



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

## Amor

**Cassie Westlund, soprano**  
**Elijah Ong, harpsichord & piano**

Saturday, March 28, 2026

7:00 pm

PepsiCo Recital Hall

### Program

Sweeter Than Roses  
*from Pausanias*

**Henry Purcell**  
(1659-1695)

Hark the Echoing Air  
*from The Fairy Queen*

Amor timido  
*Recitativo*  
*T'intendo sì, mio Cor*  
*Recitativo*  
*Placido Zefiretto*

**Marianna Martines**  
(1744-1812)

*Kaleb Comstock, bass*

Ah! vous dirai-je, maman  
*from Le Toréador*

**Adolphe Adam**  
(1803-1856)

*Autumn Bell, flute*

## Intermission

Caro nome  
*from Rigoletto*

**Giuseppe Verdi**  
(1813-1901)

*from Sechs Lieder, Op. 17*  
*Ständchen*  
*Das Geheimnis*

**Richard Strauss**  
(1864-1949)

*from Brentano Lieder, Op. 68*  
*Amor*

Afternoon on a Hill  
Wild Swans  
The Red Dress  
Joy

**Ricky Ian Gordon**  
(1956)

Afternoon  
*from Alice By Heart*

**Duncan Sheik**  
(1969)

*Will Moeller, tenor & piano*

## **Amor**

Amor, amore, amour, love is one of the few human experiences that transcends language, time, and culture. In music, love connects us to the feelings of people who lived before us and to the history shaped by those experiences. For hundreds of years, composers across different countries and styles have written about love, and yet, it still feels familiar no matter how much time has passed. What interests me most is not just that love endures, but that it rarely looks the same twice. Instead of presenting love as one single idea, this program follows its different stages, from first attraction and infatuation, to hesitation, grief, and finally, reflection.

### **Stage One: The First Kiss**

We begin in the Baroque era with Henry Purcell, where love arrives suddenly and with full force. It is immediate and physical affecting every sense. There is no overthinking, only reaction. The heart responds before the mind can catch up, and at this point, love feels like discovery. It is exciting, instinctive, and slightly overwhelming.

### **Stage Two: What is this Feeling?**

As we move into the Classical world with Marianna Martines' cantata, that certainty softens. The heart hesitates. Is this joy? Desire? Something else entirely? Love is no longer just experienced; it is thoughtfully considered.

### **Stage Three: This is Forever!**

In the Romantic operatic tradition of Adolphe Adam and Giuseppe Verdi, love is declared openly and believed completely. It feels unwavering and absolute. At this stage, there is no room for doubt, as the character become completely infatuated.

### **Stage Four: It's Not That Simple**

With Richard Strauss and his late Romantic repertoire, the perspective deepens. Love becomes more private, more layered, and more aware of its own risks. It exists in secrecy and shared understanding. There is recognition now that love can both inspire and unsettle, and the emotional language grows more complex.

### **Stage Five: In Retrospect**

In the twentieth century and contemporary works of Ricky Ian Gordon and Duncan Sheik, love is shaped by experience. Earlier innocence has shifted as love is tested against reality and reconsidered in light of change. The recital closes not with bold declarations, but with reflection. What remains are shared moments and quiet memories, the parts of love that endure long after it ends.

## Henry Purcell

Henry Purcell (1659–1695) was one of the leading English composers of the Baroque period. He worked in London during the Restoration and wrote music for the royal court, the church, and the public theatre. Purcell held several important positions, including organist at Westminster Abbey and composer for the Chapel Royal. His output includes sacred anthems, instrumental works, odes for royal occasions, and music for the stage. He is especially known for his contributions to English opera and semi-opera, including *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Fairy Queen*. Despite his short life, Purcell left a large and influential body of work that shaped the development of English vocal music.

*Sweeter Than Roses*, from the semi-opera *Pausanias*, presents love as a completely new and overwhelming experience. The singer describes a first kiss so powerful that it seems to transform every sense, moving from shock and pleasure to pure joy. The music mirrors this emotional journey, shifting rapidly in tempo and color to reflect the intensity of first love. In contrast, *Hark! The Echoing Air* from *The Fairy Queen* offers a more playful and neutral perspective. Instead of describing personal emotion, the song celebrates Cupid as he spreads love everywhere, suggesting that love is not only a private feeling but a force that moves through the world, affecting everyone.

### Sweeter Than Roses

Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze,  
On a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss  
First trembling, made me freeze,  
Then shot like fire all o'er.

What magic has victorious love!  
For all I touch or see,  
Since that dear kiss,  
I hourly prove, all is love to me.

### Hark! The Echoing Air

Hark! the echoing air  
A triumph sings,  
And all around  
Pleas'd cupids clap their wings.

Hark! the echoing air  
A triumph sings.

## Marianna Martines

Marianna Martines (1744–1812) was an Austrian composer, singer, and keyboard player active in Vienna during the Classical period. She was born into a well-connected family and grew up in the same household as the librettist Pietro Metastasio and the composer Joseph Haydn. Metastasio became a lifelong mentor to her and provided many of the texts for her vocal works, including the canata *Amor timido*. Martines was highly regarded in her time as both a performer and composer, hosting regular musical salons in her home that were attended by important figures in Viennese society. Her output includes sacred music, keyboard works, orchestral pieces, and numerous Italian cantatas and arias written in the refined Classical style.

*Amor timido* is an Italian cantata that explores the early, uncertain stages of love. The work begins with a recitative in which the speaker wonders what this new feeling in the heart might be, questioning whether it is joy, desire, or pain. In the following arietta, the emotion becomes clearer, and the character begins to recognize that the feeling is love. The second recitative shows the speaker still struggling with whether to confess these feelings, torn between the desire to speak and the fear of rejection. The cantata concludes with its most well-known section, the aria “Placido zeffiretto.” In this final piece, the speaker does not confess directly, but instead asks a gentle breeze and a small stream to carry her sighs and tears to his beloved without revealing their source.

### Recitativo

Che vuoi, mio cor?	What do you want, my heart?
Chi desta in te questi fin ora	Who makes in you these
Tumulti ignoti?	Unknown tumults?
Or ti dilati, e angusto	Now you expand, and narrow
Il sen non basta a contenerti appieno;	The breast is not enough to contain you fully;
Or ti restringi, e non ti trovo in seno.	Now you contract, and I do not find it inside.
Or geli, or ardi, or provi	Now you freeze, now you burn, now you feel
Mirabilmente uniti	Wondrously joined
Delle fiamme e del gel gli effetti estremi.	The flames and the frost their extreme effects.
Ma che vuoi? Peni, o godi?	But what do you want? Suffering, or joy?
Ardisci, o temi?	Do you dare, or do you fear?
Ah lo so: mi rammento	Ah I know: I remember
Quel giorno, quel momento	That day, that moment
Ch'io vidi incauto	When I saw unwary
In un leggiadro ciglio	In a graceful eye
Scintillar quella face	Sparkle that torch
ond'or m'accendo.	By which now I burn.
Ah pur troppo lo so:	Ah only too well I know it:
cor mio, t'intendo.	my heart, I understand you.

### **T'intendo sì, mio Cor**

T'intendo sì, mio cor;  
Con tanto palpitar  
So che ti vuoi lagnar  
Che amante sei.  
Ah taci il tuo dolor;  
Ah soffri il tuo martir:  
Tacilo, e non tradir gli affetti miei.

I understand you indeed, my heart;  
With such beating  
I know that you wish to lament  
That you are in love.  
Ah be silent about your pain;  
Ah suffer your torment:  
Hide it, and do not betray my feelings.

### **Recitativo**

Ma che! Languir tacendo  
Sempre così divrassi?  
Ah no; gli audaci seconda amor.  
Sappia il mio ben ch'io l'amo,  
E lo sappia da me.  
Dirò che rei son gli occhi suoi  
dell'ardir mio;  
che legge è di natura  
il dimandar pietade. Dirò...  
Ma se l'altera con me si sdegnà,  
e se mi scaccia?  
Oh dèi! Vorrei dirle ch'io l'amo,  
e non vorrei.

But what! To languish in silence  
Must it always be so?  
Ah no; the bold second love.  
Let my beloved know that I love her,  
And let her know it from me.  
I will say that guilty are her eyes  
of my boldness;  
that it is law of nature  
to ask for pity. I say...  
But if the proud one grows angry,  
and if she drives me away?  
Oh gods! I would like to tell her I love her,  
and yet I would not.

### **Placido Zefiretto**

Placido zefiretto,  
Se trove il caro oggetto,  
Digli che sei sospiro;  
Ma non gli dir di chi.  
Limpido ruscelletto,  
Se mai t'incontri in lei,  
Dille che pianto sei;  
Ma non le dir qual ciglio  
Crescer ti fe' così.

Gentle little breeze,  
If you find the dear one,  
Tell her you are a sigh;  
But do not tell whose.  
Clear little stream,  
If ever you meet her,  
Tell her you are tears;  
But do not tell which eyes  
Made you grow so.

*Translated by: Cassie Westlund*

## Adolphe Adam

Adolphe Adam (1803–1856) was a French composer of the Romantic period, best known for his operas, ballets, and light stage works. He studied at the Paris Conservatoire and went on to write more than forty operas and several ballets, including *Giselle* (1841). Adam was especially associated with the opéra-comique tradition, which combined spoken dialogue with musical numbers and was known for its light, yet eccentric style. In addition to his stage works, he composed sacred and popular music. He is most widely recognized today as the composer of the famous Christmas carol “O Holy Night” (*Cantique de Noël*), written in 1847.

“Ah! vous dirai-je, maman” comes from Adam’s opéra-comique *Le toréador, ou L’accord parfait* (1849). In this aria, the young heroine confides in her mother about her growing feelings for a man, describing the excitement and confusion of first love. The text presents love in a playful, youthful way, showing a character who is just beginning to understand her emotions. As the aria continues, she becomes enchanted by the tune. The libretto for *Le toréador* was written by Adolphe de Leuven and Léon-Lévy Brunswick, both well-known librettists of the French opéra-comique stage. Together, the lighthearted text and graceful music create a charming portrait of innocent, early love.

### Ah! vous dirai-je, maman

Ah! vous dirai-je, maman,	Ah! Can I tell you, mother,
Ce qui cause mon tourment?	What is causing my torment?
Depuis que j’ai vu Clitandre	Since I saw my love
Me regarder d’un air tendre,	Look at me with such tenderness,
Mon cœur dit à chaque instant:	My heart says every moment:
Peut-on vivre sans amant?	How can I live without my love?

Cet air me semble charmant,	This tune seems charming to me,
Je vous les dire souvent:	I hear people say it often:
Oui, cet air est charmant.	Yes, this tune is charming.
Son motif entraînant	Its lively motif
Produit le sentiment	Produces the feeling
Le plus tendre.	The most tender.
J’aime son mouvement	I love its motion
Roux, berçant mollement;	Softly, gently rocking;
Il est également	It is also
Expressif, élégant.	Expressive, and elegant.
Le cœur bat souplement	The heart beats softly
À l’entendre.	When hearing it.

*Translated by: Cassie Westlund*

## Giuseppe Verdi

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) was one of the most influential composers of the nineteenth century and a central figure in Italian Romantic opera. Born in northern Italy, he rose to fame in the 1840s with operas such as *Nabucco* and went on to compose many of the most frequently performed works in the operatic repertoire, including *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore*, *La traviata*, *Aida*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*. Verdi's music is known for its strong melodies, dramatic intensity, and close connection between text and character. His operas often focus on personal emotion, moral conflict, and the lives of ordinary people, helping to move Italian opera toward greater psychological depth and realism.

“Caro nome” comes from Verdi's opera *Rigoletto* (1851), set to a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based on Victor Hugo's play *Le roi s'amuse*. The aria is sung by Gilda, the sheltered daughter of the court jester Rigoletto, after she meets a young man who introduces himself as Gualtier Maldè. Believing him to be sincere and noble, she returns home and, alone in the garden, repeats his name over and over. She lingers on the sound of it, savoring the feeling it gives her, and imagines it engraved forever in her heart. The music is light and delicate, reflecting her innocence and the purity of her first love. In the context of the opera, this moment marks the beginning of her emotional awakening, though the audience knows that her love is built on deception.

### Caro nome

Gualtier Maldè! Nome di lui sì amato,  
ti scolpisci nel core innamorato!  
Caro nome che il mio cor festi primo palpitar,  
le delizie dell'amor mi dèi sempre rammentar!  
Col pensier il mio desir a te ognora volerà,  
E fin l'ultimo sospir, caro nome, tuo sarà.

Gualtier Maldè! Name of him so beloved,  
you are carved into my loving heart!  
Dear name that made my heart tremble,  
you always remind me of the delights of love!  
With my thoughts my desire will fly to you,  
and my final sigh, dear name, will be yours.

*Translated by: Bard Suverkrop*

## Strauss

Richard Strauss (1864–1949) was one of the most influential late-Romantic composers, known for both his orchestral works and his large body of *Lieder*. Born in Munich, he became one of the leading figures of German opera in the early twentieth century with works such as *Salome* (1905), *Elektra* (1909), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911), and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912). Alongside his operas, Strauss wrote more than two hundred songs throughout his life, many for his wife, the soprano Pauline de Ahna. His vocal writing combines the rich harmonies of the late nineteenth century with close attention to poetic text, placing him in the tradition of Schubert and Schumann while expanding the harmonic language and musical complexity into the twentieth century.

The *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17 (1886–88), set poetry by Adolf Friedrich von Schack. “*Ständchen*” is one of Strauss’s most beloved early songs and depicts a lover quietly calling to his beloved, urging her to slip out into the garden under the cover of night. The music creates anticipation, with a gentle, flowing accompaniment that juxtaposes the stillness of the evening. In the same set, “*Das Geheimnis*” continues the intimate atmosphere, focusing on the quiet exchange between the lovers once they meet. The song centers on a shared secret between two people in love, with warm harmonies reflecting the tenderness of the moment.

Composed much later, the *Brentano Lieder*, Op. 68 (1918), represent a more virtuosic and colorful style. “*Amor*” sets a playful poem about Cupid, portraying love as a mischievous, unpredictable force. The quick, sparkling vocal line and energetic piano writing capture the character of the love-god himself, contrasting with the quiet intimacy of the earlier songs and presenting love as lively, teasing, and full of motion. Together, these pieces show different perspectives on love, from secret meetings in the garden to the playful interference of Cupid.

### **Ständchen**

Mach auf, mach auf, doch leise, mein Kind,  
Um keinen vom Schlummer zu wecken;  
Kaum murmelt der Bach, kaum zittert im Wind  
Ein Blatt an den Büschen und Hecken.  
Drum leise, mein Mädchen, daß nichts sich regt,  
Nur leise die Hand auf die Klinke gelegt.

Get up, get up, yet softly, my child,  
So that no one is roused from slumber;  
The brook scarcely murmurs, the wind stirs  
A leaf on the bushes and hedges.  
So softly, my maiden, that nothing awakes,  
Just gently lay your hand on the latch.

Mit Tritten, wie Tritte der Elfen so sacht,  
Um über die Blumen zu hüpfen,  
Flieg leicht hinaus in die Mondscheinnacht,  
Zu mir in den Garten zu schlüpfen.  
Rings schlummern die Blüten am rieselnden Bach  
Und duften im Schlaf, nur die Liebe ist wach.

With steps as light as the footsteps of elves,  
That skip over the flowers,  
Fly lightly out into the moonlit night,  
To slip to me in the garden.  
All the blossoms slumber by the rippling brook  
And breathe in their sleep, only love is awake.

Sitz nieder, hier dämmert's geheimnisvoll  
Unter den Lindenbäumen;  
Die Nachtigall uns zu Häupten soll  
Von unseren Küssen träumen,  
Und die Rose, wenn sie am Morgen erwacht,  
Hoch glühn von den Wonnenschauern der Nacht.

Sit here, here it dusks mysteriously  
Beneath the linden trees;  
The nightingale above our heads  
Shall dream of our kisses,  
And the rose, when it awakes in the morning,  
It glows when morning opens from night.

### **Das Geheimnis**

Du fragst mich, Mädchen, was flüsternd der West  
Vertraue den Blütenglocken?  
Warum von Zweig zu Zweig im Geäst  
Die zwitschernden Vögel locken?

You ask me, maiden, what secrets the west wind  
Whispers to the bluebells?  
Why from branch to branch in the trees  
The chirping birds entice?

Warum an Knospe die Knospe sich schmiegt,  
Und Wellen mit Wellen zerfließen,  
Und dem Mondstrahl, der auf den Kelchen wiegt,  
Die Viole der Nacht sich erschließen?

Why bud nestles close to bud,  
And wave melts into wave,  
And to the moonbeam that sways on the chalice,  
The violets of night open themselves?

O törichtes Fragen! Wem Wissen frommt,  
Nicht kann ihm die Antwort fehlen;  
Drum warte, mein Kind, bis die Liebe kommt,  
Die wird dir Alles erzählen.

O foolish questioning! He who benefits  
Shall not lack an answer;  
So wait, my child, until love comes,  
It shall tell you everything.

### **Amor**

An dem Feuer saß das Kind,  
Amor, Amor,  
Und war blind;  
Mit den kleinen Flügeln fächelt  
In die Flammen er und lächelt,  
Fächelt, lächelt, schlaues Kind!  
Ach, der Flügel brennt dem Kind,  
Amor, Amor,  
Läuft geschwind!

By the fire sat the child,  
Cupid, Cupid,  
And he was blind;  
With his little wings he fanned  
The flames and smiled,  
Fanning, smiling, clever child!  
Ah, the wing begins to burn,  
Cupid, Cupid,  
He runs quickly!

„O, wie ihn die Glut durchpeinet!“  
Flügelschlagend laut er weinet;  
In der Hirtin Schoß entrinnt  
Hilfeschreiend das schlaue Kind.  
Und die Hirtin hilft dem Kind,

“Oh, how the fire torments him!”  
Beating his wings, he cries aloud;  
Into the shepherdess's lap he runs  
Crying for help, the clever child.  
And the shepherdess helps the child,

Amor, Amor,  
Bös und blind.

Hirtin, sieh, dein Herz entbrennet,  
Hast den Schelmen nicht gekennet?  
Sieh, die Flamme wächst geschwinde,  
Hüt' dich vor dem schlaun Kind!  
Fächle, lächle, schlaues Kind!

Cupid, Cupid,  
Wicked and blind.

Shepherdess, see, your heart is burning,  
Did you not recognize the rascal?  
See how the flame grows quickly,  
Guard yourself from the clever child!  
Fanning, smiling, clever child!

*Translated by: Bard Suverkrop*

## Ricky Ian Gordon

Ricky Ian Gordon (b. 1956) is an American composer known for his art songs, musical theatre works, and operas. His style blends classical vocal writing with elements of American popular song, creating music that is lyrical, direct, and closely connected to the text. He has written operas such as *The Grapes of Wrath*, *27*, and *Intimate Apparel*, as well as the musical *My Life with Albertine*. Gordon's songs are widely performed by both classical and musical theatre singers, and he is especially known for his settings of American poets, including Langston Hughes, Emily Dickinson, and Edna St. Vincent Millay.

This set of Gordon's songs reveals an emotional journey through different stages of love and experience. "Afternoon on a Hill," set to a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay, begins in a place of innocence, where the speaker stands on a sunny hillside, looking at trees, flowers, and the open sky. In the poem, she feels that simply being alive in that moment is enough, and that the world is full of possibility. "Wild Swans," also set to a poem by Millay, shifts that perspective. The speaker watches a group of swans flying overhead and reflects on how time has passed. She realizes she is no longer the same carefree person she once was, and that love and life have brought disappointment and change. In fact, she longs to be free from the love she once desired.

In "The Red Dress," set to a poem by Dorothy Parker, the character looks back with maturity, remembering a dress once worn for someone she loved. The dress becomes a symbol of a relationship that did not turn out the way she once imagined. Rather than dramatic heartbreak, the poem carries a reflective tone, suggesting someone who has accepted the outcome and learned from it. Finally, "Joy," set to a poem by Langston Hughes, brings the story of love forward again. In this poem, love returns in a simple, playful way, with the speaker celebrating the happiness of being in love without complication or regret. After everything that has come before, love becomes possible once more, not with the same innocence as at the beginning, but with a deeper understanding.

### Afternoon on a Hill

I will be the gladdest thing  
Under the sun!  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
And not pick one.  
I will look at cliffs and clouds  
With quiet eyes,  
Watch the wind bow down the grass,  
And the grass rise.  
And when lights begin to show  
Up from the town,  
I will mark which must be mine,  
And then start down!

## **Wild Swans**

I looked in my heart while the wild swans went over.  
And what did I see I had not seen before?  
Only a question less or a question more;  
Nothing to match the flight of wild birds flying.

Tiresome heart, forever living and dying,  
House without air, I leave you and lock your door.  
Wild swans, come over the town, come over  
The town again, trailing your legs and crying!

## **The Red Dress**

I always saw, I always said  
If I were grown and free  
I'd buy a gown of reddest red  
As fine as you could see  
To wear out walking, sleek and slow  
Upon a Summer day  
And there'd be one to see me so  
And flip the world away

And he would be a gallant one  
With stars behind his eyes  
And hair like metal in the sun  
And lips too warm for lies  
I always saw us, gay and good  
High honored in the town  
Now I am grown to womanhood  
I have the silly gown

## **Joy**

I went to look for Joy  
Slim, dancing Joy  
Gay, laughing Joy  
Bright-eyed Joy  
And I found her  
Driving the butcher's cart  
In the arms of the butcher boy!  
Such company, such company  
As keeps this young nymph, Joy!

## Duncan Sheik

Duncan Sheik (b. 1969) is an American singer-songwriter and composer known for his work in pop music and musical theatre. He first gained recognition as a recording artist in the 1990s and later became a major figure in contemporary musical theatre with his Tony Award-winning score for *Spring Awakening* (2006), written with lyricist Steven Sater. Sheik and Sater have continued their collaboration on several projects, including *Alice by Heart* (2019), a musical inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Their work blends pop-influenced musical styles with direct, character-driven storytelling.

“Afternoon” comes near the end of *Alice by Heart*, as Alice sits with Alfred in a London shelter during the Blitz. Alfred is gravely ill and close to death, and the song is a reflection on the love they have shared throughout the show. Rather than focusing on the tragedy of the moment, Alice remembers the simple, ordinary afternoons they spent together, holding on to those memories for as long as she can. She realizes that the child-like love they shared is much deeper as Alfred drifts away. The song serves as a final reflection on love, showing how it can be looked back on with tenderness and gratitude, even as it comes to an end.

### Afternoon

A little talk could hold me for a little while  
Another brush of whiskers and that distant smile  
So little life remaining and the shadows won't contain me  
The book of night is closing for the child

I knew you were a strange girl or I thought you were  
You mustered all the wonder from a room of hurt  
We knew the world of summer  
Like a sister, like a brother  
And the melodies were sweeter left unheard

We fell down a hole  
Don't you remember?  
We fell so fall below  
And never found the center.  
Another word or two  
And all the summer knew  
In the song of the afternoon.

You never play September in a winter game  
The heart will not remember what it will not name  
The caterpillar gazes on a world of older faces  
But the butterflies go floating all the same

We fell down a hole  
Won't you remember?  
Fell so fall below  
We never found the center.

And who knew what to do  
With all I felt for you?  
In the song of the afternoon,  
Afternoon.

*This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance. Cassie Westlund is a student of Professor Twyla Robinson. The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited. Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.*