



School of  
**Music**

College of Arts and Sciences  
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Friday, September 18, 2020

7:30 pm

Recording Studio

## Faculty Artist Series

presents

### *In His Hand: Songs of Inspiration*

*Julie Anne Wieck, soprano*

*Elena Panchenko, piano*

#### *Program*

We Sing to Him (1688)  
Lord, what is Man (1693)

Henry Purcell  
(1659-1695)

Zum neuen Jahr  
Gebet  
Neue Liebe  
from *Mörrike Lieder* (1888)

Hugo Wolf  
(1860-1903)

Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante (from *Carmen*)

Georges Bizet  
(1838-1875)

The Prayer of the Little Bird  
The Prayer of the Goldfish  
The Prayer of the Cat  
The Prayer of the Lark  
The Prayer of the Butterfly  
The Prayer of the Dove  
from *Prayers From the Ark* (1962)

Theron Kirk  
(1919-1999)

He's Got the Whole World In His Hand

Arr. by Margaret Bonds  
(1913-1972)

Grief

William Grant Still  
(1895-1978)

Hold Out Your Light

Arr. by Lena McLin  
(b. 1928)

This concert was presented via livestream in accordance with restrictions related to the containment of COVID-19. No audience was present at the time of this performance.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

**Henry Purcell (1659-1695)** is considered one of England's greatest Baroque composers; he was honored during his lifetime and was a major influence on the composers of the English musical renaissance in the early 20th Century. He served simultaneously as the organist at the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey, composing works for the keyboard and other instrumental ensembles. Purcell's compositions for the voice include choral works, opera and music for the theater, songs and ayres, as well as hymns and anthems for the church.

Anthems for soprano and basso continuo were published in a sacred collection entitled *Harmonia Sacra* in 1688 and 1693, along with works by other composers and dedicated to the queen. The works are non-liturgical but speak to man's relationship with God. A 19th Century poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, wrote in the headnote of his sonnet honoring Purcell that "The poet wishes well to the divine genius of Purcell and praises him that, whereas other musicians have given utterance to the moods of man's mind, he has, beyond that, uttered in notes the very make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally."

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903) was an Austrian child prodigy who struggled with conventional education and success throughout his life, often due to disciplinary problems, bouts of depression and his unconventional ideas about music. A Wagner devotee, Wolf developed his own unique compositional style, writing mostly art song, in an intensely expressive and compact form, closely uniting music and text through his use of tonality shifts and chromaticism. He was an avid reader of poetry and focused on one poet or poetic source at a time; his songs or lieder were published in sets determined by the poetry. Due to his mental illness, he often composed in a frenzy. In the years 1888 – 1890, Wolf composed fifty-three Mörike, thirteen Eichendorff, and fifty-one Goethe settings, as well as a set of Spanish songs, totaling 174 lieder in two and a half years. Wolf's songs often seem to depict the anguish of his life, but the subject matter varies greatly from secular, humorous, and even folksy texts, to more thought-provoking and sacred expressions.

**Georges Bizet (1838-1875)** is most well-known as the French Romantic composer of the widely performed opera, *Carmen*. The premiere, however, was not well-received at the time, due mostly to what were perceived as immoral characters and a story line that included cigarette girls, soldiers, smugglers, and a bullfighter embroiled in betrayal and murder. The one exception is the character, Micaela, an innocent village girl who attempts to redeem her childhood sweetheart and soldier, Don Jose and save him from the clutches of the beautiful, dangerous *Carmen*. In Act Three, Micaela follows Don Jose, who has assisted *Carmen* in escaping arrest and deserted into the mountains. She stands outside the smugglers' camp and prays for the courage to face what lies ahead.

**Theron Kirk (1919-1999)** was an American composer who spent the majority of his professional career in academia, teaching at San Antonio College from 1955 until he retired in 1986. He taught choir, band and orchestra, and served as department chair and President of the American Choral Directors Association. Kirk published over 1,000 compositions including works for band, orchestra, choir, and organ but the vast majority were sacred choral works. As for solo repertoire, he only composed one set of songs, *Prayers from the Ark*, a cycle for soprano, tenor, bass/baritone and orchestra or piano, based on poems by Carmen Bernos de Gasztold, a 20th Century French nun and poet. The poems were discovered in a convent kitchen and translated by Rumer Godden, later published in a children's book.

**Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)** was born and raised in Chicago, starting her piano studies with her mother, a trained musician. By the age of eight, she enrolled in the Coleridge Taylor Music School, named for the first black musician appointed as conductor of the Handel Society of London. She studied composition with Florence Price. At the age of sixteen Bonds enrolled at Northwestern University, one of only a few black students allowed to study there, but she was not allowed to use the facilities or live on campus. It was in this prejudiced environment that she first found a book of poetry by Langston Hughes. His poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" gave her the courage to continue. Later in life she would befriend Hughes and set some of his poetry in song. Margaret Bonds completed her bachelors and masters degrees in five years. In 1934 she became the first African American woman to perform with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Throughout her life she continued playing, teaching piano and composing, mostly for the voice. She became one of the first African American musicians to gain recognition.

**William Grant Still (1895-1978)** has often been called the "Dean of Afro-American Composers" because of his groundbreaking accomplishments. He started his college studies at Wilberforce University, a historically black college, but then transferred to Oberlin Conservatory of Music to study composition. He composed almost 200 works for orchestra, band, chorus, chamber ensembles, ballet, opera, solo instruments and voice. His most well-known work is his first symphony, Afro-American Symphony, but his career was full of many firsts for black musicians. These milestones included the first black conductor of a major symphony orchestra, first symphony performed by a leading orchestra, and first opera produced at New York City Opera. As part of the intellectual and artistic movement in the early 20th Century called the Harlem Renaissance, Still worked to help promote the literary, visual and performing arts of African Americans.

**Lena McLin (b. 1928)** grew up in the church in Atlanta and Chicago; her father was a Baptist pastor and her mother was a music minister. She began studying piano at an early age and for a time lived with her uncle, Thomas Dorsey, known as the father of gospel music, which expanded her musical education. McLin received her Bachelor of Music degree in piano and violin at Spelman College in Atlanta and her master's degree at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. A lifelong educator, garnering many honors, McLin taught music in Chicago public high schools for 36 years. She also founded her own ensemble and opera company to create performance opportunities for black musicians. Her award-winning choirs have appeared throughout the country, as well as on television and radio. Many of her students have become professional musicians, such as actor/singer Mandy Patinkin, opera singer Mark Rucker and R&B artist, Robert "R" Kelly. McLin has published over 400 compositions including cantatas, masses, solo and choral arrangements of spirituals, anthems, works for piano and orchestra and electronic music. In an interview in 2000 Lena McLin said "Music to me is my way of praising God, my way of praising life...Just think what the world would be without music."