DESTINY STROTHERS

Graduate Recital

Murray and Michele Allen Recital Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago
Thursday, May 16, 2024 • 7:00 PM
Allen Recital Hall

**DESTINY STROTHERS, SOPRANO**

*Graduate Recital*

**PROGRAM**

Alessandro Scarlatti (1600-1725); arr. Michael Rondeau
7 Arie con Tromba Sola (1706)
  I. Si suoni la tromba
  IV. Rompe Sprezza

Stefano Donaudy (1879-1925)
36 Arie di Stile Antico (1918)
  O del mio amato ben
  Vaghissima sembianza

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
  Die Bekehrte from *Goethe - Lieder* (1891)
  Die Spröde from *Goethe - Lieder* (1891)
  Mausfallen Sprüchlein from *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme* (1877)
  Elfenlied from *Mörike - Lieder* (1888)

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)
  Prendi, per me sei libero from *L'elisir d'amore* (1832)

- Intermission -

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*Destiny Strothers is from the studio of Dr. Linda Di Fiore. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the degree Master of Music. As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted. Masks are recommended, but not required inside the Holtschneider Performance Center.*
Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) & Raoul Pugno (1852-1914)
S’il arrive jamais from *Les heures claires* (1909)
Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)
Soir d’hiver from *Sept mélodies*, No. 1 (1914-15)
Au bord de la Route from *Cinq mélodies*, No. 4 (1922)
Cantique from *Cinq mélodies*, No. 2 (1909)

Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989)
I Am in Doubt (1975)
To Be Baptized (1979)
Come Down Angels (1978)
Watch and Pray (1972)

William Grant Still (1895-1978)
Give Me No Body Without Your Soul from *Blue Steel* (1934)

This recital is dedicated in memoriam to Walter & Beverlyn Strothers.
Program Notes

Alessandro Scarlatti (1600-1725); arr. Michael Rondeau
7 Arie con Tromba Sola (1706)
Duration: 6 minutes
This set comes from the first and fourth pieces in Alessandro Scarlatti’s 7 Arie con Tromba sola. Scarlatti was born in Palermo, Italy. The son of a tenor, he came from a musical family that was very involved in the arts. After a period of famine, the family endured the loss of their patriarch and moved to Naples. He himself fathered ten children, the sixth being his son Domenico, who became a renowned composer as well. Because of his tremendous musical output of hundreds of opera, orchestral, and vocal works, he is often credited as a significant representative of the Neapolitan School and with creating the Italian opera overture. This particular set was written in 1706 after he left Naples potentially due to the War of the Spanish Succession and likely penned in Rome before Scarlatti traveled to Venice and Urbino. These works have most notably been performed by soprano Kathleen Battle and jazz trumpeter and composer Wynton Marsalis.

Stefano Donaudy (1879-1925)
36 Arie di Stile Antico (1918)
Duration: 7 minutes
The next set is comprised of two pieces from Stefano Donaudy’s most well-known collection, 36 Arie di Stile Antico featuring works written from 1892 onwards, published in 1918 with revisions in 1922. Another native of Palermo, Donaudy penned “Vaghissima sembianza” along with his first opera as early as thirteen years old. His younger brother Alberto wrote the text for much of his catalog. Both pieces center around the theme of love and loss, reminiscing on the past and cherishing the memories in the present, hence the name of the collection (di Stile Antico) translating to in the antique style, juxtaposing Baroque musical forms with contemporary poetry.
Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
Die Bekehrte from Goethe - Lieder (1891)
Die Spröde from Goethe - Lieder (1891)
Mausfallen Sprüchlein from Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme (1877)
Elfenlied from Mörike - Lieder (1888)

Duration: 8 minutes
The next set features four works written by Hugo Wolf. Born in Styria, now Slovenia, he learned piano and violin from his father, his first teacher. He played in a family orchestra with his brother, father, and uncle before heading off to study at the conservatory. After his dismissal in 1877, he returned home and remained with his family for eight months before venturing to Vienna to teach. He dedicated his first publication Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme to his mother while Goethe, Mörike und Lender were dedicated to his father. He voraciously set music to the work of his favorite poet, Eduard Mörike, and then focused on the works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. He often composed in nature, the subject of many of his works. Elfenlied begins with a watchman proclaiming it is the eleventh hour, to which an elf wakes up at the sound thinking he is being summoned, since the German words for eleven and elf are the same. This set lies in the moments between sleep and consciousness, beginning with a passionate moonlit walk and ending with a mystical woodland tale.

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)
Prendi, per me sei libero from L’elisir d’amore (1832)

Duration: 4 minutes
This aria is actually a duet at the end of Donizetti’s opera L’elisir d’amore between the lovelorn Nemorino and his beloved Adina. Nemorino is deeply in love with Adina, who advises him to not pursue her. Heartbroken, he decides to join the military. When Adina learns what Nemorino has done, she purchases his contract and offers it back to him. He refuses to take it until she confesses her love for him. The introduction of this piece is similar to the aria “Come paride vezzoso”, earlier sung by the military officer attempting to woo Adina, suggesting she may be trying to win Nemorino’s heart just the same.
Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) & Raoul Pugno (1852-1914)
S’il arrive jamais from *Les heures claires* (1909)
Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)
Soir d’hiver from *Sept mélodies*, No. 1 (1914-15)
Au bord de la Route from *Cinq mélodies*, No. 4 (1922)
Cantique from *Cinq mélodies*, No. 2 (1909)

*Duration: 10 minutes*

Nadia Boulanger was a prolific composer whose extraordinary life was marred by grief and devastation. Born in Paris, her father was a composer, yet she had no interest in music until the conception of her younger sister, Lili. In 1904, she left for conservatory where she met virtuosic pianist Raoul Pugno. He championed her work, and encouraged her, and they wrote the song cycle *Les heures claires* (1909) together.

Boulanger composed and wrote the poetry for *Soir d’hiver* between 1914 and 1915 in tandem with the First World War. The onset of the war prompted a change among musical artists in reaction to the violent and unsettling uncertainty of a world in turmoil. There was also a great shift in Boulanger’s world after the death of Pugno in 1914. After the death of her sister in 1918, Boulanger took a step back from composing, and took up the mantle of teaching. In a way, restoring the light to fresh composers rather than wallowing in the enveloping darkness. These works outline the trajectory of her emotional investment in composing and transition into becoming one of the most notable teachers of the twentieth century.
Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989)  
*I Am in Doubt* (1975)  
*To Be Baptized* (1979)  
*Come Down Angels* (1978)  
*Watch and Pray* (1972)  
*Duration: 12 minutes*

Lauded as the “Dean of Black Women Composers”, Undine Smith Moore’s celebrated legacy as a highly esteemed teacher and composer lives on through a Pulitzer-nominated oratorio score, a collection of choral works, and a litany of art songs and chamber pieces written for students and commissioned by various organizations throughout the United States. The granddaughter of former slaves, Moore was born in 1904 and raised in Jarratt, Virginia. She matriculated at Fisk University, a historically Black college, graduating with top honors and an undergraduate degree in piano in 1926. An avid student, she continued her studies, earning a Master’s degree and Professional Diploma from Columbia University in 1931 before studying theory and composition at the Manhattan School of Music and Eastman School of Music. She taught at Virginia State until 1972.

*To Be Baptized* and *Watch and Pray* were written for her student Camilla Williams, who sang the national anthem before Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Moore’s *I Am in Doubt* features a myriad of abrupt changes in time signature and rhythmic phrasing to etch out the poetry and signify the inconstant nature of matters of the heart.

William Grant Still (1895-1978)  
*Give Me No Body Without Your Soul* from *Blue Steel* (1934)  
*Duration: 3 minutes*

Remembered similarly as the Dean of African-American Composers, William Grant Still advanced the status of Black artists in both operatic and orchestral repertoire. Still was born in Woodville, Mississippi, to college-educated teachers and children of former slaves. He enrolled in premedical studies to appease his mother in 1911 but left in 1915 before graduating with a degree in music due to serving a year in the Navy during WWI. Regarded as the most prominent composer of art songs during the Harlem Renaissance, he went on to compose hundreds of classical works, popular songs, and arrangements and orchestrations for film, television, musical theatre, and radio. This piece comes from William Grant Still’s first opera, *Blue Steel*. In the opera, Neola, the daughter of the high priest, has fallen for an alluring stranger, Blue Steel.

*Notes by Destiny Strothers*
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