

Amnesty International USA
Group 11
45th Annual Benefit Concert
December 6, 2020

Program

Rondo in C Major, Op. 51, no. 1	Spencer Myer, piano	Ludwig van Beethoven
Litany	Mario Diaz-Moresco, baritone Spencer Myer, piano	John Musto
Violin Sonata No. 1	Herdís Guðmundsdóttir, violin Liam Kaplan, piano	George Walker
Nocturne, from <i>String Poetic</i>	Herdís Guðmundsdóttir, violin Liam Kaplan, piano	Jennifer Higdon
8 Preludes, for solo piano	Liam Kaplan, piano	Liam Kaplan
Widmung (Dedication) from <i>Myrthen, Op. 25</i>	Mario Diaz-Moresco, baritone Spencer Myer, piano	Robert Schumann
An die ferne Geliebte (To the Distant Beloved), Op. 98		Beethoven
1. Auf dem Hügel sitz' ich spähend		
2. Wo die Berge so blau		
3. Leichte Segler in den Höhen		
4. Diese Wolken in den Höhen		
5. Es kehret der Maien		
6. Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder		
	Mario Diaz-Moresco, baritone Spencer Myer, piano	

Litany

Prayer [2]
by Langston Hughes

Gather up
In the arms of your pity
The sick, the depraved,
The desperate, the tired,
All the scum
Of our weary city.
Gather up
In the arms of your pity.
Gather up
In the arms of your love—
Those who expect
No love from above.

—The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes, pp. 138-139

Widmung

Friedrich Rückert

Du meine Seele, du mein Herz,
Du meine Wonn', o du mein Schmerz,
Du meine Welt, in der ich lebe,
Mein Himmel du, darein ich schwebe,
O du mein Grab, in das hinab
Ich ewig meinen Kummer gab!
Du bist die Ruh, du bist der Frieden,
Du bist vom Himmel mir beschieden.
Dass du mich liebst, macht mich mir wert,
Dein Blick hat mich vor mir verklärt,
Du hebst mich liebend über mich,
Mein guter Geist, mein bess'eres Ich!

Dedication

English Translation © [Richard Stokes](#)

You my soul, you my heart,
You my rapture, O you my pain,
You my world in which I live,
My heaven you, to which I aspire,
O you my grave, into which
My grief forever I've consigned!
You are repose, you are peace,
You are bestowed on me from heaven.
Your love for me gives me my worth,
Your eyes transfigure me in mine,
You raise me lovingly above myself,
My guardian angel, my better self!

An die ferne Geliebte

Alois Jeitteles

Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend

Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend
In das blaue Nebelland,
Nach den fernen Triften sehend,
Wo ich dich, Geliebte, fand.
Weit bin ich von dir geschieden,
Trennend liegen Berg und Tal
Zwischen uns und unserm Frieden,
Unserm Glück und unsrer Qual.
Ach, den Blick kannst du nicht sehen,
Der zu dir so glühend eilt,
Und die Seufzer, sie verwehen
In dem Raume, der uns teilt.
Will denn nichts mehr zu dir dringen,
Nichts der Liebe Bote sein?
Singen will ich, Lieder singen,
Die dir klagen meine Pein!
Denn vor Liebesklang entweicht
Jeder Raum und jede Zeit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht!

Wo die Berge so blau

Wo die Berge so blau
Aus dem nebligen Grau
Schauen herein,
Wo die Sonne verglüht,
Wo die Wolke umzieht,
Möchte ich sein!
Dort im ruhigen Tal
Schweigen Schmerzen und Qual.
Wo im Gestein
Still die Primel dort sinnt,
Weht so leise der Wind,
Möchte ich sein!
Hin zum sinnigen Wald
Drängt mich Liebesgewalt,
Innere Pein.
Ach, mich zög's nicht von hier,
Könnt ich, Traute, bei dir
Ewiglich sein!

To the Distant Beloved

English Translation © [Richard Stokes](#)

I sit on the hill, gazing

I sit on the hill, gazing
Into the misty blue countryside,
Towards the distant meadows
Where, my love, I first found you.
Now I'm far away from you,
Mountain and valley intervene
Between us and our peace,
Our happiness and our pain.
Ah, you cannot see the fiery gaze
That wings its way towards you,
And my sighs are lost
In the space that comes between us.
Will nothing ever reach you again?
Will nothing be love's messenger?
I shall sing, sing songs
That speak to you of my distress!
For sounds of singing put to flight
All space and all time;
And a loving heart is reached
By what a loving heart has hallowed!

Where the blue mountains

Where the blue mountains
From the misty grey
Look out towards me,
Where the sun's glow fades,
Where the clouds scud by –
There would I be!
There, in the peaceful valley,
Pain and torment cease.
Where among the rocks
The primrose meditates in silence,
And the wind blows so softly –
There would I be!
I am driven to the musing wood
By the power of love,
Inner pain.
Ah, nothing could tempt me from here,
If I were able, my love,
To be with you eternally!

Leichte Segler in den Höhen

Leichte Segler in den Höhen,
Und du, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Könnt mein Liebchen ihr erspähen,
Grüßt sie mir viel tausendmal.
Seht ihr, Wolken, sie dann gehen
Sinnend in dem stillen Tal,
Laßt mein Bild vor ihr entstehen
In dem luft'gen Himmelssaal.
Wird sie an den Büschen stehen,
Die nun herbstlich falb und kahl.
Klagt ihr, wie mir ist geschehen,
Klagt ihr, Vöglein, meine Qual.
Stille Weste, bringt im Wehen
Hin zu meiner Herzenswahl
Meine Seufzer, die vergehen
Wie der Sonne letzter Strahl.
Flüstr' ihr zu mein Liebesflehen,
Laß sie, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Treu in deinen Wogen sehen
Meine Tränen ohne Zahl!

Diese Wolken in den Höhen

Diese Wolken in den Höhen,
Dieser Vöglein munterer Zug,
Werden dich, o Huldin, sehen.
Nehmt mich mit im leichten Flug!
Diese Weste werden spielen
Scherzend dir um Wang' und Brust,
In den seidnen Locken wühlen. –
Teilt ich mit euch diese Lust!
Hin zu dir von jenen Hügeln
Emsig dieses Bächlein eilt.
Wird ihr Bild sich in dir spiegeln,
Fließ zurück dann unverweilt!

Light clouds sailing on high

Light clouds sailing on high,
And you, narrow little brook,
If you catch sight of my love,
Greet her a thousand times.
If, clouds, you see her walking
Thoughtful in the silent valley,
Let my image loom before her
In the airy vaults of heaven.
If she be standing by the bushes
Autumn has turned fallow and bare,
Pour out to her my fate,
Pour out, you birds, my torment.
Soft west winds, waft my sighs
To her my heart has chosen –
Sighs that fade away
Like the sun's last ray.
Whisper to her my entreaties,
Let her, narrow little brook,
Truly see in your ripples
My never-ending tears!

These clouds on high

These clouds on high,
This cheerful flight of birds
Will see you, O gracious one.
Take me lightly winging too!
These west winds will playfully
Blow about your cheeks and breast,
Will ruffle your silken tresses. –
Would I might share that joy!
This brooklet hastens eagerly
To you from those hills.
If she's reflected in you,
Flows directly back to me!

Es kehret der Maien, es blühet die Au

Es kehret der Maien,
Es blühet die Au,
Die Lüfte, sie wehen
So milde, so lau,
Geschwätzig die Bäche nun rinnen.
Die Schwalbe, die kehret
Zum wirtlichen Dach,
Sie baut sich so emsig
Ihr bräutlich Gemach,
Die Liebe soll wohnen da drinnen.
Sie bringt sich geschäftig
Von kreuz und von Quer
Manch weicherer Stück
Zu dem Brautbett hieher,
Manch wärmendes Stück für die Kleinen.
Nun wohnen die Gatten
Beisammen so treu,
Was Winter geschieden,
Verband nun der Mai,
Was liebet, das weiß er zu einen.
Es kehret der Maien,
Es blühet die Au.
Die Lüfte, sie wehen
So milde, so lau;
Nur ich kann nicht ziehen von hinnen.
Wenn alles, was liebet,
Der Frühling vereint,
Nur unserer Liebe
Kein Frühling erscheint,
Und Tränen sind all ihr Gewinnen.

Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder

Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder,
Die ich dir, Geliebte, sang,
Singe sie dann abends wieder
Zu der Laute süßem Klang!
Wenn das Dämmerungsrot dann ziehet
Nach dem stillen blauen See,
Und sein letzter Strahl verglühet
Hinter jener Bergeshöh;
Und du singst, was ich gesungen,
Was mir aus der vollen Brust
Ohne Kunstgepräg erklingen,
Nur der Sehnsucht sich bewußt:
Dann vor diesen Liedern weichet
Was geschieden uns so weit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweihet!

May returns, the meadow blooms.

May returns,
The meadow blooms.
The breezes blow
So gentle, so mild,
The babbling brooks flow again,
The swallow returns
To its rooftop home,
And eagerly builds
Her bridal chamber,
Where love shall dwell.
She busily brings
From every direction
Many soft scraps
For the bridal bed,
Many warm scraps for her young.
Now the pair lives
Faithfully together,
What winter parted,
May has joined,
For May can unite all who love.
May returns,
The meadow blooms.
The breezes blow
So gentle, so mild;
I alone cannot move on.
When spring unites
All lovers,
Our love alone
Knows no spring,
And tears are its only gain.

Accept, then, these songs

Accept, then, these songs
I sang for you, beloved;
Sing them again at evening
To the lute's sweet sound!
As the red light of evening draws
Towards the calm blue lake,
And its last rays fade
Behind those mountain heights;
And you sing what I sang
From a full heart
With no display of art,
Aware only of longing:
Then, at these songs,
The distance that parted us shall recede,
And a loving heart be reached
By what a loving heart has hallowed!

Translations © Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder*, published by Faber, provided courtesy of Oxford Lieder (www.oxfordlieder.co.uk)

Described as “flawless” by Opera News, baritone **Mario Diaz-Moresco** is fast becoming one of the most visible interpreters on the Recital and New Music stage. Recent highlights include a twice extended run of performances of *To My Distant Love* with OnSite Opera, recitals with pianist Spencer Myer at the Mendocino Music Festival, The Chamber Music Festival of Saugatuck, The Rocky River Chamber Music Society, *The Dichter Project* with the Brooklyn Art Song Society, *NYFOS Next* with Gina Perregrino and Michael Barrett, performances with John Musto and Amy Burton with the Cincinnati Song Initiative, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, Alwan in *Sumeida’s Song* with Opera Maine, *For the Love of Friends* with HUP! Productions, *Beethoven in the Yiddish Imagination* presented by YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and Carnegie Hall as part of Carnegie’s Beethoven Celebration, and performances of the music of Joan La Barbara and Alex Weiser at Roulette Intermedium. Mr. Diaz-Moresco studied at the University of Colorado and the University of Southern California and most recently completed the Professional Studies Diploma program at Mannes The New School. He has been a young artist with Chautauqua Opera, Central City Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, a Stern Fellow at SongFest and a Vocal Fellow at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute. Mr. Diaz-Moresco was a finalist in the 2019 Jensen Foundation Vocal Competition. An active recitalist, his Art Song repertoire includes works by Schumann, Schubert, Beethoven, Vaughan Williams, Beach, Poulenc, Duparc, Fauré, Ravel, Bolcom and Musto. In recent seasons Mr. Diaz-Moresco has given recitals with pianist Spencer Myer on California’s “InConcert Sierra” series, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Series in Chicago, the Rocky River Chamber Music Society of Ohio, the Chamber Music Festival of Saugatuck and the Brooklyn Art Song Society. In 2018 Mr. Diaz-Moresco was a finalist in the Joy in Singing competition. Passionate about new music, Mr. Diaz-Moresco has premiered Laura M. Kramer's song cycle *The Miracle of the Walking Fish*, for voice and guitar, Julia Adolphe's opera *Sylvia* and the song cycle *The Wanderlusting of Joseph C.*, by Joan La Barbara. At the Glimmerglass Festival he covered the role of Bernard DeVoto in the world premiere of Jeanine Tesori’s opera *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck*, and as a Stern Fellow at SongFest Mr. Diaz-Moresco premiered Ben Moore’s *John and Abigail* and sang the baritone soloist in Bernstein’s *Songfest*, in a new arrangement for duo piano and percussion by John Musto. Mr. Diaz-Moresco is currently in his second cycle as a resident singer for American Opera Projects' Composers & the Voice. Other highlights include Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, playing the lead role in Robert Ashley's *Dust*, which was named one of the best classical music performances of 2017 by the New York Times, William in *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Glass), and singing the baritone role in *Hydrogen Jukebox* at Chautauqua Opera, under maestro Steven Osgood. Recitals and concerts include a second appearance with the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Series in Chicago, singing in the Philadelphia Orchestra's concert version of *West Side Story*, numerous appearances with the Brooklyn Art Song Society and a performance of *The Wanderlusting of Joseph C.* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mr. Diaz-Moresco is a student of Diana Soviero.

Born in Reykjavík, Iceland, **Herdís Guðmundsdóttir** began playing the violin at age 5 and is currently a senior at Oberlin Conservatory studying with Sibbi Bernhardsson. She graduated with a Diploma in 2017 from the Listaháskóli Íslands, where she studied with Guðný Guðmundsdóttir. She won first place in the 2014 Nótan Music Festival Competition in Reykjavík, and received honorable mention for chamber music in 2013. She has performed as a soloist with the Reykjavik College of Music Orchestra, the Icelandic Youth Orchestra and the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra. This November she premiered a violin concerto written for her by Liam Kaplan with the Oberlin Contemporary Ensemble conducted by Tim Weiss. Guðmundsdóttir has played in master classes led by Midori, Almita Vamos, Pamela Frank, and the Takács Quartet, among others. She has taken part in summer music programs including the Music Academy of the West, Voksenasen, Harpa International Music Academy, and the Chautauqua Institute of Music Festival.

Pianist and composer **Liam Kaplan** has appeared at Weill Recital Hall, Tenri Cultural Institute, Merkin Hall, and many other venues across the United States. He has enjoyed the performance of his compositions by ETHEL, the Talea Ensemble, the Locrian Chamber Players, the Da Capo Chamber Players, and the JACK Quartet, among others. Kaplan has made solo appearances in Bartok's 3rd Piano Concerto with the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra and in Messiaen's *Couleurs de la cité céleste* with the Oberlin Sinfonietta. Herdís Guðmundsdóttir recently premiered his Violin Concerto with Tim Weiss and the Oberlin Contemporary Ensemble. In 2018, Raphael Jiménez led the Oberlin Chamber Orchestra in the premiere of his new work *Rhapsody on a Chorale* for string orchestra. This year, he released his second album featuring Bach's Goldberg Variations, Orpheus Suite by Elizabeth Ogonek, and his own 8 Preludes for Solo Piano which earned a 2019 BMI Student Composer Award. His debut recording of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II was released in July 2019, supported by a FIG Grant from Oberlin Conservatory.

Kaplan is currently pursuing his Master of Music degree in Piano Performance under the tutelage of Julian Martin at the Juilliard School, where he is a recipient of the Elisabeth Smith Scholarship. He graduated from Oberlin Conservatory in 2020 with a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and Composition, studying with Alvin Chow and Stephen Hartke. He is the fourth student to successfully complete Oberlin's Honors Program in Piano Performance since its inception in 2001. Kaplan won Oberlin's Senior Concerto, John Elvin, and Rudolf Serkin competitions, as well as the Faustina Hurlbutt Prize, the Walter E. Aschaffenburg Prize, the Pi Kappa Lambda Prize for Musicianship, the Ernst Hatch Wilkins Memorial Prize and the OFMC Agnes Fowler Scholarship. He has participated in summer music festivals including the Aspen Music Festival and School where he won the 2019 ACA Piano Concerto Competition, the Meadowmount School of Music, and Art of the Piano at CCM. Kaplan studied piano with Marcia Eckert, composition with Eleanor Cory, double bass with Judith Sugarman, and music theory with Gordon Minette at Mannes Prep. Piano teachers also include his mentor Seymour Bernstein, who is the subject of Ethan Hawke's acclaimed documentary, *Seymour: An Introduction*, in which he is a featured performer.

Lauded for "superb playing" and "poised, alert musicianship" by the *Boston Globe*, and labeled "definitely a man to watch" by London's *The Independent*, American pianist **Spencer Myer** is one of the most respected and sought-after artists on today's concert stage. Spencer Myer included in his most recent season returns to the Boise and Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonics, and solo recitals and chamber music collaborations throughout the United States, including an appearance with Jamie Bernstein at Washington, D.C.'s National Museum of Women in the Arts for a special performance of Leonard Bernstein's complete "Anniversaries".

Myer's orchestral, recital and chamber music performances have been heard throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa and Asia. He has been soloist with The Cleveland Orchestra, the Boise, Dayton, Rhode Island, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestras, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, the Baton Rouge, Indianapolis, Knoxville, New Haven, Omaha, Phoenix, Santa Fe and Tucson Symphony Orchestras, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Mexico's Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco and Beijing's China National Symphony Orchestra, collaborating with, among others, conductors Michael Christie, Leslie B. Dunner, Robert Franz, Bernhard Gueller, Jacques Lacombe, Jahja Ling, Timothy Muffitt, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Kevin Rhodes, Lucas Richman, Steven Smith, Thomas Wilkins and Victor Yampolsky. His 2005 recital/orchestral tour of South Africa included a performance of the five piano concerti of Beethoven with the Chamber Orchestra of South Africa, followed by return orchestra and recital tours in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2018.

Spencer Myer's recital appearances have been presented in New York City's Weill Recital Hall, 92nd Street Y and Steinway Hall, Philadelphia's Kimmel Center and London's Wigmore Hall, while many of his performances have been broadcast on WQXR (New York City), WHYI (Philadelphia), WCLV

(Cleveland) and WFMT (Chicago). An in-demand chamber musician, he has appeared for five summers at the Lev Aronson Legacy Festival in Dallas with cellists Lynn Harrell, Ralph Kirshbaum, Amit Peled and Brian Thornton, and has enjoyed a recurring partnership with the Miami String Quartet at the Kent/Blossom Music Festival. Other artistic partners include clarinetist David Shifrin, sopranos Nicole Cabell, Martha Guth and Erin Wall, the Jupiter and Pacifica string quartets and the Dorian Wind Quintet.

Spencer Myer's career was launched with three important prizes: First Prize in the 2004 UNISA International Piano Competition in South Africa, the 2006 Christel DeHaan Classical Fellowship from the American Pianists Association and the Gold Medal from the 2008 New Orleans International Piano Competition. He is also a laureate of the 2007 William Kapell, 2005 Cleveland and 2005 Busoni International Piano Competitions. He enjoys an esteemed reputation as a vocal collaborator since winning the 2000 Marilyn Horne Foundation Competition. Mr. Myer was a member of Astral Artists' performance roster from 2003-2010.

An enthusiastic supporter of the education of young musicians, Spencer Myer has served as a guest faculty at the Oberlin and Baldwin-Wallace Conservatories of Music, and in the fall of 2015, he was appointed Artist-Teacher of Piano and Collaborative Piano at Boston's Longy School of Music of Bard College.

Spencer Myer's debut CD for *harmonia mundi usa* - solo music of Busoni, Copland, Debussy and Kohls - was released in the fall of 2007 to critical acclaim by *Fanfare* and *Gramophone* magazines. Mr. Myer has released four CDs on the *Steinway & Sons* label since 2017: Piano Rags of William Bolcom, and three discs with cellist Brian Thornton encompassing cello/piano repertoire of Brahms, Debussy and Schumann.

Spencer Myer is a Steinway Artist.

www.spencermeyer.com