

The D'Angelo Department of Music
at
Mercyhurst University

Presents

Senior Recital

Taylor Fenstermaker, soprano
Linda Peters, piano

Walker Recital Hall
Sunday, April 19, 2026
3:00pm



MERCYHURST
UNIVERSITY

D'ANGELO DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PROGRAM

Liebst du um Schoenheit	Clara Schumann (1819-1896)
Someone to Watch Over Me From <i>Crazy for You</i> (1992)	George Gershwin (1898-1937) Ira Gershwin (1896-1983)
Bel piacere From <i>Agrippina</i>	G. F. Handel (1685-1759)
Laudate Dominum From <i>Vesperae solemnes de confessore</i>	W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
Mister Snow From <i>Carousel</i> (1945)	Oscar Hammerstein II (1895-1960) Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)
When She Loved Me From <i>Toy Story 2</i>	Randy Newman (b. 1943)
Via Dolorosa	Billy Sprague (b. 1952)
Feed the Birds From <i>Mary Poppins</i> (1964)	Richard Sherman (1928-2024) Robert Sherman (1925-2012)
I Have a Savior	Anna Byrd (b. 1989)

The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited. Please turn off and stow all electronic devices.
Thank you.

“THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH AND MY SHIELD; MY HEART TRUSTS IN HIM, AND HE HELPS ME. MY HEART LEAPS FOR JOY, AND WITH MY SONG I PRAISE HIM.” PSALM 28:7

NOTES

Clara Schumann (1819-1896) was a pianist, composer, and the wife of famous composer, Robert Schumann. She started studying piano at a young age, deemed as a child prodigy. She married Schumann and they had eight children, yet she continued to teach, compose, and tour. She and her husband worked together frequently, and she continued the collaboration even following his death in 1856. She composed chamber works, solo piano, and piano with orchestra. Some of her most famous compositions include her Piano Trio in G Minor, Piano Concerto in A Minor, and Three Romances for Violin and Piano. She was influential in the Romantic Era, establishing conventions in performing music from memory, emphasizing the composer instead of the performer, and highlighting historical composers.

“**Liebst du um Schönheit**” is a lovely art song with a sweet melody. It has a repetitive melodic line that varies slightly from phrase to phrase but mostly holds true to the first line. The lyrical content emphasizes true love and not being loved for beauty, youth, or riches. If you want to love for these things, instead love the sun, the spring, or the mermaid, not me. It ends with the singer saying if you love for love, yes, love me! It is only two pages total and has wonderful simplicity within the music and the theme.

Liebst du um Schönheit,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Sonne,
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.

If you love for beauty,
O love not me!
Love the sun,
She has golden hair!

Liebst du um Jugend,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe den Frühling,
Der jung ist jedes Jahr.

If you love for youth,
O love not me!
Love the spring
Who is young each year!

Liebst du um Schätze,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Meerfrau,
Sie hat viel Perlen klar.

If you love for riches,
O love not me!
Love the mermaid
Who has many shining pearls!

Liebst du um Liebe,
O ja, mich liebe!
Liebe mich immer,
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

If you love for love,
Oh yes, love me!
Love me always;
I shall love you forever!

George Gershwin (1898-1937) was a very famous American composer Brooklyn who wrote mostly musical theatre. His primary instrument is the piano, with him showing signs of talent and advanced ability at a young age, making him the child his parents chose to receive lessons. Gershwin began his work by working as a song plugger in Tin Pan Alley until his compositions had made him enough to turn his career towards composing. He partnered with his older brother, Ira, and wrote for Broadway, becoming the most iconic songwriting duo of their time. Some of Gershwin's most popular works are *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris*, *Porgy and Bess*, and "I Got Rhythm".

"Someone to Watch Over Me" is found in multiple musicals and featured in a few films, so this might be a familiar song to many. This version specifically is from the Gershwin musical *Crazy for You*. The 1930 musical follows a well-to-do New Yorker, Bobby Child, who has to go to Nevada to foreclose on a theatre owned by a family-business. As he falls in love with the local woman worker at the post office, Bobby decides to produce a show to save the theatre. Sung by Polly, the post office worker, in Act One, it comes at a moment when she desires a love of her own.

"Someone to Watch Over Me" has been recorded more than 1,800 times by various artists. The lyrics describe a desire to find a companion, someone special to share their life with and someone to protect and take care of them. Musically, this song is a ballad that has a simple yet beautiful melody that allows the focus to be on the sweetness of the words. Within the chord progression, there are many "jazzy" chords, including b5's, b6's, sevenths, and b9's. Within the rhythm, there are syncopations that make the repetitious melody more interesting and engaging.

George Frideric Handel was a German-British composer born on February 23, 1685, in Halle, Germany. He lived and worked in Germany, Italy, and London throughout the span of his life. In the beginning of his career, he taught private music lessons, became the organist at a cathedral in Halle, and joined the violin section in Hamburg's opera orchestra. As the popularity of operas declined, Handel began to compose more oratorios and orchestral pieces. Throughout his life he wrote approximately fifty operas and thirty oratorios, with one of his most popular and well-known compositions being *Messiah*. Handel died in London on April 14, 1759.

"Bel piacere" is from Handel's opera *Agrippina*, which debuted in Italy in 1709. *Agrippina* is a three-act opera following the story of Agrippina, the mother of Nero, as she plots the downfall of Roman Emperor Claudius so her son can go in his place.

The music for "Bel piacere" is by Handel and the lyrics are written by Vincenzo Grimani. The piece is sung by the character Poppea in Act Three. The main theme of this song is that love is most meaningful and in its purest form when it comes from the heart. This piece demonstrates many characteristics of the Baroque period, such as trills, ornaments, and a variety of dynamics.

Bel piacere e godere fido amor!
questo fa contento il cor.
Di bellezza non s'apprezza lo splendor
se non vien d'un fido cor.

It is great pleasure to enjoy a faithful love!
it pleases the heart.
Splendor is not measured by beauty
if it does not come from a faithful heart.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) is one of the most greatly recognized and celebrated composers of all time. Mozart was known as a child prodigy and his father encouraged that by touring him all around Europe starting when he was only six years old. He was advanced in both the piano and the violin, often giving concerts on both instruments. His first composition was done at age five; his first symphony was finished just before he turned twelve. Because of his vast travels, he was able to experience and learn from various cultures, which influenced his music. He held musical positions throughout his lifetime in places like Salzburg and Vienna. He composed works of every genre of his time and was a master of them all. Some of his most well-known and influential works are “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik,” “The Marriage of Figaro,” Symphony No. 41 “Jupiter,” “Clarinet Concerto,” and so much more. Overall, he wrote over 600 works.

“**Laudate Dominum**” is from the choral work *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (*Solemn Vespers for a Confessor*). It was written for liturgical use and includes chorus as well as solo voices. The fifth movement is a piece for solo soprano and piano. It is based off of Psalm 117: “Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples. For great is His love towards us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever”. Similar to the simplicity of this Psalm, the musical content of this piece mirrors that idea.

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes
Laudate eum, omnes populi
Quoniam confirmata est
Super nos misericordia eius,
Et veritas Domini manet in
aeternum.

Praise the Lord, all nations;
Praise Him, all people.
For He has bestowed
His mercy upon us,
And the truth of the Lord endures
forever.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui
Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,
et semper.
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Glory to the Father and
to the Son and to the
Holy Spirit, as it was in
the beginning, is now and forever,
for generations to come. Amen.

Composer **Richard Rodgers** (1902-1979) and lyricist **Oscar Hammerstein II** (1896-1960) are an iconic duo in the musical theatre world. Together, they wrote numerous musicals, including *South Pacific*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Carousel*. As a duo, they were nominated for and won many awards, including Tony, Oscar, Grammy, Emmy, Pulitzer, and Olivier

Awards. Their work is celebrated worldwide and continues to be performed throughout high school drama clubs and professional theatres alike.

“Mister Snow” is from 1945’s *Carousel*, a beloved classic from the Rodgers and Hammerstein repertoire. Set in the 19th century, the story follows Julie Jordan and her husband Billy Bigelow. Billy loses his job as the pair find out they are expecting. He is excited yet financially concerned. In an attempt to provide for his family, he is involved in robbing a bank, yet he gets caught and with the threat of facing prison, he takes his own life and is sent “up there”. Fifteen years later, he gets the opportunity to come down and visit the daughter he never knew. She is a lonely and friendless teenager, and Billy restores a sense of hope to both his daughter and wife, illustrating the “power of love”.

“Mister Snow” comes at the beginning of the show when Julie and Billy first meet. In a moment between her and her friend Carrie, Julie admits her infatuation with Billy, even after one encounter. Now the giddy Carrie feels free to tell Julie about her new love since she now has one of her own. Throughout the number, Carrie excitedly describes her Mister Snow and her daydreaming about their future now that he’s asked her to marry him. It is a lighthearted tune that fits beautifully in a young soprano voice, highlighting the joys of young love.

“When She Loved Me” is from the Disney/Pixar movie, *Toy Story 2*. It was written by **Randy Newman** (b. 1943), a composer widely known for his music in Disney films such as *Cars*, *Monster’s Inc.*, *Toy Story* and more. Newman studied musical composition at the University of California at Los Angeles and then worked as a songwriter on the staff of a publishing company. He first released original songs that he sang in the early 1970s with minimal success. Most of his career success came from writing film scores, winning Grammys and Oscars for his work.

This song plays an integral part in *Toy Story 2*, as it is the introduction song for the new cowgirl character, Jessie. Like one of the main toys, Woody, Jessie was loved deeply by a child. The child grew up and didn’t come around to play with the toys anymore, so they were left behind and then donated. The song is sung from Jessie’s point of view, her grief of losing her “kid” and the way they took care of each other. With a beautiful melody and simple accompaniment that supports the sadness of the story, “When She Loved Me” takes us all back to thinking about distant yet sweet childhood memories. It is sung freely with reminiscence, emphasized by repeated phrases and melodies and multiple fermatas that allow the performer to have more freedom in the expression. Made popular by singer Sarah McLachlan, “When She Loved Me” is now one of the greatest hits of the *Toy Story* soundtrack and pulls at the heartstrings of every adult watching.

Billy Sprague is a composer of mainly Christian pop songs that began his professional career in 1981 by touring with singers Amy Grant and Micheal W. Smith. He would then go on to compose songs that were recorded by Debby Boone, Cece and Bebe Winans, and Kathy Troccoli as well as recorded some of

his own songs himself. He has won four Dove awards throughout his most active years and now continues with music as the worship pastor of his current church in Florida. His most popular and well-known song, “Via Dolorosa”, was originally recorded by Christian and five-time Grammy award winner **Sandi Patty** who released it on her album *Songs from the Heart* in 1984. The song won Song of the Year at the Dove Awards in 1986 and Inspirational Album in 1985. Sprague co-wrote this song with Niles Borop as the lyricist.

“**Via Dolorosa**” means “Way of Suffering” in Latin, which is the path Jesus took on His way to be crucified on the cross. It tells of how Jesus chose to make this sacrifice and knew of the immense suffering He was about to endure. The lyrics to the chorus are repeated three times throughout the song, once in English, once in Spanish, then in English again. The composers and writers decided to repeat the lyrics in Spanish to honor the language origin of the name of the path Jesus took.

This song puts the listener and performer in a position of reflection over Jesus’ actions of sacrificial love. It can invoke feelings of grief and sorrow but also looking at His actions with immense gratitude. The listener is placed in the time of Jesus and His crucifixion, taking them through the intense emotions of this event. With each repeated chorus, the dynamics become louder and stronger, making them mean more every time the performer sings those words. “Via Dolorosa” is in E minor, so the key in and of itself already brings a somber mood to the song. The focus of this song is not on the music, but rather the story it is telling. It is a simple melody that is easy to remember with many sections of the melody being in the range and rhythm of a speaking voice, making the singer seen as the storyteller of this song.

Richard Sherman and **Robert Sherman**, also known as the Sherman Brothers, are an award winning composing duo. Born to a composer father, a successful Tin Pan Alley songwriter. One of their most famous compositions, other than the score for *Mary Poppins*, is “It’s A Small World (After All)”, heard in the beloved Disney World ride of the same name. The brothers have a long list of musical credits throughout Disney films, television, and theme parks as well as screenplays and other film scores. Both have received the honor of being inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and they did a lot of work for UNICEF in fundraising for children with HIV/AIDS.

Based off of the children’s books by P.L. Travers, Disney’s beloved *Mary Poppins* is a classic cherished by many throughout the generations, starting at its release in 1964. Starring Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke, this adored story follows a magical nanny, Mary Poppins, and her adventures with her faithful confidante, Bert the chimney sweep. With well-known songs such as “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” and “A Spoonful of Sugar” and incredible actors, it was highly celebrated that award season, winning at the Oscars. In more recent years, the Mary Poppins legacy has continued on through a Broadway adaptation opening in 2004. In 2018, a sequel was released called *Mary Poppins Returns*, starring Emily Blunt and Lin-Manuel Miranda.

“**Feed the Birds**” is a heartfelt lullaby sung by Julie Andrews in a

quiet moment in the film. It follows an old woman who sells bags of breadcrumbs on the steps of St. Paul's cathedral for those passing by to feed the birds. The message shares the simple things in life and the importance of caring for other living creatures. It is written in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, as most lullabies are, with an accompaniment that supports the beauty of the melody. With its rich and warm sound, it has worked its way into the hearts of those young and old.

"I Have A Savior" was written and produced by a team of Christians for CeCe Winans to add to her album "Believe for It". The songwriters include Anna Byrd, Kyle Lee, and Leeland Mooring. These writers have collaborated and been a part of writing for and with groups such as Gateway Worship, Bethel Music, and Hillsong Worship.

CeCe Winans is the best-selling and most awarded female gospel artist of all time, with a career spanning decades and sixty-six awards to her name. She comes from a musical family, starting her professional career as a duo with her brother, Bebe Winans. She eventually went off on her own and formed a successful solo career that is still continuing and thriving to this day. Her music is beautiful in its simplicity of always sharing the Gospel and always giving praise to the Name of Jesus and His holiness. Some of her most famous songs are her rendition of "Goodness of God," "Alabaster Box," "Worthy of It All," and "That's My King". This song, "I Have A Savior," is on her 2021 "Believe For It" album.

It praises Jesus for the way He is our Savior and Friend, and how my soul doesn't want anything but Him. No amount of money, fame, or earthly desires could compare with the riches of being known, loved, and redeemed by the King of Heaven. Some of my favorite lyrics are "You're my future, you're my hope. You're the anchor for my soul, and I was made for you". These words highlight the life of a disciple of Jesus, that He is the author of my story and I was created to know Him and make Him known.

Thank you all for coming to support my senior recital! I pray this collection of pieces blesses you as they have blessed me. Your presence here today means so much and I am thankful that you are a part of my life.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace". (Numbers 6:24-26)