

Eric Ferring

# We have tomorrow

Madeline Slettedahl

Quatuor Agate

DE 3593



# We have tomorrow

Eric Ferring, tenor

## **SAMUEL BARBER**

*Mélodies passagères*: Puisque tout passe • Un cygne  
• Tombeau dans un parc • Le clocher chante • Départ

## **FLORENCE PRICE**

Hold Fast to Dreams • We have tomorrow

## **JOHANNES BRAHMS**

*Zwei Gesänge*: Gestillte Sehnsucht • Geistliches Wiegenlied

## **AMY BEACH**

Ecstasy, Op. 19 • Chanson d'amour, Op. 21 • Two Songs, Op. 100: A mirage • Stella viatoris

## **ARTHUR SHEPHERD**

*Triptych for High Voice and String Quartet*: He it is • The day is no more • Light, my light

## **GABRIEL FAURÉ**

*La bonne chanson*: Une sainte en son auréole • Puisque l'aube grandit • La lune blanche • J'allais par des chemins perfides • J'ai presque peur, en vérité • Avant que tu ne t'en ailles • Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été • N'est-ce pas? • L'hiver a cessé

**Madeline Slettedahl**, piano • **Quatuor Agate**

Total playing time: 77:02

# We have tomorrow

Eric Ferring, tenor

Madeline Slettedahl, piano • Quatuor Agate

**SAMUEL BARBER**, *Mémoires passagères*

1. Puisque tout passe (1:41)
2. Un cygne (2:40)
3. Tombeau dans un parc (1:55)
4. Le clocher chante (1:13)
5. Départ (1:47)

*Eric Ferring, Madeline Slettedahl*

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6. Hold Fast to Dreams (1:50)
7. We have tomorrow (1:15)

*Eric Ferring, Madeline Slettedahl*

**JOHANNES BRAHMS**, *Zwei Gesänge*

8. Gestillte Sehnsucht (6:26)
9. Geistliches Wiegenlied (5:28)

*Ferring, Slettedahl & Raphaël Pagnon*

**AMY BEACH**

10. Ecstasy, Op. 19 (2:31)
11. Chanson d'amour, Op. 21 (5:03)

*Ferring, Slettedahl & Simon Iachemet*

12-13. Two Songs, Op. 100

A mirage (2:53)

Stella viatoris (3:23)

*Ferring, Slettedahl, Thomas Descamps  
& Simon Iachemet*

**ARTHUR SHEPHERD**, *Triptych for High  
Voice and String Quartet*

14. He it is (6:20)

15. The day is no more (4:32)

16. Light, my light (4:07)

*Ferring & Quatuor Agate*

**GABRIEL FAURÉ**, *La bonne chanson*

17. Une sainte en son auréole (2:16)

18. Puisque l'aube grandit (2:05)

19. La lune blanche (3:00)

20. J'allais par des chemins perfides (1:57)

21. J'ai presque peur, en vérité (2:23)

22. Avant que tu ne t'en ailles (2:50)

23. Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été  
(2:47)

24. N'est-ce pas? (2:48)

25. L'hiver a cessé (3:30)

*Ferring, Slettedahl & Quatuor Agate*

**Total playing time: 77:02**

## Artists' Note

**A**t a preview performance of this album, we were asked by an audience member: "What inspires us, and what inspired us to make this album?" This is the first question every artist must ask themselves when beginning the journey of creating an album.

*We have tomorrow* is an album that seeks to explore the immense possibilities that chamber music ensembles have at their disposal, both in the repertoire they choose and the configurations they can employ.

We often see typical chamber music albums of piano quintet or string quartet music. Though these albums have an integral place in the canon, we wanted to broaden the concept of what it is to create chamber music. Not only can a sextet like ours play dynamically as an ensemble together (*La bonne chanson*), but each member can also play as a soloist. In this album, the listener will have the chance to hear each artist as a soloist as well, in configurations from piano/voice music (which we strongly believe **is** chamber music) to piano quintet/voice, and every combination in between.

We hope you enjoy *We have tomorrow* and hope it inspires you to find what

speaks to you and use that passion to create positive change and growth in our industry and in our world.

Hold Fast to Dreams,  
Eric, Madeline, and Quatuor Agate

WE HAVE TOMORROW  
By Roger Pines

In the vocal music of **Samuel Barber** (1910-1981), the songs collectively entitled *Mémoires passagères* have a singular distinction as the only songs composed by Barber in a language other than English. Dating from 1950 and 1951, they emerged in a world only five years post-World War II, when critics as well as audiences were still welcoming lyricism, and where a composer's neo-Romantic point of view could still be not only accepted, but welcome.

Invariably attracted to both vocal beauty and interpretive intelligence, Barber reveled in any opportunity to do full justice to a great performer's artistry. In this case, he wrote the first, fourth, and fifth songs for one of America's finest sopranos, Eileen Farrell, and the other two songs for France's incomparable baritone/piano duo, Pierre Bernac and Francis Poulenc. *Mémoires passagères* was dedicated to the

two Frenchmen, who also gave its first complete performance (Paris, 1952).

For the texts of these five mesmerizingly atmospheric songs, Barber turned to lyric poems of Rainer Maria Rilke, the Bohemian-Austrian writer whose career included a lengthy sojourn in Paris (1902-1910). The cycle consistently reflects the composer's devotion to the elegance of French song (particularly the vocal works of Debussy), but also to the art of poetry itself. Barber was exceedingly well-read (according to his friend, pianist John Browning, "Poetry was as necessary to his existence as oxygen"). Throughout *Mélodies passagères*, Barber confirms his stature as the most sensitive setter of text among American composers of his day.

The first song, "Puisque tout passe," notes the passing of time, hence the need for us to create brief melodies that abound in love and art. The accompaniment's coruscating sixteenth-notes, so indicative of time flowing uninterrupted, stand in direct contrast to the simple, lyrical, straightforward vocal line. "Le cygne" marvelously depicts a swan, serenely gliding on the water while the poet's own soul is consumed by mingled happiness and doubt. Barber colors the song with constant harmonic ambiguity, and again, the accompaniment—centered on repeated

sextuplets—contrasts notably to the lyrical line above it.

Next is "Tombeau dans un parc," which finds the poet at a child's tomb, noting that if a white dove flies above the tomb, he (the poet) would be able to take only the dove's falling shadow as his offering. Befitting Barber's "Lento e sereno" marking, the song projects exquisite solemnity in the chordal accompaniment, with the vocal line evoking a tenderness worthy of both Fauré and Debussy. In "Le clocher chante," the singer hopes the carillon's sounds will enhance young people's Saturday-night pleasures. For both pianist and singer, this is the most challenging of the songs technically, with the aural depiction of the carillon and the rapid-fire articulation required, not to mention the voice's floated *pp* B-flat toward the end. *Mélodies passagères* concludes with "Départ," expressing the hope that the singer's trip will be a success (a pink point instead of a black one, in a green land). Again, a certain harmonic instability pervades, hinting at the singer's uncertainty.

While Samuel Barber's rise to prominence was charmed, with opportunities abounding, the successes of another magnificently gifted American musician, **Florence Price** (1887-1953), were hard-won. She faced formidable odds—not simply pervasive

segregation and systemic racism, but also a seemingly immovable attitude in the classical-music community regarding female composers. Thus her achievements seem doubly significant in retrospect: a woman in a male-dominated profession, she was also the first Black woman to receive notable attention as a serious composer. In 1933 she made history, becoming the first female composer to have a symphony played by a major American orchestra (the Chicago Symphony, during the Century of Progress Exposition).

A prodigy who was giving concerts on the piano at age four, Price graduated from New England Conservatory and became a brilliant pedagogue. As a composer she showed amazing variety, encompassing not only orchestral works, but also chamber music, a massive number of piano pieces, and many remarkable choral pieces, in addition to her considerable output of songs.

Price chose numerous song texts from the works of poet/playwright Langston Hughes, the foremost literary figure of the Harlem Renaissance, whose blazing directness of expression was superbly matched to Price's own style. Consider "Hold Fast to Dreams" (1945), in which the brief lines present indelible images (a dream that dies is like "a broken winged bird" or a "barren field, frozen with snow"). Price's allegiance

to the European tradition is clear, yet her great skill is being able to incorporate that tradition into her own direct, unfettered style. The song's luminous, rippling accompaniment superbly supports the voice, on which Price lavishes surging legato, thrilling ascents, and a range covering two full octaves in the final bars. Marked "Allegro" and carrying both serenity and confidence in its line, "We have tomorrow" is in keeping with Hughes's indefatigable energy and his steadfast refusal to give in to the obstacles facing Blacks of his time in all aspects of life.

This disc presents listeners with a rare chance to hear a tenor voice in two works for voice, piano, and viola by **Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897) that are more often performed by contraltos and mezzo-sopranos. Published in 1884 as Brahms's Opus 91, the songs were written for a duo who knew the composer well: contralto Amalie Joachim and her husband, the renowned violinist/violist Joseph Joachim. "Geistliches Wiegenlied" (1863) was conceived as a wedding present for the couple, but Brahms later reworked it to celebrate the birth of their son Johannes (named for the composer). "Gestillte Sehnsucht" (1884), was another gift for the Joachims, at a time when Brahms hoped—in vain, as it turned out—that they could save their severely troubled marriage.

Brahms's songs represent the final glory of the Romantic era, and the most dramatic among them achieve astonishing heights and depths of emotion. At the same time, however, he was capable of the most sublime intimacy and restraint. The composer set "Gestillte Sehnsucht" to three of the four stanzas of Friedrich Rückert's poem. The world is resting, but the singer is not truly at peace, due to unspoken longings, both sweet and anxious. He anticipates repose only when the wind's and bird's whispering will draw away not only his longings, but his life. Rückert's nature imagery receives a typically eloquent musical response from Brahms. How irresistibly the breeze is depicted in the viola's arpeggiated line, in contrast to the voice's elegantly sculpted legato, in which the delicious jump of a sixth (from B-flat to G) so pointedly indicates the sweetness of birdsong.

The composer set "Geistliches Wiegenlied" to a notably affecting poem by one of the greatest figures in Spanish literature, the late 16th/early 17th-century writer Lope de Vega (the poem was adapted by Emanuel Geibel, a German poet/playwright). The text presents the Blessed Virgin's plea to the palms blowing in the Bethlehem wind to be silent, since her child is asleep. In this three-part song (initially "Andante con moto" with a middle section marked "Poco agitato"), the

viola begins with "Joseph lieber, Joseph mein." Following the endearing, highly appropriate introduction provided by the thrice-familiar medieval carol, the voice moves into an original Brahms melody that seems to flow naturally and inevitably from the traditional one preceding it. Some minor changes in the repeat notwithstanding, the form is essentially A-B-A, amplifying the listener's sense of repose in this "sacred lullaby."

Like Florence Price, New Hampshire native **Amy Beach** (1867-1944) was a prodigy, debuting with the Boston Symphony while still a teenager. However, prevailing ideas regarding "respectable" occupations for women placed formidable obstacles in her path. Those included her husband, a successful physician who discouraged both her performing career and her wish to study under reputable teachers. In the end, she was largely self-taught, and eventually earned fame as the first American female composer recognized for large-scale orchestral works. Although superbly accomplished in multiple genres, it is chiefly for her songs that she is remembered today.

The four Beach songs on this disc reveal that, as with Price, Beach took what she needed from the European Late Romanticism. The two love songs could have emerged from any of the more promin-

Madeline Slettedahl  
and Eric Ferring



ent composers of late 19th-century salon music, but the other two songs find Beach fairly adventurous harmonically. Her development in technical adeptness and musical imagination over time is evident, as is the diversity of her textual choices.

With a text by Beach herself, "Ecstasy" (1893) proved especially popular and was given 1,000 public performances in the composer's lifetime. Typical of English-language art songs during the "Salon era" is the expression of the desire to remain with one's beloved, through every trial and forever in rapture, until death. "Chanson d'amour" (1899) places Beach among the myriad of composers attracted to poems by the great Victor Hugo, from Berlioz and Bizet to Lalo, Massenet, Saint-Saëns and Hahn. The song presents an enchanting colloquy between voice and cello, enriching the lover's plea for his sleeping beloved and his declaration that he lives only for her.

For "A mirage" (published in 1924), with the piano joined by violin and cello, Beach chose a minor poet, Bertha Ochsner (the song is dedicated to Ochsner's parents). In a harmonically bold but tonally diaphanous style, the music depicts a very specific natural scene, beginning with the words "Now the mountaintop all purple." Writing again for piano trio, Beach took the text

of "Stella viatoris" (1924) from the works of another little-known poet, Jessie Hague Nettleton. The "passing star" is part of a bleak landscape, suddenly shining out "like the kindness of God." The song gains excitingly in intensity, building to the sustained A-flat. Interestingly, Beach chooses not to end with that exultant moment, but instead closes the song quietly and with ineffable sweetness.

Born in a Mormon village in Idaho, **Arthur Shepherd** (1880-1958) was already studying at New England Conservatory at age twelve. He eventually developed a varied career as a composer, music teacher, conductor, and music critic. Shepherd enjoyed his closest associations with the Cleveland Orchestra and Cleveland College of Western Reserve University. He composed in virtually every major area of classical music, oratorio and opera excepted. In many ways a traditionalist, Shepherd, according to biography Richard Loucks, "adhered to the primacy of consonance and tonality—yet his methods of creating a 'key' and his uses of all the intervals are fresh and individual."

Shepherd composed one of his finest works, the Triptych for High Voice and String Quartet, in 1926 and 1927. These are contemplative songs set to texts of Rabindranath Tagore, the world-re-

nowned Bengali polymath (poet, writer, composer, philosopher, painter, social reformer). Tagore's enormous poetic output has attracted legions of composers. His collections include the *Gitanjali*, published in English as *Song Offerings*, with which Tagore became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

In the Triptych's three Tagore poems (set in his own translations), the subject matter is simple, the language equally so: "He It Is," a recognition of the beloved, who enchants both the eyes and the heart; "The Day Is No More," depicting the natural scene surrounding the singer as he goes to wash a pitcher; and "Light, My Light," in which the singer makes clear that light illuminates his own heart and, seemingly, the whole world, from the butterflies to the clouds to the flowers.

Working with texts that are sweet, direct, but straightforward almost to a fault, Shepherd creates a spellbindingly beautiful fabric of sound. The string writing underpinning the voice is luxuriant, but never does it prove excessive in sheer sonority. It skillfully reinforces the indication "Poco più animato (ma sempre estatico)" midway in the first song. The composer consistently flatters the voice, keeping the tessitura entirely manageable, so that the one climactic high B-flat in the first song

(fittingly on the phrase "in many a rapture of joy") achieves a stunning impact.

The second song is significantly more contained, the voice's legato declaimed largely on monotone phrases, with an affectingly plaintive conclusion. At all times, the countermelodies from the quartet superbly reinforce the vocal line, often in rippling triplets. The mood changes totally with the "Allegro con brio" marking of the third song, with virtuosity entering the aural picture in the bursts of 16th-note sextuplets from the quartet and tremendous rhythmic vitality overall. The whole song alternates appealingly between intimacy and full-out lyrical fervor, with the final succession of high Gs providing a particular thrill at the close.

The long career of **Gabriel Fauré** (1845-1924) was marked by extraordinary individuality. Bridging the final flowering of the Romantic era in French composition with the gradual emergence of Debussy and Ravel, Fauré remained his own man, so to speak. Complete mastery of form and a matchless gift for poetic nuance sealed his reputation as the supreme master of French *mélodies*.

Fauré was surprised and delighted by the unwonted impulsiveness with which he composed his nine-song cycle "'La

bonne chanson." Dating from 1892-94, it was written during his stay on the estate of Emma Bardac and her husband at Bougival. Emma became Fauré's mistress (she later married Debussy), and it was she who sang the songs first, one by one, as Fauré finished each of them. Originally for high voice and piano, the composer adapted the piece so that the voice and piano could be joined by string quartet.

Sometimes compared to the art of Renoir for its extraordinary refinement, "La bonne chanson" proved too complex musically for the public to appreciate (even Fauré's teacher, Saint-Saëns, was horrified), and it remained unpublished in the composer's lifetime. Much of it is colored by a harmonic ambiguity that Fauré very much enjoyed—he was, in pianist Graham Johnson's words, "flexing his musical muscles."

The texts are by Paul Verlaine, leading light among the Symbolist poets, who presented them as a gift to his 16-year-old fiancée, Mathilde Mauté, in 1870. His hopes for their relationship color what Johnson has called "one of the most ecstatic cycles of the 19th century." The progress of a love is viewed within the course of events as basic as dawn and spring, with the songs encompassing:

- "Une Sainte en son auréole"—the lover's enchantment with his beloved's name (the extreme elegance required of the quintet is equaled by the singer, not just in the seamless movement from note to note, but in the exceedingly subtle variety of color required);
- "Puisque l'aube grandit"—the lover beholds a luminous dawn (this demands a quality of expression that can only be termed "radiance");
- "La lune blanche"—the white moon inspires the lover to dream with his beloved (the voice must match the first violin in sheer sweetness);
- "J'allais par les chemins perfides"—the lover's solitary, anxiety-laden journey to the loved one (as the lover travels, so does Fauré's harmony, reaching a welcome resting point only with the final ravishing F-sharp chord);
- "J'ai presque peur en vérité"—the lover is anxious and almost frightened that he might truly find happiness (the "Allegro molto" marking lends an electrifying impetuosity to his plunging headlong into these emotions);
- "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles"—the lover's dreamy feelings mingling with the dawn, as he waits for his beloved to awaken (how marvelously Fauré's alternation between "Adagio" and "Moderato" contrasts

the end of the night and the lover's excited hopes for the new day);

- "Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été"—the summer wedding day, which turns to magical evening (Fauré moves unerringly from effervescence to lulling calm, with the latter, not unexpectedly, marked "Sempre dolce");

- "N'est-ce pas?"—the young couple, intoxicated by their love and now separated from the world (the line vocal lends itself initially to a confiding, intimate tone, turning more expansive in describing the nightingales' singing);

- "L'hiver a cessé"—the release and joy of spring, after winter's chill (the quintet's exhilarating virtuosity is juxtaposed with the vocal line's utterly serene legato, presenting a bridegroom now fully confident that in marriage, his greatest hopes have been realized at last).

*Roger Pines has written for seven major recording labels, including program notes for such distinguished artists as René Fleming, Anna Netrebko, Joyce DiDonato, Cecilia Bartoli, Juan Diego Flórez and Jonas Kaufmann. Pines lectures widely on operatic topics, contributes writing to opera-related publications internationally, and has appeared annually on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts' Opera Quiz since 2006.*

## **Mémoires passagères**, Op. 27

Text: Rainer Maria Rilke

Translation © Richard Stokes

1. Puisque tout passe  
(Since all things flit by)

Puisque tout passe, faisons  
la mélodie passagère;  
celle qui nous désaltère  
aura de nous raison.  
Chantons ce qui nous quitte  
avec amour et art;  
soyons plus vite  
que le rapide départ.

Since all things flit by,  
let's create a fleeting melody;  
the one that slakes our thirst  
shall be the one to win us.  
Let us sing what leaves us  
with love and art;  
let us be swifter  
than a swift departure.

2. Un cygne  
(A swan)

Un cygne avance sur l'eau  
tout entouré de lui-même,  
comme un glissant tableau;  
ainsi à certains instants  
un être que l'on aime  
est tout un espace mouvant.  
Il se rapproche, doublé,

comme ce cygne qui nage,  
sur notre âme troublée ...  
qui à cet être ajoute  
la tremblante image  
de bonheur et de doute.

A swan moves over the water  
ringed all around by itself,  
like a painting that glides;  
thus, at certain moments,  
a being that one loves  
is a whole moving space.  
It draws near, bent double,  
like the drifting swan,  
over our troubled soul ...  
adding to that being  
the trembling image  
of happiness and doubt.

### 3. Tombeau dans un parc (Tomb in a park)

Dors au fond de l'allée,  
tendre enfant, sous la dalle,  
on fera le chant de l'été  
autour de ton intervalle.  
Si une blanche colombe  
passait au vol là-haut,  
je n'offrirais à ton tombeau  
que son ombre qui tombe.

Sleep at the end of the row,  
dear child, beneath the stone;  
around your space we shall sing

the song of summer.  
Should a white dove  
pass overhead,  
as sole offering for your tomb,  
I'll present its falling shadow.

### 4. Le clocher chante (The bell tower sings)

Mieux qu'une tour profane,  
je me chauffe pour mûrir mon carillon.  
Qu'il soit doux, qu'il soit bon  
aux Valaisannes.  
Chaque dimanche, ton par ton,  
je leur jette ma manne;  
qu'il soit bon, mon carillon,  
aux Valaisannes.  
Qu'il soit doux, qu'il soit bon;  
samedi soir dans les channes  
tombe en gouttes mon carillon  
aux Valaisans des Valaisannes.

Better warmed than a secular tower  
am I to ripen my carillon.  
May it be sweet, may it be good  
for the girls of the Valais.  
Every Sunday, tone by tone,  
I cast to them my manna;  
may it be good, my carillon,  
for the girls of the Valais.  
May it be sweet, may it be good;  
into their beers on Saturday nights  
my carillon falls, drop by drop,  
for the boys of the girls of the Valais.

5. Départ  
(Departure)

Mon amie, il faut que je parte.  
Voulez-vous voir  
l'endroit sur la carte?  
C'est un point noir.  
En moi, si la chose  
bien me réussit,  
ce sera un point rose  
dans un vert pays.

My love, I must leave.  
Would you care to see  
the place on the map?  
It's marked in black.  
In me, if things  
work out, it will be  
a pink mark  
in a green land.

**Hold Fast to Dreams**  
from *Dreams* by Langston Hughes

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.

**We have tomorrow**  
From *Youth* by Langston Hughes

We have tomorrow  
Bright before us  
Like a flame.

Yesterday  
A night-gone thing,  
A sun-down name.  
And dawn-today  
Broad arch above the road we came.

**Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91**

1. Gestillte Sehnsucht  
(Assuaged Longing)  
Text: Friedrich Rückert  
Translation © Richard Stokes

In gold'nen Abendschein getaucht,  
Wie feierlich die Wälder steh'n!  
In leise Stimmen der Vöglein hauchet  
Des Abendwindes leises Weh'n.  
Was lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein?  
Sie lispeln die Welt in Schlummer ein.  
Ihr Wünsche, die ihr stets euch reget  
Im Herzen sonder Rast und Ruh'!  
Du Sehnen, das die Brust beweget,  
Wann ruhest du, wann schlummerst du?  
Beim Lispeln der Winde, der Vögelein,  
Ihr sehnenenden Wünsche, wann schlaft  
ihr ein?  
Ach, wenn nicht mehr in gold'ne Fernen

Mein Geist auf Traumgefieder eilt,  
Nicht mehr an ewig fernen Sternen  
Mit sehndem Blick mein Auge weit;  
Dann lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein  
Mit meinem Sehnen mein Leben ein.

Bathed in golden evening light,  
How solemnly the forests stand!  
The evening winds mingle softly  
With the soft voices of the birds.  
What do the winds, the birds whisper?  
They whisper the world to sleep.  
But you, my desires, ever stirring  
In my heart without respite!  
You, my longing, that agitates my breast—  
When will you rest, when will you sleep?  
The winds and the birds whisper,  
But when will you, yearning desires,  
slumber?  
Ah! when my spirit no longer hastens  
On wings of dreams into golden  
distances,  
When my eyes no longer dwell yearningly  
On eternally remote stars;  
Then shall the winds, the birds whisper  
My life—and my longing—to sleep.

2. Geistliches Wiegenlied  
(A sacred cradle-song)  
Text: Emanuel Geibel  
Translation © Richard Stokes

Die ihr schwebet  
Um diese Palmen

In Nacht und Wind,  
Ihr heil'gen Engel,  
Stillet die Wipfel!  
Es schlummert mein Kind.  
Ihr Palmen von Bethlehem  
In Windesbrausen,  
Wie mögt ihr heute  
So zornig sausen!  
O rauscht nicht also!  
Schweiget, neiget  
Euch leis' und lind;  
Stillet die Wipfel!  
Es schlummert mein Kind.  
Der Himmelsknabe  
Duldet Beschwerde,  
Ach, wie so müd' er ward  
Vom Leid der Erde.  
Ach nun im Schlaf ihm  
Leise gesänftigt  
Die Qual zerrinnt,  
Stillet die Wipfel!  
Es schlummert mein Kind.  
Grimmige Kälte  
Sauset hernieder,  
Womit nur deck' ich  
Des Kindleins Glieder!  
O all ihr Engel,  
Die ihr geflügelt  
Wandelt im Wind,  
Stillet die Wipfel!  
Es schlummert mein Kind.

You who hover  
Around these palms



In night and wind,  
You holy angels,  
Silence the tree-tops!  
My child is sleeping.  
You palms of Bethlehem  
In the raging wind,  
Why do you bluster

So angrily today!  
O roar not so!  
Be still, lean  
Calmly and gently over us;  
Silence the tree-tops!  
My child is sleeping.  
The heavenly babe

Suffers distress,  
Oh, how weary He has grown  
With the sorrows of this world.  
Ah, now that in sleep  
His pains  
Are gently eased,  
Silence the treetops!  
My child is sleeping.  
Fierce cold  
Blows down on us,  
With what shall I cover  
My little child's limbs?  
O all you angels,  
Who wing your way  
On the winds,  
Silence the tree-tops!  
My child is sleeping.

### **Ecstasy**

Text: Amy Marcy Beach

Only to dream among the fading flowers,  
Only to glide along the tranquil sea;  
Ah dearest, dearest, have we not together  
One long, bright day of love, so glad and  
free?  
Only to rest through life, in storm and  
sunshine,  
Safe in thy breast, where sorrow dare not fly;  
Ah dearest, dearest, thus in sweetest rapture  
With thee to live, with thee at last to die!

### **Chanson d'amour**

L'aube naît, et ta porte est close !  
(Dawn is breaking and your door is  
closed!)

Text: Victor Hugo

Translation: John Glenn Paton

L'aube naît, et ta porte est close !  
Ma belle, pourquoi sommeiller ?  
À l'heure où s'éveille la rose  
Ne vas-tu pas te réveiller ?

Ô, ma charmante,  
Écoute ici  
L'amant, qui chante,  
Et pleure aussi !  
Tout frappe à ta porte bénie.  
L'aurore dit : Je suis le jour !

L'oiseau dit : Je suis l'harmonie !  
Et mon cœur dit : Je suis l'amour!

Ô, ma charmante,  
Écoute ici  
L'amant, qui chante,  
Et pleure aussi !

Je t'adore ange, et t'aime femme.  
Dieu qui par toi m'a complété  
A fait mon amour pour ton âme,  
Et mon regard pour ta beauté !

Ô, ma charmante,  
Écoute ici

L'amant, qui chante,  
Et pleure aussi !

Dawn is breaking, and your door is  
closed!

My beauty, why are you sleeping?  
At the hour when the rose is awakening,  
are you not also going to awaken?

Oh, my charming one,  
listen here  
to the lover, who sings,  
and also weeps!  
Everything knocks at your blessed door.  
Dawn says, "I am the day!"  
The bird says, "I am harmony!"  
And my heart says, "I am love!"

Oh, my charming one,  
listen here  
to the lover, who sings,  
and also weeps!

I adore you angel, and I love you.  
God, who made me for you,  
made my love for your soul,  
and my gaze for your beauty!

Oh, my charming one,  
listen here  
to the lover, who sings,  
and also weeps!

## Two Songs, Op. 100

A mirage  
Text: Bertha Ochsner

Now the mountaintop all purple  
Rises thro' a mist of silver,  
While the moon, a disc of cobwebs,  
Shining in the pallid heavens,  
Ghostlike thro' the evening shadows.  
Now the lofty eucalyptus  
Stretches forth its chalky branches  
Toward the lovely, lusted heavens,  
While the drowsy westwind sighing  
Sings the theme of lamentation.

Stella viatoris  
Text: Jessie Hague Nettleton

Dun grows the sky;  
The cloudrack dark  
In the west hangs low.

The wind moans by;  
The bare trees ply their futile weaving  
Sad and slow;  
But o'er the east  
The grim clouds part  
A fleece of white,  
A space of blue  
Aloft, afar,  
There's a single star,  
Like the kindness of God  
Shining thro'.

## **Triptych**

Text: Rabindranath Tagore, as appears  
in *Gitanjali*

### 1. He it is

He it is, the innermost one, who awakens  
my being with his deep hidden touches.

He it is who puts his enchantment upon  
these eyes and joyfully plays on the  
chords of my heart in varied cadence of  
pleasure and pain.

He it is who weaves the web of this maya  
in evanescent hues of gold and silver,  
blue and green,  
and lets peep out through the folds his  
feet, at whose touch I forget myself.

Days come and ages pass,  
and it is ever he who moves my heart  
in many a name, in many a guise,  
in many a rapture of joy and of sorrow.

### 2. The day is no more

The day is no more,  
the shadow is upon the earth.  
It is time that I go to the stream  
to fill my pitcher.

The evening air is eager  
with the sad music of the water.  
Ah, it calls me out into the dusk.  
In the lonely lane there is no passer-by,

the wind is up,  
the ripples are rampant in the river.

I know not if I shall come back home.  
I know not whom I shall chance to meet.  
There at the fording in his little boat  
the unknown man plays upon his lute.

### 3. Light, my light

Light, my light, the world-filling light,  
the eye-kissing light, heart-sweetening  
light!

Ah, the light dances, my darling, at the  
centre of my life;  
the light strikes, my darling, the chords  
of my love;  
the sky opens, the wind runs wild, laugh-  
ter passes over the earth.

The butterflies spread their sails on the  
sea of light.  
Lilies and jasmines surge up on the crest  
of the waves of light.

The light is shattered into gold on every  
cloud, my darling,  
and it scatters gems in profusion.

Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling,  
and gladness without measure.  
The heaven's river has drowned its banks  
and the flood of joy is abroad.

**La bonne chanson, Op. 61**

Text: Paul Verlaine

Translation © Richard Stokes

1. Une sainte en son auréole  
(A Saint in her halo)

Une Sainte en son auréole,  
Une Châtelaine en sa tour,  
Tout ce que contient la parole  
Humaine de grâce et d'amour;  
La note d'or que fait entendre  
Le cor dans le lointain des bois,  
Mariée à la fierté tendre  
Des nobles Dames d'autrefois;  
Avec cela le charme insigne  
D'un frais sourire triomphant  
Éclos dans des candeurs de cygne  
Et des rougeurs de femme-enfant;  
Des aspects nacrés, blancs et roses,  
Un doux accord patricien:  
Je vois, j'entends toutes ces choses  
Dans son nom Carlovingien.

A Saint in her halo,  
A Châtelaine in her tower,  
All that human words contain  
Of grace and love;  
The golden note of a horn  
In forests far away,  
Blended with the tender pride  
Of noble Ladies of long ago;  
And then –the rare charm  
Of fresh, triumphant smile,

Flowering in swan-like innocence  
And the blushes of a child-bride;  
A nacreous sheen of white and pink,  
A sweet patrician harmony -  
All these things I see and hear  
In her Carolingian name.

2. Puisque l'aube grandit  
(Since day is breaking)

Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque voici l'aurore,  
Puisque, après m'avoir fui longtemps,  
l'espoir veut bien  
Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle et  
l'implore,  
Puisque tout ce bonheur veut bien être  
le mien,  
Je veux, guidé par vous, beaux yeux aux  
flammes douces,  
Par toi conduit, ô main où tremblera ma  
main,  
Marcher droit, que ce soit par des sen-  
tiers de mousses  
Ou que rocs et cailloux encombrant le  
chemin;  
Et comme, pour bercer les lenteurs de la  
route,  
Je chanterai des airs ingénus, je me dis  
Qu'elle m'écouterà sans déplaisir sans  
doute;  
Et vraiment je ne veux pas d'autre Paradis.

Since day is breaking, since dawn is here,  
Since hope, having long eluded me,

would now  
Return to me and my imploring,  
Since all this happiness will truly be mine.  
I shall, guided by your fair eyes' gentle  
glow,  
Led by your hand in which I place my  
trembling hand,  
Walk straight ahead, on mossy paths  
Or boulder-strewn and stony tracks.  
And while, to ease the journey's languid  
pace,  
I shall sing some simple airs, I tell myself  
That she will surely hear me without  
displeasure;  
And truly I crave no other paradise.

3. La lune blanche  
(The white moon)

La lune blanche  
Luit dans les bois;  
De chaque branche  
Part une voix  
Sous la ramée...  
Ô bien aimée.  
L'étang reflète,  
Profond miroir,  
La silhouette  
Du saule noir  
Où le vent pleure...  
Rêvons, c'est l'heure.  
Un vaste et tendre  
Apaisement  
Semble descendre

Du firmament  
Que l'astre irise...  
C'est l'heure exquise.

The white moon  
Gleams in the woods;  
From every branch  
There comes a voice  
Beneath the boughs...  
O my beloved.  
The pool reflects,  
Deep mirror,  
The silhouette  
Of the black willow  
Where the wind is weeping...  
Let us dream, it is the hour.  
A vast and tender  
Consolation  
Seems to fall  
From the sky  
The moon illumines...  
Exquisite hour.

4. J'allais par des chemins perfides  
(I walked along treacherous ways)

J'allais par les chemins perfides,  
Douloureusement incertain.  
Vos chères mains furent mes guides.  
Si pâle à l'horizon lointain  
Luisait un faible espoir d'aurore;  
Votre regard fut le matin.  
Nul bruit, sinon son pas sonore,  
N'encourageait le voyageur.

Votre voix me dit: "Marche encore!"  
Mon coeur craintif, mon sombre coeur  
Pleurait, seul, sur la triste voie;  
L'amour, délicieux vainqueur,  
Nous a réunis dans la joie.

I walked along treacherous ways,  
Painfully uncertain.  
Your dear hands guided me.  
So pale on the far horizon  
A faint hope of dawn was gleaming;  
Your gaze was the morning.  
No sound, save his own footfall,  
Encouraged the traveller.  
Your voice said: 'Walk on!'  
My fearful heart, my heavy heart,  
Wept, lonely along the sad road;  
Love, that charming conqueror,  
Has united us in joy.

5. J'ai presque peur, en vérité  
(In truth, I am almost afraid)

J'ai presque peur, en vérité  
Tant je sens ma vie enlacée  
À la radieuse pensée  
Qui m'a pris l'âme l'autre été,  
Tant votre image, à jamais chère,  
Habite en ce coeur tout à vous,  
Ce coeur uniquement jaloux  
De vous aimer et de vous plaire ;  
Et je tremble, pardonnez-moi  
D'aussi franchement vous le dire,  
À penser qu'un mot, qu'un sourire

De vous est désormais ma loi,  
Et qu'il vous suffirait d'un geste,  
D'une parole ou d'un clin d'oeil,  
Pour mettre tout mon être en deuil  
De son illusion céleste.  
Mais plutôt je ne veux vous voir,  
L'avenir dût-il m'être sombre  
Et fécond en peines sans nombre,  
Qu'à travers un immense espoir,  
Plongé dans ce bonheur suprême  
De me dire encore et toujours,  
En dépit des mornes retours,  
Que je vous aime, que je t'aime!

In truth, I am almost afraid,  
So much do I feel my life bound up  
With the radiant thoughts  
That captured my soul last summer,  
So deeply does your ever-dear image  
Inhabit this heart that is wholly yours,  
This heart, whose sole desire  
Is to love you and please you.  
And I tremble, forgive me  
For telling you so frankly,  
To think that one word, one smile  
From you is henceforth law to me,  
And that one gesture would suffice,  
One word, one single glance,  
To plunge my whole being in mourning  
From its heavenly illusion.  
But I would sooner not see you—  
However dark the future might be  
And full of untold grief—  
Could I not, through an immense hope,

Immersed in this supreme happiness,  
Repeat to myself again and again,  
Despite bleak reversals,  
That I love you, I love thee!

6. Avant que tu ne t'en ailles  
(Before you fade)

Avant que tu ne t'en ailles,  
Pâle étoile du matin  
–Mille cailles  
Chantent, chantent dans le thym. -  
Tourne devers le poète  
Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour;  
–L'alouette  
Monte au ciel avec le jour. -  
Tourne ton regard que noie  
L'aurore dans son azur;  
–Quelle joie  
Parmi les champs de blé mûr! -  
Et fais luire ma pensée  
Là-bas –bien loin, oh, bien loin !  
–La rosée  
Gaîment brille sur le foin. -  
Dans le doux rêve où s'agite  
Ma mie endormie encor...  
–Vite, vite,  
Car voici le soleil d'or. -

Before you fade,  
Pale morning star,  
–A thousand quail  
Are singing, singing in the thyme. -  
Turn to the poet

Whose eyes are full of love,  
–The lark  
Soars heavenward with the day. -  
Turn your gaze drowned  
In the blue of dawn;  
–What delight  
Among the fields of ripened corn! -  
And make my thoughts gleam  
Yonder, far, ah far away!  
–The dew  
Glints brightly on the hay. -  
Into the sweet dream where still asleep  
My love is stirring...  
–Make haste, make haste,  
For here's the golden sun.

7. Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été  
(So, on a bright summer day it shall be)

Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été  
Le grand soleil, complice de ma joie,  
Fera, parmi le satin et la soie,  
Plus belle encor votre chère beauté;  
Le ciel tout bleu, comme une haute tente,  
Frissonnera somptueux à longs plis  
Sur nos deux fronts heureux qu'auront pâlis  
L'émotion du bonheur et l'attente;  
Et quand le soir viendra, l'air sera doux  
Qui se jouera, caressant, dans vos voiles,  
Et les regards paisibles des étoiles  
Bienveillamment souriront aux époux.

So, on a bright summer day it shall be:  
The great sun, my partner in joy,

Shall make, amid the satin and the silk,  
Your dear beauty lovelier still;  
The sky, all blue, like a tall canopy,  
Shall quiver sumptuously in the long folds  
Above our two happy brows, grown pale  
With pleasure and expectancy;  
And when evening comes, the breeze  
shall be soft  
And play caressingly about your veils,  
And the peaceful stars looking down  
Shall smile benevolently on man and wife.

8. N'est-ce pas?  
(Is it not so?)

N'est-ce pas? nous irons gais et lents,  
dans la voie  
Modeste que nous offre en souriant  
l'Espoir,  
Peu soucieux qu'on nous ignore ou qu'on  
nous voie.  
Isolés dans l'amour ainsi qu'en un bois noir,  
Nos deux coeurs, exhalant leur tendresse  
paisible,  
Seront deux rossignols qui chantent dans  
le soir.  
Sans nous préoccuper de ce que nous  
destine  
Le Sort, nous marcherons pourtant du  
même pas,  
Et la main dans la main, avec l'âme  
enfantine.  
De ceux qui s'aiment sans mélange, n'est-  
ce pas?

Is it not so? Happy and unhurried we'll  
follow  
The modest path where Hope directs us  
with a smile,  
Little caring if we are neither known nor  
seen.  
Isolated in love as in a dark wood,  
Our two hearts, breathing gentle love,  
Shall be two nightingales singing at  
evening.  
With no thought of what Destiny  
Has in store, we shall walk along together,  
Hand in hand our souls like those of  
children  
Whose love is unalloyed, is that not so?

9. L'hiver a cessé  
(Winter is over)

L'hiver a cessé : la lumière est tiède  
Et danse, du sol au firmament clair.  
Il faut que le coeur le plus triste cède  
À l'immense joie éparse dans l'air.  
J'ai depuis un an le printemps dans l'âme  
Et le vert retour du doux floral,  
Ainsi qu'une flamme entoure une  
flamme,  
Met de l'idéal sur mon idéal.  
Le ciel bleu prolonge, exhausse et  
couronne  
L'immuable azur où rit mon amour  
La saison est belle et ma part est bonne  
Et tous mes espoirs ont enfin leur tour.  
Que vienne l'été! que viennent encore

L'automne et l'hiver! Et chaque saison  
Me sera charmante, ô Toi que décore  
Cette fantaisie et cette raison!

Winter is over, the light is soft  
And dances up from the earth to the  
clear sky.  
The saddest heart must surrender  
To the great joy that fills the air.  
For a year I have had spring in my soul,  
And the green return of sweet May,  
Like flame encircling flame,  
Adds an ideal to my ideal.  
The blue sky prolongs, heightens, and crowns  
the steadfast azure where my love smiles.  
The season is fair and my lot is happy  
And all my hopes are at last fulfilled.  
Let summer come! Let autumn  
And winter come too! Each season  
Will delight me, O you graced with  
Imagination and good sense!

American tenor **Eric Ferring** is known internationally as “a prodigiously gifted lyric tenor” (*Opera News*), for his “fine, gleaming tenor” (*New York Classical Review*), as well as for having “a beautifully round and warm timbre, expressive, and with great finesse” (*Olyrix*). His expertise ranges from early bel canto repertoire and the music of Handel and Mozart to the origination of contemporary operatic roles.

Ferring made his Metropolitan Opera debut during the 2021-2022 season singing Pong in *Turandot*, followed by Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, a Royal Herald in *Don Carlos*, and covering Grimoaldo in *Rodelinda*. He made his debut at Santa Fe Opera, singing Fenton in Sir David McVicar’s new production of *Falstaff*, and his Spoleto



Festival (USA) debut in Beethoven’s 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony. In the fall of 2022, Ferring released his solo debut album with pianist Madeline Slettedahl: *No Choice but Love: Songs of the LGBTQ+ Community* on Lexicon Classics.

His performance in Chicago Lyric Opera’s production of *Pagliacci* won a 2022 Emmy Award. The 2022-2023 season has included a return to Opéra de Rouen and debuts with the Opéra de Paris as Lurcanio in *Ariodante* and the Opéra national du Rhin as Tamino. The season also includes debuts with Opéra de Lille, Haymarket Opera and the Dubuque Symphony, and a world tour of *Rodelinda* with The English Concert.

Ferring has won top prizes at many competitions, including the George London Foundation for Singers, Glyndebourne Opera Cup, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Voice Competition, American Opera Society of Chicago, the National Society of Arts and Letters, the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, as well as grants and awards from the Richard Tucker Foundation, Sullivan Foundation, Santa Fe Opera and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

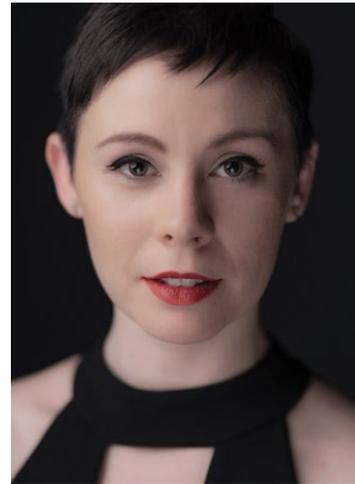
He is a native of Dubuque, Iowa, and graduated from Drake University with his Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and The Boston Conservatory with his Master of Music in Opera Performance. Ferring is a graduate of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan Opera Center and the Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Program. He is also the Project Curator for Lexicon Classics and the Executive Director of the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago (CAIC).

For more information, visit [ericferring.com](http://ericferring.com) or @ericferring on Instagram.

Hailed as an "extraordinarily expressive" (*Seen and Heard International*) pianist, **Madeline Slettedahl** is an enthusiastic collaborator, recitalist and highly-sought-after operatic coach. A current member of the

Houston Grand Opera music staff, additional appointments include Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Wolf Trap Opera, Aspen Music Festival, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, where she received her training as part of the Ryan Opera Center.

An avid recitalist, she has made recent appearances with leading operatic singers at Carnegie Hall's Citywide Concert Series, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts, the Collaborative Art Institute of Chicago's Lieder Lounge, Green Lake Festival of Music, and the Cincinnati Song Initiative Recital Series, as well as chamber music engagements with Icicle Creek Chamber Players, Bellingham Festival of Music and



Twickenham-Fest. Additional fellowships include the Solti Accademia di Bel Canto, the Britten-Pears Young Artist Program, The Song Continues with Marilyn Horne, and Renée Fleming's SongStudio program at Carnegie Hall. She also attended

Music Academy of the West, where she won First Prize in the Marilyn Horne Song Competition.

She made her recording debut in 2022 on Eric Ferring's highly acclaimed, Billboard-charting album *No Choice but Love*. Slettedahl holds degrees in Collaborative Piano and Piano Performance, from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, and Western Washington University, respectively.

Paris-based **Quatuor Agate**—Adrien Jurkovic and Thomas Descamps, violins; Raphaël Pagnon, viola; Simon Iachemet, cello—was formed in 2016. Its members studied at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin with Eberhard Feltz, in Paris under the guidance of Mathieu Herzog, and with the Quatuor Ebène at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich. In 2021, they were prize winners at the YCAT International Auditions.

Recent highlights include debut recitals at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Alte Oper Frankfurt and the Lammermuir Festival in Scotland. They return to Wigmore Hall and collaborate with the Modigliani Quartet at the TauberPhilharmonie and the Diotima Quartet at the Lange Nacht der Streichquartette in the Prinzregententheater in Munich. They are recording the complete Brahms Quartets for the Appassionato label, which will be released in early 2024.

Over the last year, Quatuor Agate debuted at Wigmore Hall and gave recitals across

Europe at the Konzerthaus Dortmund, Brucknerhaus Linz, TauberPhilharmonie Weikersheim, the Verbier, Salon-de-Provence, Radio France and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern festivals. They also recorded with Frank Braley and Gabriel Le Magadure for Appassionato.

The Quartet is artist in residence at the Fondation Singer Polignac, resident at Pro-Quartet in Paris, and Associate Artist at the Festival la Brèche in Savoie. In 2016, they founded the CorsiClassic Festival.

Quatuor Agate is grateful for support from the Günther-Caspar Stiftung and the Fondation Banque Populaire.

Adrien Jurkovic plays on a violin attributed to Giuseppe Giovanni Guarneri generously loaned by Dr. Peter Hauber. Thomas Descamps plays on a Matteo Goffriller violin generously loaned by the Fondation Boubo-Music. Raphaël Pagnon plays on a Ferdinando Alberti viola generously loaned by the Fondation Boubo-Music. Simon Iachemet plays on a Giacinto Santagiuliana cello generously loaned by the Fondation Boubo-Music.

For more information, visit [quatuoragate.com](http://quatuoragate.com) or find them on Instagram @Quatuor.Agate

Producer: Julia Faulkner  
Engineering, mixing, mastering: Christopher Willis  
Recorded at WFMT Studios, Chicago, June 1-4, 2023  
Album cover design: Gillian Riesen/Emitha LLC  
Layout and design: Lonnie Kunkel  
Page 7 photo: Jaclyn Simpson  
Page 15 photo: Kaupo Kikkas  
Page 28 photo and Eric Ferring headshot: Gillian Riesen  
Madeline Slettedahl headshot: Simon Pauly

Special Acknowledgements:

Thank you to our steadfast, generous donors across the globe who have supported this project from when it was just the seed of an idea in the summer of 2019. We couldn't have made this dream a reality without you!

