

Upcoming Music Conservatory Events

All Music Conservatory events are free and open to the public and, unless otherwise noted, take place in Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University's award-winning architectural landmark.

CCPA Ornette Coleman and Brazilian Combos

Monday, November 1, 7:30 p.m. | Jazz Showcase (806 S. Plymouth Ct.)
Paul Wertico and Neal Alger, directors. Free performance with seating on a first-come, first-served basis.

Immigrant Mass by Carlos Jaquez Gonzalez (MM '21)

Thursday, November 4, 7:30 p.m. | Ganz Hall
Live world premiere performance conducted by Cheryl Frazee-Hill with CCPA student musicians presented in partnership with Roosevelt University's American Dream Reconsidered Conference.

CCPA Puentes Latin Jazz Ensemble

Monday, November 8, 7:30 p.m. | Jazz Showcase (806 S. Plymouth Ct.)
Alejandro Cortes, director. Free performance with seating on a first-come, first-served basis.

Registration is now required to attend performances and events. To be added to the guest list for an upcoming event, please visit www.roosevelt.edu/ccpa/events or call 312-341-2352.

Your Gift to CCPA Makes an Important Difference

Each year, the generosity of CCPA audience members and friends helps our students meet and exceed their artistic and educational goals. Your tax-deductible gift does many things—including providing students with much-needed scholarship support and helping CCPA programs such as this one!

We are grateful for every gift we receive. There are three easy ways to make a donation: 1) Use the donor envelope provided at this event;

- 2) Go online to our secure site at roosevelt.edu/ccpagiving; or
- 3) Use the donation box in the lobby at this event.

Roosevelt University is positioned on the traditional, unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, and Fox also called this area home. Today Chicago is home to one of the largest urban Indigenous communities in the United States. With this land acknowledgement, the Roosevelt University community honors, with gratitude, this land and the Indigenous people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. We recognize the Indigenous people who laid the foundation for the city we inhabit, as well as the diverse Indigenous nations that reside here today. We vow to do our part to right the historic wrongs of colonization, to support Indigenous communities' struggles for self-determination, and to be better stewards of the land that we inhabit.



ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO COLLEGE
OF PERFORMING ARTS

The Music Conservatory 2021–2022 Season

OPERA FEST XIV

2–6 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday,
October 30 & 31, 2021

Murray-Green Library,
10th Floor

Rudolph Ganz Memorial Hall,
7th Floor

430 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605

Welcome Note

Murray-Green Library (10th Floor)

The Promise of Living

(from *The Tender Land*)

Music by Aaron Copland

Libretto by Horace Everett

Welcome to the 14th Annual OperaFest! As I have been a part of all of them, I can safely say that it is hard to believe that the fourteenth is upon us. I have rejoiced in welcoming not only many new students to the graduate program in voice to Roosevelt University, but also, new colleagues: music director Laurann Gilley, and stage directors Cathy Dunn, Aaron Hunt and Zachary Nelson. It has been a pleasure to work with these talented and generous people.

In opera, we tell stories of all kinds. The stories and music today may have some quirks to them, but each has a universal message—even *Susanna's Secret!* For some of our students, this is their first time being in an opera; for some others, it is the first time singing works by living composers. For all, the purpose of OperaFest is educational: to give students a chance to embrace the singing actor within each of them, singing in our own language, and creating characters without relying on a gigantic set and lavish costumes.

When we hear “The Promise of Living” today, we can all “give thanks” that live performance is back, though masked, and that our singers can explore this fantastic art form in front of friends and family. Thank you for attending OperaFest this year, and please enjoy the stories we are telling.

Dana Brown

Associate Professor, Opera and Vocal Coaching
Chicago College of Performing Arts
Roosevelt University

Director.....Zachary Nelson
Music Director Laurann Gilley
Pianist Matthew Lorenz
Assistant Director.....Courtney Houston

MartinMichael Kramer, Coleman Dziedzic, David Kronenberg
LaurieKaleigh Watkins, Laura Strickland
Ma..... Danlei Zhao
Grandpa.....Timothy Krueger
Top..... Max Wolf

Ensemble

Anthony Jones, Emily Thompson, Emily Wright, Anastasia Antropova,
Victoria Zamora, Camden McLean, Jenna Weitman, Lillian Vellom,
Courtney Houston, Tanya Landau, Hannah Zizza, Alexis Neal,
(Sol) Adam Lehman, Erica Moll, Ariana Umbriac, Ellen Chamblee,
Janay Delisma, Katherine Naffie

Aaron's Copland's *The Tender Land* is an opera in three acts that is usually set in the mid-20th century. The opera takes place on a midwestern farm, right around the time of high school graduation and spring harvest. Both events would be cause for a large celebration that would bring the community together. The scene that we are presenting today is the finale of act one: “The Promise of Living.” This moment is traditionally a quintet, made up of the five main characters, as they are preparing a feast to celebrate the rewards of a good spring harvest and the accomplishment of their daughter graduating high school.

Well, today's performance is not exactly that! Instead of five performers, we have split up the parts among the 27 performers. We will be leaving the farm and shifting the scene towards modern day. Though we will not be exploring the joys of harvest and graduation, we will still be witnessing the coming together of a community in celebration. “The promise of growing/With faith and with knowing/Is born of our sharing/Our love with our neighbor,” perfectly encapsulates the main theme of this piece. Love is what brings a community together.

Program note by Zachary Nelson

Murray-Green Library (10th Floor)
5 p.m.

The George Washington Suite: A Patriotic Ghost Story in One Scene

Music by Daron Hagen

Libretto by Rob Handel

Director Cathy Dunn
Music Director Dana Brown
Pianist Matthew Lorenz
Assistant Directors Lillian Vellom, Victoria Zamora

Christina Janay Delisma
Grace Ellen Chamblee
George Washington Anthony Jones
Miss Darlington Ariana Umbriac
Bellhop Katherine Naffie

Spirits 1 Courtney Houston, Camden McLean, Erica Moll,
Laura Strickland, Lillian Vellom, Jenna Weitman, Tanya Landau

Spirits 2 Emily Thompson, Coleman Dziedzic, David Kronenberg,
Alexis Neal, Victoria Zamora, Emily Wright, Hannah Zizza

Spirits 3 (Sol) Adam Lehman, Anastasia Antropova, Timothy Krueger,
Danlei Zhao, Kaleigh Watkins, Michael Kramer

It's 1976 and the Bicentennial of the United States is being celebrated. Two American history students are "on a pilgrimage...to stay in every room where we believe George Washington slept." Their "list" has brought them to this hotel near the site of the general's 1776 crossing of the Delaware. Christina and Grace are ushered into the suite by the bellhop, but the students can't see that the suite is already occupied by a collection of ghostly spirits who likewise admire Washington.

The women fall asleep and the ghosts gather around Emanuel Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware." The women are startled awake by the ghosts' murmurs and begin to scream, becoming even more frightened upon hearing knocks on the door. After being quieted by Miss Darlington, the hotel manager, the shocked and embarrassed women manage to fall back asleep.

A distant fife is heard and the ghost of Washington appears. The girls wake up and are able to see him! They seize the opportunity to question him, but he is frustrated by these trivial questions, when more importantly, he sacrificed so much to repeatedly answer the call of his country. In awe, the ladies tell him why they came, which makes him smile. With a gesture, he causes them to drift back to sleep. The ghostly chorus accompanies Washington's closing words: "The truth is that George Washington may have stopped for the night...But George Washington, the Father of his country, never slept."

Program note by Cathy Dunn

Thank you to Oak Park's Frame Warehouse for their complimentary services for this production!

Schedule of Events

The schedule is the same on both Saturday and Sunday.

Murray-Green Library (10th Floor)

2 p.m.

Bertha

Music by Ned Rorem

Libretto by Kenneth Koch

Ganz Hall (7th Floor)

3 p.m.

Broken Pieces

(from *New York Stories*)

Music by Daron Hagen

Libretto by Barbara Grecki and Daron Hagen

3:30 p.m.

The Birth Project

Music by Libby Larsen

Text by various authors

4 p.m.

Susanna's Secret

Music by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari

Original libretto by Enrico Golisciani

English version by Claude Aveling

Murray-Green Library (10th Floor)

5 p.m.

The George Washington Suite

Music by Daron Hagen

Libretto by Rob Handel

The Promise of Living

(from *The Tender Land*)

Music by Aaron Copland

Libretto by Horace Everett

Murray-Green Library (10th Floor)
2 p.m.

Bertha

Music by Ned Rorem
Libretto by Kenneth Koch

Director Aaron Hunt
Music Director Laurann Gilley
Pianist Piotr Nowak
Assistant Directors Laura Strickland, Erica Moll

Bertha..... Katherine Naffie
Noble Laura Strickland
Counselor..... Timothy Krueger
Officer David Kronenberg
Old Man Max Wolf
1st Barbarian Camden McLean
2nd Barbarian..... Victoria Zamora
Teacher Anastasia Antropova
Messenger..... Emily Thompson
1st Scotchman Emily Wright
2nd Scotchman Danlei Zhao
3rd Scotchman..... Max Wolf
Common Norwegian Soldier Alexis Neal
Girl Kaleigh Watkins
Man (lover)..... Michael Kramer
Norwegian Citizen Tayna Landau
Second Norwegian Citizen..... (Sol) Adam Lehman
Barbarian Chieftain Coleman Dziedzic

American composer Ned Rorem set librettist Kenneth Koch's *Bertha* to music in answer to a request from the Metropolitan Opera for a children's opera, but Koch's book wasn't what they had in mind, and the piece was refused. *Bertha* has yet to receive a mounting that pleased the critics. For the piece to succeed, the director must decide what it means and choose a point-of-view. Roosevelt's graduate students will spin you a story about war, (with its inherently diminishing returns), the lunacy of despotism, and the gullibility of the Greek chorus.

Queen Bertha's Norway is beset by Barbarians, and although it seems impossible, she leads her people to victory. When The Teacher points out the barbaric means necessary to win a war, Bertha kills the teacher and outlaws higher education. With the country at peace, Bertha declares war on and annexes Scotland. The Counselor objects to war and is killed by Bertha, who suspends the counsel altogether. Two lovers meet in secret, against Bertha's law. Bertha kills them. Bertha contemplates her future, and the loss of power and influence that accompanies age; she decides to give Norway to the Barbarians so that she can conquer them again.

Program note by Aaron Hunt

Ganz Hall (7th Floor)
4 p.m.

Susanna's Secret

Music by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari
Original libretto by Enrico Golisciani
English version by Claude Aveling

Director Aaron Hunt
Music Director Dana Brown
Pianist Dana Brown
Assistant Director Emily Wright

Susanna Corinne Costell
Gil Max Wolf
Sante David Kronenberg

First given in 1909, *Il segreto di Susanna* (*Susanna's Secret*) is a one act intermezzo by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari with a libretto by Enrico Golisciani. This form is a light entertainment that might have been used between acts of an opera of a more serious nature, to lighten the mood. We have used *commedia dell'arte* characterizations for the three players, namely *Columbina* for Susanna, *Il Capitano* for Gil (her husband), and *Harlequin* for Sante (their servant), while updating the story for today's audience by taking the original "villain" of the piece—"The Cigarette"—and exchanging it for "The Doobie."

Gil thinks he has seen Susanna in the town, in her pink hat and grey cloak, and he has, for she was on her way to procure a secret package which she can only keep secret if she insists that he is mistaken. Gil notices their home smells of a certain substance and jumps to the conclusion that his wife has taken a lover, someone who indulges in wacky tobacky. In the expected marital skirmishes that follow, Gil accuses, Susanna demurs, Gil rales, Susanna sighs, and Sante is onboard for it all, everyone's sounding board and dealer.

Program note by Aaron Hunt

Ganz Hall (7th Floor)
3 p.m.

Broken Pieces
(from *New York Stories*)
Music by Daron Hagen
Libretto by Barbara Grecki and Daron Hagen

Director Cathy Dunn
Music Director Laurann Gilley
Pianist Robert Bosworth
Assistant Director Kaleigh Watkins

Pamela Ariana Umbriac
Antonio Anthony Jones

Pamela, a single woman living in an Upper West Side studio apartment, is singing in the shower. The doorbell rings. It is Antonio, the Italian tileman, who has come to fix tiles in the shower, “at 6 A.M.!” Flustered, yet elated, she throws on her bathrobe and answers the door. Antonio enters with his supplies and a boom box. He sings along to Frank Sinatra while he works. Pamela introduces her cat, Houdini, “who lives to escape,” and makes small talk about Sinatra’s recent death. Antonio, oblivious to Pamela, suddenly blurts out, “She gave back my ring.” He begins to sob. Pamela offers him a cup of coffee, but takes it away fearing “the caffeine will make you shake. Crooked tiles...not good!” She then offers to make him “a goat cheese omelette with sun dried tomatoes,” but he doesn’t like goat cheese. She is about to go buy Parmesan, but stops herself when she realizes “the omelette is a metaphor for how my life becomes an ingredient that gets lost in eggs, or, rather, a lover’s life.” Antonio jabs, “I understand why you live alone with a cat!”

Pamela defends her choices, telling Antonio she wants unconditional love. Then she asks why he is wearing a suit. Antonio explains that the day before, he went to his fiancé’s office with expensive flowers, hoping she would forgive him. Instead, he saw “darkness in her eyes” and she threw the flowers out. Dazed, he aimlessly wandered the streets until coming to work at Pamela’s.

Pamela angers Antonio when she asks if he has ever actually fixed a bathroom, then she breaks down, crying, “I just can’t see it in broken pieces. It was so beautiful in here.” She recounts blissful moments with her fiancé, who like Antonio, had been “unfaithful.” Antonio consoles Pamela and they dance slowly, until the spell is suddenly broken—by Antonio. Pamela hurriedly gets ready for work and leaves. Time passes. Antonio finishes and leaves. Pamela returns home and discovers two surprises in her shower.

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Program note by Cathy Dunn

Ganz Hall (7th Floor)
3:30 p.m.

The Birth Project

Music by Libby Larsen

Texts by A. E. Stallings, Cheryl Strayed, Lauren Groff, Gina Zucker, Patricia Kirkpatrick, Heidi Pitlor, and Libby Larsen

Director Aaron Hunt
Music Director Dana Brown
Pianist Hyun A Kim
Assistant Director Hannah Zizza

Sopranos Ellen Chamblee, Janay Delisma

Libby Larson’s *The Birth Project* contains the first art song exploring pregnancy and childbirth in first person narrative. Larsen and other female colleagues began a conversation around the dearth of this literature at a conference in 2013. The resultant song cycle (eight of which are heard in this version) uses the poetry of Phoebe Damrosch, Lauren Groff, Patricia Kirkpatrick, Heidi Pitlor, A.E. Stallings, Cheryl Strayed, Akiko Yosano, and Gina Zucker to illuminate the birth experience from annunciation to conclusion.

This staged storytelling uses the following songs: “The Song Rehearsal,” “Pregnant,” “Ultrasound,” “Due Date,” “Mia,” “Blood Moon,” “From the Start,” and “I did it!” with two friends sharing beloved war tales oft told along with new revelations, first with each other over cocktails, and then with all of us as they draw back the curtains on this communal yet singular experience.

Program note by Aaron Hunt

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