

The Juilliard School
presents

Juilliard Songfest
Visionaries

Amanda Batista, Soprano
Erik Grendahl, Baritone
William Socolof, Bass-Baritone
Joseph Parrish, Bass-Baritone
Eirin Rognerud, Soprano
Brian Zeger, Curator and Pianist

Monday, December 6, 2021, 7:30pm
Alice Tully Hall

BEN MOORE
(b. 1960)

So Free Am I

Six settings of poems by women

I. Mutta

II. Interlude

III. Orinda Upon Little Hector Philips

IV. Nervous Prostration

V. The Poem as Mask

VI. Mettika

AMANDA BATISTA

Commissioned by the Marilyn Horne foundation and the ASCAP Foundation/Charles Kingsford Fund; premiered January 25, 2006, by soprano Monica Yunus and pianist Brian Zeger

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913-76)

Songs and Proverbs of William Blake

London

The Chimney Sweeper

A Poison Tree

The Tyger

The Fly

Ah! Sun-Flower

Every Night and Every Morn

ERIK GREND AHL

Intermission

GABRIEL FAURÉ
(1845-1924)

La fleur qui va sur l'eau

Dans la forêt de septembre

L'horizon chimérique

La mer est infinie

Je me suis embarqué

Diane, Séléné

Vaisseaux, nous vous aurons aimés en pure perte

WILLIAM SOCOLOF

HUGO WOLF

(1860-1903)

Der Tambour

GUSTAV MAHLER

(1860-1911)

Zu Strassburg auf der Schantz

Urlicht

JOSEPH PARRISH

RICHARD STRAUSS

(1864-1949)

Ich wollt' ein Sträusslein binden

Säusle, liebe Myrte!

Amor

Als mir dein Lied erklang

EIRIN ROGNERUD

Juilliard's Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts was established in 2010 by the generous support of Ellen and James S. Marcus.

Juilliard's livestream technology is made possible by a gift in honor of President Emeritus Joseph W. Polisi, building on his legacy of broadening Juilliard's global reach.

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Notes on the Program

By Brian Zeger

To see a World in a Grain of Sand,

And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand.

And Eternity in an Hour.—William Blake

A song can be a portal into another world. The composers of tonight's program chose poems that point us toward other realities, heightened states of awareness, new ways to experience both internal and external worlds. These poets are visionaries, inviting their readers and tonight's listeners to open their imaginations. The composers—Britten, Fauré, Mahler, Moore, Strauss, and Wolf—lead the way.

We begin with an eclectic set of texts chosen by composer Ben Moore. All written by women, the texts are united around themes of women's oppression and liberation. The first and last songs are translations of ancient Buddhist texts

expressing, first, the desire for liberation and, in the final song, its attainment at the end of life. The penultimate song, a setting of Muriel Rukeyser, contains, for me, the central line of the cycle in a defiant cry: “No more masks.”

Benjamin Britten's *Songs and Proverbs of William Blake* is an ambitious late work, written for baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Some of Blake's greatest and best-known short lyrics alternate with his visionary proverbs, each of which suggests in an abstract way the content of the poem that follows. Blake was a revolutionary through and through, accepting no received political or religious doctrines. His fierce individuality comes through in these uncompromising and original settings.

The songs of Gabriel Fauré we've chosen are subtle and introspective, typical of his later work. Fauré no longer nursed ambitions of wider success, writing for a small group of loyal listeners, exploring internal worlds. The four poems that make up his last song cycle, *L'horizon chimérique*, were written by Jean de la Ville de Mirmont, a contemporary of Fauré's killed at age 27 in World War I. The last line of the cycle, “Car j'ai de grands départs inassouvis en moi” (For within me are vast, unappeased departures), takes on an added poignancy for a poet whose died so young.

Music lovers know Mahler as a musical visionary, frequently touching the boundaries of human perception and spiritual yearning, whether inspired by words or in his purely instrumental music. Mahler often employed military marches in his music: sometimes to inspire, sometimes to terrify or purely as an element of parody. In “Zu Strassburg auf dem Schanz,” a military band accompanies the terrified cadet to his execution. We preface this with another military song, this one by Hugo Wolf, where the young drummer boy reveals that he is a long way from being a grown-up soldier. Mahler's sublime setting of “Urlicht,” which also serves as a movement in his second symphony, closes the group.

Richard Strauss, for all the bounty and range of his songwriting, is often criticized for setting second-rate poetry. Clemens Brentano's poetry is an exception: fanciful, fantastical, and brimming with the imaginative impulses of early German Romanticism. Flowers speak and a mischievous Cupid cavorts with a shepherdess who is both frightened and intrigued. The program ends with Strauss' transcendent love song, “Als mir dein Lied erklang,” a hymn to the power of love and the power of song itself. After an ecstatic climax, the singer echoes softly one more time, as in a distant memory, “Dein Lied”: “your song.”

After many months without live concerts, it is a joy to resume performances at Juilliard. Deepest thanks to everyone who makes this possible, including the superb team of the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts.

About the Artists

Amanda Batista

Amanda Batista is a Cuban-Puerto Rican soprano pursuing her Master of Music degree at Juilliard, studying under Darrell Babidge. Batista will make her Juilliard Opera debut as Frau Fluth in *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* in April 2022. Last season, she sang Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Chautauqua Institution as well as being featured in Lincoln Center's Restart Stages recital series. Batista holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. Credits with Opera Theater Rutgers include Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Florence Pike in *Albert Herring*, La Frugola in *Il Tabarro*, and Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

Kovner Fellowship

Erik Grendahl

Originally from Boynton, Virginia, baritone Erik Grendahl is a second-year Master of Music student at Juilliard, where he studies with Darrell Babidge. He recently appeared as Torquato Tasso in the Juilliard Opera production of *Flowers and Tears*. Grendahl's other roles include Escamillo in IN Series Opera's adaptation of *Carmen*, the Count in Bel Cantanti Opera's production of *Le nozze di Figaro* and Joseph De Rocher in James Madison University (JMU) Opera's production of *Dead Man Walking*. In 2020, he received an encouragement award from the Connecticut District of the

Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Grendahl graduated from JMU in Harrisonburg, Virginia, with degrees in music and statistics. *Loretta Lewis Award in Voice*

William Socolof

From White Plains, New York, bass-baritone William Socolof (B.M. '18, M.M. '20, voice) began training at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. In 2019 and 2021, he participated in the Marlboro Music Festival. As a vocal fellow at Tanglewood Music Festival (2017–18), he appeared in *Sondheim on Sondheim* with the Boston Pops and Bach Cantatas conducted by John Harbison and premiered works by Michael Gandolfi and Nico Muhly. In 2020, he debuted with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Andris Nelsons, and with The Juilliard Chamber Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall. William also appeared as Daniel Webster (*The Mother of Us All*) in collaboration with Met LiveArts and the New York Philharmonic and as Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) at Juilliard. William is pursuing an Artist Diploma in Opera Studies at Juilliard with William Burden. *Leonie Rysanek and Lisa Della Casa Scholarship in Voice*

Joseph Parrish

Bass-baritone Joseph Parrish, a native of Baltimore, is a master's candidate at Juilliard, where he studies with Darrell Babidge. Parrish has sung with the Asheville Lyric Opera and developed the role of Ensemble #4 in the premier of Davenport Richards/Cote's *Blind Injustice* with the Cincinnati Opera. This past year, Parrish gave a recital at St. Boniface Church in Brooklyn. At Juilliard, he sang the role of Il Sacerdote di Minerva in *Teseo* and made his Dulcamara debut in the production of *L'elisir d'amore*. In July, Parrish sang the role of Spinelloccio in a production of *Gianni Schicchi* at Festival Napa Valley under the baton of Kent Nagano and the direction of Jean-Romain Vesperini. *Toulmin Scholar*

Eirin Rognerud

Eirin Rognerud, a Norwegian coloratura soprano, began singing at age 13 in the children's choir at the Norwegian Opera, where she performed numerous roles. At 16, she was the youngest singer ever admitted to the bachelor's program at Barratt Due Institute of Music. She has won multiple prizes, including Midgardprisen in the Midgard competition. She has sung with several orchestras, including Nürnberger Symphoniker and the Royal Norwegian Navy Band. Rognerud has participated in summer programs such as Edith Wiens' Internationale Meistersinger Akademie, Bengen Operaen's Opera ved Fjorden, Voksenåsen Summer Academy, and Saluzzo Opera Academy, where she sang Morgana in *Alcina*. She studies with Edith Wiens at Juilliard, where she is completing her bachelor's degree. *Kovner Fellowship*

Brian Zeger

Recognized as one of today's leading collaborative pianists, Brian Zeger (M.M. '81, piano) has performed with many of the world's greatest singers including Marilyn Horne, Deborah Voigt, Anna Netrebko, Susan Graham, René Pape, Kiri Te Kanawa, Frederica von Stade, Piotr Beczala, Bryn Terfel, Joyce DiDonato, Denyce Graves, and Adrienne Pieczonka in an extensive concert career that has taken him to the premier concert halls throughout the U.S. and abroad. His most recent recording, is *A Lost World—Schubert Songs and Duets* with Susanna Phillips and Shenyang, was released by Delos in 2018. Other Delos recordings are *All Who Wander*, a recital disc with Jamie Barton; *Preludios*, Spanish songs with Isabel Leonard; Strauss and Wagner lieder with Adrienne Pieczonka; and *Dear Theo: Three Song Cycles by Ben Moore* with Paul Appleby, Susanna Phillips, and Brett Polegato. In addition to his concert career, he serves as artistic director of the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts at Juilliard and previously served for eight years as the executive director of the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artists Development Program.