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Faculty Recital: Rachel Schutz, soprano

Rachel Schutz

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Faculty Recital
Rachel Schutz, soprano

Christopher Dylan Herbert, baritone
Timothy Long, piano

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Saturday, April 20th, 2019
4:00 pm
Program

Beside the Sea
Sunset
Night
Hold fast to dreams

Rachel Schutz

La courte paille
I. Le sommeil
Das Ständchen
II. Quelle aventure!
Liebesbriefchen
III. La reine de coeur
IV. Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Bu
Versuchung
V. Les anges musiciens
VI. Le carafon
Mond so gehst du wieder auf
VII. Lune d’Avril

Rachel Schutz
Christopher Dylan Herbert

Florence Price
(1887-1953)

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Erich Korngold (1897-1957)
**Intermission**

**Savoir vivre et usages mondiaux**
- I. A propos de la chausette blanche
  - Isabelle Aboulker (b. 1938)

**Caneuon y gerddi**
- Plas Bodorgan
  - II. Comment on offre le bras
  - John Metcalf (b. 1946)
- Plas y ward
  - III. Et à propos de gants

**Y Foelas**
- Comme les ailes d’un oiseau
  - Ellen Reid (b. 1983)

*Christopher Dylan Herbert*
*Rachel Schutz*

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**All the Way Through Evening**
- The Disappearance of Light
- Train Station
- An Elegy to Paul Jacobs
- Poussin
- Walt Whitman in 1989
  - Chris DeBlasio (1959-1993)

*Christopher Dylan Herbert*

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**Recuerdo**
- Jeff Blumenkranz (b. 1965)

**Crossing the Hudson**
- Robert Paterson (b. 1970)

*Rachel Schutz*
*Christopher Dylan Herbert*
Program Notes

Our program explores the myriad and diverse styles to be found within the classification of “modern music.” Often a thing to be feared among audiences, modern music is considered at turns difficult, unattractive, lacking in emotion, and altogether incomprehensible. What we hope to show through this evening’s program is that music written after 1900 is, in fact, rich, diverse, and perfectly accessible.

We begin with a set of beautifully melodic songs by African-American composer Florence Price. She was a composer of great renown during the early part of the twentieth century and became the first African-American woman to have a symphony premiered by a major American orchestra. Much of her music, however, was lost during the latter half of the twentieth century and was only rediscovered in 2009 in an attic in Illinois. Her songs are frequently lyrical and melodic and often incorporate religious themes, and aspects of African American spirituals like syncopation.

We turn next to a combined set of songs by Francis Poulenc and Erich Korngold. These two men were not always taken seriously by scholars for much of the twentieth century, Poulenc because he dabbled in cabaret and humor, and Korngold because he became known principally as a composer of film music. Their music, quite different from one another, offers a rich contrast of sonorities, textures, and themes. Poulenc’s cycle, La courte paille, was the last set to have been written before his death in 1963. “The short straw” is a set of seven short vignettes set in a nursery. First, we hear from the exhausted mother, but quickly move to the child’s daydreams, games, and antics. The light-hearted set epitomizes Poulenc’s irreverence and humorous approach to song-writing and offers a delightful contrast to Korngold’s more traditional Lieder. Rich in late-nineteenth century German Romantic harmonies, dense textures, and set to typical love poems, Korngold’s under-appreciated songs are interspersed between Poulenc’s cycle. We paired the two sets deliberately because of shared poetic themes. Although Poulenc and Korngold never met, their songs complement one another effectively.

We continue our journey through the twentieth century with the cycle Savoir vivre et usages mondiaux by Isabelle Aboulker, a French composer living in Paris. Aboulker’s set, placed in a melodramatic cabaret style, employs texts by the Comtesse de Gencé, France’s equivalent of Emily Post. Caneuon y Gerddi by Welsh composer John Metcalf diverge from Aboulker’s interest in the mundane and return to ancient texts and descriptions of landscapes in North Wales. Metcalf’s musical language match the texts perfectly: the open and modal harmonies paired with complicated rhythms give the sense of timelessness and freedom that the poems and landscapes themselves suggest. Finally, Ellen Reid brings the worldly and ethereal together in her song “Comme les ailes d’un oiseau,” a setting of a passage of the novel Les Échelles du Levant by Amin Maalouf. The passage depicts a scene in which, after many years, a pair of estranged lovers meet once again.

In 1990, Chris DeBlasio selected five Perry Brass poems to create All The
Way Through Evening, a personal response to the AIDS crisis and his own HIV-positive status. DeBlasio made a living as a composer, pianist, and singer. He shows his brilliance as a composer of art song with this cycle. The central song, “An Elegy to Paul Jacobs,” is reminiscent of a French overture with inégale figures throughout the piano part. These figures, a deliberate allusion to Jacobs’ role as the harpsichordist of the New York Philharmonic, are foreshadowed at the end of the second song, “Train Station,” in the vocal part. The final song, “Walt Whitman in 1989” draws upon the experience of the AIDS crisis and connects it, as Brass explains, “with a hidden history of grief and transcendence.” After a quasi-recitative opening, DeBlasio reveals a deep largo closing section with undulating quarter notes in the piano, providing a sense of eternity and calm.

Our final set this evening brings us much closer to home. These two engaging duets celebrate New York City and the bodies of water that surround it. Robert Paterson’s “Crossing the Hudson” was commissioned for the Five Borough Songbook and is an exciting celebration of life in New York City. Jeff Blumenkranz, known in the musical theater world both as a composer and performer, wrote “Recuerdo” to a poem of Edna St. Vincent Milay and the tuneful and sweetly interweaving lines beautifully invoke the intimacy of the text. Both pieces, written within the last 15 years, offer clear evidence that modern music can be equally engaging, tuneful, and moving.

**Biographies**

**Christopher Dylan Herbert**

American baritone Christopher Dylan Herbert performs concerts and opera throughout the world, frequently with his twice GRAMMY®-nominated ensemble, New York Polyphony.

Hailed by Opera News or his “exceptional” singing, Christopher has also received acclaim for his “smooth baritone voice”, his “consistently warm sound” and his “versatile dramatic abilities”. He is a recipient of awards from the Sullivan Foundation and Gérard Souzay Competition and he was a 2014 Naumburg Competition semifinalist. His outdoor Winterize/Winterreise project with Make Music New York is described by The New York Times as “brave and, in all senses, chilling... an elegantly lean performance that would have been impressive in any context but was remarkable under these conditions.

Recent engagements in concert and opera include Vivier’s Koperninus in Buenos Aires, Bernstein’s Trouble in Tahiti at Tanglewood, concerts at the Cartagena International Music Festival in Colombia, John Cage's Renga with the San Francisco Symphony, the title role in Handel's Saul for Trinity Wall Street's Twelfth Night Festival, performances of Schubert lieder with Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, a Ginastera centennial celebration with the International Contemporary Ensemble, the world premiere of Judd Greenstein's A Marvelous Order with the NOW Ensemble, the title role in Pelléas et Mélisande with Floating Opera NY, Montresor in Stewart Copeland's The Cask of Amontillado with the American Modern Ensemble, and collaborations with Mario Brunello, Jeremy Denk, Stefan Jackiw, and Gilbert Kalish, among others. Previous seasons included performances of Fariseo in
Caldara's *Maddalena* with the American Classical Orchestra, Hannah-Before in Laura Kaminsky's *As One* with the Fry Street Quartet for American Opera Projects at BAM, Polyphemus in *Acis and Galatea* with Musica Angelica, the title role in *The War Reporter* at The Prototype Festival and Stanford LIVE, Henrik in *A Little Night Music* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, *Dover Beach* at Lake George, *Winterreise* at the Austrian Cultural Forum of New York and Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, and various recitals with pianists Thomas Bagwell, William Kelley, Chris Reynolds, and Timothy Long. Christopher has also performed Sid in Britten’s *Albert Herring* with Opera Vivente, Connie in Gordon’s *Grapes of Wrath* at Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, and Il prigioniero in *Il piccolo Marat* at Avery Fisher Hall. In addition, he has toured as a soloist with the Boston Pops and Mark Morris Dance Group, and has appeared at Tanglewood, Wolf Trap, and Central City Opera.

Christopher graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from Yale University with a B.A. in Music. He also holds an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University, and a D.M.A. in Voice from The Juilliard School. He is an Assistant Professor at William Paterson University where he leads the Vocal Studies program.

**Timothy Long**

*Timothy Long* is a pianist and conductor of Muscogee Creek and Choctaw descent who is Music Director of Opera at the Eastman School of Music.

His early training as a pianist and violinist led to work with singers, and eventually to conducting engagements that have included companies such as Boston Lyric Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Colorado, Utah Opera, Tulsa Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, City Opera Vancouver, Pacific Opera Victoria, The New Group, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Oregon Bach Festival, and the Prague Summer Nights Festival.

After working on Thomas Adès’s operatic tour-de-force, *Powder Her Face*, Tim was named by Robert Spano to be his assistant conductor for three years at the Brooklyn Philharmonic. He was subsequently named an associate conductor at the New York City Opera for two years.

In the past year, Tim conducted the world premiere of *Missing*, by Marie Clements and Brian Current, at City Opera Vancouver and Pacific Opera Victoria, the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra with the great dramatic soprano Christine Goerke, Tulsa Opera’s 70th Anniversary Gala starring famed mezzo-soprano Susan Graham, *Die Zauberflöte* at the Prague Summer Nights Festival, Ricky Ian Gordon’s *Tibetan Book of the Dead* at the Eastman Opera Theatre, and the Oklahoma City Philharmonic. He has also played numerous recitals including a world premiere by White Mountain Apache violinist/composer Laura Ortman with Navajo noise artist Raven Chacon at National Sawdust, and a concert with baritone Brian Mulligan on the Vocal Arts DC series at the Kennedy Center. Upcoming performances include conducting *Don Giovanni* at Eastman Opera Theatre, a return to Prague Summer Nights to conduct *Le Nozze di Figaro*, a workshop of *Dream Seminar* with the Trondheim Sinfonietta in Norway, and numerous recitals and masterclasses around the country.
Off-Broadway, he was music director, conductor, and featured pianist for The New Group’s production of The Music Teacher, an “opera within a play” by Wallace Shawn and Allen Shawn. Bridge Records released a recording of this unique show with Parker Posey and Wallace Shawn in the leading roles.

As a pianist and harpsichordist he has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Merkin Hall, Jordan Hall, Wigmore Hall in London, the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, Dvorak Hall in Prague, the Aspen Music Festival, the Moab Music Festival, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Caramoor Festival, and the Dame Myra Hess Series in Chicago, among many others.

Naxos recently released Tim’s recording of the Dominick Argento song cycles, The Andrée Expedition and From the Diary of Virginia Woolf, with the internationally renowned baritone Brian Mulligan. This recording has been highly lauded, with Opera News stating that he “provides masterfully sculpted renditions of the varied and challenging piano parts, which range from spare and crystalline (evoking the icy North) to rolling and transcendent.”

Rachel Schutz

Hailed for her “diamantine high notes, witty characterization, and giddily delirious coloratura,” Welsh-American soprano Rachel Schutz is in demand for her sensitive and evocative performances and wide range of repertoire.

She is active both in the opera house and on the concert stage, having performed extensively around the United States, Asia and Europe. In 2016, Rachel won first place the 44th NATS Artist Award Competition and third place in the Jensen Foundation Competition. Recent operatic roles have included Lise in Glass's Les enfants terribles, Thérèse in Les mamelles de Tirésias and Jessie in Mahagonny Songspiel with Opera Paralèlle; Papagena, Diana in Dove's Siren Song and Johanna in Sweeney Todd with Hawai’i Opera Theatre; and Susanna, Gretel, and Adele in Die Fledermaus with Stockton Opera. A seasoned recitalist and concert singer known for her "communicative zest," Rachel has been heard at Carnegie Hall's Stern, Weill, and Zankel Halls, the Ravinia Festival, the Ojai Festival, the Tanglewood Festival, with the Hawai‘i and Riverside Symphony Orchestras, on the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series, with Distinguished Concerts International New York, with the Boston Pops Orchestra, and at venues around China, Taiwan, Korea, and Thailand. As an avid supporter of new music, she can be heard on "Elements," an Albany Records album of contemporary American music, and has worked with many composers including Phillip Glass, George Crumb, Milton Babbitt, Jonathan Dove, William Bolcom, Libby Larsen, and Augusta Read-Thomas.

Rachel is also the founder of Artists for Social Justice, an arts collective that brings attention to pressing social issues such as immigration, civil rights, and climate change, and in the fall of 2018, she joined the voice faculty of Ithaca College. She holds a B.A. in Music from Stony Brook University, received her M.M. degree from the Dawn Upshaw-run Vocal Arts Program at Bard College, completed an M.A. in Linguistics at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and received her D.M.A. in voice from Stony Brook University.