

**Social Issues Recital – Text**  
**Monday, April 19, 2021**

**Women's Rights**

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Selections from *Preach Sister, Preach* (Evan Mack) – Sophie Bougeois, soprano

Note from the composer:

I was inspired to write this cycle after witnessing the 1st Women's March. After reading the Simone de Beauvoir quote, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman," I started looking at hundreds of quotes by famous women about women. There were so many brilliant (and funny) quotes that I could have probably composed three more song cycles.

Simone de Beauvoir:

This has always been a man's world, and none of the reasons that have been offered in explanation have seemed adequate! One is not born, but rather becomes a woman..

Mae West:

There are no good girls gone wrong, just bad girls found out.  
When I'm good, I'm very good, but when I'm bad, I'm better.  
Good girls go to heaven, bad girls go everywhere!

Gilda Radner:

I'd much rather be a woman than a man.  
Women can cry, they can wear cute clothes, and they're first to be rescued off sinking ships.  
Do bah do bah do.

Lucille Ball:

A man who correctly guesses a woman's age, maybe smart, but he's not very bright.

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Raquel from *Sueños de Esperanza* "Dreams of Hope" (Henry Mollicone) – Tori Vilches, soprano

Twenty years old and  
mother of five.  
Twenty years old and  
the only thing bigger  
Than my sadness and my fear  
Was my responsibility  
to feed them. Abused continuously  
by the coward,  
I was hungry and

depressed all the time.  
I decided to come to the north. But I knew the risk of this trip  
was even riskier with kids.  
I'm going to make money  
and I'll send for them  
when God wills.  
Crying, I said goodbye.

Crossing the border  
was a horrible nightmare.  
My strength abandoned me  
and I fainted three times.  
Only the memory of my children  
brought me to my feet again.

Finally, cleaning houses,  
baby sitting and caregiving,  
I was able to bring them.  
Oh my God, happy at last!  
But it was just a brief illusion.

Gangs, alcohol and drugs  
came into my life.  
Now alone, old and sad,  
I'm afraid of living.  
If I return, his vengeance awaits.

If I stay, my future is  
no better without a  
social security number or a license.  
Without papers, I'm just one  
more shadow in the dark night.

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Hold Fast to Dreams (Florence Price) – text by Langton Hughes, Kathryn Piña, soprano

Hold fast to dreams  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

## Mental Health/Loss

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She Used to be Mine (Sarah Bareilles) from *Waitress*, Emma Cave, soprano

It's not simple to say  
That most days I don't recognize me  
That these shoes and this apron  
That place and it's patrons  
Have taken more than I gave them  
It's not easy to know  
I'm not anything like I used to be  
Although it's true  
I was never attention's sweet center  
I still remember that girl

She's imperfect but she tries  
She is good but she lies  
She is hard on herself  
She is broken and won't ask for help  
She is messy but she's kind  
She is lonely most of the time  
She is all of this mixed up  
And baked in a beautiful pie  
She is gone but she used to be mine

It's not what I asked for  
Sometimes life just slips in through a back door  
And carves out a person  
And makes you believe it's all true  
And now I've got you  
And you're not what I asked for  
If I'm honest I know I would give it all back  
For a chance to start over  
And rewrite an ending or two  
For the girl that I knew

Who'll be reckless just enough  
Who'll get hurt but  
Who learns how to toughen up when she's bruised  
And gets used by a man who can't love  
And then she'll get stuck and be scared  
Of the life that's inside her  
Growing stronger each day  
'Til it finally reminds her  
To fight just a little

To bring back the fire in her eyes  
That's been gone but it used to be mine

Used to be mine  
She is messy but she's kind  
She is lonely most of the time  
She is all of this mixed up and baked in a beautiful pie  
She is gone but she used to be mine

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Words Fail (Benj Pasek & Justin Paul) from *Dear Evan Hansen*, José Ruiz-Gonzalez, tenor

I never meant to make it such a mess  
I never thought that it would go this far  
So I just stand here sorry  
Searching for something to say  
Something to say  
Words fail, words fail  
There's nothing I can say

I guess I thought I could be part of this  
I never had this kind of thing before  
I never had that perfect girl  
Who somehow could see the good part of me

I never had the dad who stuck it out  
No corny jokes or baseball gloves  
No mom who just was there  
'Cause mom was all that she had to be

That's not a worthy explanation  
I know there is none  
Nothing can make sense of all these things I've done

Words fail, words fail  
There's nothing I can say  
Except sometimes, you see everything you wanted  
And sometimes, you see everything you wish you had  
And it's right there, right there, right there  
In front of you  
And you want to believe it's true  
So you... make it true  
And you think maybe everybody wants it  
And needs it... a little bit... too

This was just a sad invention

It wasn't real, I know  
But we were happy  
I guess I couldn't let that go  
I guess I couldn't give that up  
I guess I wanted to believe  
'Cause if I just believe  
Then I don't have to see what's really there

No, I'd rather pretend I'm something better than  
These broken parts  
Pretend I'm something other than  
This mess that I am  
'Cause then I don't have to look at it  
And no one gets to look at it  
No, no one can really see

'Cause I've learned to slam on the brake  
Before I even turn the key  
Before I make the mistake  
Before I lead with the worst of me  
I never let them see the worst of me

'Cause what if everyone saw?  
What if everyone knew?  
Would they like what they saw?  
Or would they hate it too?  
Will I just keep on running away from what's true?

All I ever do is run  
So how do I step in  
Step into the sun?  
Step into the sun

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Bessie Bobtail (Samuel Barber), Hayden Ponder, baritone

As down the road she wambled slow,  
She had not got a place to go:  
She had not got a place to fall  
And rest herself – no place at all!  
She stumped along, and wagged her pate;  
And said a thing was deperate.

Her face was screwed and wrinkled tight  
Just like a nut – and, left and right,  
On either side, she wagged her head

And said a thing; and what she said  
Was desperate as any word  
That ever yet a person heard.

I walked behind her for a while,  
And watched the people nudge and smile:  
But ever, as she went, she said,  
As left and right she swung her head,  
“O God He knows: And, God He knows!  
And, surely God Almighty knows!”

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Sleep (Ivor Gurney), Andy Stellar, baritone

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving  
Lock me in delight awhile;  
Let some pleasing dream beguile  
All my fancies; that from thence  
I may feel an influence  
All my powers of care bereaving

Though but a shadow, but a sliding  
Let me know some little joy!  
We that suffer long annoy  
Are contented with a thought  
Through an idle fancy wrought:  
O let my joys have some abiding!

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I'll Be Here (Adam Gwon) from *Ordinary Days*, Olivia Garza, soprano

We met, of all places,  
In front of Gristedes some freakishly cold winters day.  
I had on several unflattering layers of wool.  
He slipped on the ice with his grocery bags full,  
So I rescued some Fruit Loops he dropped by the curb  
And he made some remark that my smile was superb  
I thought that was sweet and I started to go and he said  
"Hey, whatcha doing tomorrow?"

'Because I'll be here  
At the corner of Bleaker and Mercer tomorrow at 7.  
If you want to meet up, I'll be waiting right here,  
And in case there are two fellas waiting for you, my name's John."

He waved and then he was gone.

Needless to say I went back there to meet him  
Mostly to see if he'd show, and there he was  
Out in the cold with his jacket pulled tight.  
He took me to dinner and kissed me goodnight.  
The next week we went to this terrible play.  
And the week after that drank hot chocolate all day.  
And suddenly, eight or nine months had flown by when he said  
"Hey, whatcha doing the rest of your life?"

'Because I'll be here  
Right beside you as long as you want me to be.  
There's no question.  
There is nothing I've wanted so much in my life.  
This might sound immature but I'm totally sure you're the one."  
And we had just begun.

We got hitched in September, our favorite month,  
With a rock band that played in this old synagogue.  
And we bought an apartment on West 17th street and talked about children and getting a dog.  
Our first anniversary came in a flash  
And we promised to take the day off.  
He had to stop into his office that morning,  
And so I went walking uptown to this bakery I know.  
When I heard on the street what I thought was a joke  
Till I noticed the sirens and saw all the smoke.  
So I'm running back home with this feeling of dread  
To the voicemail he left with the last words he said.

I'm sorry, I don't mean to ruin your evening by bringing up all of this stuff.  
You're probably wondering why I even called you tonight.  
Well today something happened that spooked me alright.  
I saw this storm cloud of papers fall down from the sky,  
And I thought of that day and I started to cry.  
When as sure as I breath I heard John clear as day saying  
"Hey, you're allowed to move on. It's okay.'

'Because I'll be here  
Even if you decide to get rid of my favorite sweater.  
Even if you go out on my birthday  
This year instead of staying at home letting all of life's moments pass by.  
You don't have to cry.'

'Because I'll be here  
When you start going back to the places we went to together.

When you take off my ring and you let yourself smile.  
When you meet some handsome and patient and true.  
When he says that he wants to be married to you.  
When you call him one night and he meets you downtown.  
When you finally answer him yes."

Yes.

Jason, I will marry you.

I will give you my heart.

It has taken so long, but I'm ready to start.

Right now John's whispering 'Congrats' in my ear cause I finally let myself tell you  
That I will be here.

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Lacrymosa (Howard Goodall) from *Eternal Light – A Requiem*, Jacob Brown, baritone

Lacrymosa, dies illa  
That day will be one of weeping

Do not stand at my grave and weep,  
I am not there, I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the softly falling snow.  
I am the gentle showers of rain,  
I am the fields of ripening grain.  
I am in the morning hush,  
I am in the graceful rush  
Of far-off birds in circling flight.  
I am the starshine of the night.

I am in every flower that blooms,  
I am in still and empty rooms.  
I am the child that yearns to sing,  
I am in each lovely thing.

Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there – I did not die.

### **Race/Racial Justice**

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It's Hard to Speak My Heart (Jason Robert Brown) from *Parade*, Andrew Walters, baritone

It's hard to speak my heart.  
I'm not a man who bares his soul.



I let the moment pass me by -  
I stay where I am in control.  
I hide behind my work,  
Safe and sure of what to say:  
I know I must seem hard,  
I know I must seem: cold.  
I never touched that girl –

You think I'd hurt a child, yes?  
I'd hardly seen her face before -  
I swear - I swore we'd barely met.  
These people try to scare you  
With things I've never said.  
I know it makes no sense.  
I swear I don't know why:  
You see me as I am - You can't believe I'd lie -  
You can't believe I'd do these deeds -  
A little man who's scared and blind,  
Too lost to find the words he needs.

I never touched that child -  
God - I never raised my hand!  
I stand before you now:  
Incredibly afraid.  
I pray you understand.

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Little Song (Robert Owens) from *Mortal Storm*, text by Langston Hughes, Isaak McGuire,  
baritone

Lonely people  
In the lonely night  
Grab a lonely dream  
And hold it tight

Lonely people  
In the lonely day  
Work to salt  
Their dream away

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Litany (John Musto) from *Shadow of the Blues*, text by Langston Hughes, John Dubois, tenor

Gather up  
In the arms of your pity  
The sick, the depraved,  
The desperate, the tired,  
All the scum  
Of our weary city.

Gather up  
In the arms of your pity.  
Gather up  
In the arms of your love—  
Those who expect  
No love from above.

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Drums of Tragedy (H. Leslie Adams) from *Night Songs*, text by Langston Hughes, Jesus De Hoyos Jr, tenor

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.  
Beat the drums of tragedy and death.  
And let the choir sing a stormy song  
To drown out the rattle of my dying breath.

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.  
And let the white violins whir thin and slow,  
But blow one blaring trumpet note of sun  
To go with me to the darkness where I go.

**LGBTQIA+**

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Love Who You Love (Stephen Flaherty) from *Man of No Importance*, Kayden Burns, baritone

I'm not one to lecture  
How could I dare  
Someone like me who's been mainly nowhere  
But in my experience be as it may  
You just have to love who you love  
You just have to love who you love

Your common sense tells ya best not begin  
But your fool heart cannot help plungin in  
And nothing and no one can stand in your way  
You just have to love who you love

You just have to love who you love

People can be hard sometimes  
And their words can cut so deep  
Choose the one you choose love  
and don't lose a moment's sleep  
Who can tell you who to want  
Who can tell you what you were destined to be  
Take it from me

There's no fault in lovin  
No call for shame  
Everyone's heart does exactly the same  
And once ya believe that, you'll learn how to say  
I love who I love who I love  
So just go and love who ya love

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O, Lord, Thou Has Searched Me (Carlisle Floyd) from *Pilgrimage*, Dr. Rodriguez, baritone

O Lord, Thou has searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising. Thou compasses my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue but lo, O Lord, Thou know'st altogether. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is too high. I cannot attain unto it.

Whither shall I go from the spirit, or wither shall I flee from thy presence? If I asked up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

