



## Department of Music

presents

Matthew E. Johnson

Tenor

in a

Senior Recital

with

Jan Corrothers

Collaborative Pianist

7:30p.m.

November 4, 2023

George and Sharon Mabry Concert Hall  
Music/Mass Communication Building

# —Program—

As If We Never Said Goodbye  
from *Sunset Boulevard*

Andrew Lloyd Webber  
(b. 1948)

Die Forelle  
op. 12, no. 8

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

Wie bist du, meine Königin  
op. 32, no. 9

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

Dream-Land

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872-1958)

A Summer Idyll  
Sweet Chance, that Led My Steps Abroad

Michael Head  
(1900-1976)

Pur Dicesti, O Bocca Bella

Antonio Lotti  
(1667-1740)

Lydia

Gabriel Fauré  
(1845-1924)

Pastorello d'un povero armento  
from *Rodelinda*

George Frideric Handel  
(1685-1759)

The Music of the Night  
from *The Phantom of the Opera*

Andrew Lloyd Webber

*Oh Fair to See* selections  
II. Oh Fair to See  
IV. Only the wanderer  
V. To Joy  
VI. Harvest

Gerald Finzi  
(1901-1956)

Duetto Buffo Di Due Gatti

Gioachino Rossini  
(1792-1868)

# —Translations—

## Die Forelle

In einem Bächlein helle,  
Da schoß in froher Eil'  
Die launische Forelle  
Vorüber wie ein Pfeil.  
Ich stand an dem Gestade  
Und sah in süßer Ruh  
Des muntern Fischleins Bade  
Im klaren Bächlein zu.

Ein Fischer mit der Rute  
Wohl an dem Ufer stand,  
Und sah's mit kaltem Blute,  
Wie sich das Fischlein wand.  
So lang dem Wasser Helle,  
So dacht ich, nicht gebricht,  
So fängt er die Forelle  
Mit seiner Angel nicht.

Doch endlich ward dem Diebe  
Die Zeit zu lang. Er macht  
Das Bächlein tückisch trübe,  
Und eh ich es gedacht,  
So zuckte seine Rute,  
Das Fischlein zappelt dran,  
Und ich mit regem Blute  
Sah die Betrogene an.

In a limpid brook  
the capricious trout  
in joyous haste  
darted by like an arrow.  
I stood on the bank  
in blissful peace, watching  
the lively fish swim  
in the clear brook.

An angler with his rod  
stood on the bank  
cold-bloodedly watching  
the fish's contortions.  
As long as the water  
is clear, I thought,  
he won't catch the trout  
with his rod.

But at length the thief  
grew impatient. Cunningly  
he made the brook cloudy,  
and in an instant  
his rod quivered,  
and the fish struggled on it.  
And I, my blood boiling,  
looked on at the cheated creature.

## Wie bist du, meine Königin

Wie bist du, meine Königin,  
Durch sanfte Güte wonnevoll!  
Du lächle nur – Lenzdüfte wehn  
Durch mein Gemüte wonnevoll!

Frisch aufgeblühter Rosen Glanz  
Vergleich ich ihn dem deinigen?  
Ach, über alles was da blüht,  
Ist deine Blüte, wonnevoll!

Durch tote Wüsten wandle hin,  
Und grüne Schatten breiten sich,  
Ob fürchterliche Schwüle dort  
Ohn Ende brüte, wonnevoll.

Laß mich vergehn in deinem Arm!  
Es ist in ihm ja selbst der Tod,  
Ob auch die herbste Todesqual  
Die Brust durchwüte, wonnevoll.

How blissful, my queen, you are,  
By reason of your gentle kindness!  
You merely smile, and springtime fragrance  
Wafts through my soul blissfully!

Shall I compare the radiance  
Of freshly blown roses to yours?  
Ah! more blissful than all that blooms  
Is your blissful bloom!

Roam through desert wastes,  
And green shade will spring up –  
Though fearful sultriness broods  
Endlessly there – blissfully.

Let me perish in your arms!  
Death in your embrace will be –  
Though bitterest mortal agony rage  
Through my breast – blissful.

## —Translations—

### Pur Dicesti, O Bocca Bella

Pur dicesti, o bocca bella,  
Quel soave e caro sì,  
Che fatutto il mio piacer.

Per onor di sua facella  
Con un bacio Amor t'apri,  
Dolce fonte del goder, ah!

Oh, delightful mouth, at last you have uttered  
That gentle and precious yes,  
Upon which all my pleasure is founded.

In his own radiant honour  
Love has opened you with a kiss,  
Sweet foundation of pleasure, ah!

### Lydia

Lydia sur tes roses joues,  
Et sur ton col frais et si blanc,  
Roule étincelant  
L'or fluide que tu dénoues.

Le jour qui luit est le meilleur:  
Oublions l'éternelle tombe.  
Laisse tes baisers de colombe  
Chanter sur ta lèvre en fleur.

Un lys caché répand sans cesse  
Une odeur divine en ton sein:  
Les délices, comme un essaim,  
Sortent de toi, jeune Déesse!

Je t'aime et meurs, ô mes amours!  
Mon âme en baisers m'est ravie.  
O Lydia, rends-moi la vie,  
Que je puisse mourir toujours!

Lydia, over your rosy cheeks,  
and over your neck, so fresh and white,  
sparkling, rolls  
the fluid gold that you untie.

The day which is gleaming is the best:  
let us forget the eternal tomb.  
Let your dove's kisses  
sing on your blossoming lips.

A hidden lily ceaselessly diffuses  
a divine scent in your breast:  
like a swarm, delights  
escape from you, young Goddess!

I love you and am dying, o my loves!  
My soul is ravished by kisses.  
O Lydia, give me back my life,  
that I might die eternally!

### Pastorello d'un povero armento

Pastorello d'un povero armento  
Pur dorme contento,  
sotto l'ombra  
d'un faggio o d'alloro.

Io, d'un regno monarca fastoso,  
non trovo riposo,  
sotto l'ombra  
di porpora e d'oro.

A shepherd, though his flock be poor,  
Still slumbers tranquilly  
Beneath the shadow of some  
Beech or laurel tree.

Though I be a monarch  
Of a kingdom known for ceremony  
I find no rest in the shadow  
Of the royal purple and gold.

### Duetto Buffo Di Due Gatti

Miau!

Meow!

## —Program Notes—

### **As If We Never Said Goodbye**

Joe Gillis, a writer for films in Hollywood, is down on his luck when he manages to stumble upon the great mansion of Norma Desmond. In her younger years, Norma Desmond was the star of the early silent film era of Hollywood before she diminished with the rise of “talkies”. However, Norma is determined that she will return to the cameras and all “you wonderful people sitting there in the dark” and meets with her old friend Cecil B. DeMille but upon her first steps onto a movie set, Norma is overcome with emotion. In Mr. Johnson’s rendition of this classic from Broadway, he invokes the feeling of returning to the stage after the pandemic and back into the world of performance.

### **Die Forelle**

Schubert takes the form of a narrator alone on a dock when a fisherman comes by. He casts his line, and within a few moments a trout (forelle) is hooked. A struggle begins to catch the trout and the narrator hopes that the trout will get away before he notices that the water became muddied as the fisherman retrieves his catch. Schubert is left outraged at the thought that the man would so “cold-bloodedly” end this creature’s life.

### **Wie bist du, meine Königin**

Brahms opens with a muse to his “queen” of her loveliness and her kindness. He continues to reflect on the peace and even mimics a sonnet by William Shakespeare “Shall I compare the radiance of freshly blown roses to yours?” invoking the line of “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day...”. When the music takes a turn, the text tells us that even were she to roam in the desert wastes of some far land, that “green shade will spring up” from her path; and were there to be gloom where she trod, still, “bliss” would be found among her. By the end, the narrator asks that he die there in her arms and dying there would be a comfort.

### **Dream-Land**

Keeping in line with pining love songs, Vaughan-Williams set Christina Rossetti’s “Dream-Land”. Far off in a grove by a light running stream, rests a woman who slumbers among the ever-green arbor in a “charmed sleep”. In her sleep, the woman dreams of a green fields, the cold rush of autumn, and hears the song of the nightingale. But she suddenly wakes and begins her travels once more. Wandering among these lands of plenty, she comes goes beyond the ripening grain and stands before the “mossy shore” of some lake. It is here that she waits, for time to consume and cease the pain, and allow her to forever drift off in her dreamland.

### **A Summer Idyll**

Another song of reminiscence where the narrator daydreams of the woman he shall come to love. Far off, somewhere, she walks with the spring rays of sunlight, stands beneath the storming rain, and calls him through “the wind’s soft song” as she brings life behind her trodden path. In his fantasy, he sees a bird that sings of her as well and says she comes upon the silver moonbeams of the night; yet her power over him seems to send the sun and moon from day to night and “every wistful” waiting star. The narrator continues to remark her beauty and holds dear to his heart, the woman he believes waits for him.

### **Sweet Chance that Led My Steps Abroad**

By some happenstance of luck, the narrator was led somewhere he did not intend and came across a vast field of flowers beyond his home. He believes himself drawn to a rainbow in the distance and himself a wandering cuckoo among the arbors. All things fall away from him: no turmoil or sorrow to hold him back, and he knows that this must truly be a heaven on earth. And when he returns to reality, he goes to town smitten and to all who ask why there is a skip in his steps, he tells them that he stands in that moment forever, drenched in the rain that birthed the rainbow. Yet, this was not to last as the man believes that “a rainbow and a cuckoo may never come together this side the tomb”, as this was a once and a lifetime moment when he knew true bliss.

### **Pur Dicesti, O Bocca Bella**

Filled with joy inexpressible, the narrator tells of the wonderful feeling now stirring in his heart as his lover has accepted his proposal. “Quel soave e caro sì,” (That gentle and precious yes) has made his life far better and has given him hope and happiness forever.

## —Program Notes—

### **Lydia**

Once again, a man fondles over the woman he loves and sings through courtly love poetry, exalting her to the role of “young Goddess!”. Her beauty is so great that he is “dying...ravished by kisses” and asks that Lydia return to him his life she has stolen so easily.

### **Pastorello d'un povero armento**

In Act III, Grimoaldo's conscience weighs on him as he contemplates what he has done to claim his throne. At the foot of Bertarido's memorial, he sings of his sorrow-heavy soul.

### **The Music of the Night**

In this selection the Phantom (or Erik, in the original novel) has lured Christine into the depths of the Opera Populaire and begins musing about not only the music that he composes, but also the power of music as a force of sensation and sound. Here he tells Christine what she has already experienced in her performance on the stage: music provides an awe-inspiring experience, whether listening or performing, to such a degree that the words of the Phantom ring true, “close your eyes, let your spirit start to soar. And you'll live, as you've never lived before.” By the end of the song, the Phantom has completely intoxicated Christine with his voice and his poetry that it overtakes her, and Erik thinks on his Angel of Music and that she is his grand triumph.

### **Oh Fair to See**

In these selections from Finzi's Oh Fair to See song cycle, the narrator begins with the title song as he looks upon the beauty of his love in the spring sun. Here he compares her to the “sunny white” rays of the sky above and a “fruit laden cherry tree”. In Only the Wanderer, the love-struck man leaves his home and travels alongside his love to begin their life; and though excited for this new chapter, he feels a sense of dread that will be proven. With the first octave of To Joy, the tone has changed drastically and now a darkness has befallen the narrator. Here he stands at the grave of his wife and their unborn child “thrust out alone upon Death's wilderness.” As his grief consumes him, he hears the sound of a music box playing in his mind and perceives a vision of his child and mother running among the fields where they are buried before the dream fades and he returns to reality. Harvest is the climax of his toil. Struggling with the grief of losing everything he cared about most, he returns home; those “lands heaped with their wheaten gold”, hoping he can pick up the pieces. The narrator compares his last year to the shriveled fruit upon a tree, rejects what little peace he can ascertain from the blooms of this timber, and in the end, succumbs to the “laughing” eye of the sun down upon him. Yet, there is a song on the wind, as “earth accuses none, that goes among her stokes”, and he wanders off in solitude to find some answer beyond writhing in with his torment.



## Upcoming Events

Oct. 15	APSU Symphony Orchestra	4p.m.
Oct.17	APSU Student Recital	12:45p.m.
	APSU Woodwind Chamber Ensemble	7:30p.m.
Oct. 20	APSU Choir Concert	7:30p.m.
Oct. 21	GOMB Mid-South Marching Invitational at Fortera	

*Events listed above are held in the George and Sharon Mabry Concert Hall in the Music/Mass Communication Building and are free and open to the public, unless indicated otherwise.*

If you would like to be added to the Music Department patron database to be notified about future events, please send your name, address and email to [music@apsu.edu](mailto:music@apsu.edu) or call 931-221-7818.

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