

# Nonsense

words or language having no meaning or conveying no intelligible ideas  
language, conduct, or an idea that is absurd or contrary to good sense  
an instance of absurd action

~ Program ~

The Jumblies.....John Kilpatrick  
MU Chorus

Little Man in a Hurry.....Eric Whitacre  
MU Chamber Choir

Nonsense Songs from Alice in Wonderland.....Liza Lehmann  
(The Songs That Came Out Wrong)  
MU Chorus

How doth the Little Crocodile	Ensemble
Fury said to a Mouse	Mark Hengel, bass solo
You are old, Father William	Men's choir
Speak Roughly to Your Little Boy	Jayden Zaharris, alto solo
Will you walk a little faster	Ensemble
Mockturtle Soup	Ben Jennings, tenor solo
The Queen of Hearts	Katie Darragh, soprano solo
They told me you had been to her	Ensemble
Epilogue	Ensemble

Additional Solos—King: Sam Robertson, Alice: Clare Sweetman,  
Knave: Arik Zintel

~ Program Notes ~

Classifications of nonsense include words or language having no meaning or conveying no intelligible ideas—language, conduct, or an idea that is absurd or contrary to good sense; an instance an absurd action. Analyzed, fictitious nonsense is a style of literature that regularly confronts common sense and generates a totally original world out of the manipulation of dialect. Frequently it assembles then deconstructs the precise significance and implication of words and exposes how subjective the semantics or sense of language can be. Crucial to

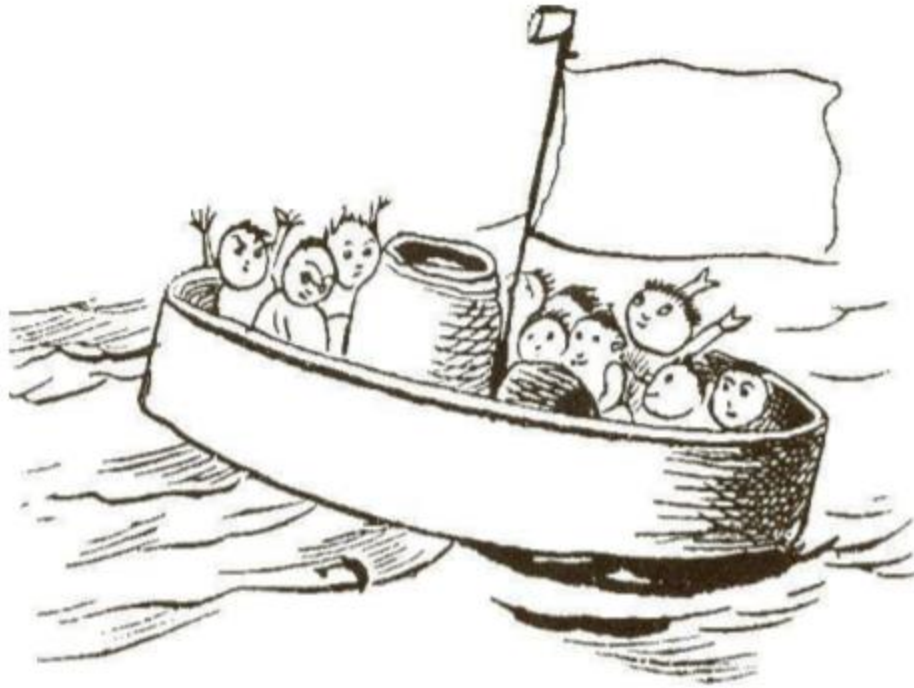
understand literary nonsense is that it is not without sense. As the reader sees the word “nonsense” the majority think of something that is entirely inconsequential and without sense—but knowing the essence of literary nonsense, requires the perception that the definition of nonsense is broader than initially understood; it fashions a unique realm within the cogent world. Parallels to current discourse are paramount obvious. Within the nonsense dialogue of today there is a more profound meaning that reflects our time.

Edward Lear (1812-1888) and Lewis Carroll (1832-1898) are both nonsense writers of the English Victorian Era whereas Edward Estlin Cummings, (e.e.cummings) (1894-1962) is an American poet, painter, essayist, author, and playwright of the 20<sup>th</sup> century not associated with nonsense literature.

John Kilpatrick was born in Oxford in 1941, at age 7 he sang in the Christ Church Cathedral Choir. After moving to West Cumberland, Kilpatrick continued to sing first bass and then tenor finally retiring his membership in the Sheffield Bach Choir after 40 years. As a child he was endeared by the nonsense poetry of Edward Lear and Gelett Burgess which he began to set to music. An intriguing individual, his career was in the industry of steel and in his spare time he enjoys gardening.

Eric Whitacre, born 1970 in Reno, Nevada, has made his unique mark on the choral world with his presentation of his Virtual Choir, *Lux Aurumque* in 2009. A graduate of Juilliard School of Music in New York he has toured the world as composer, conductor, and speaker. Many of his compositions have been recorded—most notable is Grammy Award-winning *Light and Gold*. *little man in a hurry* is the fifth piece in a choral cycle called *The City and the Sea*. All five pieces are settings of poems by e.e. cummings. Whitacre calls the piano part “oven-mitt” technique, because many of the chords are white-key clusters played as if you are wearing mitts on your hands—a daunting task for any pianist!

Born Elisabetha Nina Mary Frederica Lehmann in London, Liza Lehmann (1862-1918) was a remarkable success as a composer and soprano. Growing up in an intellectual and artistic atmosphere, her father a German painter and her mother a music teacher, composer, and arranger, Lehmann ended her performing career in 1894 when she married. She continued to compose and in 1896 wrote her most famous song cycle for four voices and piano, *In a Persian Garden*, set to the verses of Rubāiyāt of Omar Khayyām. She was known for her art and parlour songs. *Nonsense Songs* was written late in her career in 1908



original drawing by Edward Lear

## **The Jumblies**

By Edward Lear

### **I**

They went to sea in a Sieve, they did,  
In a Sieve they went to sea:  
In spite of all their friends could say,  
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,  
In a Sieve they went to sea!  
And when the Sieve turned round and round,  
And every one cried, 'You'll all be drowned!'  
They called aloud, 'Our Sieve ain't big,  
But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!  
In a Sieve we'll go to sea!'  
Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

### **II**

They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,  
In a Sieve they sailed so fast,

With only a beautiful pea-green veil  
Tied with a riband by way of a sail,  
    To a small tobacco-pipe mast;  
And every one said, who saw them go,  
‘O won’t they be soon upset, you know!  
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long,  
And happen what may, it’s extremely wrong  
    In a Sieve to sail so fast!’  
    Far and few, far and few,  
        Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
    Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
    And they went to sea in a Sieve.

### III

The water it soon came in, it did,  
    The water it soon came in;  
So to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet  
In a pinky paper all folded neat,  
    And they fastened it down with a pin.  
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar,  
And each of them said, ‘How wise we are!  
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long,  
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,  
    While round in our Sieve we spin!’  
    Far and few, far and few,  
        Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
    Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
    And they went to sea in a Sieve.

### IV

And all night long they sailed away;  
    And when the sun went down,  
They whistled and warbled a moony song  
To the echoing sound of a coppery gong,  
    In the shade of the mountains brown.  
‘O Timballo! How happy we are,  
When we live in a sieve and a crockery-jar,  
And all night long in the moonlight pale,  
We sail away with a pea-green sail,  
    In the shade of the mountains brown!’  
    Far and few, far and few,  
        Are the lands where the Jumblies live;

Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

## V

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,  
To a land all covered with trees,  
And they bought an Owl, and a useful Cart,  
And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,  
And a hive of silvery Bees.  
And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,  
And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,  
And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,  
And no end of Stilton Cheese.  
Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

## VI

And in twenty years they all came back,  
In twenty years or more,  
And every one said, 'How tall they've grown!'  
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible Zone,  
And the hills of the Chankly Bore;  
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast  
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;  
And everyone said, 'If we only live,  
We too will go to sea in a Sieve,—  
To the hills of the Chankly Bore!'  
Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

**little man in a hurry**  
By Eric Whitacre

**...e.e. cummings**

little man  
(in a hurry  
full of an  
important worry)  
halt stop forget relax

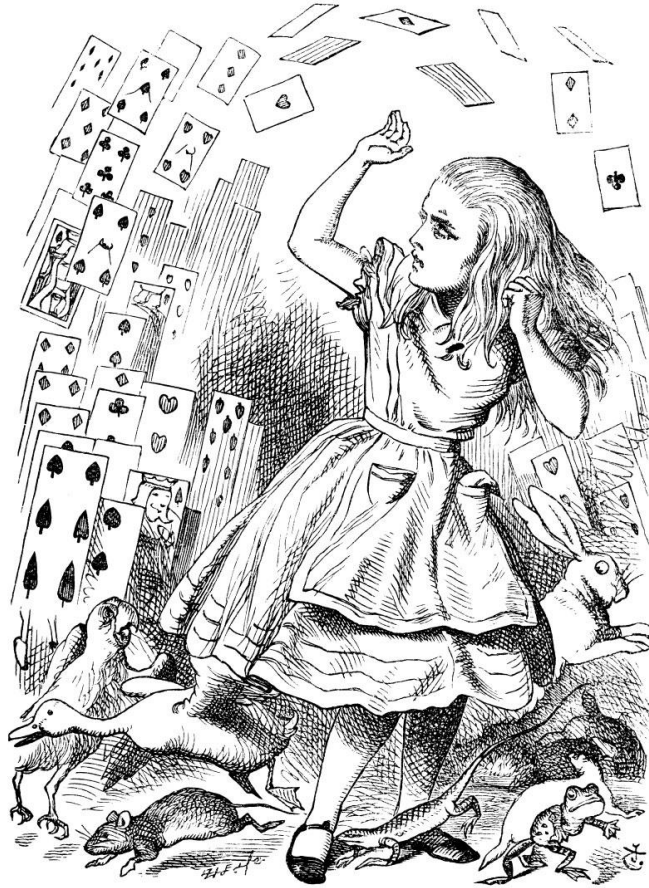
wait

(little child  
who have tried  
who have failed  
who have cried)  
lie bravely down

sleep

big rain  
big snow  
big sun  
big moon  
(enter

us)



## **Nonsense Songs**

By Liza Lehmann

### **I. How Doth the Little Crocodile**

How doth the  
little crocodile  
Improve his shining tail,  
And pour the waters of the Nile  
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully He seems to grin,  
How nearly spread his claws,  
And welcomes little fishes in,  
With gently smiling jaws!

... Lewis Carroll



## II. Fury Said to a Mouse

Fury said to a mouse,  
That he met in the house,  
“Let us both go to law,  
*I will prosecute you.*  
Come, I’ll take no denial;  
We must have a trial;  
For really this morning  
I’ve nothing to do.”  
Said the mouse to the cur,  
“Such a trial, dear sir,  
With no jury or judge,  
Would be wasting our breath.”  
“I’ll be judge, I’ll be jury,”  
Said the cunning old Fury;  
“I’ll try the whole cause,  
And condemn you to death”



### III. You are Old, Father William

“You are old, Father William,” the young man said,  
“And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—  
Do you think at your age, it is right?”

“In my youth,” Father William replied to his son,  
“I fear’d it might injure the brain,  
But, now that I’m perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “and your jaws are too weak  
For anything tougher than suet,  
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—  
Pray, how did you manage to do it?”

“In my youth,” said the father, “I took to the law,  
And argued each case with my wife;  
And the muscular strength, which it have to my jaw  
Has lasted the rest of my life.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “one would hardly suppose  
That your eye was as steady as ever,  
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—  
What made you so awfully clever?”

“I have answer’d two questions and that is enough,”  
Said his father, “don’t give yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?  
Be off, or I’ll kick you downstairs.”

### IV. Speak Roughly to your Little Boy

“Speak roughly to your little boy,  
And beat him when he sneezes;  
He only does it to annoy,  
Because he knows it teases.

I speak severely to my boy,

I beat him when he sneezes;  
For he can thoroughly enjoy  
The pepper when he pleases.”

### **V. Will you Walk a Little Faster?**

“Will you walk a little faster?” said a whiting to a snail,  
“There’s a porpoise close behind us, and he’s treading on my tail.  
See how eagerly the lobsters and turtles all advance!  
They are waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the dance?  
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, will you join the dance?  
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, won’t you join the dance?”

“You can really have no notion how delightful it will be,  
When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!”  
But the snail replied, “Too far! too far!” and gave a look askance—  
Said he thanked the kindly, but he would not join the dance.  
Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance,  
Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance.

“What matters it how far you go?” his scaly friend replied,  
“There is another shore, you know, upon the other side.  
The further off from England the nearer is to France—  
Then turn no pale beloved snail, but come and join the dance.  
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, will you join the dance?  
Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, won’t you join the dance?”



### **VI. Mockturtle Soup**

Beautiful Soup, so rich and green,  
Waiting in a hot tureen!  
Who for such dainties would not stoop?  
Soup of the evening, beautiful Soup!  
Beautiful Soup!  
Beautiful Soup!  
Soup of the evening,  
Beautiful, beautiful Soup!

Beautiful Soup! Who cares for fish,  
Game, or any other dish?

Who would not give all else for two  
Pennyworth only of beautiful Soup?  
Beautiful Soup!  
Beautiful Soup!  
Soup of the evening,  
Beautiful, beautiful soup!



## **VII. The Queen of Hearts**

The Queen of Hearts, she made some tarts,  
All on a summer's day:  
The Knave of Hearts, he stole those tarts,  
And took them quite away.

The King of Hearts, called for those tarts,  
And beat the Knave full sore.  
The Knave of Hearts brought back those tarts,  
And vow'd he'd steal no more!

## **VIII. They Told me you had Been to Her**

They told me you had been to her,  
And mentioned me to him:  
She gave me a good character,  
But said I could not swim.

He sent them word I had not gone  
(We know it to be true):  
If she should push the matter on,  
What would become of you?

I gave her one, they gave him two,  
You gave us three or more;  
They all return'd from him to you,  
Tho' they were mine before.

If I or she should chance to be  
Involv'd in this affair,  
He trusts to you to set them free,  
Exactly as we were.

My notion was that you had been  
(Before she had this fit)  
An obstacle that came between  
Him, and ourselves, and it.

Don't let him know she liked them best,  
For this must ever be  
A secret, kept from all the rest,  
Between yourself and me.'

King: That's the most important piece of evidence we've heard yet, So now let the jury—

Alice: If any one of them can explain it, I'll give him sixpence. I don't believe there's an atom of meaning in it.

King: If there's no meaning, that saves a world of trouble, yet, I don't know, I seem to see some meaning after all. "*Said I could not swim*" You can't swim, can you?

Knave: Do I look like it?

King: All right so far, nothing can be clearer than *that*. Then again: "*Before she had this fit*" You never had fits, my dear, I think?

Queen: Never!

King: Then the words don't fit you!

They told me you had been to her, but said I could not swim,  
They told me you had mention'd me to him  
They told me you had mention'd me to him  
They told me, told me this.

She gave me a good character and mention'd me to him.  
She gave me a good character to him  
She gave me a good character to him  
She gave me, gave me that.

My notion was that you had been (Before she had this fit)  
It was that you had been (Before she had this fit)  
My notion was that you had been  
A secret kept from all the rest, between ourselves and it.



## **IX. Epilogue**

Alice! A childish story take  
And, with a gentle hand,  
Lay it where childhood's dreams are twined  
In memory's mystic band,  
Like a pilgrim's withered wreath of flowers,  
Plucked in a far off land,  
In a far off, far off land.

# Marquette University Chorus and Chamber Choir

Spring 2022

## Soprano

Alicia Anderson S1  
Annmarie Buckley S1\*  
Katie Darragh S1  
Claire Flynn S1 \*  
Ari Manta S2  
Halie Maple S1  
Grace Marchello S1 \*  
Priscilla Martinez Villa S2  
Alex Schmidt S2  
Beth Schultz S2/A2 \*  
Tess Stumvoll S1 \*  
Clare Sweetman S1  
Margaret Weiner S1

## Alto

Julia Krzyzak A1  
Rachel Laliberte A1  
Clare Lindstrom A2  
Nayeli Mares A1 \*  
Emma Niles A1  
Lucila Radke A1  
Izzy Rowe A1  
Miranda Spindt A1  
Emily Udell A2  
Sarah Woerner A2 \*  
Jayden Zaharris A1

## **Tenor**

Diego Chacon T1 \*  
Quinn Evans T1  
Benjamin Jackson T2  
Ben Jennings T2/B1 \*  
Bennett Raasch T2  
Ian Thiesenhusen T1 \*  
Andres Vera Crespo T1 \*  
Will Wightkin T2  
Arik Zintel T1 \*

## **Bass**

Mark Hengel B2\*  
Sam Robertson B2 \*  
Matthew Trecek B1 \*

\* Chamber Choir

Jenny Ai, accompanist  
Lucila Radke, Librarian

## **Executive Board**

Emily Udell, President  
Mark Hengel, Vice President  
Grace Marchello, Treasurer  
Matthew Trecek, External Communications  
Alicia Anderson, Social Relations  
Ben Jennings, Men's Properties  
Annmarie Buckley, Women's Properties  
Rachel Laliberte, Historian

Mark Konewko, PhD, Director