

PORTFOLIO '22
A Virtual Studio Recital

Studio of Patrice Michaels
Voice/Opera Program
Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University
Jason Carlson, Shuyi Guan & Patrice Michaels, collaborative piano
Wednesday, June 8, 7pm

This webinar-style presentation is a sampling of the year's work in the voice studio. Each singer will introduce two selections from their repertoire recorded live from the Bienen School of Music. Comments welcome along the way via chat message, applause and comments at the conclusion of the program.

PROGRAM

Vedrai, carino from *Don Giovanni*
Azure (Irving Mills)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Edward "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974)

Alexa Bartschat, soprano
Jason Carlson, piano

Qui sedes ad dexteram patris from *Mass in B minor*
I Went To Heaven (Emily Dickinson)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
George Walker (1922-2018)

Skye Tarshis, mezzo-soprano
Patrice Michaels, piano

Romance (Paul Bourget)
Das Veilchen (J.W. Goethe)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Mozart

CC Barfield, tenor
Jason Carlson, piano

Se il padre perdei from *Idomeneo*
Monica's Waltz from *The Medium*

Mozart
Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)

Sabrina Chen, soprano
Jason Carlson, piano

Night (Louise C. Wallace)
Romance (Bourget)

Florence Price (1887-1953)
Debussy

Olivia Moyana Pierce, soprano
Jason Carlson, pianist

Et in spiritum sanctum dominum from *Mass in B minor*
Questo amor, vergogna mia from *Edgar*

JS Bach
Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Andrew Pulver, baritone
Jason Carlson, piano

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Pupille amate from *Lucio Silla*.

关雎 “Guan Ju”

Mozart

赵季平 “Zhao Jiping” (b. 1945)

Daphne Meng, soprano
Shuyi Guan, piano

Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen from *Ariadne auf Naxos*

Litany (Langston Hughes) from *Shadow of the Blues*

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

John Musto (b. 1954)

Antonio Ruiz-Nokes, bass-baritone
Jason Carlson, piano

Ich folge dir gleichfalls from *St John Passion*

Vieille chanson (C.H. Milevoye)

JS Bach

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Carly Passer, soprano
Jason Carlson, piano

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Special Thanks To

Jerry Tietz, Laura Nielsen, Bill Milgram, Nathan Frye, Juliet Petrus, Luca Moretti

REMARKS BY THE SINGERS ON THE SONGS in order of presentation

Vedrai, carino: After a successful premiere in Prague of *Le nozze di Figaro*, Mozart was commissioned by the impresario Bondini to compose *Don Giovanni* in early 1787. Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838) wrote the libretto based on the famous legend of Don Juan which was written by Tirso de Molina (1583-1648). The 29th of October, 1787 marked another triumphant premiere when *Don Giovanni* premiered at the Prague Italian Opera at the National Theater. At the beginning of Act II, Masetto is beaten by Don Giovanni, so Zerlina sings “Vedrai, carino” to comfort him. Zerlina is a flirtatious character, but ultimately wants to ease Masetto’s jealousy of Giovanni. “Vedrai, carino” is a one-pulse per bar rhythm, and has a tempo marking of andante to give the feel of a dance. There are two distinct sections where the music and text work together to create a sense of rising excitement. According to Mozart specialist Patrice Michaels, in the first section of the piece, Zerlina is more hesitant and is asking Masetto questions, while in the second section, the pitch and rhythm both become increasingly complex. There are large leaps and the rhythmic figurations get faster as Zerlina repeats her desire for Masetto to touch her. The second section is a stark contrast to the reserved pitch movement and rigid rhythm of the beginning. As this lovely aria intensifies with more passion and insistence, Zerlina is able to show Masetto her genuine feelings of love for him and express her need to be loved by him as well.

Azure: Duke Ellington described “Azure” as “a little dulcet piece which portrays a blue mood.” The color blue stood out in many of his songs after the passing of his mother. Whether it was in song title, mood, or tonal color, “blue” was an important concept for Ellington. He first recorded “Azure” on May 14, 1937 with orchestration by Joe Lipman. Since Ellington’s original recording, musicians such as Herbie Mann, Phil Woods, the Cecil Taylor Trio, Ella Fitzgerald, and Gretchen Parlato have also performed this piece. After a slow and longing piano introduction, this piece contains one section of music that is repeated as many times as the performer decides. The repetition offers the performer many opportunities to improvise and ornament the melody. “Seclusion,” “solitude,” “blue illusion” and “Azure interlude” are a few phrases that stand out and bring a feeling of loneliness to this piece. There is a yearning in these lyrics for the person that can possibly bring them out of their “Azure mood.”

Qui sedes ad dexteram patris: Bach finished composing the Mass in B minor, the larger work to which this piece belongs, in the year before his death. The mass is largely an extension of pieces that Bach composed earlier in his life, such as his Sanctus from 1724. Dedicating an earlier iteration of this work to King Augustus III of Poland, Bach hoped to earn the title of “Electoral Saxon Court Composer”; he finally earned this title in 1736. He expanded the piece into a full Latin Ordinary setting in 1749 for reasons unknown to scholars of his life. This aria is the third-to-last piece in the Kyrie and Gloria section, which purport to express the human desires to give glory to God and to beg him for mercy. It expands on the idea introduced earlier in the mass—the title, meaning “who sits at the right hand of the father,” as well as “miserere nobis,” meaning “have mercy on us.” Bach uses long, held notes on the word “sedes” to emphasize its meaning. The consistent time signature and the modulations only to closely related keys

reveal a steadfast belief in the message. The melismas ascend and then descend, illustrating the relationship of Christ to heaven but ultimately positioning him as “lower” than the father. The wide range that these phrases encompass show a desperate, emphatic plea for mercy.

I Went To Heaven: Over the course of his long life, George Walker composed a variety of art songs and larger orchestral works, incorporating and combining elements from genres such as jazz and African American spirituals. At the age of 14, Walker attended Oberlin College. In 1996, Walker was awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for music, becoming the first African American to do so. Walker was a distinguished academic, with honorary doctorate degrees from six institutions and teaching positions at universities such as Rutgers, Peabody Institute, New School, and Smith. Despite his many successes, his music remains underperformed compared to his white contemporaries. This piece comes from his 1986 song cycle, “Emily Dickinson Songs.” Using text from Dickinson’s poem of the same name, the piece emphasizes the playful voice of the speaker. Heaven is described as sickeningly sweet, so much so that it is corny and underwhelming. With Dickinson’s text, Walker challenges listeners to release their idealized vision of Heaven and look at their own “society,” a word he deliberately repeats three times at the end of the piece.

Romance, composed in 1891 is the first piece in the song cycle “Deux Romances.” Due to the similar names of the single song and the cycle from which it originated, “Romance” is often referred to by its secondary title, “L’âme évaporée” (“The vanishing soul”). It is based on a poem written by French poet Paul Bourget (1852-1935) titled *Les aveux* (Confessions). *Romance* refers to “L’âme évaporée” (“the vanishing soul”). The “vanishing soul” of the poem is the soul of the lilies, and the metaphor used by someone who wonders about a lost love. The poem talks about lilies, so the song could only be tender and delicate. Like many other of Debussy’s well-known works, “Romance” features a lilting melody with a soft and tender accompaniment, typical of his musical aesthetic. *Romance* opens with a brief piano introduction followed by an unaccompanied declamatory vocal introduction. The absence of accompaniment as it draws attention to the text (this may be interpreted as the “evaporating and suffering soul”). The rest of the phrases form arches that remain between *piano* and *pianissimo*. The harmonic style of this song produces a sound similar to a conversation – the phrases rise and fall alongside the text. This song is like a sigh; it could go unnoticed among others with a stronger personality. This style, combined with poetic lines such as “Does no more perfume remain?” creates a somber disposition. This mood allows the performer to open up and be vulnerable with the audience.

Das Veilchen is a German art song composed by Mozart in 1785. The piece is set to a poem by Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Goethe wrote the poem “Das Veilchen” in 1774 as an allegorical song for his theatrical play with songs *Erwin and Elmire*. He reworked it during his Italian journey in 1787/88, and this second version became the basis for a highly valued musical setting by Johann Friedrich Reichardt in 1793. The tale is ultimately about the need for human comfort, and the dichotomy of love. The text that the poem/piece is based on tells of how a young woman tramples on the affections of a sincere young suitor, only to realize her mistake and be united with him in the end. She sings this song in recognition of her mistake. However, in Mozart’s setting, the violet is a metaphorical stand-in for the crushed and crumpled young man who nonetheless remains true in his feelings for her. In the piece, a narrator and the little violet speak alternatively in the poem. The first stanza introduces the two characters and the setting: the violet and the shepherdess on grassland. is deceptively simple as he composes a light folk melody to carry the poem. However, he adds various sigh motives and dramatic pauses, thereby turning this little song into a miniature operatic love scene.

Se il padre perdei is the second aria for Ilia in the opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart from *Idomeneo*. Commissioned by Karl Theodor and based on a play by Crébillon père for a court carnival, it premiered at the Cuvilliés Theater in Munich, Germany. The libretto was written by Giambattista Varesco from a French text by Antoine Danchet. In the aria, Ilia, princess of Troy, is confiding in Idomeneo and confessing to him that she can think of him as a father despite the fact that he should be her enemy. Idomeneo had stolen her homeland, murdered her father and many citizens, and kidnapped her away to his island of Crete. However, since Ilia has fallen in love with Idomeneo’s son, Idamante, she confesses that she has found new love for this new home and love for Idomeneo as her new father. The aria is made up of one large section that repeats. Through this repetition, Ilia continues to embrace Idomeneo and convinces him that she is perfect for his son.

Monica’s Waltz: This aria is the main character of *The Medium*, Monica’s, biggest aria. In this aria, Monica is playing with Toby, a mute boy who Monica has lived with for most of her life, who begins the aria by hosting a puppet show for Monica. Throughout the course of this aria, Monica sings to her waltz while continuing to pull Toby further into her imagination and romantic fantasies, where she switches between singing for herself and singing Toby’s responses for him. The aria becomes increasingly intense as Monica becomes more and more entranced in the romantic passion she has for Toby and that she believes he has for her. Monica plays around with the mood of the song as she flows from light-hearted, solemn, serious, and passionate. At the end of the aria, Monica becomes completely trapped in her passion and does not realize that Toby’s demeanor is not quite at the same level as her own. She stops herself suddenly and comforts Toby saying that he “has the most beautiful voice in the world.”

Night: Price composed this piece in 1946 with text from Louise C. Wallace. Price also set Bessie Mayle’s poem “Night” to music for SSAA in 1945. The final stanza asserts, “What does it matter if white lights / can boast their rays before / brightest days burn out themselves / and night rules evermore.” Both texts reveal Price’s desire to challenge white depictions of Blackness through the metaphor of darkness and light. This piece begins by describing Night as “a Madonna,” comparing her to the Virgin Mary to relate darkness to divinity. The pattern of repeated eighth notes in C Major creates a relaxing atmosphere for the listener, revealing Price’s intention to subvert the idea that darkness is intimidating. The text then describes Night’s “rose red” mouth. While minstrelsy uses red mouths to negatively caricature Blackness, Price maintains the major accompaniment to depict red lips as one of Night’s beautiful features. The piece transitions to a minor mode when Night “lights her stars.” The text’s possessive pronoun asserts that Night owns the stars. Price may emphasize this phrase to warn white individuals not to view Black individuals—specifically Black women—as inferior. The piece concludes as Night looks at “a dreamy child—the wearied Day.” Price highlights this phrase with a *ritardando* and a *fermata* over a rest to reiterate that just as the Virgin Mary created Jesus, Night should be respected for creating her child, the Day, which could not exist without her. Together, these elements depict Blackness as something beautiful and divine.

Romance: Debussy wrote this art song after winning the *Prix de Rome* of composition. It was published in his 1891 *Deux Romances* song cycle. Paul Bourget, a friend, wrote the text after leaving Catholicism in 1867. The poetry reflects his uncertainty before reconnecting with religion, as the speaker wonders why a relationship no longer provides the same faithful love, bliss, or peace as

before. The chords of the piece are rich with unresolved suspensions to encapsulate the unanswered questions of the text. The key travels from D Major to G Major, then to the relative E minor. These keys are closely related, which expresses the speaker's restrained wandering. The piece builds with an ascending scale of quarter notes as the speaker voices frustration at trying to grasp something as intangible as "d'une vapeur surnaturelle" ("a supernatural mist.") This leads to the loudest phrase of the piece, a desperate cry for a lost connection once made of hope. This proclamation is marked mezzo-forte, which illustrates the speaker's restraint, even at the climax. These tense questions receive a positive answer from the second piece in the song cycle, "Les Cloches" ("The Bells"). This piece describes bells that "revive the withered leaves / of days gone by," which could represent wedding bells or music in general. Debussy most likely published these pieces together to affirm that while one can get lost in uncertainty, music can offer stability and remind one of the world's beauty.

Pupille amate is sung by the character Cecilio in Mozart's opera, *Lucio Silla*. With text written by Giovanni de Gamerra (1742-1803), Mozart composed this opera in 1772 at just sixteen years old. The story of *Lucio Silla* revolves around the forbidden romance between Cecilio and Giunia. Cecilio, a senator who dictator Lucio Silla banished from Rome, returns secretly to visit his wife, Giunia, to hear that Silla wants Giunia for himself. After a series of events, Cecilio decides to kill Silla, and is imprisoned for his attempt to do so. Cecilio sings the aria, "Pupille amate" to Giunia when she visits Cecilio in prison, both of them believing that these are their last moments together. The aria is written in an ABACA rondo form, with each A section returning to the words, "Pupille amate, non lagrimate, morir mi fate pria di morir." ("my beloved, don't cry, you will cause me to die a premature death!") The rhythmic density of the melody increases with each successive section, first eight notes, then sixteenth notes, then thirty-second notes, as Cecilio increases in fervor and conviction to comfort Giunia, and perhaps himself, in their grief.

赵季平 (Zhao Jiping) is one of the most famous composers in China, well-known for creating compositions influenced by the folk music of northwestern China. Although there are many musical settings of this ancient poem, Zhao Jiping's is the most well-known. It is the first poem found in *诗经* (Shi Jing), the first collection of poems in China, which features 305 poems from the Zhou Dynasty (1050 BCE-221 BCE). Confucius (551 BCE-479 BCE), China's most famous teacher, philosopher, and political theorist, believed that society should be structured according to five core relationships: Husband and Wife, Father and Son, Elder Brother and Younger Brother, Lord and his Noblemen, and Friend to Friend, so he organized *Shi Jing* according to these five relationships. He believed that Husband and Wife was the first and most important relationship, thus "Guan Ju", a story about a gentleman falling in love with a maiden, was chosen as the first poem in the collection. The poem begins with the gentleman hearing the mating call of the osprey and he is reminded of his own love interest. He feels distressed at the thought of not being able to be with her, and he then goes on to watch the maiden working to collect and sort watercress as he fantasizes about a wedding and happy marriage with her. The original poem features five stanzas, each stanza containing four lines of four characters. In Zhao Jiping's setting, "Guan Ju" is organized into ABCA form, with stanzas 1 and 2 during A, stanza 3 during B, and stanzas 4 and 5 during C. At the end, he returns back to section A, reiterating stanzas 1 and 2, where the gentleman first hears the osprey's mating call and ponders about the maiden that he loves.

Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen: The lowly clown, Harlequin, tells the abandoned Ariadne that she must let go of her love for Theseus and move on. Premiered in Stuttgart, 1912, with Strauss himself at the podium, *Ariadne auf Naxos* mixes commedia dell'arte with high opera by setting the Greek tale of Theseus and Ariadne as a frame story to the experiences of performance troupes. The opera begins with a prologue and proceeds to the traditional opera. Backstage, the performers are thrown into disarray after the major-domo orders the music master to organize an opera and Italian comedy to be performed simultaneously so that there will be time for fireworks later in the evening. The music master, composer, and comedians produce *Ariadne auf Naxos* to combine the two kinds of performances. The opera finds princess Ariadne of Crete alone on an island by prince Theseus of Athens after he slayed the Minotaur. In a cave, meets three nymphs and the rest of the troupe. Harlequin sings this arietta to console Ariadne, who has given up hope on life. The lied-like aria is as sweet and playful as the comic who sings it. Strauss tasks singers with maintaining vocal solidity throughout sustained lines and attending to text in his vernacular setting.

Litany: Composed in 1987, *Shadow of the Blues* sets a variety of Langston Hughes' poetry across his career to music. Musto follows Hughes' tongue-and-cheek recount of a Southern lynching of a black man, "Silhouette," with the earnest "Litany." By changing the name from "Prayer" to "Litany," Musto directs the text not to the divine, but to humanity. While a prayer's only audience is otherworldly, a litany is passed between clergy and congregation. The poem and piece are bids of connection to include the marginalized into the American social fabric. It refutes that Lazarus' famous "tired," "poor," and "huddled masses" are truly being welcomed in the United States. Musto's rekindling of Hughes' sentiment is especially poignant at the height of the AIDS epidemic, which disproportionately affected gay, African-American, and impoverished populations. The piano opens the piece with anguish and ends it with longing. Musto asks singers to call out through large leaps in vocal line. Throughout, the singer is tasked to swell with increasing intensity, reaching a climax when asking for the downtrodden to be "gather[ed] up in the arms of your love." Unexpectedly, the final lines become soft as the singer pleads, explaining that the treatment of those marginalized is similar to being forsaken by God. Musto's setting adds vocal gesture to Hughes' words, while painting their context through accompaniment.

Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten ("I will follow you this way with joyful steps") is an aria from the first half of Bach's famous oratorio, *St. John's Passion*, which premiered in Leipzig, Germany on Good Friday Vespers in 1724. Generally, a *Passion* is the telling of the story of Jesus Christ's suffering in the Christian tradition. The older of Bach's two passions to survive in its entirety, this work is populated by different arias, choruses, and recitatives that document Christ's passion as told through the Gospel of John, the fourth and final gospel that makes up the New Testament. In 1723, one year before *St. John's Passion* was premiered at the St. Nicholas Church, Bach was appointed as Thomaskantor, the musical director at Thomanerchor ("St. Thomas Boys' Choir of Leipzig"). This prominent role required Bach to, among other responsibilities, produce a cantata each week to respond to that Sunday's teachings, and *St. John's Passion* is a product of such compositions on a grand scale. The soprano vocal line is accompanied by flutes and a basso continuo line. The text connotes musical lightness and energy, a sensibility emboldened by lively accompaniment. There is a seeming conversation between the vocal and instrumental lines (the "I" and the "you,"

respectively, one could infer): as soon as the basso continuo and flute lines begin an ascending line, the vocal line responds similarly with quick scalar motion, each “following” the other “with joyful steps” throughout the piece.

Vieille chanson: Enrolled at the Paris Conservatory at the young age of 10, Bizet’s education there culminated when he won the Prix de Rome, France’s most prestigious musical prize, in 1857. This enabled him to spend five years studying composition, two of them in Rome. Bizet then returned to Paris and became disenchanted with Romantic ideas; he longed to create music that was different from what was popular in Paris at the time. The poem was written by Charles Hubert Millevoye (1782-1816), who was known for his style bridging Classical and Romantic periods through his sentimentality and connection to nature (Romantic) and his intellectuality, story-telling, thought, and passion (Classical). The poem was written in 1800 but not published until 1814, and Bizet set it to music in 1865. It is the story of a young shepherd, Myrtil, who wishes to gift a songbird to his love, Lucette. When the songbird flies away Myrtil is distraught; Lucette sees this level of devotion and consoles him that he has lost only the little songbird, not her love. It is composed in ternary (ABA) form, a typical Classical compositional structure. The pastoral setting and even the title itself connote antiquity and a gracefulness and awareness of the Romantic, especially when characterized by light, elegant, and short melodic phrases. This bridging between Classical and Romantic periods, something that both Bizet and Millevoye strove for, is evident in the compositional techniques and story within this beautiful art song.

BIOGRAPHIES

Alexa Bartschat is a sophomore majoring in Voice & Opera Performance and Choral Music Education (Bienen School of Music). From Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Alexa is interested in rock climbing and hiking in addition to music.. She recently performed as a chorus member of Northwestern’s spring production of *La Bohème*. Alexa teaches piano at the elementary level, and is looking forward to conducting research this summer about choral music education during COVID.

Skye Tarshis (she/her) is a second-year student majoring in Voice/Opera in the Bienen School of Music and English (Creative Writing, Poetry) in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. She is an assistant editor of and contributor to *Wavelength*, a music publication, and *Scene + Heard*, an arts and culture magazine. Additionally, she is a member of Northwestern University’s student-run literary magazine, *Helicon*, on the poetry staff. Skye is honored to have made her Northwestern Opera Theater debut as a member of the chorus in Puccini’s *La Bohème* this spring.

CC Barfield is a first-year student from Chicago, majoring in Voice/Opera Performance (Bienen School of Music) and Psychology with a minor in French (Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences). As a member of the HHW Vocal Arts Ensemble, CC and has sung for the recent Chicago Mayoral Inauguration, at ex Chiesetta di Villa Scheibler in Milan, and with the Chicago Symphony Chorus. CC is currently a member of the Bienen School of Music’s University Singers and is participating in the university production of *La Bohème*.

Sabrina Chen (she/her) is a junior studying Voice/Opera Performance (Bienen School of Music) and Communication Studies (School of Communications). She is a member and President of the Northwestern Treblemakers a cappella ensemble. Sabrina performed in OPUS’s production of *Les Aventures du Roi Pausole*, Northwestern Opera Theatre’s remote production of Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo* and most recently sang in Jake Heggie’s *If I Were You* and *La Bohème*.

Olivia Moyana Pierce is studying Musicology (Bienen School of Music) and Performance Studies (School of Communications). As an Emerging Scholar, she is currently conducting archival research on Black female composers. Additionally, Olivia releases original music under the name Moyana Olivia (www.moyanamusic.com). She is a member of the Royal Family Music Group in her hometown of Minneapolis. Her work has been commissioned by the Edina High School Choir Department and featured by the Best Buy Corporation, The View, the National Women’s March Movement, the ACLU, and KMOJ radio.

Andrew Pulver is a second-year student pursuing dual degrees in Voice/Opera Performance (Bienen School of Music) and Computer Science (Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences). As a boy soprano he sang concerts, fundraisers and shows, including 17 operatic productions with solo roles at the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, and Glimmerglass Festival. While in high school he played leading roles in *Cinderella*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Beauty and the Beast*. As a baritone, he has continued to sing in concerts and fundraisers.

Daphne Meng (she/her) is a third-year student majoring in Music Education and Voice/Opera Performance (Bienen School of Music). Most recently, she performed in the chorus of Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo* with Northwestern Opera Theatre. She currently serves as the Music Director of Northwestern’s Extreme Measures A Cappella. Outside of music, she works for Jumpstart at Northwestern’s Civic Engagement Center, where she films weekly educational videos for three- to five-year-olds in Evanston and Rogers Park.

Antonio Ruiz-Nokes (he/him) is a third-year Choral Music Education and Voice/Opera major with a minor in American History. He recently sang as a chorister in *La Bohème* with Northwestern Opera Theatre, and taught voice lessons through *Raise the Bar*, Waukegan’s program for student enrichment. This summer he will be teaching private lessons and leading the music programming for *Musical Chairs* in Evanston.

Carly Passer (she/her) is a third-year pursuing degrees in Voice/Opera (Bienen School of Music) and Learning Sciences (School of Education and Social Policy). A board member for Chicago Undergraduate Program (a student-run organization for social justice issues in Chicagoland), she’s also Director of Jewish Education for NU’s Jewish Theatre Ensemble and a member of Camp Kesem.

Carly recently performed as a chorister in Northwestern Opera Theatre's virtual production of *L'Orfeo*, as Laetita in Opera Projects for University Singer's production of *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and in *La Bohème*.

Jason Carlson is a collaborative pianist and vocal coach. He is a frequent recitalist, including appearances with New York Philharmonic trombonist Joseph Alessi, legendary flautist Sir James Galway, and a lecture recital on law and opera with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. As a répétiteur, Jason has worked with renowned singers such as Neil Shicoff and Elizabeth Futral, and has served as a rehearsal pianist under maestros Lorin Maazel, Stephen Osgood, John DeMain, Andrew Bisantz, Dean Williamson, and William Waters, among others. Jason is currently an accompanist and rehearsal pianist at Northwestern University, and has assisted with musical preparation for over 30 main-stage operas. He has also served as the music director for the Northwestern University Intensive Vocal Performance Summer Seminar since 2009, as well as music director and advisor to OPUS, Northwestern's student-run opera initiative, since its inception in 2015. Jason is the founding music director for the award-winning Third Eye Theater Ensemble, specializing in contemporary works by living composers, and has also served as music director for many regional opera companies, including Main Street Opera, Petite Opera, American Chamber Opera, and New Moon Opera. He has previously held teaching positions at the Castleton Festival and the Music in the Marche program in Italy, and has been invited to give masterclasses locally and worldwide, with venues including the Chicago Vocal Arts Consortium, Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand, and the Academy of Performing Arts in Hong Kong.

Shuyi Guan was born in Shenyang, China. She began as a pianist in the Middle School attached to Shenyang Conservatory of Music. A graduate and prize winner from Oberlin Conservatory, she has attended the prestigious Banff Centre for three consecutive summers. She is a DMA graduate in Piano Performance, where her primary teacher was Dr. Steven Spooner. She has also studied with Alan Chow and Angela Cheng. In Chicagoland, Shuyi has performed collaboratively with Chicago Children's Choir, North Park University and Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music.

A native of Southern California, **Patrice Michaels** holds BAs in Music and Theater from Pomona College, an MFA in Voice from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and is a laureate of the Music Theatre Studio Ensemble at The Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada. Her esteemed teachers include Janice McVeigh, Roy Schuessler, Tom Wikman and Shirlee Emmons for voice, Vern Sutton, Wesley Balk and Colin Graham for Opera Theater and Dominick Argento and Karl Kohn for composition. Former Professor of Music at Lawrence University's Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin, Ms. Michaels served for ten years as Director of Vocal Studies at University of Chicago, and joined the Bienen School of Music's Voice/Opera Program in 2019. She is in demand as a master clinician and guest artist, invited to institutions such as The Hart School (Hartford, CT), Tel Aviv's Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, Dreyfoos School of The Arts in West Palm Beach, Pomona College and ISA (Havana, Cuba). As a singer, she has 28 CD releases on various labels. As a composer, her current projects include a song cycle title "Un viaje en una canción/A Journey In Song" and an opera, *Jane Crow*, on the life of Pauli Murray. www.patricemichaels.com