



**ELON**  
UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF  
**Music**

**Sadie Margolis, *soprano***

**Sharon LaRocco, *piano***

**Joshua Gibbs, *violin***

Whitley Auditorium

Thursday, May 8th, 2025

5:30 pm

## Program

Ich will dir mein Herze schenken..... Johann Sebastian Bach  
from *Matthäus-Passion* BWV 244 (1685-1750)

Freschi luoghi, prati aulenti.....Stefano Donaudy  
Amor mi fa cantare... (1879-1925)

Loveliest of Trees..... John Duke  
I can't be talkin' of love (1899-1984)

*Five Hebrew Love Songs*.....Eric Whitacre  
I. Temuna (b. 1970)  
II. Kalá kallá  
III. Lárov  
IV. Ézye shéleg  
V. Rakút

Hello! Oh, Margaret, it's you..... Gian Carlo Menotti  
from *The Telephone* (1911-2007)

Frère! voyez!... Du gai soleil..... Jules Massenet  
from *Werther* (1842-1912)

Art Is Calling for Me..... Victor Herbert  
from *The Enchantress* (1859-1924)

*Sadie Margolis is a student of Dr. Polly Cornelius.*

*This recital is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Music Vocal Performance.*

## Program Notes

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)** was an influential figure of the Baroque era and one of the best-known composers of the early 18th century, alongside contemporaries such as Handel and Telemann. Throughout his career, Bach worked as a church organist, court musician in Weimar, Kapellmeister in Cöthen, and finally as cantor of St. Thomas's School and civic music director in Leipzig. Though he never wrote an opera, his music incorporated a dramatic essence, especially in works like the notable *St. Matthew Passion* (1727, rev. 1736), combining operatic intensity with Lutheran theology, portraying Peter's denial and remorse through sighing motifs and expressive recitative. Bach was known for inventing musical themes and transforming them through techniques like inversion, augmentation, and stretto, all featured in his other famous works, including the *St. John Passion*, *Mass in B Minor*, and the *Brandenburg Concertos*. His keyboard works, like *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, demonstrated the possibilities of equal temperament, while his orchestral and choral compositions reflected a distinctive balance of harmonic clarity, contrapuntal complexity, and emotional sensitivity. Bach's legacy continues as a standard for concerto grosso writing and intellectual rigor in music.

*Ich will dir mein Herze schenken* is a tender aria from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Debuted in 1727, the aria appears at a powerful point in the Passion after Jesus predicts his betrayal at the Last Supper, and each disciple anxiously asks, "Lord, is it I?". This piece serves as a personal and heartfelt vow of devotion in contrast to fear and doubt. The soloist shows their heart and soul to Jesus, expressing complete devotion and trust in both suffering and love. Musically, the piece is gentle and contemplative, with a lilting 6/8 meter that supports the lullaby-like quality of the vocal line. The oboe obbligato in the original orchestration weaves delicately around the voice, heightening the emotional pull. Baroque ornamentation is restrained, and the occasional subtle accidentals and dissonances add depth. The nuanced differences between major and minor second intervals are especially important in the authentic 18th-century style. Additionally, the phrasing follows the natural stresses of the German text, helping every word feel honest and meaningful. This aria is typically performed in churches during Holy Week or as part of a full *St. Matthew Passion* performance.

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**Stefano Donaudy (1879–1925)** was an Italian composer known for vocal music, specifically his collection *36 Arie di Stile Antico*, published in 1918 and revised in 1922. He was born in Palermo, Italy, to a French father and Italian mother, and showed talent early in his childhood. The musical prodigy composed his first opera, *Folchetto*, and the popular art song *Vaghiissima sembianza* at just 13. After studying with Guglielmo Zuelli, director of the Palermo Conservatoire, Donaudy spent a great deal of his career teaching, accompanying, and coaching members of Sicily's wealthiest families, all while composing. He collaborated closely with his brother, Alberto Donaudy, who provided libretti and lyrics for most of his vocal music. Although his songs were performed by renowned singers like Enrico Caruso and, more recently, Andrea Bocelli, his operas never achieved the same lasting success as his art songs. His last opera, *La Fiamminga*, was a colossal flop at its 1922 premiere, after which Donaudy stopped composing entirely and died three years later at the age of 46. Donaudy's legacy and music endure through the elegance and vocal purity, capturing the style and spirit of Italy's *Stile Antico* movement.

*Freschi luoghi, prati aulenti*, No. 13 in Donaudy's *36 Arie di Stile Antico*, is an example of bel canto style, where the vocal line's beauty and expressiveness shine through lyrical phrasing. The interplay between piano and voice is dynamic, with the accompaniment enhancing the legato phrasing and supporting the vocal line's sweeping motion. The lyrics depict the beauty of nature through the changing seasons, evoking fresh meadows and fragrant fields, with vivid imagery that reflects the serenity of rural life. Moreover, Donaudy's use of rubato allows for flexibility, imitating the gentle breeze and portraying the gradual seasonal transitions. The delicate trickling effect Donaudy writes at the end of each section mirrors the lyrics "magico splendor" (magical splendor), depicting a shimmering, ethereal quality. Throughout the phrases, the music builds toward the dominant and mediant, creating a sense of anticipation, making the arrival at the tonic feel more satisfying and conclusive.

*Amor mi fa cantare*, No. 23 in Donaudy's *36 Arie di Stile Antico*, showcases the strengths of both Donaudy brothers between Stefano's music and Alberto's poetry. This piece is a quintessential example of bel canto style showcased throughout the *36 Arie di Stile Antico*, featuring long, legato lines and a supportive accompaniment that allows the voice to shine. The song follows a strophic form, repeating the same musical material with different lyrics in each strophe. The consistent, repeated ending line of each verse reinforces the heartfelt message of love, giving the song a poetic, romantic passion that grows. The accompaniment remains understated, keeping the focus on the voice. The portamentos are playful, especially in the rising staccato notes that climb the scale to the lyrics "I am like wax in the sun." This flirtatious quality balances the sweeter portamentos heard earlier in the piece, fostering youthful longing.

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**John Woods Duke (1899–1984)** was an American composer and pianist known for his contributions to the art song vocal canon. He was raised in a musical household in Cumberland, Maryland, and began piano studies at age 11. After serving with the Student Army Training Corps during World War I, Duke stayed in New York to study with leading musicians and debuted as a concert pianist in 1920. In 1923, he joined the music faculty at Smith College, where he taught piano and composition for over four decades. Duke composed more than 260 art songs and is celebrated for his lyrical style in his musical interpretations of works by American poets such as Frost, Millay, and Cummings. He studied composition abroad with Nadia Boulanger and Artur Schnabel, influences that shaped his refined style and cultivated a deep understanding of collaborative piano: the art of voice and piano partnership. Duke focused on composing for the voice, once saying, "vocal utterance is the basis of music's mystery." His emphasis on the human voice as the most primal form of musical expression resonates with singers and pianists today, while paving the way for future generations of art song composers.

*Loveliest of Trees* is based on A. E. Housman's well-known lyric poem from *A Shropshire Lad* symbolizes the fleeting nature of youth and the importance of appreciating beauty. The song is written in ternary (ABA) form, with a contrasting middle section that modulates to the parallel minor. Rather than notating this section in A  $\flat$  minor, the expected parallel to the original key, Duke writes the middle section in G $\sharp$  minor, subtly disguising the transition through enharmonic equivalence. This modulation complements the poem's introspective turn, as the speaker becomes aware of time and recognition of life's brevity. Housman's poetry, favored by many early 20th-century English composers, is known for its pastoral imagery and emotional clarity. His works often express a wistful reflection on youth, aligning with themes of nature and time present in this piece. The accompaniment features a delicate, sweet pattern, with a repeating pattern of three sixteenth notes in the right hand offset by steady eighth notes in the left. This gentle, twinkling texture evokes the quiet beauty of falling snow, creating a nostalgic winter atmosphere that draws the listener into the scene. The piece ends with an imperfect authentic cadence, echoing the speaker's unresolved reflection and yearning, leaving the audience with a sense of incompleteness as time moves forward.

*I can't be talkin' of love* conveys John Duke's signature lively style, combining a pianistic, neo-Romantic flair with hints of the linear, modal language of the 1930s. With text by Esther Mathews, this piece carries a lighthearted, flirtatious tone as the singer insists she should not speak of love, despite confessing to dreaming of it. Duke brings in twentieth-century techniques like polytonality and serialism, drawing from Schoenberg's avant-garde, 12-tone method, which treats all notes of the chromatic scale equally. That lack of a clear tonal center mirrors the narrator's emotional hesitation; just as she avoids openly admitting she's in love, the music circumvents settling into one key. Though the song is set in F $\sharp$  major, the middle section modulates dramatically to C major, a tritone away, an interval nicknamed "the devil's interval," revealing the singer's suppressed feelings. Chromaticism, double sharps, and accidentals outside the key signature create modal texture and highlight the character's evasion and inner conflict. Duke's witty syncopation and stylized, jazzy rhythms add to the exchange between voice and accompaniment.

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**Eric Whitacre** (b. 1970) is one of the most recognizable names in choral music today, known for his ethereal harmonies and emotionally powerful music. Born in Reno, Nevada, he ironically first dreamed of being a rock star. A life-changing college choir experience at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, singing Mozart's *Requiem*, led him to classical music. Eric completed his first choral piece, "Go, Lovely Rose", in 1990 as a gift for his college choir director, David Weiller. That piece, along with two others, was published as *Three Flower Songs*. At the time, Whitacre could not read music fluently, yet he pursued a degree in composition and eventually earned a degree from Juilliard. His breakthrough album *Light & Gold* won a Grammy and solidified his place in the modern classical world. Whitacre's works, like *Sleep*, *Lux Aurumque*, and *The Seal Lullaby*, have become staples of the choral repertoire internationally. He also created the Virtual Choir, a groundbreaking global project that connected thousands of singers in online performances. Whether collaborating with Hans Zimmer or NASA, Whitacre brings a cinematic, heartfelt, and human quality to all of his music.

**Five Hebrew Love Songs** began as a small, spontaneous project and has since become one of Whitacre's most beloved choral compositions. Written in 1996 for a recital in Speyer, Germany, the songs were a collaboration between Whitacre and his then-girlfriend, soprano Hila Plitmann, while they were both students at Juilliard. When violinist Friedemann Eichhorn asked Whitacre to write something for voice, violin, and piano, he turned to Plitmann for lyrics. She wrote five short Hebrew poems, like little love "postcards," in under two hours, illustrating moments from their relationship. Set in a Swiss ski village, each movement reflects a snapshot of their time together: the precise pitches of cathedral bells ringing outside their window in *Éyze Shéleg!*, or the clever wordplay in *Kalá Kallá* ("light bride" in Hebrew). While the original trio performed the songs a week after written, Whitacre later expanded the piece into versions for choir and string quartet, and now there are five different arrangements. Even though Whitacre and Plitmann eventually separated, both have shared how much these poems and this music still mean to them. For me, *Five Hebrew Love Songs* is a poignant reminder of how music can preserve love and connection, transforming quick moments into timeless melodies. As I step into my next chapter, I will carry the music I've made at Elon with me, always. "Numen Lumen," a beacon of spiritual and intellectual light, has guided and inspired me throughout this journey, and I leave with immense gratitude for the music, the memories, the community that shaped me, and the enduring strength of Israel and the Jewish people.

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**Gian Carlo Menotti (1911–2007)** was an Italian-American composer, librettist, and director whose operas brought emotional, vivid storytelling to opera. He is best remembered for *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *The Consul*, and *The Saint of Bleecker Street*; all works that combine lyrical beauty with theatrical elements and earned him two Pulitzer Prizes. Menotti wrote his libretti, often in English, and was determined to make opera accessible and relevant, whether that meant writing for TV, Broadway, or the traditional opera house. Influenced by composers like Puccini and Mussorgsky, his music was mostly tonal, but he did not shy away from dissonance and modern techniques to raise the stakes. Early works like *Amelia Goes to the Ball* and *The Medium* launched his career, and he went on to write repertoire ranging from comic chamber operas to grand tragedies. In 1958, Menotti founded the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy, which eventually expanded to Charleston and Melbourne. A theatrical craftsman, he left behind a legacy of music, which continues to engage contemporary audiences.

**Hello! Oh, Margaret, It's You** is a whimsical aria from Menotti's *The Telephone*, a comic opera that explores the humorous dynamics of communication in the modern world. The aria is sung by Lucy, who has been preoccupied with nonstop phone calls, while her boyfriend Ben struggles to get her attention. In this scene, she's talking to her friend Margaret, and the conversation bounces along with quick exchanges and lively vocal lines. Menotti uses humor and vocal agility, turning the rapid-fire dialogue into something that highlights the ridiculousness of modern-day distractions. The piano accompaniment plays an active role by representing the ringing and chattering of the telephone itself, adding to the comedic chaos of the moment. Overall, this charming and witty piece, where the telephone, both a tool for connection and a source of frustration, plays a central role in Lucy and Ben's relationship. This amusing aria is vocally challenging with fast-paced passages that demand precision and clear diction.

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**Jules Massenet (1842-1912)**, the renowned French composer, left a profound mark on opera with his distinctive synthesis of lyrical melodies and emotion. After studying at the Paris Conservatoire and winning the Prix de Rome in 1863, Massenet's career blossomed, leading him to compose over forty operas, spanning from grand works to Opéra-Comique to even heroic epics. His most famous operas, *Manon* and *Werther*, are still regularly performed around the world today, but his other works, like *Thaïs*, *Don Quichotte*, and *Cendrillon*, prove his versatility in operatic genres. While his early successes were marked by theatrics that were popular amongst Parisian audiences, Massenet's later years were less fortunate, as he faced scrutiny for being seen as outdated. Despite this criticism, his orchestrations and expressiveness remained adored by audiences and musicians alike. In Massenet's prolific career, his influence extended beyond opera, with contributions to oratorios, cantatas, and over 200 songs and mélodies that intertwined new orchestral colors with religious and romantic themes. His music was revived in the mid-20th century, affirming his reputation as a master of French lyric opera.

*Frère! voyez!... Du gai soleil* from *Werther*, based on Goethe's novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), appears in Act 2. Sophie, Charlotte's cheerful younger sister, sings this aria in an attempt to lighten the mood and cheer up the sad Werther, who is heartbroken over his one-sided love for Charlotte. Charlotte has recently married Albert, and while Werther spirals into despair, Sophie persists as a radiant juxtaposition. Her cheerful song about sunshine and laughter provides a burst of warmth and innocence in an increasingly tragic story. The aria portrays her youthful optimism and naivety, unaware of the emotional storm unfolding around her. The buoyant energy and melody in the upper tessitura create a youthfulness for the character. *Werther* premiered in Vienna in 1892 after an initial rejection in Paris for being too serious. Though slow to gain popularity in France, it eventually became a staple of the Opéra-Comique.

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**Victor Herbert (1859–1924)** was an American composer, cellist, and conductor, known for his successful operettas that lit up Broadway from the 1890s through World War I. Born in Guernsey and raised in Germany, he trained as a cellist and built his early career in Vienna and Stuttgart before relocating to the United States in 1886 with his wife, opera singer Therese Förster. In America, Herbert wore many hats: performing as a cellist, teaching at the National Conservatory of Music, and conducting ensembles including the Pittsburgh Symphony. He composed over 40 operettas, including *Babes in Toyland* (1903), *The Red Mill* (1906), and *Naughty Marietta* (1910), along with orchestral works like *Cello Concerto No. 2* (1894). As a strong advocate for composers' rights, he helped found the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) in 1914 and influenced early U.S. copyright law. He also wrote music for Broadway revues, including the *Ziegfeld Follies*, and composed two operas, *Natoma* (1911) and *Madeleine* (1914). Though he adapted to evolving musical trends like jazz and musical comedy later in his career, his influence extended beyond operettas, shaping the development of American musical theater and popular orchestral music.

*Art is Calling for Me* premiered on Broadway in October 1911 as part of Victor Herbert's lesser-known but still popular comic operetta, *The Enchantress*. This aria has become a favorite among sopranos for its lively and satirical soprano showcase, marrying wit with vocal fireworks. This serves as a testament to Herbert's masterful ability to evoke humor through a technical exhibition of the prima donna's range. The piece moves with a lilting, waltz-like feel and sparkles with charming lyrics by Harry B. Smith (1860-1936), energized patter sections, and soaring high notes, demanding operatic grandeur with lighthearted theatricality. In the show, the number is sung by Princess Stellina in the second act, who declares her desire for fame and adoration as a grand opera diva. She admits she would rather be an opera singer than a royal, hoping the bold declaration will capture Prince Ivan's attention. With its tongue-in-cheek humor and satirical pizzazz, the piece follows the character as she whimsically dreams of diva stardom, making it a playful and campy treasure for sopranos in both classical and crossover settings.

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## Translations

### *Ich will dir mein Herze schenken*

Although my heart is swimming in tears,  
since Jesus takes leave of me,  
yet his Testament brings my joy:  
his flesh and blood, o preciousness,  
he bequeaths to my hands.  
Just as in the world, among his own,  
he could not wish them harm,  
just so he loves them to the end.

I will give you my heart;  
sink within, my Savior!  
I will sink into you;  
Although the world is too small for you,  
ah, you alone shall be for me  
more than heaven and earth.

### *Freschi luoghi, prati aulenti...*

Cool places, fragrant meadows,  
Remain always in flower;  
Let not summer sow seed in you,  
Let not autumn carry you away,  
Let not the dead season take away  
So much magical splendor.  
I want one day to ramble with her  
Amidst softness so green,  
When at last my pangs  
She will show herself to understand.

Cool places, fragrant meadows,  
Remain always in flower.  
Let not any season take away  
So much magical splendor.  
And you then, clear streamlets,  
Which already are running to the sea,  
Don't be miserly with your waters  
In the late season of the year,  
Don't you join also the deception  
Of a prosperity so brief.  
I want one day to be reflected with her  
In your clarity,  
When at last my pangs  
She will show herself to understand.

### *Amor mi fa cantare...*

Love makes me sing  
To speak the hidden praises  
Of two bright eyes  
And of two idle lips.  
If I think of that look,

The sun seems to me offended  
And I blaze and burn completely  
If I think of those lips.  
If then, as usual,  
She looks at me and talks a little,  
I am like wax in the sun:  
I melt entirely.

But in vain I have trotted behind her  
For almost an entire year;  
In vain, changing meter,  
I show myself audacious or haughty.  
If I direct a word to her,  
From laughing she cannot hold herself up...  
Do I write her a song?  
She reads it and doesn't read it.  
If then, as usual,  
She looks at me and talks a little,  
I am like wax in the sun:  
I melt entirely.

### *Five Hebrew Love Songs*

#### *I. Temuná*

A picture is engraved in my heart;  
Moving between light and darkness:  
A sort of silence envelopes your body,  
And your hair falls upon your face just so.

#### *II. Kalá kallá*

Light bride  
She is all mine,  
And lightly  
She will kiss me!

#### *III. Lárov*

"Mostly," said the roof to the sky,  
"the distance between you and me in endlessness;  
but a while ago two came up here,  
And only one centimetre was left between us."

#### *IV. Éyze shéleg*

What snow!  
Like little dreams  
Falling from the sky.

#### *V. Rakút*

He was full of tenderness;  
She was very hard.  
And as much as she tried to say thus,  
Simply, and with no good reason,

He took her into himself,  
And set her down  
In the softest, softest place.

***Frère! voyez!... Du gai soleil***

Brother! Look! Look at the beautiful bouquet!  
I have pillaged from the garden for the Pastor.  
And afterwards, we are going dancing!  
For the first minuet it is on you that I count ...  
Ah! The sombre face!  
But today, Mr Werther,  
All the world is joyous!  
Happiness is in the air!

From the cheerful sun, full of flame,  
In the brilliant azure,  
the pure light descends from our forehead to our soul.  
All the world is joyous!  
Happiness is in the air!  
And the bird which climbs into the sky  
On the breeze which sighs,  
Has come back to tell us  
That God permits us to be happy!  
All the world is joyous!  
Happiness is in the air!