

october project presents

THE BOOK OF ROUNDS

21 songs of grace

There has never been an album quite like this.

Released on Sounds True in the fall of 2015, it is not only an exquisitely rhapsodic cycle of musical rounds, it is *also* a transformative journey of consciousness—with lyrics that offer a new vocabulary of mantra—in English.

The Book of Rounds is a cycle of twenty-one songs conceived of and written by Julie Flanders and Emil Adler. Each round is a fugue of positive messages created to invoke a feeling of well-being in those that listen to, sing or speak them. The music lifts the words beyond their ordinary meanings into an enveloping and transformative experience that is poetic and universal.

ON THE MUSIC

A round is a melody that harmonizes itself as it repeats, with voices entering at measured intervals, and cascading over each other to create a kaleidoscopic effect of meaning and beauty. Through the repetition that defines it, a round can have a profound contemplative effect.

The Book of Rounds is divided into three chapters of seven rounds each. The complete work follows a dramatic and a meditative arc that moves the listener through each chapter, sometimes gently, sometimes strikingly shifting the mood, and offering what is ultimately a relaxing, energizing and integrated experience.

ON THE WORDS

Using simple, prayer-like language, the rounds are essentially positive *mantras* that cascade, circle and relate in the same way the melodies do. With every repetition, each lyric begins to acquire different shades of meaning, shifting the mind and the heart of the listener.



Julie Flanders, whose deeply influential work in the expressive arts is complemented by her profound work as a healer and spiritual teacher, describes this as one of her most personal projects. *The Book of Rounds* was originally written for her son—as an embrace of protection and comfort during difficult times.

ON THE PRODUCTION

Produced by internationally acclaimed recording artist October Project, *The Book of Rounds* came together over several years of experimentation, mentorship and collaboration. Although the recording is rendered by only a very small number of singers (with the voices of OP's Marina Belica, Julie Flanders & Emil Adler woven in throughout), the layered arrangements by Keiji Ishiguri create a virtual orchestra of sound.

The singers featured on this recording include a handpicked group of Yale University students and alums, most of whom are part of Yale's great *a cappella* tradition that includes both the Whiffenpoofs and Redhot & Blue, which Marina Belica conducted when she was a student there.

October Project

Renowned for the aural beauty and metaphysical power of its songs, October Project features award winning composer Emil Adler, internationally acclaimed poet/lyricist Julie Flanders and transcendent lead vocalist Marina Belica.

Innovators in the ever-changing music world, Belica, Flanders & Adler have released a succession of highly acclaimed independent recordings following two albums for Epic Records (Sony) that helped define the musical landscape of the 1990s.

Powered by Flanders' words, Adler's music, and the group's trademark harmonies, October Project has enjoyed sustained popularity and longevity around the world through the timeless impact of its material and powerful artistry of its vocals. They have sold over half a million records, with headline tours throughout the country and songs featured widely on television,



radio and in film. Coming in 2017, the band will be releasing *The Ghost of Childhood*, its highly anticipated full-length studio album.

Their current release on Sounds True Recordings, *The Book of Rounds: 21 Songs of Grace* (2015) is an epiphanal and collaborative masterwork that includes a specially formed chorus of 16 singers with additional vocals by the band. Excited by the impact of this work, the Omega Institute has invited October Project to lead a workshop there in September 2016 entitled "The Joy of Music – The Power of Song."

With printed music from *The Book of Rounds* published by Hal Leonard, choruses around the country have begun to perform this work, "a fugue of positive messages." Chorus Austin will perform the world premiere in November 2016.



PRAISE & CITATIONS

Julie Flanders' work has been speaking to my heart for many years, often offering me the perfect phrase that makes me feel seen and understood. She knows the language of music and the music of language equally well. Treat yourself to her artistry!

—Martha Beck, best-selling author and *Oprah Magazine* columnist

I am a choral singer, and have been my whole life. I have always longed for chants in English that express my soul's longing. So, I've been waiting for your cd! It is beautiful in all ways—the rounds themselves, the lyrics, the instrumentation, and the voices. I know I will listen to it over and over.

—Elizabeth Lesser, co-founder of the Omega Institute

The Book of Rounds is a gorgeous musical journey.

—Paul Winter, 7-Time Grammy-winning Saxophonist, bandleader, composer and founder of Living Music

An uplifting collection of rounds that stirs the soul and enchants the mind with their beauty and meaning.

—Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat, www.spiritualityandpractice.com

The beautiful lyrics of Julie Flanders and the haunting, flowing music of Emil Adler have come together in the form of *The Book of Rounds* with songs that evoke the emotionally charged tracks of OP's Epic albums: fans of those albums will rejoice in the joy and energy of these rounds.

—Peter Bay, Artistic Director of the Austin Symphony Orchestra

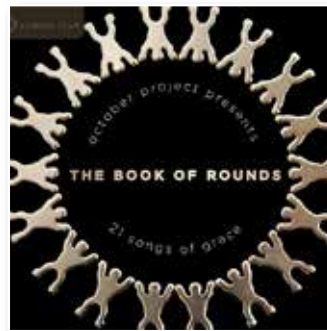
October Project

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PHOTO © STEVEN LOWY



October Project

PRAISE

The music is airy and transporting...shimmering with sometimes dark, sometimes inspirational, always thoughtful songs.

—The Boston Globe

Spell-weavers.

—Miami Herald

Songs brought to life dramatically by captivating female vocals with multi-layered harmonies. Think Heart in their gentler, more introspective moments...

—Fireworks Magazine, UK

Julie Flanders' work has been speaking to my heart for many years, often offering me the perfect phrase that makes me feel seen and understood. She knows the language of music and the music of language equally well. Treat yourself to her artistry!

—Martha Beck, best-selling author, life coach
& *Oprah Magazine* columnist

The music has an enigmatic quality. It's like an 'emotional hologram,' where the listener enters into the musical landscape.

—The Christian Science Monitor

I am in love with Julie Flanders poetry and lyrics – infinitely deep words that spring directly from the soul of the universe."

—August Gold, author of *The Prayer Chest*
and *Multiply Your Blessings*

Marina Belica's voice is delicate yet powerful.

—musicaldiscoveries.com



PHOTO © PETER MITTEY

Delicate, intricate webs of sound...This is a band that perfectly encapsulates melancholy and remembrance. Inspirational, soul-warming and definitely worth seeking out.

—The Star Newspapers

A languid, poetic aura that's dreamlike and mystical, bittersweet and beautiful.

—Philadelphia Daily News

The New York group straddles the line between art music and pop song.

—The Advocate

Groundbreaking. The seamless harmonies...are magical...

—The Gavin Report

Marina Belica unfurls her voice like so much golden silk, with Julie Flanders on harmonies like a long-lost sister.

—Wildy's World

October Project



spiritualityandpractice.com
Arts Review, 12/4/15

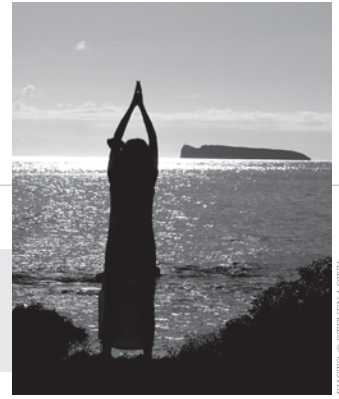


PHOTO © STEVEN LOWMY

The Book of Rounds is a collection of 21 songs, seven rounds in three chapters. A round is a melody that harmonizes itself as it repeats with voices flowing together in intervals and then building to melodic highs. The repetition of phrases can lead to a contemplative state. In a pamphlet accompanying the CD, we read:

“The rounds are both an expansive and intimate embrace of sound and meaning, offering messages that are revelations of what's best in ourselves and in others.”

The first selections have been written for a *cappella* voices with simple but profound material on grace, beauty, and earth. The second seven were written with more extended phrases and richer harmonies. Here are rounds on shadow, time, and together. The final group is the most creative with additional piano accompaniment and on “Joy,” a percussion surprise.

This is an uplifting collection of rounds that stir the soul and enchant the mind with their beauty and meaning.

GOING DEEPER

In the pamphlet accompanying the CD is this short essay on “Ways to Listen” to the rounds:

“For those who practice meditation, or want to, the rounds provide a calm or rapturous companion to your explorations of the divine. For a deeply meditative experience or to induce a devotional state of clearing and grace, listening without interruption to the entire song cycle is ideal. The album is just over one hour long.

“If you have only three minutes, and would like a touch of inspiration, listen to a single round. Tune in its

message and carry it with you as an affirmation for the day. Or put your player on 'shuffle' and allow yourself to be surprised and informed by the round that comes up.

“To explore differences in texture and voice, listen closely to one chapter at a time. The first is pure simplicity, the second set is more adventurous, and the third set is actively engaging. Each chapter is a coherent and wondrous experience.

“Remember, too, that the lyrics are designed to stand alone—without music—as modest yet profoundly affective prayers, capable of alleviating energies of negativity, challenge, or difficulty. The titles of each round can be used as single-word mantras, just as the lyrics may be repeated over and over for a similar effect.

“If you enjoy singing, you will find that singing the principal melody of each round is an exhilarating experience. To download the melodies, we invite you to visit October Project’s website, octoberprojectmusic.com.

“Rounds lend themselves to a cappella singing, in which voices must tune as they come into relationship with each other. Round-singing is an enjoyable way to bring isolated individuals into harmony and resonance with one another as a group or community. The sum of voices is infinitely greater than any one of the parts, as the various egos are sublimated and come together toward oneness.

“But most importantly, you can listen for the pure pleasure of it. You do not have to be aware of why these songs are spiritually powerful in order to enjoy them. Put them on in the background and let them do the work for you.”

October Project

The Sounds True Blog: *many voices, one journey*

manyvoices.soundstrue.com

Interview from
October 14, 2015



Musical rounds, by virtue of their repetitive nature, can elicit a meditative state. One voice or line enters, then another, until you are immersed in a cascade of voice and harmony. Many people are familiar with the meditative and calming experience of Kirtan singing. The music helps induce a meditative state as you flow along with the melody & rhythm. *The Book of Rounds: 21 Songs of Grace* offers an alternative to Kirtan singing – it’s music you can use for the same benefit and more.

The lyrics of *The Book of Rounds* are intended as modern mantras, in English, set into beautiful musical rounds which, by their repetitive nature, are inherently meditative, so that both singer and listener are transformed by the experience. Elizabeth Loesser, co-founder of The Omega Institute, says this about the music:

“I am a choral singer, and have been my whole life. I have always longed for chants in English that express my spiritual understanding and longing. So, I’ve been waiting for your cd! It is beautiful in all ways—the rounds themselves, the lyrics, the instrumentation, and the voices. I know I will listen to it over and over.”

WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE ROUNDS

- say them
- sing them
- silently or aloud!
- sing them by and to yourself or
- sing them to another person(lullabye)
- sing them – two people in unison is very satisfying!
- two people in ROUNDS is FUN and a completely different happiness
- sing them in a GROUP of singers – a choir or a chorus
- SING ALONG with whatever part you hear and like most in the recorded rounds
- FEEL FREE TO CHANGE PARTS there are no rules!

- LISTEN to them
- LISTEN to what draws you in
- one at a time if you only have 3 minutes
- listen to the WHOLE PIECE if you want to induce a deep or devotional state of clearing and grace

INTENTION/EFFECTS OF THE BOOK OF ROUNDS

- fugue of positive messages
- clears a space inner or outer
- elicits and induces feelings of wellbeing and peace
- sacred, spiritual but not specifically religious
- elevates vibrational level
- offers an embrace of protection and comfort
- transmutes negative energy and experiences into positive ones
- Sample The Book of Rounds album here!

ABOUT THE BOOK OF ROUNDS

With *The Book of Rounds*, October Project offers an album to comfort, heal, and awaken listeners.

Originally composed as “modern mantras” or plainchants for listening or joining in, these contemplative rounds, voiced *a cappella*, return us to the spiritual origins of all song—the merging of words and music among kindred souls, to illuminate and elevate.

Performed beautifully here by a choir specially created for this album, including members of the band, these tracks evoke the felt experiences of grace, shelter, hope amidst darkness, joy, renewal, and more.

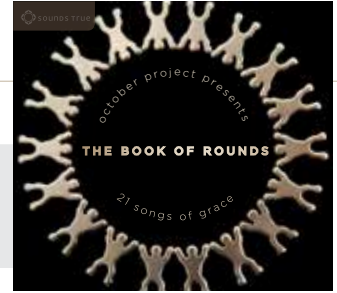
October Project is best known for the albums *October Project* and *Falling Farther In* and includes here members Julie Flanders, Marina Belica, and Emil Adler.

October Project



The Recorded A Cappella
Review Board

rarb.org
Review from
February 3, 2016



The Book of Rounds is a passion project that makes musical simplicity complex, resulting in a beautiful exploration of a familiar form. The October Project presents an hour-long masterwork that manages to show delicacy and strength simultaneously, leaving listeners enraptured through its classical choral stylings.

Rounds are intended to be simple and accessible. This is why our earliest nursery songs follow this form, permitting our youngest singers to catch on to patterns quickly. Rounds are good for repetitive working songs to keep a steady pace and output. They're great for marches, chanting, and dances, too, often with simple lyrics or themes for the same fundamental purpose: it's easy for all to join-in on the experience. Due to its length, canon-style layering, and varied meters, careful construction was necessary for *The Book of Rounds* to succeed within its round-based boundaries. The work is tied together through uplifting, affirming messages that encourage us to live mindfully and in the present. It's worth singing, and worth studying, too.

The music for *The Book of Rounds* was composed by Emil Adler, and the lyrics were penned by Julie Flanders, both of whom founded the band October Project (along with Marina Belica, who co-produced the recorded release). Of interest to a cappella fans, the arrangements are the work of Keiji Ishiguri, an alumnus who directed both The Whiffenpoofs and Redhot & Blue at Yale University. The featured vocalists also hail from Yale, with voices from October Project coming and going as the rounds progress. The twenty-one songs are divided into three chapters, two of which are arranged for a cappella performances, while the third chapter offers piano accompaniment.

From a performance standpoint, the awesome strength of *The Book of Rounds* is how customizable it is for choirs. Whether you've got a handful of voices or a hundred voices, you can make this (largely SATB) score work for you, just as the nature of a traditional round is intended. It can also be sung one round at a time, or as a whole. The first seven selections (Chapter I of the full score) are available for purchase as a beautiful booklet from Hal Leonard for \$5.95, which is an incredible value for a multi-piece score that's 56 pages in length. Chapters II and III are available for purchase through the group's web site, as well as a collection of all twenty-one rounds in simple, single-line form. *The Book of Rounds* will be especially worthwhile to learn if your ensemble has a sparrow-voiced soprano who appreciates a good floating descant. The Hal Leonard publication opens with Beauty, one of the pivotal songs from the work that features arresting harmonies and captivating lyrics. For choirs wishing to explore the other chapters, tribal-beat Joy is another standout that delights with its groove and body percussion possibilities. And for listeners staying the course for the full hour, you'll get to experience the feeling of continuity between beginning and end. After the last track (Ready) asks us, "Will you be ready then?", the music can start anew with "Now in this moment, it's time to start over..." in Grace. Modern a cappella music rarely becomes this contemplative and personal, this moving and invitational.

With their repetitive nature, rounds inherently ask us to listen closely, to hear important words and phrases over and over again as a means to make an impact. In *The Book of Rounds*, we're treated to twenty-one delightful, sensitive pieces that blissfully break the mold in our contemporary a cappella scene, interweaving new and old to create a refreshing offering of ethereal music.

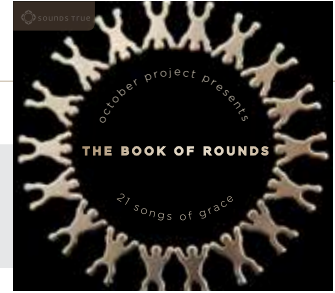
October Project



Yale Alumni Magazine

yalealumnimagazine.com

Review from
March/April 2016



Spiritual song cycles today tend to be solo works, written and performed by singers of the breathy, withdrawn, indie variety. *The Book of Rounds* is different. Released this past fall as both a CD/download and a 55-page score for vocal groups of ten or more, it has grandeur, exuberance, and a sweet communality. The lush majesty of the hour-long presentation—intricately harmonized rounds for male and female voices, with simple titles such as “Beauty,” “Believe,” and “Know”—is the work of the seasoned popsmiths of October Project.

The band had its roots in undergraduate collaborations between Morse College roommates Marina Belica ’81 and Julie Flanders ’81, who were later joined by

Rutgers grad Emil Adler. The new recording features vocalists Belica and Flanders, augmented by past and present members of the Yale singing groups Redhot and Blue, the Whiffenpoofs, and Spizzwinks. With a few African- and classical-style arrangements, as well as several pieces in traditional collegiate vocal-group form, *The Book of Rounds* has a different spiritual appeal from the band’s usual work: less like a pagan ceremony in the woods, more like Godspell. October Project considers these rounds “modern mantras”—musical meditation for performers and audiences. *The Book of Rounds* rebrands the round in the same cheery communal spirit that you feel at Yale a cappella concerts: bright, attentive to all voices, using the ensemble to lift the music to a higher spiritual plane.



ONLINE FAN REVIEWS



“So much beauty of melody, voices, harmonies, and lyrics. The album is inspiring, soothing and very evocative of the sacred. I’m very happy to have found it!”

“I love each and every piece of work in The Book of Rounds. It feels to me like a blessing.”

“Would love to share these with the whole world.”

“October Project wows us once more. This is another beautiful album that my whole family loves.”

“I’ve always been a fan of OP’s music, but this is clearly an inspired masterpiece. Truly hypnotic and transcendent.”

“If you want to give yourself a special gift, this extraordinary CD is worth its weight in gold.”

“The lyrics of a poet sung by the voices of angels.”

“The Book of Rounds brings harmony, rhythm and clarity to our lives through a musical meditative experience that is uplifting and transcendent. October Project’s journey to the land of a cappella is pure and joyful and allows your mind to free itself as it dives into the music and ceases to think - it is a spa for your mind.”

“Beautifully melodic, authentic and ethereal. Moving harmonies that transport and inspire!”

“There are moments in the Rounds that are so startlingly beautiful they take your breath away. October Project has branched out from the lovely ballads of their earlier work to this extraordinary celebration of the human voice.”