

Department of Music Presents

MUSIC

The Universal Connection

SONGS OF LOVE AND HOPE

Laquita Mitchell, soprano

Ryan MacEvoy McCullough, piano

Studley Theatre

Tuesday, February 14

7:30 p.m.

SONGS OF LOVE AND HOPE

Program

Ch'io mi scordi di te... Non temer, amato bene, K. 505	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
L'invitation au voyage Chanson Triste Phydylé	Henri Duparc (1848-1933)
Waldseligkeit Selige Nacht Nocturne Hat dich die Liebe berührt	Joseph Marx (1882-1964)

African American Women Composers in Song and Opera

Song to the Dark Virgin (1926)	Florence Price (1887-1953) Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Young Love in Spring (1955) #3 from <i>Songs of the Seasons</i>	Margaret Bonds (1913-1972) Langston Hughes
Love Let the Wind Cry... How I Adore Thee (1977)	Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989) poem by Sappho
My Daddy Wore a Cap (2019) Julie's Aria from the opera <i>Omar</i>	Rhiannon Giddens (b. 1977) Michael Abels (b. 1962)

Laquita Mitchell

Soprano Laquita Mitchell consistently earns acclaim on eminent international opera and concert stages worldwide. Ms. Mitchell performed the soprano soloist in the world première of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec's *Sanctuary Road* at Carnegie Hall with Oratorio Society of New York which was nominated for a 2021 Grammy Award.

This season, Mitchell will reprise "Julie" in *Omar* for the Carolina Performing Arts, a role she created in the opera's world premiere at the Spoleto Festival last season, and return to the role of Josephine Baker in *Josephine with Music of Remembrance*. In concert, Ms. Mitchell performs Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Madison Symphony, Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* with Sarasota Orchestra, *Sanctuary Road* with the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati, Verdi's *Requiem* with Rhode Island Philharmonic, and Nathaniel Dett's *The Ordering of Moses* with the Cincinnati May Festival in their 150th Anniversary Season under the direction of Marin Alsop.

Last season, Ms. Mitchell created the role of Julie in the World Premiere of *Omar* with Spoleto Festival USA, in addition to performing Robinetta in On Site Opera's production of Rachel J. Peters's *Lesson Plan* with mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and reprising the role of Josephine for the New Orleans Opera. Mitchell delighted concert goers across the US with performances such as *The Ordering of Moses* for the Bach Festival Society of Winter Park, Beethoven's 9th *Symphony* for the Memphis Symphony, Brahms' *Requiem* and a *Bel Canto* Gala with AlbanyPro Musica, *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Lima Symphony Orchestra, Juneteenth performances with the players of the New York Philharmonic, *Sanctuary Road* with Chautauqua Symphony, and a *Holiday Concert* for the Princeton Symphony.

Ms. Mitchell has performed with Opéra Comique, Grange Park Opera (UK), Grand Theatre of the City of Luxembourg, Generalife Theater (Granada, Spain), Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Lyric Opera of

Chicago, New York City Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and Spoleto Festival USA and many others.

A native of New York City, Ms. Mitchell was a 2004 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Grand Prize Winner, and was awarded a Sara Tucker Award. She was also the First Prize Winner of the Wiener Kammer Oper's Hans Gabor Belvedere Competition, making her the first American to win this competition in over twenty years. Additionally, Ms. Mitchell was the First Prize Winner of the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers, as well as the winner of the Audience Choice award. Ms. Mitchell holds a Master of Music degree and the Professional Studies Certificate at the Manhattan School of Music and completed undergraduate studies at Westminster Choir College.

Ms. Mitchell is an adjunct professor at the Mannes School of Music and the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College.

www.laquitamitchell.com

Ryan MacEvoy McCullough

Born in Boston and raised behind the Redwood Curtain of northern California, pianist Ryan MacEvoy McCullough has developed a diverse career as soloist, vocal and instrumental collaborator, composer, recording artist, and pedagogue. Ryan's music-making encompasses work with historical keyboards, electro-acoustic tools and instruments, and close collaborations with some of today's foremost composers. In a performance of Chopin "his virtuosity was evident and understated, his playing projected a warmth... that conjured the humanity of Artur Rubinstein," (Eli Newberger, *The Boston Musical Intelligencer*) and in a performance of contemporary music, his playing "found a perfect balance between the gently shimmering and the more brittle, extroverted strands... and left you eager to hear the rest." (Allan Kozinn, *NY Times*). Ryan's growing discography features many world premiere recordings, including solo piano works of Milosz Magin (*Acte Prealable*), Andrew McPherson (*Secrets of Antikythera, Innova*), John Liberatore (*Line Drawings, Albany*), Nicholas Vines (*Hipster Zombies from Mars, Navona*), art song and solo piano music of John Harbison and James Primosch with soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon (*Descent/Return, Albany*), and art song by Sheila Silver (*Beauty Intolerable, Albany, also with Ms. Fitz Gibbon*). He has also appeared on PBS's *Great Performances* (*Now Hear This, "The Schubert Generation"*) and is an alumnus of NPR's *From the Top*.

As concerto soloist Ryan has appeared frequently with orchestra, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Sarasota Festival Orchestra, Colburn Conservatory Orchestra, Orange County Wind Symphony, and World Festival Orchestra, with such conductors as George Benjamin, Gisele Ben-Dur, Fabien Gabel, Leonid Grin, Anthony Parnter, Larry Rachleff, Mischa Santora, and Joshua Weilerstein. Mr. McCullough has collaborated with the Mark Morris Dance Group, contemporary ensembles eighth blackbird and yarn/wire, and has performed at festivals including the Tanglewood Music Center, Token Creek Chamber Music Festival, Sarasota Festival, Nohant International

Chopin Festival, and Methow Valley Chamber Music Festival. Upcoming performances in the '21-'22 season include an original cabaret collaboration with mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, a residency with the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra, Brahms' Die Schöne Magelone at the Harvard Musical Association with soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon, and performances of Stockhausen's MANTRA at Notre Dame and Syracuse Universities as part of ensemble HereNowHear.

Ryan lives in Kingston, NY, with his wife, soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon, and in his time off can be found brewing beer, building and modifying audio equipment, or photographing the sublime Hudson Valley.

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