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### Faculty Artist Series: Songs of Grace

St. Norbert College Music Department

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**Faculty Recital**  
*Songs of Grace*

Dr. Yi-Lan Niu, Soprano  
Mrs. Elaine Moss, Piano  
Dr. Wendy Scattergood, Cello

Sunday, 2/27, 2:00pm 2022

## Program

### Akhmatova Songs

John Tavener (1944-2013)

1. Данте (Dante)
2. Пушкин и Лермонтов (Pushkin and Lermontov)
3. Борис Пастернак (Boris Pasternak)
4. Двустиишие (Couplet)
5. Муза (The Muse)
6. Смерть (Death)

Soprano + Cello

### Four Songs

André Previn (1929-2019)

1. Mercy
2. Stones
3. Shelter
4. The Lacemaker

Soprano + Piano + Cello

## Intermission

“Oh, Yemanjá” from the Opera *Scourge of Hyacinths, Scene 3*

Tania León (1943-)

Soprano + Piano + Cello

Élégie (Melodie) from the play *Les Érinnyes* op.10, No.5

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Soprano + Piano + Cello

Dream with Me from the musical drama, *Peter Pan*

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

Soprano + Piano + Cello

**\*Special Thanks to Amina Djavadova for Russian Pronunciation**

## Program Notes

### Akhmatova Songs

This collection is composed by John Tavener and was commissioned by the Cricklade Music Festival. It was first performed in 1993 at St. Sampson's Church of Cricklade, Wiltshire, England. Tavener set these 6 pieces based on poems that Russian poet Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966) wrote during different periods of her life. The first three pieces show Akhmatova's great respect for other poets including Dante, Pushkin and Lermontov. The fourth piece, *Couplet*, represents her mistrust of her own work. *The Muse* depicts her longing for writing and looking forward to being inspired. In the last piece, Akhmatova expects her own death and the desire for an afterlife. Tavener is an English contemporary composer famous for his religious choral works. He wrote these pieces for the soprano Patricia Rozario who is an Indian-British soprano. Her unique background inspired Tavener to incorporate a melodic mode of Indian raga in both the first and last pieces to create a platonic and divine aspect to the music.

#### I. Данте (1936)

Он и после смерти не вернулся  
В старую Флоренцию свою.  
Этот, уходя, не оглянулся,  
Этому я эту песнь пою.  
Он из ада ей послал проклятье  
И в раю не мог её забыть, -

#### I. Dante

And even after death he did not return  
To Florence, his of old.  
In going, he gave no backward glance,  
To him I sing this song...  
From hell he sent his curses upon her,  
And in heaven he could not forget her...

#### II. Пушкин и Лермонтов (1927)

Здесь Пушкина изгнание началось  
И Лермонтова кончилось изгнание.  
Здесь горных трав легко благоуханье,  
И только раз мне видеть удалось  
У озера, в густой тени чинары,  
В тот предвечерний и жестокий час —  
Сияние неудаленных глаз  
Бессмертного любовника Тамары.

#### II. Pushkin and Lermontov

Here began Pushkin's exile  
and Lermontov's exile ended.  
Here gentle scent of mountain grasses,  
And only once I managed to see  
Beside the lake, in plane tree's thickest shade  
In that cruel hour before the evening —  
The blaze of his eyes unquenched,  
The deathless lover of Tamara.

#### III. Борис Пастернак (1936)

Он награждён каким-то вечным детством,  
Той щедростью и зоркостью светил,  
И вся земля была его наследством,  
А он её со всеми разделил.

#### III. Boris Pasternak

Endowed with some eternal childhood,  
He shone open-handed, clean of sight,  
The whole earth was his heritage,  
And this with all he shared.

#### IV. Двустигшие(1931)

От других мне хвала - что зола.  
От тебя и хула - похвала.

#### IV. Couplet

For me praise from others- as ashes,  
But from you even blame - is praise.

V. Муза (1924)

Когда я ночью жду её прихода,  
Жизнь, кажется, висит на волоске.  
Что почести, что юность, что свобода  
Пред милой гостьей с дудочкой в руке.

И вот вошла. Откинув покрывало,  
Внимательно взглянула на меня.  
Ей говорю: "Ты ль Данту диктовала  
Страницы Ада?" Отвечает: " Я!".

VI. Смерть (1942)

1.  
Я была на краю чего-то,  
Чему верного нет названья...  
Засывающая дремота,  
От себя самой ускользание...

2.  
А я уже стою на подступах к чему-то,  
Что достается всем, но разною ценой...  
На этом корабле есть для меня каюта  
И ветер в парусах - и страшная минута  
Прощания с моей родной страной.

V. The Muse (1924)

At night, as I await her coming,  
Life seems to hang upon a thread,  
And what are honour, youth, or freedom  
Before the kindly guest with pipe in hand?

Here- she has come. Flung off her veil,  
And searchingly has looked on me.  
I say to her: "Did you dictate to Dante  
The script of Hell?" She answers: "I".

VI. Death (1942)

1.  
I was on the border of something  
Which has no certain name...  
A drowsy summons,  
A slipping away from myself...

2.  
Already I stand at the threshold to something,  
The lot of all, but at a varying price...  
On this ship, there is a cabin for me.  
And wind in the sails- and the dread moment  
Of the parting with my native land.

*Translated by Mother Thekla Orthodox Monastery of the Assumption  
Normanby, Whitby, North Yorkshire*

## Four Songs

The German-American composer André Previn had over a seventy-year career in the music industry. He was known as a pianist, a conductor and a composer. The collection of *Four Songs* was premiered at Lincoln Center in 1994. The performers included the famous soprano Sylvia McNair, pianist Martin Katz and cellist Carter Brey. The song texts were selected from the poetry of the prominent African-American novelist Toni Morrison. Morrison's works are closely related to the evolution of African-American culture. Although her works often depict difficult circumstances of her time and the dark side of humanity, the messages are filled with integrity, redemption and strength.

- I. Mercy  
I could watch  
heads  
turn from the traveler's look  
the camera's probe  
bear the purity of their  
shame  
hear mute desolation in syllables  
ancient as  
death.  
I could do these things  
if  
if only if only  
I knew that when milk  
spills and hearts stop  
under heel  
some small thing gone  
chill  
in right  
to warm  
toward a touch because  
mercy  
lies in wait  
like a shore.  
Mercy  
mercy  
mercy  
like a shore.

II.     Stones  
I don` t need no men  
Telling me I ain` t one.  
My trigger finger strong  
As his on a shot gun.  
Butter cake and roses smooth  
stones in my bed.  
Handsome quilts cover  
stones in my bed.  
I don` t need no man  
telling me I ain` t one.  
My backbone ain` t like this  
but least I got one  
High-heeled slippers break  
stones in my bed.  
Games played at night trick  
stones in my bed.  
Stones in my bed.  
Stones.  
I don` t need no man  
telling me.

III.    Shelter  
In this soft place  
Under your wings  
I will find shelter  
From ordinary things.

Here are the mountains  
I want to scale  
Amazon rivers  
I` m dying to sail.

Here the eyes of the forest  
I can hold in a stare  
And smile the movement  
Of Medusa` s green hair.

In this soft place  
Under your wings  
I will find shelter  
From ordinary things.

#### IV. The Lacemaker

I am as you see  
what most become me:  
miles skipped  
cancelled trips  
masters yet unmet.  
Lace alone us loyal, sacred, royal, in control  
of crimes stopped  
by patterns of blood bred to best behavior.  
As you see I am  
what has become of me.

#### “Oh, Yemanja”

This piece is selected from the opera *Scourge of Hyacinths*, scene 3, where Miquel’s mother, Tiatin, prays to Yemanja, the water goddess. She believes the rampant growth of the water hyacinths is a punishment sent by Yemanja. As she sings about the hyacinths blocking the waterway, she implies that the political system of the nation is attempting to stop Miguel from fleeing the country. *Scourge of Hyacinths* is the Cuban composer Tania León’s first opera. It premiered at Munich Biennale for New Music Theater where it won the BMW Prize for Best Composition in 1994.

Oh, Yemanja,  
Sister of the clear...  
Sister of the once clear waters,  
Mover of the undertows...  
Your waters are muddied.  
Your once clear path,  
Undertows that suck my household down to seabed.  
I shall not abandon faith... I...  
Await a sign.  
Protectress the innocent,  
Let my son be an eel without scales.  
That yet survives both heat and cold,  
Flood and drought.  
Let him breast these rapids.  
Let him reach the calm sanctuary  
Of your clear spring waters.  
Oh, Yemanja, Keep faith with your faithful servitor.  
Don`t abandon my frail crafts  
In mid-stream,  
No, not among the fulsome hyacinths.  
Oh, Yemanja,  
Protectress, seer of all, Sister...

## **Élégie (Melodie)**

“Élégie” is from the incidental music that Jules Massenet wrote for his friend Félix Henri Duquesnel’s (1832-1915) French play "Les Érinyes" (The Erinyes) in 1876. This individual piece was published separately for either cello and orchestra (Op.10, no.5) or the song titled "O doux printemps d'autrefois."

Ô doux printemps d'autrefois, vertes saisons, vous  
avez fui pour toujours! Je ne vois plus le ciel bleu; je  
n'entends plus les chants joyeux des oiseaux! En  
emportant mon bonheur, Ô bien aimé, tu t'en es allé!  
Et c'est en vain que revient le printemps! Oui! Sans  
retour, avec toi, le gai soleil, les jours riants sont partis!  
Comme en mon cœur tout est sombre et glacé,  
tout est flétri pour toujours!

O sweet Spring of yesteryear, green seasons, you have  
fled forever! I no longer see the blue sky, I no longer  
hear the joyous songs of the birds! You have fled, my  
love, and with you has fled my happiness. And it is in  
vain that the spring returns! For along with you, the  
cheerful sun, the laughing days have gone! As my  
heart is dark and frozen, so all is withered forevermore!

*Translated by Richard Stroke*

## **Dream with Me**

“Dream with me” is performed by the character Wendy from the musical play *Peter Pan*. This play was an adaptation from a theatrical work called *A Boy who wouldn't grow up* by J.M. Barrie. The process of creating *Peter Pan* was complicated as the production was never designed to be a large-scale musical, but instead, an *incidental* music composed by Leonard Bernstein. The show premiered in 1950, but was not particularly popular until the conductor Alexander Frey recorded the songs from the production in 2001.

Dream with me tonight.  
Tonight and ev'ry night,  
wherever you may chance to be.  
we're together, if we dream the same sweet dream.  
And though we're far apart,  
Keep me in your heart  
And dream with me.  
The kiss we never dared  
We'll dare in dreaming  
The love we never shared  
Can still have meaning.  
If you only dream a magic dream  
With me tonight  
Tonight and ev'ry night  
Wherever you may chance to be  
Close your lovely eyes and dream with me.

The kiss we never dared  
We'll dare in dreaming  
The love we never shared  
Can still have meaning.  
If you only dream a magic dream  
With me tonight  
Tonight and ev'ry night  
Wherever you may chance to be  
Close your lovely eyes and dream with me.