

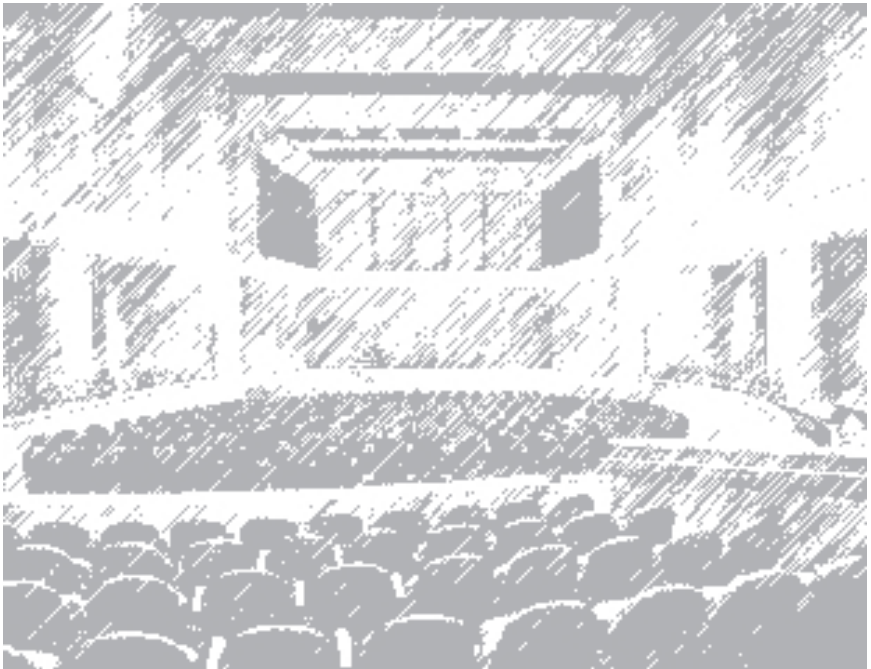
Kennesaw State University  
School of Music



Senior Recital

**Siobhan Rodriguez, soprano**

Judy Cole, piano



Sunday, April 24, 2016 at 8 pm

Music Building Recital Hall

One-hundred Twenty-second Concert of the 2015-16 Concert Season

# program

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759)

**Let the bright Seraphim**

from *Samson* (1741) [Hamilton]

Brandon Austin, trumpet

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

**Du bist die Ruh, D. 776** (1823) [Rückert]

**Ganymed, D. 544** (1817) [Goethe]

**Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118** (1814) [Goethe]

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Selections from *Fêtes galantes pour Madame Vasnier*

**Clair de lune** (1882) [Verlaine]

**En Sourdine** (1882) [Verlaine]

Selection from *Quatre Chanson de jeunesse*

**Pantomime** (1883) [Verlaine]

RICKY IAN GORDON (b. 1956)

Selections from *Only Heaven* (1997) [Hughes]

**Daybreak in Alabama**

**Harlem Night Song**

Selection from *Genius Child* (1993) [Hughes]

**Border Line**

FRANCESCO BARTOLOMEO CONTI (1681-1732)

**Il mio bel foco** (1720) [Anonymous]

LUIGI ARDITI (1822-1903)

**Il Bacio** (1860) [Aldighieri]

GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858-1924)

**Quando m'en vo**

from *La Bohème* (1895) [Illica/Giacosa]

# program notes

**Let the bright Seraphim** | George Frederic Handel  
from *Samson* (1741) [Hamilton]

Handel is regarded as one of the greatest composers of the Baroque era, with works such as *Water Music*, *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and *Messiah* remaining steadfastly popular. Handel spent the bulk of his career in London, becoming well known for his operas, oratorios, anthems, and organ concertos. *Samson* is a three-act oratorio and is considered one of his finest dramatic works. It is usually performed as an oratorio in concert form, but on occasions has also been staged as an opera. *Samson* uses a libretto by Newburgh Hamilton, who based it on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, which in turn was based on the figure Samson in chapter 16 of the *Book of Judges* (*Britannica*, 2016). The song, "**Let the bright Seraphim**," is often performed separately from the oratorio and was performed in Princess Diana's wedding to Prince Charles by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa.

**Du bist die Ruh, D. 776** (1823) [Rückert] | Franz Schubert  
**Ganymed, D. 544** (1817) [Goethe]  
**Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118** (1814) [Goethe]

Franz Schubert is one of the most important composers of the early romantic era. Much of his creativity and artistry can be seen in his lieder. His songs are filled with a variety of different structures and styles and express the many aspects of Romanticism. He is exceptional at creating innovative melodic figures and structures that help to express the essence and character of the poem (*Britannica*, 2016). Schubert's "**Du bist die Ruh**," translating to "You are Calm and Peace," is one of the most romantic and emotional pieces in his collection. Setting the music to a passionate poem by Friedrich Rückert, an inspirational German poet, Schubert translates the text's sensuality perfectly, with loving and gentle themes and simple form, thus creating a beautiful and moving song. "**Ganymed**" is a through-composed setting of a poem inspired by ancient Greek mythology. Ganymede was a boy of exceptional beauty, and Goethe's poem describes the feelings of the young lad as he is transported up to heaven by Zeus to become cup-bearer to the gods. Schubert wrote "**Gretchen am Spinnrade**" when he was only sixteen years old. The poem is taken from Johann Wolfgang Goethe's tragic play, *Faust*. One of the significant motives of this song can be seen in the sixteenth-note figure in the piano accompaniment that is used to express the movement of Gretchen's spinning

wheel. While Gretchen is spinning the wheel, she is reflecting on her moments with Faust and the deep intoxicating passion that she has for him. There are moments that the spinning wheel stops, and in those moments she becomes overwhelmed with her passionate thoughts about Faust.

Selections from ***Fêtes galantes pour Madame Vasnier*** | Claude Debussy

**Clair de lune** (1882) [Verlaine]

**En Sourdine** (1882) [Verlaine]

Selection from ***Quatre Chanson de jeunesse***

**Pantomime** (1883) [Verlaine]

The introduction of Schubert's lieder in France during the nineteenth century encouraged French composers to set French poems in a similar style. In contrast to German lieder, the French *mélodie* took on a much freer melodic and harmonic structure. Along with Maurice Ravel, Debussy was one of the most prominent figures associated with Impressionist music, though he himself disliked the term when applied to his compositions. There are many sets that Debussy composed, however *Fêtes galantes pour Madame Vasnier* was created specifically with the soprano voice in mind (*Britannica, 2016*). The poem "**Clair de lune**" by Paul Verlaine inspired Debussy to create three different works: the famous piano piece entitled *Clair de lune* is No.3 of the Suite bergamasque, a song to the poem is No.3 in the first book of *Fêtes galantes*, and an early setting of the same Verlaine text to different music is known as *Votre âme est un paysage choisi*. "**Pantomime**" has evidence of Spanish exoticism and rhythmic intensity as the poet recalls a story with many twists and turns. Through chromaticism and lush harmonies, the song depicts many different scenes, one right after the other, inspired by the Comedia del'Arte story. Debussy had a tendency to compose two different versions of one poem, and "**En Sourdine**" was one no exception. The text of the song depicts the passion of two lovers spending an evening together.

Selections from ***Only Heaven*** (1997) [Hughes] | Ricky Ian Gordon

**Daybreak in Alabama**

**Harlem Night Song**

Selection from ***Genius Child*** (1993) [Hughes]

**Border Line**

Ricky Ian Gordon studied composition at Carnegie Mellon University. He has written vocal music in the genres of art song, opera and musical theatre. One

can hear the influence of jazz and musical theatre in his music. Some of his works include: *Sycamore Trees* (2010), *The Grapes of Wrath* (2010), *Green Sneakers* (2008), *Orpheus and Eurydice* (2005), *Bright Eyed Joy* (2001), *Dream True* (1999), and *Only Heaven* (1999) (Gordon, 2016). The poetry of Langston Hughes had a great influence on Ricky Ian Gordon. Much of Langston Hughes' work was written during the Harlem Renaissance, which occurred during the 1920s and 1930s. Hughes's poetry and fiction offers insightful views of the African-American working class of America (Academy of American Poets, 2016). In the poem "**Daybreak in Alabama**," Hughes aims to capture the pure element of southern life through imagery and metaphors. He also has an underlying theme of equality and love transcending the color your skin as if it were "natural as dew." "**Harlem Night Song**" reflects the carefree nature African Americans had in New York during the Harlem Renaissance. This is contrary to the belief that all African Americans were miserable and poor, which is exactly what Hughes wanted to prove wrong. When writing the poem "**Border Line**," Hughes wanted to instill the message of purpose in the world. During this time, African-Americans were often viewed in a very negative light and were considered to be beneath of the usual standard of the typical American lifestyle. This poem reflects the oppression that African-Americans felt at the time and Gordon transforms it into a jazz-inspired complexity of thoughts.

**Il mio bel foco** (1720) [Anonymous] | Francesco Bartolomeo Conti

**Il Bacio** (1860) [Aldighieri] | Luigi Arditi

Instrumental and vocal classical music is an iconic part of Italian identity, spanning experimental art music and international fusions to symphonic music and opera. Opera is integral to Italian musical culture, and has become a major segment of popular music. Italian folk music is an important part of the country's musical heritage, and spans a diverse array of regional styles, instruments and dances. In the era of Italian art song, composers were often inspired by local Italian folk music (Art Song Update, 2016). Although "**Il mio bel foco** (Quella fiamma)" has long been attributed to Venetian composer and statesman Benedetto Marcello, recent scholarship now identifies the Florentine Francesco Bartolomeo Conti as the likely composer of this song. Written as an arietta, the song is a confrontation to a lover whom is questioning the love of the singer. "**Il Bacio**" is one of the most popular vocal waltzes by Luigi Arditi. The poet, Gottardo Aldighieri, wrote the poem for Arditi in a matter of minutes, in which Arditi completed the piece to be performed by singer Adelina Patti the very next day. The song is about a simple kiss and how it is treasured.

**Quando m'en vo** | Giacomo Puccini  
from *La bohème* (1895) [Illica/Giacosa]

*La bohème* has become part of the standard Italian opera repertory and is one of the most frequently performed operas worldwide. The opera is based on Henri Murger's novel, *Scènes de la vie de bohème*, a collection of vignettes portraying young bohemians living in the Latin Quarter of Paris in the 1840s (Britannica, 2016). In this aria, Musetta, formerly Marcello's sweetheart, arrives with her rich and elderly government minister admirer, Alcindoro, whom she is tormenting. It is clear she has tired of him. To the delight of the Parisians and the embarrassment of her patron, she sings a risqué song, hoping to reclaim Marcello's attention.

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Stephen W. Plate, DMA  
Director, School of Music  
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