

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

May 8, 2017 7:30 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



Dominique McCormick, soprano
Keith Weber, piano

J'ai deux amours (1930)

Vincent Scotto
(1874-1952)

French *Bergerettes* (1874)

Jean- Baptiste Weckerlin
(1821-1910)

Par un matin

Jeune fille

Maman, dites-moi

Venez, agréable printemps

Non je n'irai plus au bois

from *Thumbs Up!* (1934)

Vernon Duke
(1903-1969)

Autumn in New York

Five Folk Songs

Luigi Zaninelli
(b. 1932)

The Water is Wide

Come All you Fair and Tender Ladies

Go' Way From My Window

I Know Where I'm Goin'

All the Pretty Horses

from *Can-Can* (1953)

Cole Porter
(1891-1964)

I love Paris

from *Fifty Million Frenchmen* (1929)

You don't know Paree

INTERMISSION

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.

Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

La Fiancée du Timbalier (1884)

Martial Caillebotte
(1853-1910)

La Dame de Monte Carlo (1961)

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

from *Anything Goes* (1934)
Take Me Back to Manhattan

Cole Porter
(1891-1964)

Notes on the Program

How better to start my recital than with a song made famous by an American woman who fell in love with France and made her life there. My *deux amours* (two loves) are my two beloved countries; France and the United States. Like Josephine Baker, I went to France as a young woman, living in Paris for the better part of a decade. I however have decided to keep a foot in each country. Today's program is a musical homage to the places I love.

J'ai deux amours - words by Georges Koger (1894-1975), music by **Vincent Scotto** (1877-1969): Josephine Baker was born in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1906. She went to France during the Roaring 20's to star in the *Revue Nègre*, a jazz music hall revue that exploited the black cultures of the US and the French colonies of Southeast Asia. *J'ai deux amours* (I have two loves) is a song that Baker would have sung at the *Revue* or at the *Folies Bergère*, where she wore her famous *jupe de bananes* (banana skirt). Baker lived in France for over fifty years, eventually renouncing her US citizenship to become a French national. While Baker projected a sensual, erotic image on stage, she evolved into a political activist in real life, working with veterans for the Red Cross during World War II and eventually turning her home into a refugee camp. After the war General Charles de Gaulle named Baker a *Chevalier* of the *Légion d'honneur* (Knight of the Legion of Honor).

Jean Baptiste Weckerlin (1821-1910) was a French music publisher whose best-known publications concerned French popular songs and French folk music. In 1874, he published the ***French Bergerettes Eighteenth Century Romances and Chansons***. A *bergerette*, or shepherdess' air, is a form of early rustic French song, related to the *rondeau*, composed of a single stanza, and often accompanied by harp, harpsichord, lute or guitar. *Chansons* and *romances* are also traditional French folk songs that are strophic in form and amorous or even sensual in nature. Do not be deceived by the sweet simple melodies of these arrangements. Some of the text that is set to this music is quasi-erotic and less refined than the poetry seen and heard later in French *mélodie* (1848-1930s). The songs *Par un matin* (One morning) and *Non, je n'irai plus au bois* (No, I will not return to the woods) mention "Lisette"; this is a name commonly used in the poetry of the 18th century to represent a peasant girl. In both of these songs she finds herself in trouble, trusting a shepherd boy and letting him have his way with her. In *Jeune fillette* (young maiden) and *Maman, dites-moi* (Mommy, tell me) the text is a lesson for a young girl on what to do when a man tries to seduce or take advantage of her. *Jeune fillette* even goes so far as to tell her that if your love cheats on you, cheat right back! In the one *romance* of the set, *Venez, agréable printemps* (Come, pleasant spring), love is compared to nature, flowers, and the song of nightingales. We are told that in order to be happy, we must love and be loved. The moral of this poem is not necessarily about romantic love, but a love for all people and living things.

You may notice that tonight's program includes music from the repertoire of jazz and musical theatre. A large part of my formation as a singer was learning musical theatre and jazz standards like the ones you will hear this evening.

Cole Porter (1891–1964) and **Duke Vernon** (1903–1969) spent a large portion of their adult lives studying and composing music in Paris. Early in their careers both men were discouraged by American audiences' lackluster response to their music. Like so many other composers of the time, Porter and Vernon sought a new beginning in Paris during *Les Années Folles* (the crazy years), 1920–1929, when Parisian nightlife and artistic culture were inspired by American Jazz music. The music of Porter and Vernon was an immediate success with their Parisian audiences. This resulted in an outpouring of compositions from both men that reached not only European but American audiences as well. After *Les Années folles*, the men shared their time between America and Europe, with cities like New York and Paris continuing to inspire their compositions.

In this program, *Autumn in New York*, *I love Paris*, *You Don't Know Paree* and *Take me Back to Manhattan* were specifically chosen to transition the programmed group of songs from one part of the world to another, encouraging you to take a journey with me to the cities I know best. Each piece holds a special place in my heart, and allows me to return to the two places in the world that I consider as “home”.

Luigi Zaninelli's (b. 1932) *Five Folk Songs* (1979) is a group of songs for high voice and piano. Zaninelli was born in New Jersey and began studying piano at the age of twelve, becoming equally proficient in both jazz and classical piano. He has composed a wide range of music from solo instruments and voice to large ensembles, choruses and orchestra. He is a promoter of jazz, American folk song, sacred spirituals and gospel music.

Like the *bergerettes*, American folk songs can be traditional pieces passed down from generation to generation and from community to community. Some American folk songs can be traced back to their origins in Europe. Zaninelli's captivating and sophisticated arrangements of some of the best-known American folk songs help establish this genre of music for the recital and concert stage.

The Water is Wide is based on a Scottish poem in which there are seven stanzas, however Zaninelli only sets three. Repetitive, ascending broken arpeggios representing the flowing water accompany the simple, strophic melody. The lyrics describe the challenges of love and the reality one faces when the infatuation stage of a relationship has dwindled.

Hailing from the Appalachian region, *Come all ye Fair and Tender Ladies* begins with the soprano singing the first verse without accompaniment and rhythmically free. It is a warning call to all women; they should be careful with their hearts when giving them to flattering men. Although the song is strophic, Zaninelli creates an atmosphere of instability. Each verse starts on a different beat than the one before it. This compositional choice could be deliberate for like the ladies, the soprano must be careful too: she needs to be sure to start on the right beat.

Go 'Way from My Window (1906) is the most modern piece in the cycle. This is an original composition by the “Dean of American Balladeers”, John Jacob Niles (1892-1980). Niles was the American Ralph Vaughan Williams, traveling the Appalachian region and transcribing original folk songs from oral sources. Zaninelli takes Niles' haunting melody and transforms it into a slow gospel ballad. The strophic melody is set against an accompaniment that evokes a sluggish cowboy on his trail heading

home after a long haul. In comparison to the Niles recording, Zaninelli's tempo choice is slower and calls for an improvisatory style to be displayed by vocalist.

The fourth piece in this set *I Know Where I'm Goin'* is a song that has been performed since the early 19th century. The origin is uncertain, thought to be either Scottish or Irish. This song tells of a woman who has everything except the man she wishes she could marry. Zaninelli is very deliberate in his dynamic markings. Most of the piece is sung in the range of *pianissimo* and *mezzo piano*, as if the woman must keep these things to herself and not let others know how she is feeling. Perhaps her family does not approve, maybe he is already taken, or perhaps she cannot summon the courage to tell him how she feels. Zaninelli does allow the woman to let go at least one time: at the return of the first verse, on the repeated text "I know who I love", Zaninelli marks a crescendo to *fortissimo* and the word "love" is held by a fermata. However a *subito piano* interrupts the next line of text and "I wish I'd marry" softens again, as if she is unable to free herself from her despair of loneliness.

All the Pretty Little Horses is a lullaby placed at the end of an exquisite set of songs. The origins of this piece are not clear, perhaps African-American in origin. It can be sung with a variety of interpretations, one being a slave woman singing to her owner's child while she is separated from her own, another being the less painful imagery of a mother singing her child to sleep. Whatever the interpretation, Zaninelli's score markings ask the singer to sustain long phrases in the dynamic marking of *piano* while the accompaniment anchors the 6/8 rocking meter in the left hand, as the right hand swirls thirty-second note patterns to create a magic sleeping powder to dust over the baby's head.

The remainder of the program consists of two *scène lyriques* (lyrical scenes), **Martial Caillebotte's** (1853-1910) ***La Fiancée du Timbalier*** (1884) and **Francis Poulenc's** (1899-1963) ***La Dame de Monte Carlo*** (1961). They are harmonically and thematically worlds apart, however both works portray a story of a woman: one, a milkmaid longing for the return of her soldier fiancé, and the other, an older woman who mourns the loss of youth. These women experience tragedies in life that leave them broken and hopeless.

The *scène lyrique* of the 1880s evolved from the French *chanson* and *mélodie*. In comparison to the *chanson* and *mélodie*, the *scène lyrique* is musically more complex, longer in duration and written for voice with piano or symphonic accompaniment. The subject matter in the poetry chosen for *scènes lyriques* is more elaborate and intricate than that of the *chansons* and *bergerettes* heard earlier in the program. In a *scène lyrique*, the composer makes deliberate compositional choices to enhance the dramatic elements of the poetry, lending to a more engaged performance from the singer. Although not considered to be an opera, the *scène lyrique* allows the performer to find the middle ground between the intimate nature of *mélodie* performance and the grandiose usage of emotion and exaggerated intention found in opera and operetta.

Martial Caillebotte's ***La Fiancée du Timbalier*** is based on a poem by Victor Hugo (1802-1885) from his collection of poems entitled *Odes et Ballades*, written in 1825. The *scène* tells the story of a milkmaid's search for her *fiancé* who is returning from war. The woman meets a fortuneteller who predicts that the woman's *fiancé* will not return. When the procession of soldiers is complete, and the *fiancé* is not among them, the woman is left dying of a broken heart.

A *timbalier* is a soldier characterized as a kettledrummer, or *homme de cheval* (horseman). Drums were used to help announce the arrival of the enemy, to lead marches or processions, and to provide entertainment for fellow soldiers. A *timbalier* would rather die first before giving up his drums to the enemy.

Although the *La Fiancée du Timbalier* is scored for voice and orchestra, the piano reduction successfully retains thematic, word painting and symbolic elements that are meant for the orchestral instruments. As you listen to this piece, listen for the low rumbling pattern in the piano's left hand notes which are used to mimic the color of the timpani, the accented rhythmic feature of the upper right hand notes evoking a trumpet fanfare's military motifs, and try to identify the staccato articulations found in the middle section which symbolize the hoofs of the horses that parade as the soldiers pass by.

Martial Caillebotte's music encompasses the characteristics of romanticism and modernism. Inspired by Richard Wagner (1813-1883) Caillebotte uses leitmotifs, rich harmonies, varying tonal centers and evaded cadences. In *La Fiancée du Timbalier*, two principal leitmotifs can be identified throughout the work. The first is heard within the first thirty seconds of the piece. It is preceded with a haunting cascade of broken isolated diminished seventh chords. The leitmotif enters in the right hand piano part in G minor. It is accompanied by a syncopated heartbeat-like ostinato in the bass. This leitmotif has been identified as the *Guardian Angel* motif. In the poem, the female protagonist sings to St. Brigitte, the patron saint of dairymaids, whom she wishes would watch over her *fiancé*. The second leitmotif of E major/minor is heard in the middle section of the piece. It is propelled by a fanfare of dominant pedal octaves with the military rhythmic motif mentioned above; this leitmotif is called *The Parade*.

The entire poem is set with quotation marks. This is significant for it highlights the voice and point of view of the milkmaid, however, the last stanza of the poem is not in quotes; it is from the point of view of a passerby, an observer, or maybe even the fortune-teller. The narrator describes the milkmaid falling into the crowds of people. The piano plays the tumbling diminished seventh chords that were used in the introduction of the piece. This time however, these chords are written with an accelerated tempo and an augmented rhythmic pattern to evoke the image of a woman falling into a crowd. This book-end compositional technique aids the listener to accept the conclusion of the story. In the closing musical material of this scene, the haunting leitmotif of St. Brigitte is reintroduced. It is isolated in the right hand piano part, since this time no heartbeat ostinato is found in the accompaniment. The poem's final words "*les timbaliers étaient passés*" (the kettledrummers have already passed) are sung over the dominant pedal and the piano closes the piece like a candle being extinguished.

French composer, pianist and collaborator **Francis Poulenc** composed a large body of work for the voice and piano. He enjoyed the collaborative relationship he had with the French soprano/actress Denise Duval (1921–2016). Poulenc was also loyal to his literary inspirations that included the works of Jean Cocteau (1889–1963). The "dream team" of Duval and Cocteau had premiered Poulenc's other *scène lyrique*, *La Voix Humaine* in 1958. ***La Dame de Monte Carlo*** (1961) was Poulenc's second work that set Cocteau's prose to music while giving Duval an opportunity to display her extensive acting and singing ability.

Cocteau's version of the *La Dame de Monte Carlo* (1936) was a monologue from his *Théâtre de Poche* and originally written for a cabaret artist Marianne Oswald. The monologue portrays a lonely, older woman who takes one last trip to Monte Carlo, a place where she had once thrived, living out her younger years in complete freedom. She gambled successfully, had lovers, and lived the carefree life of a privileged socialite. Once beautiful and adored, she has now become aged and ignored. Her once luxurious clothes are now torn and her furs ragged and tattered. Poulenc's devotion to melody is juxtaposed with erratic harmonic transitions and frenzied syllabic text setting. The singer is forced to oscillate between a recitative-like execution of the text and a lyrical presentation. The woman is clearly on the edge of losing her mind, and Poulenc's compositional choices of violent rhythmic and motivic

shifts leave the listener uneasy and unsure how or what they should feel for this woman. She is at rock bottom, and has lost it all. She gambles one last time and after she loses, throws herself into the Mediterranean Sea.

Duval sang the premiere in November of 1961 at the opera house of Monte Carlo. This was Poulenc's last work for Duval. It is originally scored for orchestra and voice, however the voice and piano edition is the one most performed today.

About the Artists

Dominique McCormick is a lyric soprano from Long Island, New York. She is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, B.M., Aaron Copland School of Music, M.M., and a Performer's Certificate and Music Theory diploma from the Conservatoire National de Région Boulogne-Billancourt in France. Performing in the United States and Europe, her roles include: Iphis in Handel's *Jephtha*, Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*; Laetitia in Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*; Susanna in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Sola Myrrhis, in Messager's *Coup de Roulis*; Hanna Glavari in Lehar's *The Merry Widow*. As soloist, works include: Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*; Mozart's *Mass in c minor* and *Requiem*, Brahms's *Requiem*; Handel's *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*; Bach's *Mass in b Minor*, *Magnificat*, and *St. Matthew's Passion*; Poulenc's *Gloria*; Mendelssohn's *Psalm 42* and *Lauda Sion*; Recitalist for *Les Musicales de Normandie*; and *Les Nuits de Cheronne*.

In addition to performing Dominique works as professor of voice and piano and conductor for music ensembles. From September 2011 to August 2013, Dominique held the position of assistant music director at the American Cathedral in Paris. In October 2011 she was appointed voice professor for Choeur Régional Vittoria d'Île de France under the direction of Michel Piquemal. Upon her return to the United States in 2013 as part of a fellowship she received to assist her doctoral studies, she worked as an adjunct professor at CUNY Queens College teaching sight singing, applied voice, and French diction for singers.

Currently working on her doctoral dissertation in music from the CUNY Graduate Center, Dominique is happy to be newly relocated to Houston where she is working as Artistic Director and Co-Founder of the music school Century Fine Arts. There she is teaching voice, piano and music theory. Future performance engagements include soloist for concerts with Ars Lyrica, Grace Song Inc., River Oaks Chamber Orchestra in Houston, Texas and Kyo- Shin- An- Arts of New York, New York.

Recent GRAMMY-nominated Producer **Keith Weber** is a choral and orchestral conductor, vocal coach, choral clinician, organist, pianist, harpsichordist, and collaborator widely known for his musical versatility and excellence.

He is currently Director of Music and Organist at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Houston and is Artistic Director of Grace Song, Inc., the Texas 501 (c) 3 organization [www.gracesong.us] that presents captivating concerts of vocal chamber music, helps young American singers develop their careers and brings about the creation of exciting new music.

A native of western Pennsylvania, he holds a B.M., cum laude, in Organ Performance from Southern Methodist University, an M.M. also from SMU and an M.S.M. from Perkins School of Theology.

Keith was the founding Associate Musical Director of the Lyric Opera of Dallas, and was Head Coach with the 2002-2005 Summer Festival, Opera In The Ozarks, and serves as a resource and vocal/career/life coach for dozens of fine singers.

As a recital collaborator and accompanist, Keith has worked with singers and instrumentalists across the United States, many in programs for Grace Song, Inc. and maintains ongoing relationships with tenor Vern Sutton (with whom he appeared on Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion" in May of 1999 - celebrating the release of a CD on the Ten Thousand Lakes [Schubert Club of Minnesota] label), sopranos Laura Claycomb and Melissa Givens, mezzo-soprano Natalie Arduino, tenor Dann Coakwell and baritone David Grogan. Keith was invited to bring four singers along and join the fun on the 2013 Prairie Home Companion Cruise of the Mediterranean Sea.