



The German Society of Pennsylvania

presents

Soprano Leslie Johnson

with composer/performers

Michael Djupstrom and Chuck Holde-



Sunday, February 18, 2018 at 3:00pm

The German Society of Pennsylvania
www.germansociety.org

611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Calendar of Events

February 2018

Sat. Feb. 24 7th Annual Bierfest, 2:00pm

March 2018

Sat. Mar. 3 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am

Sat. Mar. 10 Buchclub, 1:30pm

Wed. Mar. 14 Konversationsabend: Reconstruction of the Imperial Castle, 6:00pm

Fri. Mar. 16 Friday Film Fest: *Willkommen bei den Hartmanns*, 6:30pm

Tues. Mar. 27 Lecture by Fredericke Baer: the Hessians

April 2018

Sat. Apr. 7 Hamburger Abend, 7:00pm

Wed. Apr. 11 Konversationsabend: Historiography, 6:00pm

Sat. Apr. 14 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am

Wed. Apr. 18 Genealogy Information Session at the Delaware County Courthouse

Fri. Apr. 20 Friday Film Fest: *Winnetou Part 1: Eine neue Welt*, 6:30pm

Mon. Apr. 23 Lecture by Prof. Juergen Overhoff

May 2018

Wed. May 2 Lecture by Rich Wagner: Breweries of the Northern Liberties, 7:00pm

Sat. May 5 Women's Auxiliary Anniversary Luncheon, 12:00pm

...Save the date for our next “Wister and More!” concerts:

Sun. Mar. 18 The Casimir Trio
Program will include works by Mozart, Dvořák, Farago, and Beethoven

Sun. Apr. 22 The Delius Society presents Choral Arts Philadelphia
Delius's *Songs of Sunset* with an orchestral score by Lloyd Smith presented by
the Wister Quartet under the direction of Matthew Glandorf

Sun. May 20 Academy of Vocal Arts
Current AVA students will present Broadway musicals and German operettas
from their vast repertoire of songs.

All of our events are open to the public.

We welcome members and non-members alike.

Most events require tickets. Please call or email the office to inquire about purchasing:

215.627.2332 info@germansociety.org

PROGRAM

Leslie Johnson, soprano

Michael Djupstrom, pianist and composer

Chuck Holdeman, bassoonist and composer

Three Teasdale Songs (2010) Michael Djupstrom (b. 1980)
I would live in your love
Absence
Spring Rain

Sejdefu majka buđase (2007) Michael Djupstrom
"Sejdefu's mother wakes her" - premiere performance for bassoon and piano

Six Songs in German, Op. 48 Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)
Gruss
Dereinst, Gedanke mein
Lauf der Welt
Die verschwiegene Nachtigall
Zur Rosenzeit
Ein Traum

- Intermission -

Bagatelle (2002) Chuck Holdeman (b. 1946)
vocalise with bassoon and piano

Three Merwin Songs (2009-2016) Chuck Holdeman
premiere performance
Young Man Picking Flowers
Elegy for a Walnut Tree
A Breeze at Noon

from "Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten" BWV 202 J. S. Bach (1685-1750)
recitative and aria "Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden"
recitative and aria "Sich üben im Lieben"

There will be one 15-minute intermission. We offer refreshments from our bar during that time. Your ticket to our concert also invites you to a complimentary reception with the artists in the

Program Notes

Michael Djupstrom has written about his compositions:

These three songs were written to poems by Sara Teasdale, an American poet active in the early part of the 20th century. The first, *I would live in your love*, was originally commissioned separately by the Lotte Lehmann Foundation in 2006; the others followed when soprano Kimberly Walton asked me to write a few more songs to create a small Teasdale set. Seen as a group, the poems form a kind of loose narrative describing various stages of a love affair: *I would live in your love* depicts the powerful rush of emotion that accompanies the beginnings of a romance; *Absence* speaks of a great separation between lovers; and in *Spring Rain*, the narrator looks back upon life with the wisdom of experience.

Sejdefu majka buđaše: This work is a free setting of a traditional *sevdalinka* folk song from the Balkan region. In creating this instrumental version of a vocal work, I tried to preserve the spirit of the original lyrics, which deal with universal themes of love and loss. These are the traditional themes of *sevdalinka* songs, a genre which originated through contact with the Turks, and fuses elements of European, Middle Eastern, and Sephardic music. The original song's structure was preserved in making this transcription, but I treated the harmony and the melodic line more freely. Here are the words of the folksong on which the composition is based:

Sejdefu majka buđaše:
Ustani, kćeri moja Sejdefo!

Sejdefu's mother wakes her:
Rise, my daughter Sejdefa!

Zar misliš, majko, da ja spim!
Ja ti se mlada s dušom dijelim.

Do you think, mother, that I'm asleep?
I'm parting with my soul.

Zovi mi, majko, komšije,
I prvo moje gledanje.

Call the neighbors, mother
And my first love.

Što smo se, majko, gledali,
U šajku, lađu na more.

The one whose eyes met mine
On the boat out at sea.

The great Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg had composed to German texts before, his Op. 4 set, and in 1884 he returned to German poetry, composing the first two of the Op. 48 set. The other four were written in the same week in August 1889, and the set was published the same year. They were dedicated to a Swedish Wagnerian soprano, Ellen Nordgren Gulbranson.

Chuck Holdeman's *Bagatelle* was composed in 2002, based on a chord progression he discovered standing by the piano, as he waited to be picked up by a driver who was running late. The four chords, performed one note at a time, are repeated throughout the work, while the bassoon and then the wordless voice spin varied melodies and duets above them. *Bagatelle* is dedicated to soprano Lynn Long, a member of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, who sang its first performance, also playing the piano part.

Holdeman's new *Three Merwin Songs* are not completely new as the first was composed in 2009. Eventually *Young Man Picking Flowers* acquired a partner, *A Breeze at Noon*, dedicated to the German Society of Pennsylvania, and then finally in 2016 a third song *Elegy for a Walnut Tree*, dedicated to Leslie Johnson, was composed to make it a set. The composer had previously written a set of eight songs based on poetry by W. S. Merwin, the celebrated American poet, a past U.S. Poet Laureate and winner of two Pulitzers and a National Book Award. Now 90, Merwin lives in Hawaii where he turned a former pineapple plantation into a nature preserve. The two outer songs are based on this milieu, while the middle song, the elegy, looks back to an icon of the poet's youth.

J.S. Bach may have written his exuberant Wedding Cantata, BWV 202 in 1714 for nuptials at the Weimar court, or possibly for his own wedding, to Anna Magdalena, in Cöthen in 1721- his bride was a soprano. To perform the entire work, in nine parts, requires and oboe and a string section. For today's performance the musicians have chosen two arias, each with a recitativo introduction. For the first the obbligato may have been intended for the 'cello, but has often been played by its wind instrument colleague of the continuo section, the bassoon. For the concluding aria, the bassoon fills in for its double reed relative, the oboe, taking the notes down an octave.

Song Texts and Translations

Three Teasdale Songs

poems by Sara Teasdale

I. I would live in your love

I would live in your love as the sea-grasses live in the sea,
Borne up by each wave as it passes, drawn down by each wave that recedes;
I would empty my soul of the dreams that have gathered in me,
I would beat with your heart as it beats, I would follow your soul as it leads.

II. Absence

I cannot sleep, the night is hot and empty,
My thoughts leave nothing lovely in my heart,
You love me, and I love you, life is passing,
We are apart.

The August moonlight vibrates with the voices
Of insects and their passions frail and shrill—
Oh from what whips, oh from what secret scourgings
All of earth's children bow before her will.

III. Spring Rain

I thought I had forgotten,
But it all came back again
To-night with the first spring thunder
In a rush of rain.

I remembered a darkened doorway
Where we stood while the storm swept by,
Thunder gripping the earth
And lightning scrawled on the sky.

Your eyes said more to me that night
Than your lips would ever say....

I thought I had forgotten,
But it all came back again
To-night with the first spring thunder
In a rush of rain.

The passing motor buses swayed,
For the street was a river of rain,
Lashed into little golden waves
In the lamp light's stain.
With the wild spring rain and thunder
My heart was wild and gay;

Gruß (Greeting)

Text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

Leise zieht durch mein Gemüt
Liebliches Geläute,
Klinge, kleines Frühlingslied,
Kling hinaus ins Weite.
Kling hinaus bis an das Haus,
Wo die Veilchen sprießen,
Wenn du eine Rose schaust,
Sag, ich laß sie grüßen.

Softly flow through my soul,
sweet sounds of love,
sing, little spring song,
peal forth into the vast distance.
Flow toward that house,
where the little violets bloom,
when you see a rose,
give her my greetings.

Dereinst, Gedanke mein (One day, O my Soul)

Text: Emanuel von Geibel (1815-1884)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

Dereinst, Gedanke mein,
Wirst ruhig sein.
Läßt Liebesgluth
Dich still nicht werden,
In kühler Erden,
Da schläfst du gut,
Dort ohne Lieb' und ohne Pein
Wirst ruhig sein.

One day, o my Soul,
you will find rest.
From love's fires
that give you no peace,
in the cool earth
you will sleep soundly,
there without love and without pain
you will find rest.

Was du im Leben
Nicht hast gefunden,
Wenn es entschwunden,
Wird's dir gegeben,
Dann ohne Wunden
Und ohne Pein
Wirst ruhig sein.

What you have not
found in life,
when life is ended
will be yours.
Then without wounds
and without pain
you will find rest.

Lauf der Welt (The Way of the World)

Text: Johann Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

An jedem Abend geh' ich aus
Hinauf den Wiesensteg.
Sie schaut aus ihrem Gartenhaus,
Es stehet hart am Weg.

Every evening I go out,
and meander through the fields.
She watches from her garden house
that lies right along the path.

Wir haben uns noch nie bestellt,
Es ist nur so der Lauf der Welt.

We have never yet planned this,
it's just the way of the world.

Ich weiß nicht, wie es so geschah,
Seit lange küsst' ich sie,
Ich bitte nicht, sie sagt nicht: ja!
Doch sagt sie: nein! auch nie.
Wenn Lippe gern auf Lippe ruht,
Wir hindern's nicht, uns dünkt es gut.

I don't know how it happened,
that I first kissed her,
I did not ask, she did not say: yes,
but she also never said: no.
When lips willingly meet,
we do not prevent them, we let them be.

Das Lüftchen mit der Rose spielt,
Es fragt nicht: hast mich lieb?
Das Röschen sich am Taue kühlt,
Es sagt nicht lange: gib!
Ich liebe sie, sie liebet mich,
Doch keines sagt: ich liebe dich!

The breeze plays with the rose,
it does not ask: do you love me?
The little rose cooling herself with dew
does not say, may I?
I love her, she loves me,
but neither says: I love you!

Die Verschwiegene Nachtigall (The Silent Nightingale)

Text: Walther von der Vogelweide (1170-1230)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

Unter den Linden,
an der Haide,
wo ich mit meinem Trauten saß,
da mögt ihr finden,
wie wir beide
die Blumen brachen und das Gras.
Vor dem Wald mit süßem Schall,
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
sang im Thal die Nachtigall.

Under the linden tree,
in the meadow,
where I sat with my beloved,
there may you find
how we both
crushed the flowers and the grass.
By the woods with sweet sound
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
sang in the vale the nightingale.

Ich kam gegangen
zu der Aue,
mein Liebster kam vor mir dahin.
Ich ward empfangen
als hehre Fraue,
daß ich noch immer selig bin.
Ob er mir auch Küsse bot?
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
Seht, wie ist mein Mund so rot!

I came on the way
to the meadow,
my beloved came to meet me.
I was welcomed
like a noble woman.
Am I still blessed
if he has also given me kisses?
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
See, how my lips are so red!

Wie ich da ruhte,
wüßt' es einer,
behüte Gott, ich schämte mich.
Wie mich der Gute
herzte, keiner
erfahre das als er und ich –
und ein kleines Vögelein,
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
das wird wohl verschwiegen sein.

If anyone knew,
how I lay there
God forbend, I should be ashamed.
How the good man embraced me,
no one must know
except him and me;
and a little bird,
Tandaradei!
Tandaradei!
that will forever silent be!

Zur Rosenzeit (In Time of Roses)

Text: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

Ihr verblühet, süße Rosen,
Meine Liebe trug euch nicht;
Blühtet, ach! dem Hoffnungslosen,
Dem der Gram die Seele bricht!

You faded, sweet roses,
when my love forsook you;
Ah, bloom! for the desperate one
whose soul now breaks with woe!

Jener Tage denk' ich trauernd,
Als ich, Engel, an dir hing,
Auf das erste Knöspchen lauernd
Früh zu meinem Garten ging;

Every day I think sadly,
of when I, my angel, clung to you,
awaiting the first buds of spring,
I went early into my garden;

Alle Blüten, alle Früchte
Noch zu deinen Füßen trug
Und vor deinem Angesichte
Hoffnung in dem Herzen schlug.

all the flowers, all the fruit
I laid then at your feet,
and drank from your countenance
the hope that radiated into my heart.

Ihr verblühet, süße Rosen,
Meine Liebe trug euch nicht;
Blühtet, ach! dem Hoffnungslosen,
Dem der Gram die Seele bricht!

You faded, sweet roses,
when my love forsook you;
Ah, bloom! for the desperate one
whose soul now breaks with woe!

Ein Traum (A Dream)

Text: Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt (1819-1893)

Translation: Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

Mir träumte einst ein schöner Traum:
Mich liebte eine blonde Maid;
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

Die Knospe sprang, der Waldbach schwoll,
Fern aus dem Dorfe scholl Geläut –
Wir waren ganzer Wonne voll,
Versunken ganz in Seligkeit.

Und schöner noch als einst der Traum
Begab es sich in Wirklichkeit –
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

Der Waldbach schwoll, die Knospe sprang,
Geläut erscholl vom Dorfe her –
Ich hielt dich fest, ich hielt dich lang
Und lasse dich nun nimmermehr!

O frühlingsgrüner Waldesraum!
Du lebst in mir durch alle Zeit –
Dort ward die Wirklichkeit zum Traum,
Dort ward der Traum zur Wirklichkeit!
Once I dreamed a lovely dream:

a blond maiden loved me,
it was in the vast green woods,
it was in the warm springtime:

The buds bloomed, the forest brook swelled,
from the distant village pealed the bells,
we were filled with wonder,
and overcome with bliss.

But sweeter still did once I dream,
a dream that then came true:
it was in the vast green woods,
it was in the warm springtime;

the forest brook swelled, the buds sprang into
bloom,
bells pealed from the village:
I held you close, I held you long
and never, never shall I let you go!

Oh, woods green with spring,
you live in me through all of time!
There reality became the dream,
there the dream became reality!



Three Merwin Songs
poems by W. S. Merwin

YOUNG MAN PICKING FLOWERS

All at once he is no longer
young with his handful of flowers
in the bright morning their fragrance
rising from them as though they were
still on the stalk where they opened
only this morning to the light
in which somewhere unseen the thrush
goes on singing its perfect song
into the day of the flowers
and while he stands there holding them
the cool dew runs from them onto
his hand at this hour of their lives
it is the hand of a young man
who found them only this morning

ELEGY FOR A WALNUT TREE

Old friend now there is no one alive
who remembers when you were young
it was high summer when I first saw you
in the blaze of day most of my life ago
with the dry grass whispering in your shade
and already you had lived through wars
and echoes of wars around your silence
through days of parting and seasons of absence
with the house emptying as the years went their way
until it was home to bats and swallows
and still when spring climbed toward summer
you opened once more the curled sleeping fingers
of newborn leaves as though nothing had happened
you and the seasons spoke the same language
and all these years I have looked through your limbs
to the river below and the roofs and the night
and you were the way I saw the world

A BREEZE AT NOON

As I stand at the graves it comes
becoming the moment we have
together that single breath
from beyond Andromeda
from a time before time
it is here at home where I cherish
the flying days and it stirs
the dry leaves of the breadfruit tree
and drops a dead Pinanga frond
like an arrow at my feet
and I look up into the green
cluster of stems and gold strings
beaded with bloodred seeds
each of them holding tomorrow
and when I look
the breeze has gone



"Elegy for a Walnut Tree" from THE MOON BEFORE MORNING by W. S. Merwin.
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"Young Man Picking Flowers" by W. S. Merwin, originally published in The New Yorker.
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"A Breeze at Noon," by W. S. Merwin, originally published in The New Yorker.
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**Johann Sebastian Bach: from “Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten,” Wedding Cantata,
BWV 202**

Text: Anon

Translation: Francis Browne

Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden

Recitative

Die Welt wird wieder neu
Auf Bergen und in Gründen
Will sich die Anmut doppelt schön verbinden
Der Tag is von der Kälte frei.

Aria

Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden
Durch die neugeborene Welt.
Ja, weil sie ihm wohlgefällt,
Will er selbst ein Buhler werden.

Sich üben im Lieben

Recitative

Und dieses ist das Glücke,
Dass durch ein hohes Gunstgeschicke
Zwei Seelen einen Schmuck erlangt,
An dem viel Heil und Segen prangt.

Aria

Sich üben im Lieben,
In Scherzen sich herzen
Ist besser als Florens vergängliche Lust.
Hier quellen die Wellen,
Hier lachen und wachen
Die siegenden Palmen auf Lippen und
Brust.

Phoebus hurries with swift horses

The world becomes new again
On hills and in valleys
Beauty will unite and be doubly fair,
The day is free from cold.

Phoebus hurries with swift horses
Through the newborn world,
Yes, since this delights him so much,
He himself wants to become a lover.

To become adept in love

And this is good fortune,
When through a lofty gift of fate
Two sould obtain one jewel,
Which is resplendent with health and blessing.

To become adept in love,
To jest and caress
Is better than Flora’s passing pleasure.
Here the waves flow,
Here laugh and watch
The palms of victory on lips and breast.

About the Artists



With repertoire spanning the Renaissance to the 21st century, soprano **Leslie Johnson** has been hailed as “warm and commanding” and “richly expressive” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*), with “a voice to thrill and the stage command of a professional actor” (*Albany Times-Union*). Ms. Johnson has been featured as soloist with the Beijing National Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the New Haven Symphony, and the Springfield (MA) Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared extensively in the region as a featured soloist with the Bach Festival of Philadelphia, Tempesta di Mare, Piffaro: The Renaissance Band, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Old City Music, Philadelphia Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Valley Vivaldi, the Gabriel Chamber Ensemble, and others. She appears regularly as soloist with The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, with whom she has performed more than 20 Bach cantatas and other works, including her portrayal of Maria Barbara Bach in Chuck Holdeman's opera *Young Meister Bach*, presented at the German Society in 2014. Also an ensemble singer, she has sung with The Crossing, Choral Arts Philadelphia, and The Philadelphia Singers, and as a member of the Early Music quartet The Laughing Bird. With a diverse vocal career that has also encompassed art song and opera, she has sung with Philadelphia's Lyric Fest, appeared at the Octobre en Normandie Festival in Rouen, France, the New York Festival of Song, Chicago's Ravinia Festival, and the Newport Music Festival, and has performed leading roles with the Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, Portland Opera, Wolf Trap Opera Company, Lake George Opera Festival, Glimmerglass Opera, and others.



The work of composer and pianist **Michael Djupstrom** has been honored with first prizes in the international composition competitions of the UK's Delius Society, the American Viola Society, the Chinese Fine Arts Society, and has been further recognized through awards and grants from institutions such as the American Academy of Arts and Letters (Charles Ives Fellowship, Charles Ives Scholarship), Pew Center for Arts & Heritage (Pew Fellowship), New Music USA, S&R Foundation (Grand Prize, Washington Awards), Meet the Composer, the American Composers Forum, the Académie musicale de Villecroze, and the Sigurd and Jarmila Rislov Foundation, among many others. Recent commissions have come from the Philadelphia Orchestra Association, the Na-

tional Cherry Blossom Festival, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Tanglewood Music Center, the New York Youth Symphony Chamber Music Program, Music From Angel Fire, the Curtis Institute of Music, the Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus, International Opera Theater, the Lyra Society, the Lotte Lehmann Foundation, and the Cavatina Duo, among others. As a pianist, Djupstrom has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia-based new music ensemble Relâche. He has recorded for American Public Media's "Performance Today," Radio Television Hong Kong's Radio 4, and the Equilibrium, American Modern, and Meyer Media labels. An active and committed educator, Djupstrom teaches the composition seminar and is Coordinator of the composition department at the Curtis Institute of Music. Djupstrom received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and also holds an Artist Diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he was a student of Jennifer Higdon and Richard Danielpour.

Chuck Holdeman is a native of the musical town of Oberlin, Ohio; he came to Philadelphia after high school and graduated from Curtis in 1968, a student of Sol Schoenbach. He has performed for many organizations over the years, including a resident wind quintet at University of Delaware in the 70's, the Delaware Symphony from which he retired in 2009, and currently Philadelphia's new music group Relâche, and the Bach Festival of Bethlehem where he began playing in 1969. Compositional highlights include the oboe concerto he wrote for Richard Woodhams in 2006, and eight songs, settings of poems by W. S. Merwin who attended the premiere in Texas in 2008. Relâche gave the second performance of his *Mural Music* on January 14, 2018. Chuck is now at work on settings of 8 poems by Jeffrey Harrison, as well as a new opera for young audiences, *Yorgie Yorgensen, the Pop Cycle, and the Sausage Bassoon*.



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We also wish to acknowledge with thanks the generous support received from
The Philadelphia Cultural Fund for this season of our music program.

