



Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

MM RECITAL

Cayce Murphy, soprano

with Dr. Alex Benford, piano
and Bianca Balderama, violin

NOVEMBER 21, 2023 | 7:30 PM

HARRIS CONCERT HALL

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Kevin Sanders, Director
College of Communication and Fine Arts
Ryan Fisher, Interim Dean

PROGRAM

Vergnügen und Lust, BWV 197

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Vado, ma dove? K. 583

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Ariettes Oubliées

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

I. C'est l'extase langoureuse

II. Il pleure dans mon cœur

III. L'ombre des arbres

IV. Chevaux de Bois

V. Green

VI. Spleen

Intermission

Cuatro Madrigales Amatorios

Joaquin Rodrigo
(1901-1999)

I. ¿Con qué la lavaré?

II. Vos me matásteis

III. ¿De dónde venís, amore?

IV. Des los álamos vengo madre

Five Hebrew Love Songs

Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

I. Temuná

II. Kalá Kallá

III. Laróv

IV. Éyze Shéleg!

V. Rakút

Taylor, the Latte Boy

Marcy Heisler
(b. 1967)

PROGRAM NOTES

***Vergnügen und Lust*, BWV 197 by Johann Sebastian Bach**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a prolific German composer and musician of the late Baroque period, known primarily for his orchestral and instrumental compositions. He, however, also wrote a number of oratorios, choral and concert works to highlight the vocal instrument- including his concert aria *Vergnügen und Lust* from the cantata *Gott ist unsre Zuversicht* (BWV 197). This buoyant, light-hearted vocal composition features solo violin and continuo and speaks on the plentiful joys which life has to offer. This characterization is especially prevalent in the melismatic passages that are a compositional staple of Bach.

***Vado, ma dove?* K. 583 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was an Austrian composer in the Classical period best known for his symphonies, concertos, and operas- which he wrote 22 of in his lifetime. He lived a rather short life of 35 years but had a compositional output of more than 800 works. He is regarded as among the greatest composers of Western classical music. Alongside these musical outputs, Mozart composed 60 concert arias, including *Vado, ma dove*.

This concert aria is taken from the second act of Mozart's lesser-known opera *Il burbero di buon cuore*, drawing from the perspective of Madame Lucilla who at this point is wallowing in self-pity and bewilderment at the course her love life seems to be taking. There is an air of sensitivity, yet solemnity to this aria that offers a striking contrast of emotion in the A and B sections. The libretto is by Lorenzo da Ponte- who also contributed to Mozart's more famous works including *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

PROGRAM NOTES

***Ariettes Oubliées* by Claude Debussy**

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was a prolific French composer who sought out to embody the spirit of his nation through music, while being highly influenced by painters and artists in the Impressionist movement. His music can be characterized as charming and beautiful, but simultaneously complex and exotic. He was very text-oriented, staying true to the linguistic characteristics of the French language in his songs, which provides a musical ebb and flow that further romanticizes his compositions.

Debussy's song cycle *Ariettes oubliées*, translating to “*Forgotten Airs*” culminates a total of six songs that are set with various texts by poet, Paul Verlaine, from *Romances sans paroles* (Romances without Words). They were originally published separately but were combined into a song cycle several years after. The first three in the set- *C'est l'extase, il pleure dans mon cœur*, and *l'ombres des arbres* are very symbolic and representative of nature in the context of love. The exuberant *Chevaux de Bois* provides the most contrast in the set, musically and poetically- the setting is that of a rural merry go round in a Belgian county fair. Closing out, *Green* sets the scene of passionate expression of young love and *Spleen* a setting of despair and longing for a lover that was lost.

***Cuatro Madrigales Amatorios* by Joaquin Rodrigo**

Joaquin Rodrigo (1901-1999) was one of the greatest Spanish composers of the 20th century. Many people will recognize Rodrigo's musical output from his *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra and the famed melodic theme of its Adagio movement. He composed 87 pieces for voice during his lifetime, set by texts from the 9th century up to his own time in six different languages. The human voice was Rodrigo's favored medium of musical expression, considering it to be “the perfect instrument”.

The *Cuatro Madrigales Amatorios*, translating to “*Four Madrigals of Love*”, is inspired by music of the 16th century and surrounds the themes of love. Each piece provides a brief, powerful depiction of a distinct emotional state caused by the feeling- whether it be loss, lack of reciprocity, flirtation, or infatuation. *¿Con qué la lavaré?* and *Vos me matásteis* highlight the more somber, melancholy feelings associated with love whereas *¿De dónde, venis amore?* and *De los álamos vengo, madre* do so with the more energizing, enthusiastic aspects of the emotion.

PROGRAM NOTES

Five Hebrew Love Songs by Eric Whitacre

Eric Whitacre (1970), born in Reno, Nevada, is an American composer, conductor, and speaker best known for his choral music. He described his own experience with his first choral rehearsal as a turning point in his life, saying, "In my entire life I had seen in black and white, and suddenly everything was in shocking Technicolor." He earned his master's degree in composition at the Juilliard School, where he studied with John Corigliano and David Diamond. Trademarks of his pieces include the use of aleatoric and indeterminate sections, shimmering and shifting harmonies, cluster chords, as well as scores calling for hand actions or props. His style is similar to Morten Lauridsen's in the way that it is "neo-impressionistic."

The *Five Hebrew Love Songs* are a collection of five songs that were composed with the collaboration of Whitacre's girlfriend at the time, soprano Hila Plitmann, who was born and raised in Jerusalem. She was asked by Whitacre to write a few 'postcards' in her native tongue and, several days later, created the Hebrew poetry that forms the song cycle. It was commissioned by the University of Miami in 2001 to adapt the songs to a SATB chorus, which led to many other arrangements of the work.

Each of the songs captures a moment that Whitacre and Plitmann shared together. *Temuná (A Picture)* describes the etch of a picture of a loved one in the heart of a lover, *Kalá Kallá (Light Bride)* was a pun that Whitacre came up with while he was first being taught Hebrew (true story)! *Laróv (Mostly)* reflects upon how distance is unachievable in the context of the presence between two lovers, *Ézye Shéleg! (What Snow)* is an ethereal depiction of the snow, outlining the pitches of the cathedral bells that woke the couple every morning in Germany. *Rakút (Tenderness)* concludes the set- dawning upon the care for a loved one and wanting to protect them from the harshness of the world, wrapping them up in tenderness.

PROGRAM NOTES

Taylor, the Latte Boy by Marcy Heisler

Marcy Heisler (1967) is a musical theater lyricist and performer born in Deerfield, Illinois. She attended Northwestern University and graduated from NYU Tisch School of the Arts' Dramatic Writing Program. Heisler met Zina Goldrich, co-composer of *Taylor, the Latte Boy* at a musical theater workshop in 1992 and have been working together since 1993. *Taylor, the Latte Boy* is a contemporary standard most associated with Broadway star, Kristen Chenoweth. The song details the infatuation the narrator has for the coffee boy at Starbucks. She introduces herself and takes various actions to be signs of his affection. She even goes to the extent of saying "I love him, I love him, I love him."

Regarding the lyrics, Heisler said, "So many of the stories come from my own experience, my own life, I don't think that much about it... A singer will call and say, 'What was the motivation?' I went into a coffee shop and met a cute boy.