles Master Chorale**

**January 22, 2015 at 12 noon  
January 23, 2015 at 7 pm**

125 students from Cortines High School of Visual and Performing Arts, a.k.a. Grand Arts, collaborating with Los Angeles Master Chorale's professional teaching artists, Composer Jonathan Beard, Librettist Doug Cooney and Performer Alice Kirwan Murray and choir classroom teachers Desiree Fowler and Stormy Sacks have written a new oratorio told in multiple musical movements.

Born out of the LA Master Chorale's award-winning Voices Within program, students were immersed in a six month in-school residency to compose and perform an original oratorio. This is the fifth oratorio composed by high school students since 2011.

Permission to adapt the Anne Frank story for this educational project  
has been kindly and exclusively granted by the  
Anne Frank Fonds Basel

# Libretto

## 1: Heroes Shine in the Darkness

In 1944, Miep Gies, secretary to Otto Frank, returns to the Frank family's hiding place in Amsterdam and finds Anne's diary on the floor.

### **MIEP:**

IT IS COLD AND BARE LIKE A TOMB BEHIND THE BOOKCASE.  
I WALK IN AND OUT OF THAT DOOR,  
BUT I STAND HERE, STUCK IN TIME.  
THERE IS A PRESENCE IN THE ROOM THAT I CANNOT DESCRIBE.  
HEROES SHINE IN THE DARKNESS.  
I SEE ANNE'S DIARY ON THE FLOOR.  
SHOULD I READ IT?

### **LISTENERS:**

DON'T LET IT BE SECRET.  
WHERE DID THEY GO? WHY WERE THEY TAKEN? WHAT WILL WE FIND?  
ANSWER US. ANSWER US.

### **MIEP:**

LOOK NOT TO ME FOR ANSWERS.  
LOOK TO THE DIARY.  
HEROES SHINE IN THE DARKNESS.

## 2: A Fire May Start Quite Small

In 1933, the Nazi Party's rise to power in Germany calls for the elimination of the Jewish and other non-Aryan people throughout Europe by discrimination, oppression, and ultimately genocide. Unfortunately, many people cannot escape the Nazi agenda.

### **NARRATIVE:**

A FIRE MAY START QUITE SMALL - IN A DISTANT FIELD.  
IF SOMETHING FUELS THE FLAMES, THAT FIRE WILL SPREAD.  
THE CHANCELLOR DECLARED HIS PEOPLE - A SUPERIOR RACE.  
THEY LIKED WHAT THEY HEARD AND FOLLOWED HIM WITH BLIND DEVOTION.

DARKNESS CONSUMES THE LIGHT, IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE.  
SMOKE FILLS THE AIR, IMPOSSIBLE TO BREATHE.  
LIGHTNING STRIKES AND RIVERS FLOOD.  
LIVES WILL SURELY CHANGE.

THOSE WHO OPPOSED AND THOSE WHO DID NOT FIT THE MOLD  
FOUND THEMSELVES AT RISK. IT COULD NOT BE STOPPED.  
THE HATE WOULD SPREAD. HAPPIER DAYS, NOW MEMORIES.  
THEY WERE ISOLATED, VICTIMIZED, TRAPPED WITHIN SECONDS,  
IN FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES.

### **3: Our Children**

Otto Frank, a Jewish businessman, ponders the rise of the Nazi Party -- and the dangers posed for his own children.

#### **OTTO:**

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.  
OUR CHILDREN, ARE THEY WORTHLESS?  
ARE THEY TARGETS? ARE THEY TO BE ORPHANS?  
DO FAMILIES HAVE NO FACES? CAN A FAMILY DISAPPEAR?  
IS THERE MORE HOPE THAN FEAR?  
WILL WE HAVE A HOME AGAIN?  
IT IS TIME FOR THE CHILDREN TO HIDE.

[a Jewish prayer]

*"MAY THE DOOR OF THIS HOME BE WIDE ENOUGH  
TO RECEIVE THOSE WHO HUNGER FOR LOVE.  
MAY ITS THRESHOLD BE NO STUMBLING BLOCK TO YOUNG FEET."*

### **4: Together But Alone**

To avoid Nazi oppression, Frank moves his family to the city of Amsterdam in Holland. Germany invades Holland in 1940.

#### **NARRATIVE:**

IT WAS GENOCIDE - AND CHILDREN WERE THE FIRST TO DIE.  
INNOCENCE WAS DANGEROUS; CHILDREN SENT TO DEATH.  
UNTHINKABLE. UNBELIEVABLE. BUT LIFE HAD CHANGED.  
THE DOOR WAS CLOSING IN FRONT OF THEIR EYES.  
THE FAMILY FLED GERMANY TO AMSTERDAM TO FIND NEW LIFE  
BUT HATRED FOLLOWED THEM.

ISOLATION: THEY WERE PLACED IN DIFFERENT HOUSES, DIFFERENT SCHOOLS.

ALIENATION: THEIR STAR WAS USED TO RIDICULE THEM. TO SHAME.

SEPARATION: THEIR FAMILY TORN APART.

A LETTER CAME DEMANDING MARGOT REPORT TO A LABOR CAMP.  
THEIR PEACE WAS BROKEN. THEY HAD TO LEAVE THEIR HOME.  
SO THE FAMILY NOW HIDES, TOGETHER BUT ALONE.

## 5: Slow Motion Life

In 1942, Frank hides his family and friends in a "secret annex" above his office. They must be quiet to avoid capture by the Nazis.

### **NARRATIVE:**

ALL THE CHILDREN WERE FORCED TO BE ADULTS  
ONCE THEY PASSED THROUGH THE SMALL HIDDEN DOOR.  
ALL THE RULES. SO MANY RULES.

OTTO BURNS THE TRASH.  
MARGOT FIGHTS THE URGE TO COUGH.  
ALL THESE PEOPLE ALL THE TIME.

THE SOUND OF A CREAKING FLOOR  
NOT ENOUGH ROOM AT THE DINNER TABLE.  
SHARING A BEDROOM WITH A PERSON I DO NOT KNOW.

FROM MORNING TO DUSK, MOVING EVER SO SLIGHTLY.  
THIS SLOW MOTION LIFE IS UNBEARABLE.

## 6: Silence, No Noise

Frank established rules of absolute quiet during the daytime hours among the occupants to avoid being detected.

### **CHOIR:**

SILENCE. NO NOISE. NO ONE MAY KNOW OF YOUR EXISTENCE.  
SILENCE. NO NOISE. NO RUNNING WATER, NO FOOTSTEPS, NO LIGHT.

**MR. VAN DAAN:** BE VERY QUIET.

**MARGOT:** OUR LIVES ARE AT STAKE.

**MRS. FRANK:** IT MAY SEEM IMPOSSIBLE BUT WE ARE ALL HERE FOR EACH  
OTHER.

### **CHOIR:**

SILENCE. NO NOISE. NO ONE MAY KNOW OF YOUR EXISTENCE.  
SILENCE. NO NOISE. NO RUNNING WATER, NO FOOTSTEPS, NO ---

**ANNE:** ALL I HEAR IS NO --

**CHOIR:** Shhhhhh --

## **OTTO:**

AS THE SUN SETS, LIFE RESUMES.  
THIS ATTIC IS OPPRESSIVE  
BUT IT WILL SAVE US IN THE END.

## **7: Her Diary**

Anne had received a diary for her 13<sup>th</sup> birthday and confided all her thoughts and impressions in it. She named the diary "Kitty."

## **NARRATIVE:**

SHE HAD AN AUTOGRAPH BOOK OF RED PLAID  
FASTENED WITH A LITTLE BRASS BUCKLE.  
A BIRTHDAY GIFT SHE RECEIVED FROM HER FATHER  
BUT THE BOOK WOULD BECOME HER DIARY

EVERY DAY, SHE WOULD WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING.  
CONFIDING EVERY EMOTION  
WHAT SHE THOUGHT AND HOW SHE FELT  
FASTEN THE BUCKLE ON THE LITTLE BELT.

## **8: Paper Cannot Speak**

As the years passed, Anne's diary became a great source of comfort. She put all her fears, insecurities, and insights into writing.

## **ANNE** (as she writes):

I ENJOYED SKIPPING ROPE. I TOOK PRIDE IN IT.  
IT WAS NOISY AND FUN. WILL I SKIP ROPE AGAIN?  
WILL I EVER SEE MY FRIENDS?  
OR ARE YOU MY ONLY FRIEND NOW, KITTY?

EVERYTHING THAT I KNEW OUTSIDE THE DOOR IS GONE.  
HERE THEY LOOK AT ME LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG.  
HERE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND MY TROUBLES.  
EXCEPT FOR YOU, MY ONLY FRIEND.  
A DIARY HAS BECOME MY ONLY FRIEND.  
PAPER CANNOT SPEAK. PAPER CANNOT FEEL.  
BUT YOU HEAR ME. I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND.  
YOU REASSURE ME. IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT.  
I KNOW IT IN MY HEART. I SEE IT ON THE PAGE.

IN MY FAMILIAR PRISON, I WAIT IN SILENCE, SUFFOCATING.  
I ENVY THE BIRDS THAT SOAR IN THE SKIES.

DAYS TURN TO WEEKS, WEEKS TO MONTHS, MONTHS TO YEARS.  
FOREVER WAITING. I HAVE CHANGED. I AM CHANGING.  
PAPER CANNOT SPEAK. PAPER CANNOT FEEL.  
BUT YOU HEAR ME. I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND.  
YOU REASSURE ME. IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT.  
I KNOW IT IN MY HEART. I SEE IT ON THE PAGE.

## **9: On a Normal Day**

In 1944, the annex is raided by SS officers. All the occupants are arrested and sent for interrogation.

### **NARRATIVE:**

ON A NORMAL DAY –  
NO, NOT A NORMAL DAY.  
A CAR ARRIVES AT THE WAREHOUSE WITH MEN IN BLACK BOOTS.

THEY ENTER THE HOUSE WHERE IT HAD BEEN SO QUIET.  
AND THERE HAD BEEN NO NOISE.  
NOT A SOUND. ONLY SILENCE.

ANNE WRITES IN HER DIARY.  
SHE FILLS IT WITH HER THOUGHTS. THE DETAILS OF HER LIFE.  
BUT HER HEART BEGINS TO HAMMER. SHE CATCHES HER BREATH.  
SHE HEARS THE BOOKCASE MOVE.

NO MORE CREEPING FOOTSTEPS. HEAVY BOOTS UPON THE FLOOR.  
MUFFLED VOICES TURN TO SHOUTS.  
DAYLIGHT FLOODS THE ROOM. BOOKS TUMBLE TO THE GROUND.  
HER LIFE, HER HEART, HER SOUL, IS FACE DOWN, FACE DOWN.

INTERROGATE THE FAMILY.  
SEND THEM ON TRAINS TO DIFFERENT CAMPS.  
SEND THE DAUGHTERS TO HARD LABOR.  
A FAMILY TORN APART. A FAMILY DISAPPEARS.  
HAD THEY EVER BEEN THERE AT ALL?  
NO NOISE.

## **10: Hope In Everything We Do**

Anne and Margot are sent to the Bergen-Belsen labor camp. Margot dies of typhus in 1945. Anne dies a few weeks later.

### **NARRATIVE:**

IN THE ROTTING BUNKS BETWEEN DULL BRICK WALLS,  
TWO SISTERS LAY IN WAITING FOR ALL THE PAIN TO LEAVE.  
DEATH IS DRAWING NEAR. DEATH AWAITS.

**MARGOT:**

I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM. I DO NOT KNOW THIS PLACE.  
A VOICE WITHIN ME IS SOBBING. I FEEL MYSELF SHRINKING.  
THE PITY, THE SHAME. I AM DYING.  
IS ANYONE THERE?

**ANNE:**

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. WE ARE NOT ALONE.  
I SET THE SUPPER TABLE.  
MOTHER COOKS THE FOOD.  
COME AND LIGHT THE CANDLES.  
FATHER CALLS FOR YOU.

JOIN US AT THE TABLE.  
I'VE SAVED A SEAT BY ME.  
IF YOU LIGHT THE CANDLES,  
YOU WILL SEE OUR FAMILY.

HOPE IS HARD TO FIND IN A DARK TIME.  
I HAVE GROWN TEN YEARS IN BARELY TWO.  
WE CANNOT TAKE THE THINGS WE HAVE FOR GRANTED. BE GRATEFUL.  
WE MUST HAVE HOPE IN EVERYTHING WE DO.

**MARGOT:**

YOU HAVE ALWAYS SEEN THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.  
YOU SEE THE GOOD IN ME.

**ANNE:**

JOIN US AT THE TABLE.  
I'VE SAVED A SEAT BY ME.  
IF YOU LIGHT THE CANDLES,  
YOU WILL SEE OUR FAMILY.

**ANNE & MARGOT:**

HOPE IS HARD TO FIND IN A DARK TIME.  
I HAVE GROWN TEN YEARS IN BARELY TWO.  
WE CANNOT TAKE THE THINGS WE HAVE FOR GRANTED. BE GRATEFUL.  
WE MUST HAVE HOPE IN EVERYTHING WE DO.

## **11: Still Believe**

Rescued from the annex, Anne's diary is published in 1947 to worldwide acclaim, translated into 70 languages with over 30 million copies sold. Anne's "voice" speaks for six million victims of the Holocaust.

### **NARRATIVE:**

A FIRE MAY START QUITE SMALL.  
ONE GIRL CAN LIGHT A CANDLE.  
ONE VOICE CAN SPEAK FOR SIX MILLION SOULS.

HOW DO WE FORGIVE WHAT CANNOT BE FORGIVEN?  
CAN PEACE BE FOUND INSIDE TRAGEDY?  
HOW DO WE FORGET WHAT CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN?  
LOOK INSIDE YOURSELF FOR TRANQUILITY.

**ANNE:** MY DOUBT CONSUMES ME.  
MY SOUL IS NO LONGER MINE.  
IT WANDERS ON ITS OWN.

### **CHOIR:**

BUT IF WE LISTEN FOR YOUR VOICE,  
IF WE FOLLOW THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS,  
IF WE STAY TRUE TO THIS PATH,  
HAPPINESS WAITS. GOODNESS SHINES.

**MIEP:** HEROES SHINE IN THE DARKNESS.

### **CHOIR:**

HOW DO WE FORGIVE WHAT CANNOT BE FORGIVEN?  
CAN PEACE BE FOUND INSIDE TRAGEDY?  
HOW DO WE FORGET WHAT CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN?  
LOOK INSIDE YOURSELF FOR TRANQUILITY.

**ANNE:** I AM HERE. AND IN THE END, DESPITE IT ALL, I STILL BELIEVE.  
DEAR KITTY, I STILL BELIEVE.

End of libretto.