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MUSIC REVIEW: LEWIS SPRATLAN – 'HESPERUS IS PHOSPHORUS'

 Posted by: Jon Sobel August 3, 2015 in [Album Reviews](#), [Classical](#), [Music](#), [Music Genres](#), [Reviews music](#)
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Hesperus is Phosphorus, a major new choral work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer [Lewis Spratlan](#), sets a series of texts loosely connected by a celestial theme to appropriately expansive music scored for the chamber choir The Crossing and the six-piece [Network for New Music Ensemble](#).

Ranging from a two-line quote from physicist Richard Feynman and an equally brief New Testament passage to poems by A. R. Ammons and Adrienne Rich and lengthy prose selections from the work of David Eagleman, the texts evidently inspired the composer to great imaginative heights.

For example, the eerily triumphant "Unity" uses Ammons's poem "Guide" to reflect the suite's overall theme, the ancients' realization that

Hesperus, the evening star, and Phosphorus, the morning star, are one and the same: the planet Venus. "You can't come to unity and remain material...how I said can I be glad and sad: but a man goes from one foot to the other." Two feet, same body. Spooky and transcendent, the music suggests the breadth of space as well as the fire of the stars.

The composer's impeccable choral touch ties disparate elements and moods together throughout the



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