

Music in Midtown

THE
GRADUATE
CENTER
CITY UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK

Elebash Recital Hall
The Graduate Center
365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street), NYC
Thursdays 1:00–2:00 PM



Thursday, March 21, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Treasures from The Great American Songbook

Amy Burton, soprano
John Musto, pianist

Program

Let's Misbehave (from <i>Paris</i> 1928)	Music & Lyrics by Cole Porter
What Is This Thing Called Love? (from <i>Wake Up & Dream</i> 1929)	Music & Lyrics by Cole Porter
It Never Entered My Mind (from <i>Higher & Higher</i> 1940)	Music by Richard Rodgers Lyrics by Lorenz Hart
Manhattan Madness (from <i>Face the Music</i> 1932)	Music & Lyrics by Irving Berlin
A Wish (2001)	Music by Fred Hersch Lyrics by Norma Winstone
Our Love Is Here to Stay (1937)	Music by George Gershwin Lyrics by Ira Gershwin
I Love a Piano (from <i>Stop, Look, Listen!</i> 1915)	Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin
Day Dream (1939)	Music by Billy Strayhorn Lyrics by John Latouche
Lullaby in Ragtime (from <i>The Five Pennies</i> 1959)	Music & Lyrics by Sylvia Fine
I'll See You in C.U.B.A. (from <i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic</i> of 1919)	Music & Lyrics by Irving Berlin

You Don't Know Paree (from *Fifty Million Frenchmen* 1929)

Music & Lyrics by Cole Porter

Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered (from *Pal Joey* 1940)

Music by Richard Rodgers
Lyrics by Lorenz Hart

Let's Face the Music and Dance (from *Follow the Fleet* 1936)

Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin

Music in Midtown is a series of lunchtime concerts spotlighting the highly regarded musical performance program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Presented in the warm, intimate, acoustically rich Elebash Recital Hall, these performances feature the music program's renowned faculty, alumni, outstanding performers selected from students in the DMA program and noted guest artists. Some concerts are followed by a master class, which the public is invited to observe. Norman Carey is Director and John Musto is Assistant Director.

About the Program

Let's Misbehave (Cole Porter) could have served as the national anthem of the roaring twenties. The song was first introduced in the summer of 1927 at Les Ambassadeurs, a hot spot in Paris immortalized in paintings by Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec. It was briefly included in the musical *Paris*, but for the 1928 Broadway production was replaced by *Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love*, less libertine but certainly more suggestive.

What Is This Thing Called Love (Cole Porter) was introduced at the London Pavilion in *Cochran's 1929 Revue*, which was subsequently retitled *Wake Up and Dream*. The show was a hodgepodge of tunes by different composers and lyricists besides Cole Porter including Ivor Novello, Arthur Schwartz, J. S. Bach and Léo Delibes. The show moved to Broadway later that year.

The melancholy *It Never Entered My Mind* (Rodgers and Hart) is a number from the 1940 musical *Higher and Higher*. The show was not a particular success but featured a trained seal named Sharkey who turned out to be a favorite. In 1944 a film version was released as a vehicle for Frank Sinatra but used only one Rodgers and Hart song. About this song, composer Alec Wilder commented "[it] employs a very strange and effective harmonic device...For six measures it moves back and forth every half measure from F to A minor. The melody in these measures is very simple and somber."

In the midst of the depression, the Chrysler building was completed in 1930, the Empire State building was begun in 1931, and in 1932, Irving Berlin penned *Manhattan Madness* for the musical *Face the Music*. The lyric "buildings go up with wrecking crews waiting to tear them down again" is as timely now as then.

A Wish (Hersch/Winstone) began its life as a piano solo called *Valentine*, perhaps Fred Hersch's most popular tune. Dating from 2001, it received a Grammy nomination for Best Instrumental Composition in 2008. The lyrics were supplied by jazz vocalist and lyricist Norma Winstone.

Our Love Is Here To Stay (1927) is famously known as the last song George Gershwin wrote. He had written down the chorus of the song but not the verse. His brother Ira enlisted the help of Oscar Levant and Vernon Duke, who wrote in his autobiography "...fortunately, Oscar Levant remembered the harmonies from George's frequent piano performances of the tune and I was able faithfully to reconstruct it." Ira then supplied the lyrics. The song was featured in the 1938 film *The Goldwyn Follies* and again in 1952 in *An American in Paris*, sung by Gene Kelly.

"Sherlock Holmes couldn't find a plot in *Stop, Look, Listen!* the new Irving Berlin revue at the Globe." was the critical response to the 1915 show - understandable in an era where coherent storytelling was subservient to showcasing individual performers' talents. *I Love a Piano*, the novelty song that closes Act I is the only enduring hit from the show.

Composer, pianist, lyricist, orchestrator Billy Strayhorn penned *Day Dream* with words by John Latouche in 1939. Strayhorn was Duke Ellington's close collaborator, his "alter-ego" as the Duke would refer to him. They were always cagey about who wrote what, but Strayhorn admitted that he wrote this song for alto sax player Johnny Hodges while Ellington was on tour with his band in Europe.

Lullaby in Ragtime by Sylvia Fine is from the 1959 movie *The Five Pennies*, starring her husband, Danny Kaye. In this scene he plays a trumpeter on a tour bus with his band, his (on-screen) wife and infant daughter. He sings this tune to lull her to sleep. In addition to being a lyricist/composer, Fine was also an award-winning television producer.

On January 16th, 1919, the Congress ratified the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution outlawing the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. The Volstead Act of 1920 sealed the deal and ushered in thirteen years of Prohibition. This proved a boon for organized crime and bootlegging, and apparently for Irving Berlin and songwriting. *I'll See You in C.U.B.A.*, introduced in the *Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic of 1919* can be heard as a good-natured protest song, a nose-thumbing to American puritan values and a hearty embrace of the coming Roaring Twenties zeitgeist.

Cole Porter's *Fifty Million Frenchmen* opened on Broadway in November of 1929. The story takes place in Paris (naturally) and has a typical boy-meets/loses/wins-girl plot. *You Don't Know Paree*, sung by the temporarily lovelorn boy, has an authenticity that somehow transcends its function in an otherwise fluffy tale.

Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered is a breakout hit from the 1940 show *Pal Joey* with music by Rodgers and another poignant lyric by Lorenz Hart. It is sung by jaded socialite Mrs. Vera Simpson about her newest fling, club singer/con man Joey Evans whom she's supporting. Her motives can be quite transparent, as the reprise of the song demonstrates:

He's kept enough,
He's slept enough,
And yet, where it counts,
he's adept enough.

In 1936, Irving Berlin couldn't be unaware of the dark clouds gathering over Europe, when he penned the prophetic lyric "There may be trouble ahead..." Yet, *Follow the Fleet* remains an entertaining confection highlighting the extraordinary dancing prowess of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The show was a forerunner to shore leave scenarios like *On the Town* and *Fancy Free*.

Let's Face the Music and Dance, a choreographic tour-de-force for the couple, was filmed in a nearly three-minute continuous segment.

About the Artists

With a voice the New York Times has called, "luminous" and "lustrous," versatile soprano **Amy Burton** has sung with the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, at the White House, and with major opera companies, orchestras, and at concert and cabaret venues throughout the US, Europe, UK, Japan, Mexico, and Israel. Known for her crystalline portrayals of Mozart heroines as well as French repertoire ranging from opera to chansons populaires, Ms. Burton performs throughout the USA and abroad in recital and cabaret concerts with her husband, composer-pianist John Musto. The couple have toured the US and Mexico with "Late Night with Leonard Bernstein" narrated by the composer's daughter Jamie, with acclaimed pianist Michael Boriskin.

Ms. Burton has premiered and recorded several of Musto's song cycles and has been a champion of contemporary composers such as Paul Moravec, John Corigliano, William Bolcom, Richard Danielpour, John Harbison, and others. Notable concert appearances include her New York recital debut at 92Y, Great Performances at Lincoln Center, Mostly Mozart Festival, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, PS21, The Kennedy Center, Atelier Lardeur in Paris, the Liceu Forum in Barcelona, the Neue Galerie's Café Sabarsky, and the modern-day premiere of Cole Porter's 1929 show, *La Revue des*

Ambassadeurs at Town Hall with Vince Giordano and the Night Hawks and in Paris with L'orchestre de Padeloup.

She has recorded for Bridge, Naxos, Harbinger, Albany, Angel/EMI, Opera America, Soundmirror, and CRI, and won major prizes from the Gerda Lissner, George London, Sullivan Foundations, and the Marian Anderson International Vocal Competition. In addition to her 17 years on the Metropolitan Opera's roster, Ms. Burton was also a leading soprano at New York City Opera, where she received the Christopher Keene Award, the Kolosvar Award, and the Diva Award. During her time at NYCO, she sang both Susanna and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, The Governess in *Turn of the Screw*, La Folie in Mark Morris' production of *Platée*, and the Handel heroines in *Xerxes*, *Ariodante*, and *Orlando*. At the Glimmerglass Festival, she sang Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Donna Elvira, and Elle in *La voix humaine*. Her work on behalf of Glimmerglass Opera, its young artists, and the town of Cooperstown led to Opera America awarding her their first ever Artist Advocate Award.

A sought-after teacher, Ms. Burton is on the voice faculties at The Juilliard School, Mannes School of Music, the CUNY Graduate Center (DMA program), SongFest, a summer festival at Pomona College, Chautauqua Institution, and POI in Mercatello sul Metauro, Italy. She has been a guest teacher at CLA Berkshires, The Ravinia Festival Steans Institute, McGill University, CCM, Hunter College, Ithaca College, Vassar College, among others. She continues to perform in the US and abroad and maintains a busy private studio in New York.

Composer and pianist **JOHN MUSTO's** activities encompass orchestral, operatic, instrumental, chamber and vocal music, and music for film and television. His music embraces many strains of contemporary American concert music, enriched by sophisticated inspirations from jazz, ragtime and the blues. These qualities lend a strong profile to his vocal music, which ranges from a series of operas - *Volpone*, *Later the Same Evening*, *Bastianello* and *The Inspector* - to a catalogue of art songs that is among the finest of any living American composer.

As a pianist, he performs frequently as soloist and chamber musician in a broad range of repertoire including his own piano concerti. He appears frequently with his wife, soprano Amy Burton, in recital and cabaret.

Mr. Musto was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his orchestral song cycle *Dove Sta Amore*, and is a recipient of two Emmy awards, two CINE Awards, a Rockefeller Fellowship at Bellagio, an American Academy of Arts and Letters award, and a Distinguished Alumnus award from the Manhattan School of Music. He is currently on the piano faculty of the CUNY Graduate Center in New York, where he also serves as Coördinator of the D.M.A. Program in Music Performance.

Musto's work has been recorded by Bridge, Harmonia Mundi, Nonesuch, Cedille, Archive, Naxos, Harbinger, CRI and EMI, Hyperion, MusicMasters, Innova, Channel Classics, Albany, and New World Records.

He is published by Peermusic Classical.

MUSIC IN MIDTOWN

Spring 2024 Season

Music in Midtown is a series of free lunchtime concerts spotlighting the highly regarded musical performance program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Presented in the warm, intimate, acoustically rich Elebash Recital Hall, these performances feature the music program's renowned faculty, alumni, outstanding performers selected from students in the DMA program and noted guest artists. Some concerts are followed by a master class, which the public is invited to observe. Norman Carey is Director and John Musto is Assistant Director.

THURSDAYS at 1:00pm Elebash Hall

- M a r c h

03.21.24

Amy Burton, Soprano & John Musto, Piano

Esteemed Graduate Center faculty members Amy Burton and John Musto open Music In Midtown's spring season with an exploration of The Great American Songbook, including works by Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, and Geroge Gershwin.

- A p r i l

04.04.24

Roy Jennings, Piano & Kenneth Overton, Bass-Baritone & Karmesha Peake, Mezzo-Soprano

Past faculty member and pianist, Roy Jennings presents the program "Spiritual/Spiritual" featuring the works of J.S. Bach, Hall Johnson, and his own arrangements of Negro Spirituals. He will be joined by Metropolitan Opera members Kenneth Overton, bass-baritone and Karmesha Peake, mezzo-soprano.

04.18.24

Charles Neidich, Clarinet & Norman Carey, Piano

Clarinetist, composer, and conductor Charles Neidich performs with chair of the music department Norman Carey. The program will feature duos by Aaron Copland and Dorothy Rudd Moore.

- M a y

05.02.24

Chamber Music on Fifth I

Music In Midtown presents a chamber music concert featuring a stellar group of musicians from the DMA performance program. Ethan Brown, Robert Carlson, Amber Evans, Nenad Ivočić, Ellen Kim, Cheng Liang, and Mizuho Yoshimune will be featured in performances of Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 7, the Britten Cello Sonata, and three songs by Massenet, Rheinberger, and Brahms.

05.16.24

Chamber Music on Fifth II

Music In Midtown ends the spring semester with a program of chamber works performed by our extraordinary artists in the DMA program in music performance, including Lora Al-Ahmad, Samuel Andonian, Tiffany Chang, Meera Gudipati, Ryan Jung, Joseph Staten, Sean Statser, Sophia Stoyanovich, Martine Thomas, and Aaron Wolff. Program features works by David Carey, Gabriel Fauré, Lukas Foss, and Meera Gudipati.

Music In Midtown thanks its generous supporters.

Thursday afternoon Music In Midtown concerts begin at 1:00pm; all concerts are FREE.

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