



Spring 2026 MS NATS Members' Recital

Viola Dacus, mezzo-soprano
Tyler Kemp, pianist

Ich atmet einen linden Duft
Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder
Liebst du um Schönheit
Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen
from *Rückert Lieder*

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Gustav Mahler drew from the poetry of Friederich Rückert for two late sets of songs, the powerfully poignant *Kindertoten Lieder* (1901-1904) and the five songs known simply as *Rückert Lieder*, four composed in 1901 and “Liebst du um Schönheit” in 1902. The *Rückert Lieder* are remarkable for their beauty and individuality. The four songs presented tonight illustrate that individuality through the wafting melody representing the gentle fragrance of a lime branch in “Ich atmet einen Linden duft,” the busy accompaniment suggesting bees at work in “Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder,” the intimate declaration of endless love in “Liebst du um Schönheit” (a gift to Mahler’s wife, Alma, and not actually intended for performance), and in the exquisite “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,” in which the poet escapes the from the tumult of the world into the final lines: “my heaven, my love, my songs.”

Translations

Ich atmet einen linden Duft

I breathed a gentle fragrance.
In the room stood
A sprig of lime,
A gift
From a loving hand.
How lovely was the lime fragrance.
How lovely is the lime fragrance.
The sprig of lime
you broke so gently;
I breathe gently
The fragrance of lime,
Of love’s gentle fragrance.

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder

Look not into my songs!
My eyes I cast down,
As if caught in an evil act.
Myself I dare not even trust
Their growth to watch.
Your curiosity is betrayal.

Bees, when they build cells,
Let also no one watch,
They do not even watch themselves.
When the rich honeycombs
Have been brought to the light of day,
Then before all shall you taste!

Liebst du um Schönheit

If you love for beauty,
O love not me!
Love the sun,
She has golden hair.
If you love for youth,
O love not me!
Love the spring
Which is young each year.
If you love for treasure,
O love not me!
Love the mermaid
Who has many clear pearls.
If you love for love,
Ah yes, love me!
Love me always,
I shall love you forever.

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

I am lost to the world
Where I used to waste much time;
It has for so long heard nothing of me,
It may well believe that I am dead!
It is to me also nothing to be concerned about
If it thinks that I am dead.
I cannot really say anything against it,
For truly am I dead to the world.
I am dead to the world's tumult
And rest in a quiet place!
I live alone in my heaven,
In my love, in my song!

Are You Laughing?: A tribute to funny art songs

Lynn Holliman, Soprano
Sue Tarver, pianist

I Hate Music! A cycle of five kids songs

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

- ii. Jupiter Has Seven Moons
- iv. A Big Indian and Little Indian

Usherette Blues

Jeremy Nicholas (1947-Present)

Someone is Sending Me Flowers from the Shoestring Revue

David Baker (1931-2016)

Arr. by Roger Vignoles (1943-Present)

Program Notes

I Hate Music: A cycle of five kids songs - Leonard Bernstein

Bernstein's song cycle, *I Hate Music*, was written as a dedication to one of his dear friends, artist Edys Merrill, who inspired the title of the cycle. Merrill, Bernstein's flatmate at the time,

would make the statement “I hate music” often due to Bernstein vocal coaching and piano practicing in their flat. Composed in 1942 and premiered in 1943, the cycle centered around the perspective of the ten year old character Barbara, and is meant to show the natural sweetness of a child. This cycle has been performed and recorded by several performers including Barbara Bonney, Harolyn Blackwell, and Blanche Thebom.

Usherette Blues - Jeremy Nicholas

Jeremy Nicholas is a writer, actor, composer, and musician from England. Nicholas made his mark on theater and television with his numerous roles in a variety of theater companies and television series. He is also known for his compositions for television and stage plays, as well as a variety of songs for BBC Radio. His piece *Usherette Blues* is from the perspective of a movie theater usher lamenting that they are always unable to see the end of the films because of their job. The best known publication of the piece is in the collection *Sarah's Encores* published in 1989 and was a collection of songs from performers Sarah Walker and Roger Vignoles.

Someone is Sending Me Flowers - Baker/Vignoles

Someone is Sending Me Flowers was composed by David Baker for The Shoestring Revue. The revue, created by Ben Bagley, premiered in 1955 in New York City and saw enormous success. Ben Bagley would go on to bring the revue back in 1957. Included in the original 1955 cast were some of the great names in theater at the time such as Bea Arthur, Ann Hampton Calloway, and Dody Goodman. This piece is also featured in the collection from Sarah Walker and Roger Vignoles, *Sarah's Encores*.

Many Colors of Musical Theatre

Brad Robinson, *baritone*
&
Amanda Johnston, *piano*

Present

Program

Stars (*Les Miserables*)
(b.1944)

I wonder what the king is doing tonight? (*Camelot*)

Where is the life that late I led? (*Kiss Me, Kate*)

Meditation I (*Shenandoah*)

?????????

Claude-Michel Schönberg

Alan Jay Lerner (1918-1986)

Cole Porter (1891-1964)

Gary Geld (1935-2015)

Tom Leher (1928-2025)

Stars (*Les Miserables*)

What can we say about Inspector Javert, the primary antagonist of *Les Miserables*? Born in a prison, the son of convicts and now a police inspector, he has doggedly pursued ex-convict Jean Valjean across France for years. But, why? Valjean is, after all, a very minor felon, seemingly unworthy of such an almost maniacal pursuit. In “Stars” we are given a glimpse into Javert’s personal ethical system which is comprised of a combination of strict moralistic and legalistic tenets that fuel his crusade and, according to Victor Hugo (the author of the novel *Les Miserables*), will ultimately lead to his destruction.

I wonder what the king is doing tonight? (*Camelot*)

Who is this wandering alone in the woods so late? All hail King Arthur! Champion in battle, conqueror of armies and uniter of the realm! What could possibly shake this unshakable warrior-monarch’s calm? A mighty beast? A new foe from beyond? Evil spirits? We will discover the source of his terror as we listen in on him as he awaits his fate. Hint: It might have something to do with his impending marriage to Guenevere, whom he has never met and is shortly to arrive at Camelot for the nuptials scheduled for tomorrow. Masters of musical theater, Lerner and Lowe once again show their knack for bringing larger than life characters to a very personal level to which we all can relate.

Where is the life that late I led? (*Kiss Me, Kate!*)

Kiss Me, Kate! presents us with an acting troupe in the midst of a production of Shakespeare’s “The Taming of the Shrew”. Action bounces back and forth between backstage antics and those in the stage production itself, as the on and off-stage plots parallel each other with great hilarity and tenderness as well. Here we are onstage with Petruchio, who has just married Kate (i.e., “The Shrew”) in return for an enormous dowery happily given by her father in order to be rid of her. Petruchio bemoans his married life (which has spanned less than a day at this point) as he takes us down a memory lane lined with a bevy of past acquaintances (ladies of the evening).

Meditation I (*Shenandoah*)

Meet Charlie Anderson, a successful farmer and devoted father who has raised a large, loving family in the rich Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, which was to become a focal point of savage fighting and devastation during the American Civil War. We are on the eve of that conflict, and he and his boys are under immense pressure to rally to the cause of the Confederacy. We find him at the graveside of his beloved wife, Martha, where he often returns when burdened by the pressures of life. Here he retraces the past life which they shared together, and the threats now placed upon the present.