



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

**James D. Rodriguez, baritone**  
**Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao & Michael Bukhman, piano**

**Special Guests**  
**Gwendolyn Alfred, soprano**  
**Eric Laine, tenor**  
**Adrian Martinez, baritone**

January 16, 2026

7:00 PM

PepsiCo Recital Hall

**Program**

Selections from *A Shropshire Lad*  
The Lads in Their Hundreds  
Is My Team Ploughing?

George Butterworth  
(1885 – 1916)

Adrian Martinez, baritone

Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child (*Cantata*)

John Carter  
(1932 – 1981)

Gwendolyn Alfred, soprano

*Four Walt Whitman Songs*  
Beat! Beat! Drums!  
O, Captain! My Captain!  
Come Up from the Fields, Father  
Dirge for Two Veterans

Kurt Weill  
(1900 – 1950)

**Intermission**

The Prayer of St. Francis

Peter Matthews  
(b.1944)

Eric Laine, tenor

*Vier ernste Gesänge (Four Serious Songs)*, op. 121  
Denn es gehet dem Menschen  
Ich wandte mich  
O, Tod, wie bitter bist du  
Wenn ich mit Menschen und mit Engelszungen redete

Johannes Brahms  
(1833 – 1897)

## Artist Bios

Praised for her “bright and passionate tone” (Houston Chronicle), soprano **Gwendolyn Alfred** made her Houston Grand Opera debut in a newly commissioned work which landed her in the prestigious Texas Monthly magazine. Her Houston Symphony debut featured her as a soloist in their touring Summer Community Concert Series and she additionally sang the soprano solos in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (Houston Civic Symphony & Fort Bend Symphony) and Carmina Burana (Fort Bend Symphony). Her most notable opera roles include: Emeline (What Wings They Were), Donna Anna (Don Giovanni), Giulietta (Les Contes d’Hoffmann), Magda (The Consul), Contessa Almaviva (Le Nozze di Figaro), Madama Cortese (Il Viaggio a Reims), Mrs. Gobineau (The Medium), Cinna (Lucio Silla), and Maria Corona (The Saint of Bleecker Street) with such companies as HGOCO, Opera in the Heights, Miami Music Festival, and The Moores Opera Center.

Alfred recently made her off-Broadway debut as a soprano soloist in the original dramatic work *The Women Have Something to Say*. Dr. Alfred is an Assistant Professor of Voice at Texas Christian University. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Houston, Master of Music from Lamar University, and Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Houston. Her research on William Grant Still’s opera, *Troubled Island*, has been published in *Black Americans in Higher Education: A Review of Social Science Research*, Volume 8. Alfred has also published research on black women composers in the *NATS Journal of Singing* and has presented at the International Florence Price Festival.

She has toured “The Black Female Composer” trio recital nationally, with Drs. Artina McCain and James Rodriguez, and has been recently performing her newly-curated recital, featuring contemporary black women composers and new commissions, nationally and soon in Toronto, Canada. In 2024, she sang as part of the Mahogany Chamber Music Series at the Crosstown Theater in Memphis, Tennessee and premiered *Colossus Mother of Exiles* by Christopher Aspaas with the TCU Concert Chorale. Her mission is to influence and build well-rounded musicians from diverse backgrounds with her love for a wide array of genres, and her eclectic experience with various musical styles.

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Passionate about collaboration and chamber music, award-winning pianist **Michael Bukhman** is active internationally as a chamber musician, adjudicator, and pedagogue. Recent performance highlights include a recital with Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra concertmaster Michael Shih and principal violist DJ Cheek; a recording project with the Painted Sky Ensemble (Corey Mackey and Jeremy Reynolds, clarinets) of numerous commissioned works for two clarinets and piano, including Paul Schoenfeld’s monumental final composition *Eretz Hefetz*, premiered in Dublin, Ireland at the 2024 International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest; a summer recital with acclaimed violist Matthew Lipman; and a recital with flutist Emily Ho as part of the Texas Flute Festival. In 2022 he participated in the inaugural concerts of the Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU, performing Messiaen’s *Quartet for the End of Time* and the world premieres of *Ascendant Grooves* for two pianos and *Reveries* for cello and piano by TCU faculty composer Till MacIvor Meyn. Working with musicians from the Dallas and Fort Worth symphony orchestras, Bukhman has been featured in the newly established Metamorphosis Dallas ensemble, the Spectrum Chamber Music Series, and the Chamber Music Society of Fort Worth. In commemoration of Beethoven’s 250th anniversary in 2020, Bukhman performed the Triple Concerto with the TCU Symphony Orchestra under maestro Germán Gutiérrez, with cellist Jesús

Castro-Balbi and violinist Elisabeth Adkins. In Fall 2020, Bukhman was invited to the Oberlin Conservatory for a virtual Beethoven celebration in a solo sonata performance as part of a marathon Beethoven piano sonata project. His 2013 performance with violinist Itzhak Perlman in Sarasota, Florida was lauded for its “brilliant playing” and having “pushed the audience to the edge of frenzy” (Herald-Tribune). In June of 2016 Bukhman performed a duo recital with Grammy award-winning violist Kim Kashkashian to great acclaim at the American Viola Society Festival in Oberlin, OH. He has previously collaborated with Nobuko Imai, Donald Weilerstein, Tessa Lark, Roger Tapping, Julia Bullock, Dawn Upshaw, the Attacca Quartet, Rebecca Ringle, Peter Frankl, and many others. Recent international tours include violin-piano performances in four Chinese cities with masterclasses taught across China and Taiwan, and previous performances across Japan.

Currently Associate Professor of Collaborative Piano and Chamber Music at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX, Bukhman is a co-founder and co-director of the Texas Chamber Music Institute (TCMI), a world-class chamber music summer program on the TCU campus. With co-founders Liz Lee and Juliette Herlin, Bukhman presented on the topic of “*The Modern Chamber Music Festival*” at the national convention of Chamber Music America in Houston, TX in February 2025. In January 2025, Bukhman was invited to present a teaching masterclass at the Tianjin Juilliard School in Tianjin, China, as well as at Steinway & Sons in Guangzhou. He is also Collaborative Arts Chair for the Texas Music Teachers Association (TMTA). Prior to his appointment to TCU, Bukhman served as Guest Artist-in-Residence at the Oberlin Conservatory (2017) and on the staff and pre-college faculty of the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA, to which he returned in summer 2022 as a collaborative piano faculty member at Morningside Music Bridge International Festival. Other music festival appearances include PianoTexas, the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute, the Heifetz Institute, Yellow Barn Music Festival, The Perlman Music Program, and the Ojai Music Festival. Bukhman previously also taught at Bard and Vassar Colleges. While at Bard, Bukhman founded *Play/Chat@Bard*, a concert series showcasing young musicians in performance with informal conversation.

Bukhman attended the Oberlin Conservatory of Music as a student of Robert Shannon, where he became the first in that institution’s history to graduate with Honors in Piano Performance. As part of his Honors project, Bukhman recorded the complete 24 Preludes and Fugues of Shostakovich, performing ten of them on one recital. He holds MM and DMA degrees from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Robert McDonald. An award-winning pianist, Bukhman’s accolades include: medalist in the 2009 Hilton Head International Piano Competition; top-ranked winner of the 2005 Jacob K. Javits Fellowship; first-prize winner at the 2006 Corpus Christi International Competition for Piano and Strings; and laureate of the 2006 Gina Bachauer Competition at the Juilliard School.

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Taiwanese Pianist **Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao** enjoyed performing in a wide variety of settings, which includes chamber music, opera, orchestral ensembles, new music ensembles, and choral music. She has collaborated with many distinguished artists including Lynn Harrell, Stefan Jackiw, Robert McDuffie, Bion Tsang, Gerardo Riberio, David Coucheron, Jennifer Stumm, members of the Tokyo, Emerson, Juilliard String Quartets, and members from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra.

Kao is an Associate Professor of Professional Practice and Collaborative Piano Artist at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. She is also the Coordinator of Collaborative Piano at the

prestigious Meadowmount School of Music in Westport, New York. She has been a collaborative pianist at Columbus State University and Mercer University in Georgia, where she worked with students of the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings.

She has appeared at Carnegie Weill Hall and can be heard with cellist Bion Tsang on his CD *The Blue Rock Sessions*. She was also a member of the Boulder Altitude Directive, a modern music ensemble dedicated to commissioning and performing new music, during their inaugural season. Cecilia has received fellowships for both the Aspen School of Music and the Music Academy of the West, where she studied with Jonathan Feldman. She also was a chamber music artist at the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival in Florida.

Kao holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Collaborative Piano from the University of Colorado Boulder and a Master of Music degree in Collaborative Piano from the University of Texas at Austin, where she studied with the pioneer pedagogue, Anne Epperson. Prior to her move to the U.S., she was one of the first pianists to receive the Master of Arts degree in Collaborative Piano from National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei, where she also received her bachelor's degree in Piano Performance. Her principal teachers include Anne Epperson, Margaret McDonald, Alexandra Nguyen, Elizabeth Pridgen, Chi-Chen Wu, and Shu-Cheng Lin.

Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao is a Yamaha Artist.

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Acknowledged for his “vocal allure” and “fiery declamation” (*San Diego Story*), **Eric Laine**, tenor, has earned recognition as an innovative artist both on stage and in recital. Recently, he made his European debut as Il Podestà in *La finata giardiniera* with the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest, a role he later reprised with Opera Neo in San Diego, CA. On the operatic stage, Dr. Laine has sung Joante in the American premiere of *Apollo y Dafne*, Alfred and Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, Jay in *The Stranger's Tale*, Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Vašek in *The Bartered Bride*, Henrik in *A Little Night Music*, the title role in *Albert Herring*, Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, Tantale in *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Noël in *Le testament de la tante Caroline*, Apollo in the American premiere of *Coronide*, and Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, appearing with companies such as Orchestra of New Spain, First Coast Opera, Moores Opera Center, American Baroque Opera Co., Opera in the Heights, and Red River Lyric Opera, among others. During the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 seasons, Dr. Laine was a regular ensemble member with Houston Grand Opera.

As a concert soloist, Dr. Laine has been featured in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, *Messiah*, *Alexander's Feast*, *Missa in Angustiis*, *Membra Jesu nostri*, *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi*, Bruckner's Te Deum, Schubert's Mass No. 2 in G Major, Pergolesi's *Miserere*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, Esmail's *This Love Between Us*, and many cantatas by J.S. Bach, having sung with Mercury Chamber Orchestra, Choral Society of Greensboro, Harmonia Stellarum Houston, Charlotte Music Club, Symphony of the Hills, Music by Women Festival, Boston Early Music Festival, Heart of the Triangle Choral Society, Houston Symphony, Raleigh Camerata, Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra, Winston-Salem Mozart Club, Houston Masterworks Chorus, and Tyler Civic Chorale. An avid promoter of art song, Dr. Laine frequently creates themed programs that pair chamber music with visual art, performing with organizations such as Cincinnati Song Initiative and Toronto Summer Music.

Dr. Laine received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance and pedagogy from the University of Houston Moores School of Music. Additionally, he holds a Master of Music in

vocal performance from the University of North Texas and earned a Bachelor of Music in music education from UH, with a dual focus in voice and classical saxophone. A trained vocologist through the Utah Center for Vocology in Salt Lake City, UT, Dr. Laine studied under the tutelage of Dr. Ingo Titze and Dr. Katherine Verdolini Abbott. He is a published author in the *Journal of Singing*, and his research interests include Latin American art song repertoire, vocal agility, and the intersection of exercise science and vocal pedagogy. Dr. Laine currently serves on the faculty of Texas Christian University as Assistant Professor of Voice.

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**Adrian Martinez** is a baritone studying under Dr. James Rodriguez and is currently a junior music education major at Texas Christian University. He holds the distinction of being both a Dean's Scholar and a Marine Corps Scholar. Adrian is a member of TCU's Concert Chorale and serves as a section leader in University Singers. He is also involved in TCU's Opera program, where he has performed as Samuel in *Pirates of Penzance*, Antonio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and most recently sang in the premiere of Dr. Blaise Ferrandino's *A Service of Love*. This spring he will sing the role of Vice Principal Panch in the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee. He has also competed in the TEXOMA NATS Regional Student Competition. Following graduation, Adrian plans to teach high school choir and later pursue advanced studies in choral conducting.

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Baritone, **James D. Rodriguez**, has appeared in operatic works by Bizet, Rossini, Mozart, Donizetti, Strauss, Verdi, Catán, and many others. Favorite roles include Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Tonio in *Pagliacci*, Dr. Rappaccini in *La Hija de Rappaccini*, Herr Fanninal in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the title roles in *Rigoletto* and *Falstaff*. Other appearances include those with Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera in the Heights, Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre, Opera Theatre Pittsburgh, the Natchez Festival of Music, and the Moores Opera Center. Concert appearances include Beethoven's *9th Symphony & Mass in C*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Carlisle Floyd's *Pilgrimage*, Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, Goodall's *Eternal Light: A Requiem*, and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with the Houston Camerata, Fort Bend Symphony, and San Antonio Symphony, among others.

An avid collaborator, he has performed recitals with PianoTexas Festival with Dr. Michael Bukhman, the Festival of American Song with Dr. Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao (with composer Libby Larsen in residency), Opus Nova, Mt. Vernon Music, and Austin Chamber Music Center, for which he was awarded an Austin Critics Table Award for his participation in "Black Composers Concert: The Black Female Composer", with pianist, Dr. Artina McCain. In addition, he has performed as part of a trio with Drs. McCain and Alfred, touring the works of Black Female Composers as part of a recital series throughout the United States. In 2024, he sang as part of the Mahogany Chamber Music Series at the Crosstown Theater in Memphis, Tennessee and premiered *COLOSSUS: Mother of Exiles* by Christopher Aspaas with the TCU Concert Chorale. He is also the recipient of the gold medal in the Young Texas Artists Vocal Competition.

Dr. Rodriguez is an Associate Professor of Voice & Voice Pedagogy at Texas Christian University and has presented his research at conferences through the National Association of Teachers of Singing, The Voice Foundation, the Pan American Vocology Association, and many

others. He holds advanced degrees from the University of Houston and is a Certified Vocologist from the National Center for Voice and Speech.