

# VOCALISE

*Songs of Thirteen Moons, Part VI*

*Aesthetic Positioning*

Peter Dickson Lopez

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*Vocalise* is the climactic sixth part of *Song of Thirteen Moons*, an elegiac cycle composed in memory of the composer's beloved wife, Irene, of nearly fifty years. Scored for soprano, tenor, double chamber choir, orchestra and electronics, *Vocalise* culminates in a duet conversation that enacts the eternal joining of two souls — love lost and found again. The work stands at approximately twenty minutes and is designed to be programmed independently, as the capstone of a multi-work concert pairing, or as part of the larger cycle. It is currently being brought forward through a commissioning consortium for the 2026 or 2027 Barlow General Commission.

## COMPOSITIONAL IDENTITY

Peter Dickson Lopez composes lush, cinematic, electroacoustic works exploring spirituality, metaphysics, and unseen dimensions. His music occupies a distinctive position within the contemporary landscape — at the intersection where harmonic luminosity meets electroacoustic innovation, where vocal lineage meets cinematic architecture, where intimate grief opens onto cosmic transcendence. Trained at UC Berkeley under five composers whose works were performed by the San Francisco Symphony — William Denny, Andrew Imbrie, Richard Felciano, Olly Wilson, and Edwin Dugger — Lopez's compositional voice was forged in the crucible of the American West Coast avant-garde, then refined through decades of private creative evolution. His first major work, *The Ship of Death* (Paris, 1977), premiered at the Gaudeamus International Composers Competition in the Netherlands, establishing his practice at the frontier between acoustic and electronic traditions.

## A CONSTELLATION OF AFFINITIES

Harmonic Luminosity

— Arvo Pärt, Valentin Silvestrov, Pēteris Vasks



*Sustained radiance and spiritual reduction; harmony as a form of prayer*

## Electroacoustic Ritual

— Kaija Saariaho, Jonathan Harvey, Tristan Murail

*The marriage of acoustic and electronic sound worlds; technology as spiritual conduit*

## Vocal Lineage

— Henryk Górecki, Olivier Messiaen

*The human voice as vessel of transcendent grief; singing that bears witness*

## Cinematic Architecture

— Tōru Takemitsu, John Adams

*Vast sonic canvases with narrative sweep; post-minimalist faith in tonal beauty*

## Mythic / Metaphysical Explorers

— George Crumb, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Giacinto Scelsi

*Ritual encounter with the numinous; the dissolution of ego into pure sound*

## THE UNIQUE POSITION

No single composer in this constellation occupies the same crossroads as Lopez. Pärt approaches from sacred minimalism, Saariaho from spectral innovation, Takemitsu from East-West synthesis, Crumb from sonic ritual — but none arrives at the specific confluence that characterizes *Vocalise*: a work that is simultaneously elegiac and luminous, intimate and architecturally vast, acoustically gorgeous and electronically transformed. *Songs of Thirteen Moons* synthesizes the spiritual depth of the tintinnabuli tradition, the timbral innovation of the spectralists, the vocal expressivity of Górecki's elegiac soprano, the cinematic sweep of Adams, and the numinous intensity of Crumb and Scelsi — into a single, integrated artistic vision shaped by profound personal loss and the composer's lifelong conviction that music can illuminate the unseen.



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For the complete Musical Lineage Constellation, comparative analysis, and curated listening  
playlist, contact: [peter@peterdicksonlopez.com](mailto:peter@peterdicksonlopez.com)

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