

*Faculty and Guest Artist Recital*

FEATURING

SUZANNE HENDRIX-CASE, MEZZO-SOPRANO  
KOREY BARRETT, PIANO  
FERNANDO PARRA BORTÍ, DIRECTOR

# PROGRAM

- Vier ernste Gesänge*, op. 121 .....Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)  
Four Serious Songs, 1896
1. Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh
  2. Ich wandte mich, und sahe an
  3. O Tod, wie bitter bist du (Jesus Sirach, Kap. 41)
  4. Wenn ich mit Menschen- und mit Engelszungen

## BRIEF INTERMISSION

- Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, GMW 10-K ..... Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)  
Songs of a Wayfarer, 1884-85 version
1. Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht
  2. Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld
  3. Ich hab' ein glühend Messer
  4. Die zwei blauen Augen

## ABOUT OUR GUEST DIRECTOR

Fernando Parra Bortí is a director and visual artist working in Opera, Theatre and Film. He has participated as an Apprentice Stage Director at The Merola Opera Program and completed a two-year internship with The Wooster Group. As assistant director he has worked with Tony Award winner Michael Mayer on *A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical* (Broadway Debut), *La Traviata* (Metropolitan Opera) and *Like Water for Chocolate* (NY Stage & Film). He is a graduate of École Jacques Lecoq in Paris, The LaMama Umbria International Symposium for Directors and Jan Pappelbaum's Scenography Workshop at the Venice Biennale.

## ABOUT OUR FACULTY ARTISTS

[Suzanne Hendrix-Case](#)

[Korey Barrett](#)

# ABOUT TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

For several years I have been contemplating what classical singing, and specifically art song, might look like in the future. With more entertainment options at home and audiences becoming accustomed to quick moving, dopamine-fueling content, art song can seem like a holdover from an antiquated time, designed for an audience with an attention span that no longer exists. An additional challenge is that performance opportunities in traditional operatic productions are declining, with significantly more singers fighting for fewer roles. It is clear that to keep these genres active and vital, singers are going to have to consider new ways to attract audiences and help show that this literature is as pertinent as it was over 100 years ago, while also creating opportunities for themselves. Art song literature conveys aspects of the human experience that have not changed, and it continues to provide a fertile ground for artistic expression.

In 2019, I had the good fortune to be working at the Metropolitan Opera, which afforded me the opportunity to see "Reich, Richter, Pärt," at The Shed in Hudson Yards. The performance was in an unconventional space that combined artwork, video, and singers who acted as part of the audience. This led me to consider what new types of collaboration could be explored using art song as the foundation for experimentation. Soon after, COVID arrived, and with it the total decimation of live performances for some time. In the recovery, many arts organizations began experimenting with pared down productions and new ways of presenting familiar works. Many singers, including myself, took to the internet, performing in streaming operas or making music videos. Then, in 2023 Jonas Kaufmann performed "Doppelgänger," a staging of Franz Schubert's *Schwanengesang*, at the Park Avenue Armory in NYC. The production was directed by Claus Guth and featured Kaufmann on a "set" of over 60 hospital beds with dancers and actors. Designed to have a smaller cast and be more economical than traditional opera, it helped me to understand what type of experience I was looking to create. I contacted my friend, director Fernando Parra Bortí, and asked if he was familiar with the project. I had been hoping to collaborate with Fernando for quite some time, and fortunately he was also interested in exploring the possibilities of staging art song, in our case, *Lieder*.

The texts of these particular sets are from somewhat unconventional sources - Brahms drew from the Luther Bible and Mahler wrote his own poetry. Despite their origins, they exhibit many of the hallmarks of German Romanticism, and provide a wide range of options for exploration through their literal and musical languages. I have performed both sets before, and I am excited to reinterpret them through this lens. The constraints of time and location also forced us to be creative, but at times limits help us create more novel ideas than we would have had under optimal circumstances. Hopefully this performance will help to stimulate the imagination of our students regarding what type of projects they might care to create after they have completed their studies.

# TRANSLATIONS

## Vier ernste Gesänge

### 1) Denn es gehet dem Menschen

German source: Martin Luther

Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh;  
wie dies stirbt, so stirbt er auch;  
und haben alle einerlei Odem;  
und der Mensch hat nichts mehr denn  
das Vieh:  
denn es ist alles eitel.

Es fährt alles an einen Ort;  
es ist alles von Staub gemacht,  
und wird wieder zu Staub.  
Wer weiß, ob der Geist des Menschen  
aufwärts fahre,  
und der Odem des Viehes unterwärts  
unter die Erde fahre?

Darum sahe ich, daß nichts bessers ist,  
denn daß der Mensch fröhlich  
sei in seiner Arbeit,

denn das ist sein Teil.  
Denn wer will ihn dahin bringen, daß er sehe,  
was nach ihm geschehen wird?

### 2) Ich wandte mich

German source: Martin Luther

Ich wandte mich und sahe an alle,  
die Unrecht leiden unter der Sonne;  
Und siehe, da waren Tränen derer,  
Die Unrecht litten und hatten keinen Tröster,  
Und die ihnen Unrecht täten,  
waren zu mächtig,  
Daß sie keinen Tröster haben konnten.

Da lobte ich die Toten,  
die schon gestorben waren  
Mehr als die Lebendigen,  
die noch das Leben hatten;  
Und der noch nicht ist,  
ist besser, als alle beide,  
Und des Bösen nicht inne wird,  
das unter der Sonne geschieht.

### 3) O Tod, wie bitter bist du

German source: Martin Luther

O Tod, wie bitter bist du,  
Wenn an dich gedenket ein Mensch,  
Der gute Tage und genug hat

## Four serious songs

### For that which befalleth the sons of men

For is the same with men as it is with beasts;  
as the one dies, so dies the other;  
and they have all the same breath;  
and man has no more than  
the beast;  
for all is vanity.

All go to one place;  
it is that all are of dust made,  
and all return to dust.  
Who knows if the spirit of man  
goes upward  
and the spirit of the beast goes  
downward to the earth?

I saw that there is nothing better,  
than that a man rejoices  
in his own works,

for that is his portion.  
For who will bring him to see  
what will happen after him?

### So I returned

So I returned, and considered all  
those who suffer injustice under the sun;  
and beheld the tears of those  
who were oppressed and had no comforter;  
and those who did them injustice,  
they were too powerful,  
so that they had no comforter.

Then I praised the dead  
which are already dead  
more than the living,  
who still had life.  
And who is not yet,  
is better than both of these,  
who hath not seen the evil work  
That, under the sun, is done.

### O Death

O death, how bitter you are,  
is the remembrance of thee to a man  
that liveth at rest in his possessions,

Und ohne Sorge lebet;  
Und dem es wohl geht in allen Dingen  
Und noch wohl essen mag!

O Tod, wie wohl tust du dem Dürftigen,  
Der da schwach und alt ist,  
Der in allen Sorgen steckt,  
Und nichts Bessers zu hoffen,  
Noch zu erwarten hat!

#### **4) Wenn ich mit Menschen...**

German source: Martin Luther

Wenn ich mit Menschen  
- und mit Engelzungen redete,  
und hätte der Liebe nicht,  
so wär ich ein tönend Erz,  
oder eine klingende Schelle.  
Und wenn ich weissagen könnte  
und wüßte alle Geheimnisse und alle Erkenntnis,  
und hätte allen Glauben,  
also, daß ich Berge versetzte,  
und hätte der Liebe nicht, so wäre ich nichts.  
Und wenn ich alle meine Habe den  
Armen gäbe,  
und ließe meinen Leib brennen  
und hätte der Liebe nicht,  
so wäre mir's nichts nütze.

Wir sehen jetzt durch einen Spiegel  
in einem dunklen Wort,  
dann aber von Angesicht zu Angesichte.  
Jetzt erkenne ich's stückweise;  
dann aber werde ichs erkennen,  
gleichwie ich erkannt bin.

Nun aber bleibet Glaube,  
Hoffnung, Liebe, diese drei;  
aber die Liebe ist die größte unter ihnen.

#### **Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen** **Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht**

German source: Gustav Mahler

Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht,  
Fröhliche Hochzeit macht,  
Hab' ich meinen traurigen Tag!  
Geh' ich in mein Kämmerlein,  
Dunkles Kämmerlein!  
Weine! wein'! Um meinen Schatz,  
Um meinen lieben Schatz!

Blümlein blau! Blümlein blau!  
Verdorre nicht! Verdorre nicht!  
Vöglein süß! Vöglein süß!  
Du singst auf grüner Heide!

unto the man that hath nothing to vex him,  
and that hath prosperity in all things;  
yea, unto him that is yet able to receive meat!

O death, how good you are to the needy,  
he who is weak and old,  
who is full of worry,  
and has nothing better for which to hope,  
or to expect to come.

#### **Though I speak with the tongues of men...**

Though I speak with the tongues of men  
and of angels,  
and have not love,  
I would be as sounding brass  
or a tinkling cymbal.  
And if I had the gift of prophecy,  
and knew all mysteries and all knowledge;  
and had all faith,  
so that I could move mountains,  
and had I not love, I would be nothing.  
And if I gave all my possessions to the poor,

and though I give my body to be burned,  
and had not love,  
it would be of no use to me.

We see now through a mirror  
a dark word,  
but then face to face:  
now I know it piecemeal,  
but then I shall know  
as I am also known.

And now abide faith,  
hope, love, these three;  
but the greatest of these is love.

#### **Songs of a Wayfarer** **When my love has her wedding-day**

When my love has her wedding-day,  
her joyous wedding-day,  
I will have my day of mourning!  
I will go into my little room,  
dark little room!  
I weep! Weep! For my love,  
For my dear love!

Little blue flower! Little blue flower!  
Do not wither, do not wither!  
Sweet little bird! Sweet little bird!  
You sing on the green heath!

„Ach, wie ist die Welt so schön!  
Ziküth! Ziküth!“  
Singet nicht! Blühet nicht!  
Lenz ist ja vorbei!  
Alles Singen ist nun aus!  
Des Abends, wenn ich schlafen geh',  
Denk' ich an mein Leid!  
An mein Leide!

### **Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld**

German source: Gustav Mahler

Ging heut' morgen über's Feld,  
Tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;  
Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:  
„Ei du! Gelt?  
Guten Morgen! Ei, Gelt? Du!  
Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?  
Zink! Zink! Schön und flink!  
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!“

Auch die Glockenblum' am Feld  
Hat mir lustig, guter Ding',  
Mit den Glöckchen, klinge, kling,  
Ihren Morgengruß geschellt:  
„Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?  
Kling! Kling! Schönes Ding!  
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt! Heia!

Und da fing im Sonnenschein  
Gleich die Welt zu funkeln an;  
Alles, alles, Ton und Farbe gewann!  
Im Sonnenschein!  
Blum' und Vogel, groß und klein!  
„Guten Tag! Guten Tag!  
Ist's nicht eine schöne Welt?  
Ei, du! Gelt? Schöne Welt!“  
Nun fängt auch mein Glück wohl an?  
Nein! Nein! Das ich mein',  
Mir nimmer, nimmer blühen kann!

### **Ich hab' ein glühend Messer**

German source: Gustav Mahler

Ich hab' ein glühend Messer,  
Ein Messer in meiner Brust,  
O weh! O weh!  
Das schneid't so tief  
In jede Freud' und jede Lust,  
So tief! so tief!  
Es schneid't so weh und tief!  
Ach, was ist das für ein böser Gast!  
Nimmer hält er Ruh',  
Nimmer hält er Rast!  
Nicht bei Tag,

“Ah, how fair the world is!  
Chirp! Chirp!”  
Do not sing! Do not bloom!  
Spring is over!  
All singing now is done!  
At night, when I go to sleep,  
I think of my sorrow!  
Of my sorrow!

### **I walked across the fields this morning**

I walked across the fields this morning,  
Dew still hung on the grass,  
The merry finch said to me:  
'You there, hey –  
Good morning! Hey there you!  
Isn't it a lovely world?  
Tweet! Tweet! Beautiful and bright!  
O how I like the world!'

And the bellflowers at the field's edge,  
Merrily and in good spirits,  
With its tiny bell - ding, ding -  
Rang out its morning greeting:  
'Is it not a lovely world?  
Ding-ding! Beautiful thing!  
O how I like the world! Hey!'

And then in the gleaming sun  
The world at once began to sparkle;  
All things gained in tone and colour!  
In the sunshine!  
Flower and bird, great and small.  
'Good day! Good day!  
Isn't it a lovely world?  
Hey, you there?! A lovely world!'  
Now will my happiness also begin?  
No! No! The happiness I mean  
For me can never bloom!

### **I've a gleaming knife**

I have a glowing knife,  
A knife in my breast,  
Alas! Alas!  
It cuts so deep  
Into every joy and every desire,  
So deep, so deep!  
It cuts so painfully and deeply!  
Ah, what a evil guest it is!  
Never at peace,  
Never at rest!  
Not by day

Nicht bei Nacht, wenn ich schlief!  
O weh! O weh! O weh!  
Wenn ich in dem Himmel seh',  
Seh' ich zwei blaue Augen steh'n!  
O weh! O weh!  
Wenn ich im gelben Felde geh',  
Seh' ich von fern das blonde Haar  
Im Winde wehn! O weh! O weh!  
Wenn ich aus dem Traum auffahr'  
Und höre klingen ihr silbern Lachen,  
O weh! O weh!  
Ich wollt', ich läg' auf der schwarzen Bahr',  
Könnt' nimmer die Augen aufmachen!

### **Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz**

German source: Gustav Mahler

Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz,  
Die haben mich in die weite Welt geschickt.  
Da muß' ich Abschied nehmen  
Vom allerliebsten Platz!  
O Augen blau, warum habt ihr mich angeblickt?  
Nun hab' ich ewig Leid und Grämen!

Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller Nacht,  
Wohl über die dunkle Heide.  
Hat mir niemand Ade gesagt, Ade!  
Mein Gesell' war Lieb' und Leide!

Auf der Straße stand ein Lindenbaum,  
Da hab' ich zum ersten Mal im Schlaf geruht!  
Unter dem Lindenbaum,  
Der hat seine Blüten über mich geschneit,  
Da wußt' ich nicht, wie das Leben tut,  
War alles, alles wieder gut!  
Alles! Alles!  
Lieb und Leid, und Welt und Traum!

or by night, when I sleep!  
Alas! Alas! Alas!  
When I look into the sky,  
I see two blue eyes!  
Alas! Alas!  
When I walk in the yellow field,  
I see from afar her golden hair  
Blowing in the wind! Alas! Alas!  
When I suddenly wake from my dream  
And hear ringing her silvery laugh,  
Alas! Alas!  
I wish I was lying on the black bier,  
and never open my eyes again!

### **The two blue eyes of my love**

The two blue eyes of my love,  
they have sent me into the wide world.  
I had to take my farewell  
from the place I loved most!  
O blue eyes, why did you gaze on me?  
Now have I eternal sorrow and grief!

I went out in the still night,  
Across the dark heath.  
I had no one to say farewell, farewell!  
My companions were love and suffering!

By the roadside stands a linden tree,  
That was the first time I rested in sleep!  
Under the linden tree,  
Which snowed its blossoms on me,  
I knew not what life was like,  
And all, all was well again!  
All! All!  
Love and suffering, and world and dream!