



Faculty Recital Series

2021–2022 Season

Sara M. Snell Music Theater

Tuesday, February 1, 7:30 PM

Margaret Chalker, soprano
Brock Tjosvold, piano

This is the day that has been made Ronald A. Cox
(1921-2016)

Members of the Chalker Studio

How beautiful are the feet Georg Friederik Händel
(1685-1759)
from *Messiah*

You shall go out in joy Ronald A. Cox
Members of the Chalker Studio

Sull'aria Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)
From *Le Nozze di Figaro*
Mekayla Fountaine, soprano

Wie nahte mir der Schlummer ...Leise, leise Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)
from *Der Freischütz*

from *Pagliacci* Ruggiero Leoncavallo
(1858-1919)
Prologue
Qual fiamma avea nel guardo ... Stridono lassù
Sei là?

Steven Groth, baritone

Somewhere
from *West Side Story*

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

No one is alone
from *Into the Woods*

Steven Sondheim
(1930-2021)

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Program Notes

Ronald A. Cox was a 1947 graduate of the Eastman School of music with a double major in Trombone and Voice (tenor). He spent his entire life as a devoted music educator, served as Commissioner of Brass for NYSSMA, gigged with various dance bands throughout his career (until age 87) and conducted many church choirs, composing responses and anthems for the forces at hand. With his wife Nancy Brown Cox, he raised 4 children in Waterloo, N.Y. and was musical father to hundreds upon hundreds of students from Waterloo Central School and later, Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Margaret Chalker is the 2nd of the 4 children and eternally grateful to both Ronald and Nancy for their musical instruction and loving parenting.

“How beautiful are the feet of them” is dedicated to the memory of Dean Emeritus Dr. Lonel Woods.

Sull'aria

This duet occurs in the third act of *le Nozze di Figaro* and finds the Countess and Suzanna conspiring to write a message for the Count to lure him into their trap, designed to show him the error of his ways. The Countess dictates the poetic details of a secret rendezvous describing exactly where (in the garden) he should meet and knows from experience that he will understand completely.

Wie nahte mir der Schlummer ... leise, leise

We find Agathe in her room, attempting sleep while waiting anxiously for the return and announcement of the winner in the shooting contest which will decide if and when she can marry Max, the man she loves. She tries to calm her racing thoughts with prayer.

How can I go to sleep when I haven't seen him yet? Yes, love is always accompanied by worry.

I wonder if the moon will smile on his path?

What a beautiful night!

Softly, devout melody, wend your way to the stars,
Resound with the song, joyfully wafting my prayer to the halls of heaven.

Oh, how clear the golden stars; how purely they glow.
But there in the far mountains it looks like a storm is brewing; there over the woods hangs a multitude of heavy and damp clouds.

To You I turn my prayerful hands, Lord without beginning or end!
From dangers You protect us, send your host of angels!

Everything is quiet now; dearest friend, where are you?
Even though my ears listen covetously, only the pine boughs rustle,
Only the birch leaves in the glade whisper through the sublime stillness.
Only the nightingale and crickets seem to enjoy the night air.

But wait! Does my ear deceive me?
It sounds like footsteps, there from the middle of the pines something emerges!
It's him! The banner of love can fly!
Your girl is still waiting in the night!

It seems he does not see me.

God! If I am not deceived by the moonlight, his hat is decorated with the flower bouquet!

That means he got the best shot!

That bodes well for tomorrow!

O sweet hope! Newly invigorated courage!

My pulse is pounding, and my heart is racing, I am sweetly overjoyed about him!
Heaven, take these grateful tears as a pledge to this dream.

Pagliacci. (For an excellent article by Dr. Anthony Eversole on Leoncavallo, composer of this semester's Crane Opera production of Zazà (March 25, 26, 27), please go to the Facebook page of Crane Ensemble and click his blog titled Leoncavallo, Zazà and the Giovane Scuola)

The action takes place near Montalto, Calabria, (circa 1867-1870) on the Feast of the Assumption of our Lady.

Tonio, described as a half-wit is rather disgruntled and preparing for an evening performance of the show performed by the traveling troop of which he is a member. He takes a moment to sing this prologue, but the play within the play has not yet begun. This is for the real audience.

May I?

Dear ladies and gentlemen. You'll pardon me if I come out alone here.

I am the Prologue!

Tonight, we will perform the masquerade known as "Pagliaccio", and as in olden days, the author sends me to speak here, as was the custom.

But not to tell you, as of old: "The tears we shed on the stage, mean nothing! All our cries of pain and our grief and despair, never need frighten you!"

No! No! Our author instead, has ventured to bring to you scenes from life and its sorrows.

He has borne in mind constantly, that the actor is a man, and that for living men he is writing.

Truth alone has inspired his tale.

A story full of memories, stirred in his secret heart, one summer morning, he wrote it with real tears of compassion and his sobbing has left its trace on every page!

Come then, here you will see the burning passions of men and of women:

You'll witness the sad fruits of lust and hatred. You will hear loud cries of rage, shouts of despair and anguish, and mocking laughter!

Dear people, I beg you, when we come before you in the actor's tattered costumes, spare a thought for us, think of our sorrows, we are but men like you, with hearts to be broken;

We all breathe the same air around us, like you we are part of all creation.

I have told you about us, now listen how the plot is unraveled.

Come on now, Let's begin!

(Translation by Tom Hammond)

Nedda, having taken part in the spectacle announcing the evening's performance, separates herself from the others to be alone with her thoughts, after Canio, her husband, has threatened and accused her of unfaithfulness once again. She entertains ideas of escape, recognizing her youth, yearning and passion.

What a fiery gaze he glared at me. I lowered my eyes to prevent him from seeing my secret thoughts – oh if he caught me, brutal as he is!
Enough! Away with these ideas! They are just perilous and foolish dreams.

Oh, what a beautiful sun in the middle of August.

I am so full of life and all its languid, mysterious desires, ...I do not know what I want.

Oh! Such a flight of birds! How they shriek! What do they ask for? Where are they going? Who knows?

My mama, who told peoples' fortunes, understood the birds, and sang me their stories when I was a child.... like this:

Shrieking high above, freely launching into flight like glittering arrows, defying all dangers of sun and clouds, they fly tirelessly through the sky.

Let them enjoy their journey through the heavens, thirsty for the blue and splendor of space.

They too have dreams, visions and illusions, soaring through the clouds of gold.

Despite the winds and lightning flashes they spread their wings and bravely forge ahead,

Neither rain nor thunder, nor anything else ever stops them.

They fly and fly over abyss and sea.

They fly to some mysterious haven they perhaps have dreamed of but will never know.

But the Bohemians of heaven follow the powerful mystery which drives them forward...

And on, and on, and on and on!

Nedda notices Tonio who has been watching her.

N: You're here? I thought you already left.

T: The blame lies with your singing! Your voice entranced me, holding me spellbound.

N: Ha! What poetry!

T: Don't mock me, Nedda!

N: Go on! Go to the tavern!

T: I know I'm mis-shaped, ill-favored and scheming: that I can inspire nothing but abhorrence, yet I have my longings, my hopes and dreams. I too have a heart! You ignore me, not knowing the weight of torment and torture I endure. Despite my misfortunes I am suddenly inflamed with the victory of love. Let me speak and tell you...

N: You love me? Ha ha ha ha! You will have time to tell me everything tonight if needed!...

T: Nedda!

N: This evening! Perform your grimaces of love up there on stage!

T: Don't laugh Nedda!

N: You'll have time! (Repeats herself)

T: You don't know how heavy my heart is! Don't laugh Nedda!

N: For now, spare me this nonsense, ha ha, this nonsense can wait until then!

T: No! It's now I want to talk to you! And you will listen and know that I love you! I desire you and I will have you, I swear it!

N: Hey! Tell me, master Tonio! Your back desires a whipping or do you need your ears boxed to calm your passion?

T: You mock me? Wicked woman! For the love of God, you will pay for this!

N: How dare you? Do you want me to call for Canio?

T: Not before I've kissed you!

N: Hands off!

T: Now I will have you!

N: Miserable fool!

T: By the holy Virgin of the Assumption, Nedda, I swear, you will pay for this!

N: Filthy brute! Go! You don't frighten me: I understand you! You have a soul, like your body – deformed, lurid and horrible!

Margaret Chalker is grateful to all her voice teachers, Sophie Ginn Paster, Helen Boatwright, Marlana Malas, Gloria Davy, Dale Funding and David L. Jones. Also filling her heart with gratitude are her influential pianists and coaches: Ann Beckman, Kelly Thomas, Victoria Von Arx, Edward Rushton, Julie Miller, Eugenia Tsarov, Yoojung Kim and many others including treasured colleagues, conductors (Ralf Weikert) and directors (Grisha Asagaroff) too numerous to count. Finally, Ms. Chalker is eternally grateful to all the students who have spent time studying and developing their voices and selves into wonderful singing musicians.



Margaret Chalker as "The cunning little vixen", Janáček, sung in German, Opernhaus Zürich, 1989.