

Friday, February 12, 2021 | 4 PM

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC OPERA THEATRE
Tazewell Thompson, Director of Opera Studies

presents

Connection/Separation

Featuring arias and scenes from

Carmen, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *La clemenza di Tito*, *L'elisir d'amore*,
Le nozze di Figaro, *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and *Lucio Silla*

A. Scott Parry, Director

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Myra Huang, Vocal Coach & Pianist

Kristen Kemp, Vocal Coach & Pianist

Megan P. G. Kolpin, Props Coordinator

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In each of our lives—during this last year especially—we may have discovered ourselves in moments of wanting, even needing some sort of human connection, but instead finding separation by any number of barriers. In the arias and scenes that follow, we witness characters in just this kind of moment; searching for meaningful contact yet being somehow barred from achieving it. Through circumstance, distance, convention, misunderstanding, pride, fear, ego, or what have you, we may find ourselves in situations similar to the characters in this program, while looking forward to the days when connection can be more easily achieved and separation the exception to the rule.

– A. Scott Parry

SCENES

“Comme autrefois” from *Les pêcheurs de perles* (1863)

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Eugène Cormon and Michel Carré

Leïla Madison Fitzpatrick

Myra Huang, coach-pianist

Recorded live in the Alan M. and Joan Taub Ades Performance Space

Left to spend the night alone outside an unfamiliar temple, the Brahmin priestess Leïla tries to calm herself, finding solace that earlier while praying for the pearl fishers, she had heard her lover Nadir’s voice calling to her. She sleeps, faithful that he watches over her and will join her again.

“Una furtiva lagrima” from *L’elisir d’amore* (1832)

Music by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Felice Romani

Nemorino Sehyun Lee

Kristen Kemp, coach-pianist

Recorded in Seoul, South Korea and NYC

Having been head over heels in love with the beautiful Adina for many months, Nemorino believes he finally understands why she has been acting so strangely today. He rejoices in his newfound awareness that she may indeed have finally, although still furtively, fallen for him in return.

“Parto, m’affretto” from *Lucio Silla* (1772)

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Giovanni de Gamerra and Pietro Metastasio

Giunia Yuhui Yang

Kristen Kemp, coach-pianist

Recorded in Shanghai, China and NYC

Giunia, whose fiancé was banished and father was killed by the new dictator of Rome, Lucio Silla, is being forced to now marry the tyrant or herself be put to death. Raging, Giunia chooses her own death over the betrayal of her father’s memory and breaking with her true love’s betrothal vow.

“Parto, parto, ma tu, ben mio” from *La clemenza di Tito* (1791)

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Caterino Mazzolà

Sesto Xu Guo

Myra Huang, coach-pianist

Recorded in Handan, China and NYC

At the urging of the jealous and proud Vitellia with whom he is infatuated, the young patrician Sesto departs to secretly murder his long-time friend, the newly crowned Emperor of Rome, Tito. He is heartbroken with feelings of duty to country, but determined to go on, blinded by his love.

“Tradito, schernito” from *Così fan tutte* (1790)

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

Ferrando Xiang Li

Kristen Kemp, pianist-coach

Recorded in Jinan, China and NYC

Guglielmo and Ferrando have tested their lovers' constancy. Guglielmo's love has remained firm, while Ferrando's has given in to temptation. Full of anger at his faithless fiancé, Ferrando calls out for revenge, only to realize he still loves her and intends instead to remain with her regardless.

“Habanera” from *Carmen* (1875)

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Ludovic Halévy and Henri Meilhac

Carmen Yingmeige Xiong

Kristen Kemp, pianist-coach

Recorded in Beijing, China and NYC

On a break from the cigarette factory, Carmen, the well-known Spanish Romani woman, sings of love being free like a fluttering bird, flying quickly from place to place. Carmen requires freedom to choose a new lover at any moment, warning that if someone tries to hold on to her, they'd best beware.

“La fleur que tu m'avais jetée” from *Carmen*

Don José Yu Ding

Kristen Kemp, pianist-coach

Recorded in Taiyuan, China and NYC

Don José, a corporal in the Spanish army, helped Carmen to escape the law, and in return, went to prison in her stead. Now released and rejoined with her, he explains how a single flower she threw to him gave him hope to continue on in his sentence, each day increasing his intense love for her.

“Non so più” from *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786)

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

Cherubino

Churan Qiu

Kristen Kemp, pianist-coach

Recorded in Beijing, China and NYC

The young page boy Cherubino tries to explain to the maid Susanna that he doesn't know what is making him feel so discombobulated every time he lays eyes on a woman. He wants only to talk about love, and even if there's no one who will listen, he will continue talking of love to himself.

“Deh vieni non tardar” from *Le nozze di Figaro*

Susanna

Jinjin Wang

Kristen Kemp, pianist-coach

Recorded in Chongqing, China and NYC

It's been a folly of a wedding day for Susanna, and even now at the end, her bridegroom Figaro suspects her of meeting the Count for a romantic assignation. To repay him for his suspicions, she playacts excitement for just such a rendezvous, while her hiding husband covertly watches.

“Dies bildnis” from *Die Zauberflöte* (1791)

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder

Tamino

Shinjae Lee

Myra Huang, pianist-coach

Recorded in Seoul, South Korea and NYC

Prince Tamino has been given a portrait of the youthful Pamina by her mother, the Queen of the Night, and has been charged with rescuing her from her abductor, Sarastro. Tamino is immediately smitten by her, and drawn by feelings unfamiliar to him, decides to enjoin the mission to save her.

“Ach, Ich fühl's” from *Die Zauberflöte*

Pamina

Gigi Guo

Myra Huang, pianist-coach

Recorded in Shanghai, China and NYC

Due to arcane rules of a secret order initiation ceremony, Tamino must not speak to or look at his newfound love Pamina. She is confused and heartbroken by this, begging Tamino to witness her tears, but the Prince remains resolute. Pamina determines she will find solace only in the grave.

Act III, scene 1 from *Les pêcheurs de perles*

Zurga Andres Cascante
Leïla Madison Fitzpatrick

Myra Huang, pianist-coach

Recorded live in the Alan M. and Joan Taub Ades Performance Space

Having found his best friend Nadir consorting with Leïla, a priestess with whom he is secretly in love, Zurga, the newly crowned king, has condemned the lovers to die at sunrise. His heart breaks in isolation as he bemoans the fate he has chosen for the two for whom he cares most.

Leïla suddenly arrives at Zurga's tent and begs for mercy for the innocent lovers. Zurga rages at her assertion of innocence. Leïla then offers that he take only her life in place of Nadir's. Zurga asserts that Leïla loves Nadir and, exposing his own love of her, admits he himself is jealous. Shocked and repelled, Leïla tells Zurga she will never return his love and departs to die with Nadir at dawn.

“Brahma Chorus” from *Les pêcheurs de perles*

Full Company

Madison Fitzpatrick, Gigi Guo, Jinjin Wang, Yuhui Yang, soprano

Xu Guo, Churan Qiu, Yingmeige Xiong, mezzo-soprano

Yu Ding, Sehyun Lee, Shinjae Lee, Xiang Li, tenor

Andres Cascante, baritone/bass

Myra Huang, pianist-coach

Kristen Kemp, second pianist-coach

Recorded in locations around the globe

The entire populace of the village join together in singing an anthem of prayer for protection of each and for sustenance of their larger community: “Brahma, holy Brahma, may your hand protect us, come and dispel the snares of the nightly spirits! O holy Brahma we kneel down before you!”

Students in this performance are supported by the *Mae Zenke Orvis Opera Scholarship*.

We are grateful to the generous donors who made these scholarships possible. For information on establishing a named scholarship at Manhattan School of Music, please contact Susan Madden, Vice President for Advancement, at 917-493-4115 or smadden@msmny.edu.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

A. Scott Parry, Director

A. Scott Parry's direction has been hailed by *Opera News* as "marvelous," "lively," "imaginative," and "spot-on" with over 125 productions that have spanned an enormous range of repertoire, from *West Side Story* to *Così fan tutte* and *La traviata* to *La Cage aux Folles*. He conceived of, designed, and directed the world première of *I lavori d'amore persi*, a pastiche of music theatre fragments by Claudio Monteverdi for the Bloomington Early Music Festival as well as the modern absurdist opera *The Pig, the Farmer, and the Artist* at La Mama (Off-Broadway). Mr. Parry spent a decade on the directing staff of New York City Opera at Lincoln Center, has served on the faculty of Indiana University in Bloomington, and has been a Visiting Professor at the New England Conservatory, Amherst College, and Peabody Conservatory. He also spent ten years as the Producing Artistic Director of Opera & Lyric Theatre at the Ohio State University and is currently the Stage Director and Acting Coach for Dolora Zajick's Institute for Young Dramatic Voices. As a composer, he premiered his quartet theatre song cycle "*On the Impracticality... of Love*" at NYC's Singer's Forum and recently completed his libretto adaptation of *La mère coupable* (*The Guilty Mother*), the third "Figaro play" of Beaumarchais, which is currently being set to music. Mr. Parry is represented by Robert Gilder & Co.

Myra Huang, Vocal Coach & Pianist

Acclaimed by *Opera News* as being "among the top accompanists of her generation," and "a colouristic tour de force" by the *New York Times*, Grammy® Award-nominated pianist Myra Huang is highly sought after for her interpretation of lieder and art song as well as her depth of musicianship and impeccable technique. Last season, Huang performed in recitals throughout the U.S., including the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the Kennedy Center, the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center, and the 92nd St Y. Huang was chosen as the recipient of the Samuel Sanders Collaborative Artist Award for 2019 by the Classical Recording Foundation for her consummate artistry. Regular collaborations include recitals with tenor Lawrence Brownlee, tenor Nicholas Phan, bass-baritone Eric Owens, baritone Joshua Hopkins, and soprano Susanna Phillips.

Huang has served on the music staffs of the Washington National Opera, Houston Grand Opera, New York City Opera, and the Palau De Les Arts in Valencia, Spain. She was a staff pianist for the Operalia Competition, directed by Plácido Domingo, for fifteen years. Huang regularly teaches at young artist programs throughout the U.S. and is on the music staff of the Steans Music Institute at Ravinia, as well as guest staff of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera. This season, Huang joins the Faculty of the Manhattan School of Music in the Vocal Arts Department, Opera Studies Division.

Huang is an avid recitalist and recording artist. Her album *Gods and Monsters* with tenor Nicholas Phan was nominated for "Best Classical Vocal Solo Album" at the 2018 Grammy® Awards. Her most recent album with Phan, *Clairières*, has been nominated in the same category for the 63rd Grammy Awards in 2021. Huang is a Steinway Artist.

Kristen Kemp, Vocal Coach & Pianist

Vocal coach and accompanist Kristen Kemp joined the Opera Theatre faculty at Manhattan School of Music in 2018. Originally from Florida, she has worked with numerous opera companies throughout the United States, including Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Sarasota Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Martina Arroyo Foundation Prelude to Performance, Opera North, and Chelsea Opera, as well as the Opera Theatre of Lucca, Italy, in association with the Cincinnati Conservatory. Kristen was a music staff member at Sarasota Opera beginning in 2003, as well as the Studio Artist Director for five seasons. As Studio Artist Director, she regularly coached mainstage roles and prepared and performed over 30 outreach concerts each season. As a member of the coaching staff for Sherrill Milnes V.O.I.C. Experience, she has had the pleasure of working with the programs in New York, Florida, and Savannah since 2010. She received her MM degree and AD degree in opera coaching from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Megan P. G. Kolpin, Properties Coordinator

Megan P. G. Kolpin holds a BFA from Purchase College in New York. Over the past ten years she has worked all over the country, from Utah Shakespeare Festival to Connecticut Repertory Theatre. Megan's most recent design credits include *The Wild Party* at MSM and Eco Village at the Theatre at St. Clements. She would like to thank her partner James for supporting and encouraging her, as well as her family and friends. She is currently the resident Properties Coordinator at Manhattan School of Music.

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OPERA AT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recognized as one of the foremost opera training programs in the world, Manhattan School of Music's opera program attracts some of the most talented young singers from the United States and more than forty other countries. Students in the program refine their technique and develop their artistry under the guidance of a faculty of eminent artist-teachers while gaining exposure before New York City audiences through performances in opera scenes, community outreach concerts, and two full-length productions each year.

The Manhattan School of Music opera program has a long and proud tradition of producing some of the finest operatic artists in America and abroad. Manhattan School of Music's opera productions have been praised as a significant contribution to operatic life in New York City, and many students have gone on to major careers. Among notable alumnae are sopranos Dawn Upshaw, Catherine Malfitano, Alexandra Deshorties, Kathleen Kim, and Tonna Miller and mezzo-sopranos Susan Graham, Dolora Zajick, Jennifer Dudley, and Kate Aldrich of the Metropolitan Opera. Alumni who have appeared at the Metropolitan Opera and the New York City Opera are sopranos Lauren Flanigan, Pamela Armstrong, Lori Guilbeau, and Amy Johnson; mezzo-sopranos Beth Clayton and Heather Johnson; countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo; tenors Matthew Chellis and Brandon Jovanovich; and baritone Scott Altman. Another noted alumnus is Maestro George Manahan, Music Director of the American Composers Orchestra and Director of Orchestral Activities at MSM.

Manhattan School of Music has issued CDs of Ned Rorem's *Miss Julie*, Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring*, Gaetano Donizetti's *Il campanello di notte*, Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tabiti*, Gustav Holst's *Savitri*, Ludwig Spohr's *Beauty and the Beast*, the world premiere recordings of Daniel Catán's *Rappaccini's Daughter*, William Mayer's *A Death in the Family*, Scott Eyerly's *The House of the Seven Gables*, Robert Ward's *Roman Fever*, Thomas Pasatieri's *The Seagull*, Lee Hoiby's *A Month in the Country*, John Musto's *Later the Same Evening*, Lee Hoiby's *Summer and Smoke*, Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*, Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*, and Nicolas Isouard's *Cendrillon*.

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 960 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege program continues to offer superior music instruction to 475 young musicians between the ages of 5 and 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

Your gift helps a young artist reach for the stars!

To enable Manhattan School of Music to continue educating and inspiring generations of talented students and audiences alike, please consider making a charitable contribution today.

Contact the Advancement Office at 917-493-4434 or visit msmnyc.edu/support

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