

68<sup>th</sup> Concert Series 2021-22



FRIENDS *of* MUSIC

is pleased to present

**Megan Moore,**  
mezzo-soprano  
**Francesco Barfoed,**  
piano

Sunday, November 7, 2021. 4:00 pm  
Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York

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**Who We Are**

Friends of Music Concerts, Inc. is an award-winning, non-profit, volunteer organization now celebrating its 68th season of showcasing, right here in Westchester, artists chosen from among the finest in today's diverse world of chamber music. Additionally, our Partners in Education program in the public schools and free student admission to our concerts give young people enhanced exposure to and appreciation of classical music.

**In order to help sustain what one of our artists called this “legendary series,” we would welcome people who can join the volunteers listed above, either as Board members or equally valued off-Board committee members. Specifics we are looking for include, but are not limited to, people with networking, writing/publishing production, and/or fund development skills. Call us at 914-861-5080 or contact us on our website (see below); we can explore the range together.**

**Acknowledgments**

We are proud to be a grantee of ArtsWestchester with funding made possible by Westchester County government with the support of County Executive George Latimer, as well as of the Rea Foundation and the Bergen Foundation. Additional support has been received from many friends of Friends of Music, including subscribers and other ticket holders listed in this program.\* If you, too, can contribute in this way, please send your gifts to Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546.

# Program

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**Una Voce Poco Fa**, from *Il Barbare de Siviglia*

Gioachino Rossini  
(1792-1868)

**Was bedeutet die Bewegung  
Ach, um deine feuchten Schwingen**

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

**Galathea  
Arie aus dem Spiegel von Arkadien**

**Arnold Schoenberg**  
(1874-1951)

**Love let the wind cry**

Undine Smith Moore  
(1904-1989)

## Intermission

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Tariq Al-Sabir: **I love giving hugs  
Always I am wanting you  
Sixth Extinction**

LYNX's Amplify Series  
(Commissioned 2017-2019)

Emily Cooley: **Beautiful Small Things**

Travis Reynolds: **My Neatest Friend Z**

Joel David Balzun: **I see light  
Lucky**

**Alle de voksende Skygger  
Jeg beder ej om Guldets Glød  
Foraarssang**

Rued Langgaard  
(1893-1952)

**Per questa fiamma....Ah! Pensate che rivolti**  
from *Anna Bolena*

Gaetano Donizetti  
(1797-1848)

Next concert

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**Saturday, April 9, 2022, 8:00 pm** at Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, NY.

**Jonathan Swensen, cello; Adam Golka, piano.**

Program: Bach's Cello Suite No. 3 in C Major; Beethoven's Cello Sonata No. 4 in C Major, Op. 102, No. 1; Khachaturian's Sonata-Fantasy for Cello in C Major; Prokofiev's Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 119.

# Program notes

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## **Una Voce Poco Fa** from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*

Gioachino Rossini

Rossini composed his first opera when he was only sixteen; it was such a success that he wrote an average of almost two operas a year until he was thirty-seven. The most famous of them is *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*), his seventeenth. Cesare Sterbini's libretto was based on the first comedy of the French playwright Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, whose comic types, humorous wordplay, and lively characterizations were reflected in Rossini's opera.

This very famous aria comes from Act I, Scene II. Rosina, Dr. Bartolo's ward, after reading a letter from Lindoro, the Count Almaviva, sings of her love for him, vowing to marry him despite her guardian, and describes what a fine, docile wife she will make.

## **Was bedeutet die Bewegung** and **Ach, um deine feuchten Schwingen**. Suleika songs

Franz Schubert

Schubert's lyricism, continuity of texture, and variety of moods are celebrated in his tremendous output of songs. In his early years he had established the lied (German for "song") as an autonomous musical form, laying the groundwork for the vast number of Romantic songs composed in the 19th century. He did not compose his songs for the concert hall but rather for informal musical evenings held in private houses. Sitting at the piano, he would accompany singers like his friend Johann Michael Vogl, or well-trained amateurs like Karl Schonstein. Schubert, too, had a good singing voice; he had been a choirboy as a child.

**Was bedeutet die Bewegung?** ("What does this motion mean?"), one of his most well-known songs and the first of his Suleika songs, was composed in 1821. Schubert thought he was using a text by the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe; however, it actually was written by Marianne von Willemer, the third wife of a banker friend of his, whose uncredited poems had been included in Goethe's *Buch Suleika*, part of his *West-östlicher Divan* of 1819. This song, vibrant with life, desire, and passion, also is a masterful evocation of nature. The piano delivers the sounds of the wind, while Suleika addresses the East wind, seeking signs that her beloved still will be there for her.

In the second song (**Ach, um deine feuchten Schwingen**) ("Ah, your damp wings"), Suleika speaks to the West wind, telling it to bring tidings of her love to her beloved without revealing how painful his absence is.

## **Galathea** and **Arie aux dem Spiegel von Arkadien**

Arnold Schoenberg

The first official Berlin Cabaret was the *Über-Brettl*, founded by Ernst von Wolzogen in 1901 in order to raise the level of the commonplace vaudeville show with first-rate artistic talent. It was for von Wolzogen's troupe that Schoenberg wrote his famous cabaret songs, eight *Brettl-Lieder*, most of them either mildly satiric or pertly erotic.

**Galathea**, with words by Franz Wedekind, captures the longing and passion that cabaret explored so boldly. By alternating extremely chromatic passages with leaping melodic sequences, Schoenberg expresses the passionate feelings of a man's desire for a young girl, as Galathea lists the zones he would like to kiss.

**Arie aus dem Spiebel von Arkadien** ("From the mirror of Arcady"), with text by Emanuel Schikaneder, is the last of the series. A slow waltz with a chromatic edge, its simple setting stands it apart from the rest of the group, confirming the heartbeat of a young man always ready for love.

## **Love let the wind cry**

Undine Smith Moore

Hailed as the Dean of Black Women composers and self-described as "a teacher who composes, not simply a composer who teaches," Undine Smith Moore wrote more than 100 works, mostly for piano, small ensembles, and solo voice.

She studied piano as a child. Her mother's influence was formative, as she exposed her daughter to spiritual and slave songs that later would shape her compositions. After graduating from Fisk University, where she studied piano and began composing, she was awarded a scholarship to Juilliard. Subsequently

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she led the music program for the public school system in Goldsboro, NC, while completing her MA in Teaching at Columbia. For 40 years she was a member of the music faculty at Virginia State University where she taught music theory, piano, and organ, and co-founded the Black Music Center, and from which she later (1980) received an honorary doctorate. Her oratorio, *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr* (1980), on the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

In **Love Let the Wind Cry** she set a poem by the ancient Greek poet Sappho based on the prose translation by H.T. Wharton. It premiered at the wedding of Jewell and Leon Taylor Thompson, to whom it is dedicated, in 1961.

### **LYNX's Amplify Series (commissioned 2017-2019)**

The LYNX project is a non-profit art song organization that celebrates diverse voices through newly commissioned song, connecting communities through inclusive concerts and innovative educational programming. Megan Moore is its co-founder and a continuing member. Its Amplify Series sets the poetry and prose of neurodivergent individuals to music as contemporary classical song. For the project, composers were paired with non-verbal children with autism, setting a range of texts from poetry to journal entries. The writers submit poetry and prose to LYNX for consideration by each season's selected composers. The composers then choose which texts speak most to them, and set them to music.

### **I love giving hugs; Always I am wanting you; Sixth Extinction**

Tariq Al-Sabir

Composer, vocalist, music director, and vocalist, Tariq Al-Sabir has been described as a “boundless talent” by Baltimore’s City Hall, and *The Examiner* deemed him “a rising musical mastermind.” A performer and writer in many styles including classical, gospel, jazz, pop, and musical theater, his early passion for music was supported by The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, of which he now is a graduate, with scholarship for composition lessons that began while he was in middle school and continued while he attended the Baltimore School for the Arts. His first job was as lead vocalist in the season 4 theme song of HBO’s “The Wire.”

Al-Sabir frequently performs and composes in NYC, where he now is based. He was interviewed and featured on Al Jazeera for his innovative work that creatively and seamlessly challenges genre separation. In 2016 he was invited to be a performer and speaker at TEDxMidatlantic, focusing on his experiences and projects with music, justice, and music education for children of color. In summer 2019 he made his LA Philharmonic debut in the cast of Meredith Monk’s ATLAS, under the direction of Yuval Sharon. He currently is collaborating with Monk on her new evening-length performance, *Indra's Net*.

### **Beautiful Small Things**

Emily Cooley

Emily Cooley is a Philadelphia-based composer of orchestral, chamber, and vocal music. A graduate of Curtis, University of Southern California, and Yale, in 2012 she co-founded Kettle Corn New Music, a concert presenting organization in NYC. She is a Community Artist Fellow at Curtis, where she designs collaborative music programming with Philadelphians who are incarcerated or returning citizens. She has been a fellow at the Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, Norfolk New Music Workshop, CULTIVATE at Copland House, and Cabrillo Conductors/Composers Workshop. Her orchestral works have been performed by the Minnesota, Louisville, Milwaukee, Berkeley, Sioux City, and Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestras, as well as numerous university orchestras. **Beautiful Small Things** was written in 2017 in collaboration with poet Ryan Harris.

### **My Neatest Friend Z**

Travis Reynolds

A graduate of The Boston Conservatory, Travis Reynolds is a composer and pianist currently based in Los Angeles, where he is music director and pianist at First Unitarian Universalist Church in addition to being an active teacher and accompanist. His compositions have been performed by the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra and members of both the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Boston Modern Orchestra Project, among others. This season will see the premier of the choral work *Hobbes, the Cat*.

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He also is a finalist for the NYC Piano Composer Symposium at Columbia and winner of tenor Gregory Wiest's call for scores for his song cycle *Birds Gone South*.

**My Neatest Friend Z**, whose text is by Rithik Sinhasan, is one of six songs in the cycle innocence commissioned by the LYNX project. It takes the form of a lullaby, with a melodic line that alludes to the famous Brahms lullaby.

**I see light; Lucky**

Joel David Balzun

Praised as a “mature artist with a voluminous sound,” baritone and composer Joel Balzun’s multifaceted career has led him to work with some of the world’s most respected musicians and ensembles. He has appeared on both the operatic and concert stages of Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. As a fellow at Tanglewood, he sang alongside Stephanie Blythe in a concert of American song, and with Dawn Upshaw and Sanford Sylvan in Shostakovich’s brooding Symphony No. 14. He studied music composition and vocal performance at the University of Calgary, Biola University, and the Eastman School of Music where he earned his Master’s degree. He currently is on the voice faculty of Biola University. In May 2021 he launched Black Dog Commission, a new commissioning series for art song repertoire that openly discusses life with mental illness, inspired by his own journey with depression. Through it, he looks forward to premiering this coming spring a new work written for him by Tom Cipullo with poetry by

Les Murray

An accomplished composer, Balzun’s “haunting and beautiful” music has received international recognition. He was a multiple prize-winner in the 2017 SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Composers. His music has been performed in Canada, the United States, Costa Rica, and Taiwan.

**Alle de voksende Skygger; Jeg Beder ej om Guldets Glød; Foraarssang**

Rued Langgaard

Introverted and solitary, Danish composer Rued Langgaard wrote religiously and symbolically tinged music that did not fit in well with the anti-Romantic down-to-earth views of music widely held in Denmark in the 20th century. Nevertheless, today he is counted among the most important 20th century Danish composers.

His father, a pianist and composer, had been a pupil of Liszt; his mother also was a pianist. As an eleven-year-old he made his debut as an organist and organ improviser; when he was 19, his first symphony was performed by the Berlin Philharmonic. He continued to perform as an organist throughout his life.

Although Danish national song was becoming popular during his lifetime, Langgaard worked in the less well-known lied tradition. Melody was not the most important aspect for him; he seems to have thought of song as a tone picture in miniature, with special attention to the atmosphere and the image projected. Only a few concerts in his lifetime focused on his song compositions.

**Alle de voksende Skygger** (“September”) was a popular text for Danish composers to set to music. **Jeg Beder ej om Guldets Glød** (“I do not Ask for Gold’s Bright Glow”) is one of Langgaard’s early songs, written in 1908. **Foraarssang** (“Spring Song”) was written in 1915 to a text by Langgaard’s late uncle, the opera singer Aage Foss, who was not known as a poet. It is dedicated to “my friend Gunnar Foss,” the singer’s son.

**Per Questa fiamma...Ah! Pensate che rivolti . . .** from *Anna Bolena*

Gaetano Donizetti

Gaetano Donizetti, Bellini’s contemporary, was an exponent of *bel canto* singing. He wrote more than 70 operas and 170 songs. *Anna Bolena* is a tragic opera in two acts. Felice Romani wrote the Italian libretto. It depicts the life of Anne Boleyn, second wife of England’s Henry VIII; it is one of four operas the composer wrote that deal with the Tudor period in English history.

In Act II, Giovanna Seymour (Jane Seymour), Anna lady-in-waiting, says she does not want to be the cause of Anna’s death. Henry answers that she will not save Anna by leaving. Courtiers and Jane ask the king to be merciful, and Jane approaches Henry with dignity, asking for mercy once again. But he tells her

## Program notes *continued*

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to leave.

**Per Questa fiamma...Ah! Pensate che rivolti** functions as a cavatina, as distinguished from an aria or recitative. It originally means a short song of fairly simple character, without a second strain or any repetition. The second part requires coloratura, which indicates a melody ornamented with runs, trills, and wide leaps.

---notes provided by Susan Halpern.

## About the Artists

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**Mezzo-soprano Megan Moore**, a native of Cincinnati, Ohio, and graduate of both Miami (OH) University and the Eastman School of Music, is an award-winning opera and concert singer; most recently she won first prize at the Jensen Foundation Vocal Competition and, with her frequent collaborator Francesco Barfoed (see below) first prize at the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. Among the recognitions she received as a result of the latter was our own Performance Award as well as YCA's sponsorships of her New York debut in Merkin Concert Hall and her Washington, DC, debut at Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater.

Acclaimed for her Rossini interpretations, her signature roles include Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and the title role in *La Cenerentola*. Her vocal agility also shines in the baroque repertoire; she recently took on the tour-de-force role of Medea in Handel's *Teseo* for COVID-adapted film projects at Juilliard. She has appeared in concert performing Purcell and Handel excerpts with the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra. She also has portrayed Giovanna Seymour in excerpts from *Anna Bolena* in concert with Santa Fe Orchestra.

Megan couples her passion for performing art songs and new music with her work in arts advocacy and community engagement. For instance, in 2015 she co-founded LYNX, the art song initiative devoted to presenting diverse voices through newly commissioned songs. Since 2017 its Amplify Series has commissioned over four hours of new art song with texts by young people with non-verbal autism; several of these are on tonight's program.

Born and raised in Copenhagen, **pianist Francesco Barfoed** is a collaborative and solo artist on the rise. He is a member of the Wunder Trio, a prize-winning piano trio whose members met at the Manchester Music Festival in Vermont on 2017. In his already extensive career, he has performed Rachmaninoff's 1st Piano Concerto as well as on the national Danish Radio (DR P2), in Italy and in Austria, and at various chamber music festivals across Denmark, including the Hindsgavl Festival.

An avid collaborator with both singers and instrumentalists alike, he was awarded the prestigious Stern Fellowship for the (cancelled, alas) 2020 SongFest in Los Angeles. In addition to the YCA first prize he and Megan Moore won, they garnered 2nd prize at the Naumberg International Vocal Competition, have performed at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, and have performed in masterclasses for artists like Renée Fleming and Malcolm Martineau. He is on the coaching faculty at Saluzzo Opera Academy in Italy and this fall has been teaching sight-reading for pianists at Juilliard.

Francesco's studies in the United States, currently at Juilliard, have been supported by several prizes and scholarships from organizations like the Denmark-American Foundation, the Bikuben Foundation, and, perhaps most notably, the Victor Borge Scholarship, which is awarded to just one musician from Scandinavia each year.

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