

**LUCA PISARONI, *bass-baritone***  
**MACIEJ PIKULSKI, *piano***

IN RECITAL

PROGRAM

- “Amore e morte”  
from *Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata* Gaetano Donizetti  
(1797 - 1848)
- “La conacchia”  
from *Nuits d'été à Pausilippe*
- “Amor marinaro”  
from *Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata*
- From *Composizioni da Camera* Vincenzo Bellini  
(1801 - 1835)  
8. Dolente immagine di Fille mia  
11. Vanne, o rosa fortunata  
9. Vaga luna, che inargenti
- “Il rimprovero” (Mi lagnerò tacendo)  
from *Les soirées musicales* Gioacchino Rossini  
(1792 - 1868)
- “L'ultimo ricordo”  
from *Péchés de vieillesse*, Vol. 1: Album italiano, no. 4
- “L'orgia”  
from *Les soirées musicales*
- “Ma belle amie est morte” (Lamento), CG 404 Charles Gounod  
(1818 - 1893)
- “Priere” (Ah! si vous saviez comme on pleure)
- “Où voulez-vous aller?” (Dites, la jeune belle)
- “Le soir,” CG. 441
- “Aimons-nous!” CG. 449
- “Sonnet” Camille Saint-Saëns  
(1835 - 1921)
- “Clair de lune”
- “Extase”
- “Si vous n'avez rien à me dire”
- “Danse macabre”

# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

*Notes by Ellen Goodnight*

For our final virtual recital, we are pleased to present a spirited program by Italian bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni, accompanied by Polish pianist Maciej Pikulski. Mr. Pisaroni and Mr. Pikulski have dedicated the first half of their recital to the three great composers of the operatic *bel canto* era: Donizetti, Bellini, and Rossini (or as I like to call them, the Bel Canto Boys). The term *bel canto* in English literally means “beautiful singing,” and refers to both the compositional style and vocal technique of predominantly Italian vocal music that prevailed in Europe during the 18th and early 19th centuries. During this era, dramatic expression centered on precision in the voice and the beauty and brilliance of performance. Compositional features of *bel canto* opera worked their way into vocal chamber music, as exemplified by the selections on this program.

We begin with Gaetano Donizetti’s (1797-1848) “**Amore e morte**” (“Love and death”) from *Soirées d’automne à l’Infrascata* (“Autumn evenings at Infrascata”) which takes the form of a final message from a narrator on his deathbed to his love, Elvira. The original text for this piece is by Italian poet Giovanni Antonio Luigi Redaelli (1785-1815) and was titled “Ad Elvira.” Then, we have “**La conacchia**” (“The distaff”) from *Nuits d’été à Pausillipe* (“Summer nights at Posillipo”): a coquettish piece from the perspective of a young woman who parades herself in front of her window to catch the attention of a young man. What I find most interesting about this piece is how similar it sounds to parts of Giuseppe Verdi’s iconic “Brindisi” from *La Traviata*. The larger work, *Nuits d’été à Pausillipe*, is an album of ariettas, romanzas, nocturnos, and duettinos published in 1836 specifically for chamber performance. This collection of works was heavily influenced by Donizetti’s time living in Naples. Many of the texts, including “La conacchia,” are in the Neapolitan dialect and Posillipo (Pausillipe) is a hillside overlooking the bay of Naples. Also from *Soirées d’automne à l’Infrascata*, we have “**Amor marinaro**” (“Sailor’s love”), another Neapolitan folk text often known by its first line “Me voglio fà ‘na casa miez’ ‘o mare” (“I want to build a house surrounded by the sea”).

Next, we hear three pieces from Vincenzo Bellini’s (1801-1835) *Composizioni da Camera* (“Compositions for the chamber” or “Chamber compositions”). *Composizioni* is a collection of fifteen pieces written for voice and piano, likely composed in the 1820s during Bellini’s time in Naples and Milan. However, it wasn’t until the centenary of his death in 1935 that these pieces were published, first under this title by Ricordi. It’s actually unlikely that Bellini would consider these fifteen pieces a work unto itself; prior to the publication of the *Composizioni da Camera*, “**Dolente immagine di Fille mia**” (“Sorrowful image of my Phyllis”) was published in *Tre ariette inedite* (“Three unpublished ariettes”) along with two other songs, including the final piece of his on this program. This collection was released in 1838, only three years after the composer’s death. Nevertheless, drama and intrigue follow the pieces in this collection, and in the case of “Dolente immagine,” in an almost Shakespearean fashion. Bellini’s lifelong friend Francesco Florimo insisted that this piece was a setting of a poem by Maddalena Fumaroli, one of Bellini’s pupils with whom he had shared a mutual attraction. Though Maddalena’s father forbade them from marrying, they kept their love secret until 1826 when Bellini left Naples to fulfill a commission in Milan. Shortly thereafter, he gained considerable fame after the success of his operas *Il pirata* (1827) and *La straniera* (1829) at La Scala. Maddalena’s father wrote to Bellini, explaining he had a change of heart and now granted him permission to marry his daughter, but by then it was too late. Bellini had lost interest in Maddalena and found new interest in his growing fame. Maddalena died after receiving the news, presumably of a broken heart. This would be a great story of course, but alas. The manuscript for “Dolente immagine” is dated 1821, one year before Bellini and Maddalena even met.

That said, the piece’s sorrowful, poignant flavor lends itself easily to the overall drama encapsulated in these three pieces. While the romanzas in the *Composizioni* might contain more dramatic flair, the ariettes remain rather simple in style. In “**Vanne, o rosa fortunata**” (“Go, oh fortunate rose”) the opening strain is punctuated by two short clauses before reaching a coda, the melodic line of which rises sequentially before falling to the final cadence. Moreover, “**Vaga luna, che inaregenti**” (“Lovely moon, who sheds silver light”) maintains a strophic form with minimal accompaniment. Though equally beautiful, it draws such a stark contrast to the almost melodramatic arias in Bellini’s operas like “Casta diva” from *Norma*.

To round off our time with the Bel Canto Boys, we have three songs by Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868); two of which are from the *Les soirées musicales* ("Musical evenings"). Following the roaring success of Rossini's final opera *William Tell* in 1831, Rossini decided to retire from the stage and committed the rest of his life to chamber works. The twelve songs that comprise *Les soirées musicales* were written between 1830 and 1835, before being published as a single work in 1835. The first three pieces use texts by Pietro Antonio Domenico Trapassi, better known by his pseudonym Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782), a prolific poet and librettist, largely considered to be the father of *opera seria* libretti. The first of these songs we will hear is "**Il rimprovero**" ("The reproach"), which was said to be Rossini's favorite Metastasian text. The original manuscript to this song is dated May 14, 1832 and bears a dedication to "Cécile."

Our next piece is from another set from Rossini's post-operatic career, *Péchés de vieillesse* ("Sins of old age"). This collection contains over 150 pieces of vocal, chamber, and solo pieces, all grouped into fourteen different albums that had previously gone unpublished. The first of these fourteen albums, *Album italiano* contains a song whose text might appear familiar to us. "**L'ultimo ricordo**" ("The last memory") is Rossini's setting of Redaelli's poem used in Donizetti's "Amore e morte." In Rossini's original setting of the poem, he replaced Elvira with the name of his wife, Olympe, who had nursed him back to health after the composer took ill. With that added context, it is almost impossible to miss the guttural pain our narrator is feeling as he presses a withered flower into the hand of his beloved.

We then return to *Les soirées musicales* for the final Italian piece on this program, "**L'orgia**" ("The orgy") whose text is by politician-turned-poet Carlo Pepoli (1796 - 1881), best known for writing the libretto for Bellini's *I Puritani* which premiered in Paris in 1835. This rousing drinking song emulates the chaotic bliss one might experience when in the presence of Cupid, the god of love (also known by his Greek name, Eros) and Bacchus (Dionysus), god of wine and festivities.

Our program continues with two sets of French *mélodies* by composers who, like our Bel Canto Boys, composed a number of songs but were better known for their larger works. The term *mélodie* refers to the accompanied French art song of the 19th and 20th centuries similar to German Lieder. They usually consisted of a serious lyric poem set for solo voice and piano and were composed in such a way that unified the poetic and musical forms to increase the emotion and drama of the piece. Some of the very first *mélodies* were composed by Hector Berlioz (1803-1869), who was also among the first to use the term to describe this type of work. His song cycle, *Les nuits d'été* ("Summer nights," 1841) is considered to be the exemplary work for the genre and was a source of inspiration for our next composer, Charles Gounod (1818-1893). However, whatever chronological advantage Berlioz had, Gounod surpassed him in compositional quality and elegance. In fact, fellow French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) regarded Gounod as "the true founder of the *mélodie* in France."

The first piece we will hear from Gounod is "**Ma belle amie est morte**" ("My beautiful love is dead") composed in London in 1872 and marks an interaction between Gounod and Berlioz. The text, published in 1838 and originally titled "Lamento" with the subtitle: "La chanson du pêcheur" ("The fisherman's song"), is by French poet, dramatist, and critic Théophile Gautier (1811 - 1872). Berlioz set many of Gautier's poems to music, including his previously mentioned inaugural cycle *Les nuits d'été*. Gounod's setting of the same text was undoubtedly inspired by Berlioz, but the execution could not be more different. For starters, Gounod omitted nearly half of the poem in his setting, using only the lines he felt served his needs for the music. The result is a seamless musical structure that, despite the fact that it is not strophic, contains a richness in the harmonic language that almost feels like it was written by Henri Duparc (1848-1933) or another one of Gounod's younger contemporaries. Similarly, the text used for our piece, "**Priere**" ("Prayer"), is by Sully Prudhomme (1839-1907), a French poet and essayist most often associated with Duparc. While this piece has all of the hallmarks of a classic Gounod song, the piano introduction and interlude have a faster tempo than the vocal line, a rather old-fashioned compositional device.

We return to the writings of Gautier with "**Où voulez-vous aller?**" ("Where would you like to go?"). This text was originally published in Gautier's *La Comédie de la mort* in 1838 under the title "Barcarole," in reference to the traditional folk songs sung by Venetian gondoliers. In most classical settings, a barcarole is composed in 6/8 meter,

a tempo reminiscent of the gondolier's stroke. A better-known setting of this piece, albeit more turbulent in execution, is "L'île inconnue" ("The unknown island"), also from Berlioz's *Nuits d'été* cycle. However, unlike "Ma belle amie est morte," Gounod's setting predates Berlioz's by a year; another example of just how prolific Gounod's skill in *mélodie* truly was. He continues to transcend the expectations set forth by composers often thought to be his predecessors. Moreover, while this piece is in French, one can clearly hear the Italianate influence in its almost *bel canto* style and phrasing.

Continuing on, we next hear "**Le soir**," **CG. 441** ("The evening") based on a poem of the same name from *Méditations poétiques* by Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869) published in 1820. The *Méditations* was a crucial work that ushered in the Romantic movement in French literature, while simultaneously inspiring the works of French composers like Franz Liszt (1811-1886). While Gounod's musical interpretations of Lamartine's works are less flashy and spectacular than Liszt's, Gounod demonstrates his innate ability to capture the tone of the text in a way that is both lofty and celestial in nature but also intensely personal and sincere. As such, "Le soir" remains in the vocal repertory as the quintessential Gounod song: containing long vocal lines with graceful melodies foreshadowed in the piano introduction, and key changes at the beginning of the second and fifth verses that indicate some drama without laying it on too thick.

Finally, we bid adieu to Gounod with "**Aimons-nous!**" **CG. 449** ("Let us love!"), a bright and cheerful piece with syncopations rippling through the piano accompaniment beneath a long and gorgeous melody in the voice. The text for this piece comes from Jules Barbier (1825-1901), another poet who was also a famous opera librettist. Barbier is best known for his libretti for some of Gounod's own works including *Faust*, *La reine de Saba*, and *Roméo et Juliette*, as well as *The Tales of Hoffmann* by Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) and *Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896).

To close out this performance, Mr. Pisaroni will grace us with a set of more French art songs, this time by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921). Saint-Saëns had dabbled in song composition from the time he was six years old and would go on to write more than 140 throughout his musical career. While most compositional elements of his pieces followed the same trajectory of other French Romantic composers, Saint-Saëns was highly sensitive to word setting and took great care to compose motifs that served the text. He once told a young Lili Boulanger (1893-1918) that musical talent was not enough to write effective songs, "you must study the French language in depth; it is indispensable." And what better way to explore Saint-Saëns's mastery of language than with a piece based on a poem by the iconic Lord Byron? The text for this lesser-known piece, "**Sonnet**" was taken from *The Corsair* by English poet George Gordon Byron (1788-1824), better known as just Lord Byron, and translated into French by Benjamin Laroche (1797-1852).

Next is another lesser-known gem: "**Clair de lune**" ("Moonlight") published in 1866 and based on the poem by French poet and intellectual Catulle Mendès (1841-1909); not to be confused with a more famous piece of the same name by Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918), the text for which is by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896). This piece was composed right before Saint-Saëns began working on his very first opera, *Le timbre d'argent*. At this point in time, all of Saint-Saëns's songs, as well as their dedications, reflected an air of longing and excitement for the next phase of his artistic career. "Clair de lune" was dedicated to Mme Marie Barbier, the wife of the aforementioned Jules Barbier, who wrote the libretto for Saint-Saëns's operatic debut.

The texts for these next two pieces come from one of the most influential and celebrated poets of the French Romantic movement: Victor Hugo (1802-1885). First published in *Les Chants du Crépuscule* ("Twilight Songs") in 1835, Hugo's poem "Puisque j'ai mis ma lèvre" was set by Saint-Saëns in 1860, then published four years later under the title "**Extase**" ("Ecstasy"). Of course, Hugo's work has been a treasure trove of inspiration for musicians and composers for centuries, but this poem in particular has been set by many French composers from the late 19th century, including Saint-Saëns's own student Gabriel Fauré (1845 - 1924), plus Reynaldo Hahn (1874- 1947) and Emiliano Renaud (1875-1932).

We continue with Hugo's texts with "**Si vous n'avez rien à me dire**" ("If you have nothing to tell me") set in 1870, but not published until 1896. This piece is intriguing from a compositional standpoint for a few reasons. For one, it's almost sparse melody contradicts the practices of most salon songs in the 1870s, during which time, salon songs had rich, overflowing themes. Instead, Saint-Saëns keeps the attention focused on vocal display and color with an almost minimalist approach to the melodic construction. For this reason, "Si vous" could almost be mistaken for a song by Hahn, who was born five years after this song was even written. Moreover, the main theme in the vocal line of "Si vous" is almost prophetic to that of "L'Indifférent," the third piece in Maurice Ravel's song cycle, *Shéhérazade*, which was not performed until 1904.

To conclude this rich and effervescent program, we will hear the predecessor to one of Saint-Saëns's most iconic pieces, "**Danse macabre**" ("Dance of Death"). Before the great orchestral work of the same name, there was the song; Saint-Saëns's setting of the poem by French physician and symbolist poet Henri Cazalis (1840-1909). The Dance of Death (also known as *Totentanz* in German) is an artistic allegory dating back to the Late Middle Ages wherein the personification of Death summons the deceased by playing a violin and encouraging them to dance on their collective graves. It served as a reminder of the fragility of life and universality of death, and progressed throughout Western Medieval culture, particularly in France during the time of the bubonic plague and remained as a pillar in French folklore. Saint-Saëns published his setting of Cazalis's poem for solo voice and piano in 1873 before reworking it into a tone poem for orchestra that premiered two years later.

While the orchestral version (opus 40) has become a staple in Western classical music, and even in film and popular music, one can clearly see where the musical elements that make this orchestral piece so influential originated in the vocal version. These elements are expanded on the orchestral version in an effort to enhance the drama and imagery in a form where Cazalis's text is absent. For example, both versions start with repeated tritones, the infamous *diabolus in musica* (Latin for "the Devil in music") or the Devil's third. Of course, in the solo vocal version, this opening is heard in the piano accompaniment, but in the orchestral reworking, Saint-Saëns wrote it for solo violin in reference, of course, to Death himself. Perhaps these tritones are merely Death tuning his instrument before leading the rest of the orchestra in the main dance theme before returning to the vocal line, which is traded for solo flute in the orchestral version. This begins a pattern of call and response between the string and wind sections, mirroring that of the voice and piano. Later on in the piece, where the piano has trills and the theme doubled on the octave in the right hand, the orchestra has the same theme but in the percussion section, alluding to the skeletons' bones cracking as they dance. Obviously, the piano/vocal version does not have the instrumentation utilized in the orchestra version, but one might say these two pieces share a sort of musical skeleton.

# TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

## Donizetti: "Amore e morte" from *Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata*

Text by Giovanni Antonio Luigi Redaelli (1785 - 1815) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### Amore e morte

Odi di un uom, che muore,  
Odi l'estremo suon,  
Questo appassito fiore  
Ti lascio, Elvira, in don.

Quanto prezioso ei sia  
Tu dei saperlo appien;  
Nel dì che fosti mia  
Te lo involai dal sen.

Simbolo allor d'affetto,  
Or pegno di dolor;  
Torni a posarti in petto  
Questo appassito fior;

E avrai nel cor scolpito,  
Se duro il cor non è,  
Come ti fu rapito,  
Come ritorna a te.

### Love and death

Hear from a dying man,  
Hear his last sound,  
This withered flower,  
I leave you, Elvira, as a gift.

How precious it is,  
You know it well;  
On the day that you were mine,  
I stole it from your breast.

Once a symbol of affection,  
Now a pledge of pain.  
Returned to its place on your breast,  
This withered flower.

And you will have engraved in your heart,  
If it is not hardened,  
How it once was stolen,  
And how it returns to you.

## Donizetti: "La conacchia" from *Nuits d'été à Pausilippe*

Neapolitan folk song | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### La conocchia

Quann'a lo bello mio voglio parlare,  
ca spisso me ne vene lu golio,  
a la fenestra me mett'a filare,  
quann'a lo bello mio voglio parlare.

Quann' isso passa, po' rompo lo filo,  
e con na grazia me mett' a priare,  
bello, peccarità, proitemilo,  
isso lu piglia, e io lo stò a guardare.  
E accossi me ne va' mpilo, ah jemmè!

### The distaff\*

When I wish to speak to the one I love,  
as I often want to do,  
I sit down to spin at my window,  
when I wish to speak to the one I love.

When he passes, I break the thread [*so the spindle falls to my feet*]  
and then with grace begin to ask,  
"My dear, please pick that up for me,"  
he bends to pick it up, and I stand watching him.  
And so is lit in me a fire that shall burn forever!

\* A distaff is a tool used in spinning designed to hold the unspun fibers and keep them untangled during the spinning process

## Donizetti: "Amor marinaro" from *Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata*

Neapolitan folk song | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### Amor marinaro

Me voglio fà 'na casa miez' 'o mare  
Fravecata de penne de pavune,  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

D'oro e d'argiento li scaline fare  
E de prete preziose li barcune,  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

Quanno Nennella mia se va affacciare  
Ognuno dice, "mò sponta lu sole."  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

### Sailor's love

I want to build a house surrounded by the sea  
Made of the feathers of a peacock.  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

Of gold and of silver, I will make the stairs  
And of precious stones, the balconies.  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

When my Nennella leans out  
Everyone will say, "here comes the sun."  
Tralla la le la, tra la la la.

## Bellini: Songs from *Composizioni da Camera*

### 8. Dolente immagine di Fille mia

Text by Anonymous

Dolente immagine di Fille mia,  
perché sì squallida mi siedi accanto?  
Che più desideri? Diritto pianto  
io sul tuo cenere versai finor.

Temi che immemore de' sacri giuri  
io possa accendermi ad altra face?  
Ombra di Fillide, riposa in pace;  
è inestinguibile l'antico ardor.

### 11. Vanne, o rosa fortunate

Text by Pietro Metastasio [Trapassi] (1698 - 1782)

Vanne, o rosa fortunata,  
a posar di Nice in petto  
ed ognun sarà costretto  
la tua sorte invidiar.

Oh, se in te potessi anch'io  
transformarmi un sol momento;  
non avria più bel contento  
questo core a sospirar.

Ma tu inchini dispettosa,  
bella rosa impallidita,  
la tua fronte scolorita  
dallo sdegno e dal dolor.

Bella rosa, è destinata  
ad entrambi un'ugual sorte;  
là trovar dobbiam la morte,  
tu d'invidia ed io d'amor.

### 9. Vaga luna, che inargenti

Text by Anonymous

Vaga luna, che inargenti  
queste rive e questi fiori  
ed ispiri agli elementi  
il linguaggio dell'amor;  
testimonio or sei tu sola  
del mio fervido desir,  
ed a lei che m'innamora  
conta i palpiti e i sospir.

Dille pur che lontananza  
il mio duol non può lenir,  
che se nutro una speranza,  
ella è sol nell'avvenir.  
Dille pur che giorno e sera  
conto l'ore del dolor,  
che una speme lusinghiera  
mi conforta nell'amor.

### 8. Sorrowful image of my Phyllis

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

Sorrowful image of my Phyllis,  
why do you sit so desolate beside me?  
What more do desire? Streams of tears  
have I poured on your ashes.

Do you fear that, forgetful of sacred vows,  
that I might burn by another flame?  
Shadow of Phyllis, rest in peace;  
the flame of our love is inextinguishable.

### 11. Go, oh fortunate rose

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

Go, oh fortunate rose,  
to rest at Nice's breast  
and all will be forced  
to envy your fate.

Oh, if I could, into you  
transform myself for just a moment,  
no longer with happiness  
would this heart sigh.

But you bow your head with spite,  
beautiful pale rose,  
your brow loses all color  
from scorn and from pain.

Beautiful rose, it is destined,  
for us both an equal fate;  
we must find death there,  
you from envy and I of love.

### 9. Lovely moon, who sheds silver light

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

Lovely moon, who sheds silver light  
On these shores and on these flowers  
Inspires the elements  
To breathe the language of love;  
I testify now to you alone  
Of my fervent desire,  
And she who falls in love with me  
Can recount my heartbeats and sighs.

Tell her too that distance  
Cannot soothe my grief,  
That if I nourish a hope,  
It is only for the future.  
Tell her that day and night,  
I count the hours of pain,  
That a flattering hope  
Comforts me in my love.

**Rossini: "Il rimprovero" (Mi lagnerò tacendo) from *Les soirées musicales***  
Text by Pietro Metastasio [Trapassi] (1698 - 1782) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**Il rimprovero**

Mi lagnerò tacendo  
Della mia sorte amara, ah!  
Ma ch'io non t'ami, o cara,  
Non lo sperar da me.  
Crudel, perchè fin'ora  
Farmi penar così?  
Crudel!

Mi lagnerò tacendo  
Della mia sorte amara, ah!  
Ma ch'io non t'ami, o cara,  
Non lo sperar da me.

**The reproach**

I will lament in silence  
Of my bitter fate, ah!  
But not to love you, dear one,  
Do not expect that from me.  
Cruel one, why do you still  
Let me suffer like this?  
You cruel one!

I will lament in silence  
Of my bitter fate, ah!  
But not to love you, dear one,  
Do not expect that from me.

**Rossini: "L'ultimo ricordo" from *Péchés de vieillesse*, Vol. 1: Album italiano, no. 4**  
Text by Giovanni Antonio Luigi Redaelli (1785 - 1815) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**L'ultimo ricordo**

Odi di un uom, che muore,  
Odi l'estremo suon,  
Questo appassito fiore  
Ti lascio, Olimpia, in don.

Quanto prezioso ei sia  
Tu lo conosci appien;  
Dal dì che fosti mia  
A te l' involai dal sen.

Premio allor di affetto,  
Or pegno di dolor;  
Torni ad ornati in petto  
Questo appassito fior;

Odi di un uom, che muore,  
Odi l'estremo suon,  
Questo appassito fiore  
Ti lascio, Olimpia, in don.

**The last memory**

Hear from a dying man,  
Hear his last sound,  
This withered flower,  
I leave you, Olympe\*, as a gift.

How precious it is,  
You know it well;  
On the day that you were mine,  
I stole it from your breast.

Once a reward of affection,  
Now a pledge of pain.  
Returned now to ornament your chest,  
This withered flower.

Hear from a dying man,  
Hear his last sound,  
This withered flower,  
I leave you, Olympe\*, as a gift.

\* Rossini changed the name in his setting of this poem from Elvira to Olimpia, in reference to his wife, Olympe



**Rossini: "L'orgia" from *Les soirées musicales***

Text by Carlo Pepoli (1796 - 1881) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**L'orgia**

Amiamo, cantiamo le donne e i liquor,  
gradita è la vita fra Bacco ed Amor!

Se Amore ho nel core, ho il vin nella testa,  
che gioia, che festa, che amabile ardor!

Amando, scherzando, trincando liquor,  
m'avvampo, mi scampo da noie e dolor.  
Cantiam, gradita è la vita fra Bacco ed Amor!

Danziamo, cantiamo, alziamo il bicchier,  
ridiam, sfidiam i tristi pensier!

Amando, scherzando, trincando liquor,  
m'avvampo, mi scampo da noie e dolor.  
Cantiam, ridiam, gradita è la vita fra Bacco ed Amor!

Regina divina, la madre d'Amor,  
giuliva rinnova, rinnova ogni cor.

Balzante, spumante con vivo bollor  
e il vino divino del mondo signor.

Già ballo, traballo, che odor, che vapor!  
Si beva, ribeva con sacro furor.  
Cantiam la vita è compita fra Bacco ed Amor!

Evviva evviva le donne e il liquor,  
la vita è compita fra Bacco ed Amor.

Già ballo, traballo, che odor, che vapor!  
Si beva, ribeva con sacro furor.  
Cantiam, ridiam, la vita è compita fra Bacco ed Amor!

**The orgy**

Let us love, let us sing of woman and wine,  
for grand is the life among Bacchus\* and Cupid!

I have love in my heart, I have wine in my head,  
what a joy, what a feast, what a lovable passion!

Loving, joking, drinking some wine,  
I flare up, I escape from boredom and pain.  
Let us sing, for grand is the life among Bacchus and Cupid!

Let us dance, let us sing, let us raise a glass,  
let us laugh, let us defy our thoughts of sadness.

Loving, joking, drinking some wine,  
I flare up, I escape from boredom and pain.  
Let us sing, let us laugh, for grand is the life among Bacchus and Cupid!

The queen divine, the mother of love,  
joyfully revives, renews every heart.

Jumping, sparkling, boiling with life,  
and the wine divine, Lord of the world.

Already I dance, I stagger, what a smell, what a vapor!  
You drink, drink again with holy frenzy.  
Let us sing, for life is complete among Bacchus and Cupid!

Hurrah, hurrah for women and wine!  
Life is complete among Bacchus and Cupid.

Already I dance, I stagger, what a smell, what a vapor!  
You drink, drink again with holy frenzy.  
Let us sing, let us laugh, for life is complete among Bacchus and Cupid!

\* Bacchus is the Roman name for Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, fertility, theatre, festivals, and ritual madness

**Gounod: "Ma belle amie est morte" (Lamento), CG 404**  
Text by Théophile Gautier (1811 - 1872) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**Ma belle amie est morte (Lamento)**

Ma belle amie est morte:  
Je pleurerai toujours;  
Sous la tombe elle emporte  
Mon âme et mes amours.  
Dans le ciel, sans m'attendre,  
Elle s'en retourna;  
L'ange qui l'emmena  
Ne voulut pas me prendre.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amours, s'en aller sur la mer!

La blanche créature  
Est couchée au cercueil.  
Comme dans la nature  
Tout me paraît en deuil!  
La colombe oubliée  
Pleure et songe à l'absent;  
Mon âme pleure et sent  
Qu'elle est dépareillée.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amours, s'en aller sur la mer!

Sur moi la nuit immense  
S'étend comme un linceul;  
Je chante ma romance  
Que le ciel entend seul.  
Ah! comme elle était belle  
Et comme je l'aimais!  
Je n'aimerai jamais  
Une femme autant qu'elle.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amours, s'en aller sur la mer!

**My beautiful love is dead (Lament)**

My beautiful love is dead,  
I shall weep forever;  
Into the tomb, she has carries  
My soul and my love.  
To heaven, without waiting for me,  
She has returned.  
The angel who took her away  
Did not want to take me.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Ah! without love, to set off to sea!

The white creature  
Is lying in her coffin;  
How all of nature  
Seems to be in mourning!  
The forgotten dove  
Weeps and thinks of the absent one;  
My soul cries and feels  
That it is incomplete.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Ah! without love, to set off to sea!

Over me the immense night  
Spreads itself like a shroud;  
I sing my romance  
That heaven alone hears.  
Ah! how beautiful she was,  
And how I loved her!  
I shall never love  
Another woman as much as her;  
How bitter is my fate!  
Ah! without love, to set off to sea!

**Note:** This is the entire poem by Gautier, first published 1838 in *La Comédie de la Mort*. The text highlighted in grey indicates the portion of the poem omitted by the composer.

**Gounod: "Priere" (Ah! si vous saviez comme on pleure)**  
Text by Sully Prudhomme (1839 - 1907) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**Priere**

Ah! si vous saviez comme on pleure  
De vivre seul et sans foyers,  
Quelquefois devant ma demeure  
Vous passeriez.

Si vous saviez ce que fait naître  
Dans l'âme triste un pur regard,  
Vous regarderiez ma fenêtre  
Comme au hazard.

Si vous saviez quel baume apporte  
Au coeur la présence d'un coeur,  
Vous vous assoiriez sous ma porte  
Comme une sœur.

Si vous saviez que je vous aime,  
Surtout si vous saviez comment,  
Vous entreriez peut-être même  
Tout simplement.

**Prayer**

Ah! If only you knew how one cries  
When living alone and without a family,  
Sometimes, in front of my house,  
You would pass.

If only you knew what is birthed  
In a sad soul, by a simple look,  
You would look to my window  
As if by chance.

If only you knew what balm can be brought  
To a heart by the presence of another heart,  
You would sit beneath my door  
Like a sister.

If only you knew that I love you,  
Especially if you knew how much,  
You might even come inside  
Quite simply.

**Gounod: "Où voulez-vous aller?" (Dites, la jeune belle)**  
Text by Théophile Gautier (1811 - 1872) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**Où voulez-vous aller?**

Dites, la jeune belle,  
Où voulez-vous aller?  
La voile ouvre son aile,  
La brise va souffler!

L'aviron est d'ivoire,  
Le pavillon de moire,  
Le gouvernail d'or fin;  
J'ai pour lest une orange,  
Pour voile une aile d'ange,  
Pour mousse un séraphin.

Dites, la jeune belle!  
Où voulez-vous aller?  
La voile ouvre son aile,  
La brise va souffler!

Est-ce dans la Baltique,  
Dans la mer Pacifique,  
Dans l'île de Java?  
Ou bien est-ce en Norwége,  
Cueillir la fleur de neige,  
Ou la fleur d'Angsoka?

Dites, la jeune belle,  
Où voulez-vous aller?  
La voile ouvre son aile,  
La brise va souffler!

Menez-moi, dit la belle,  
À la rive fidèle  
Où l'on aime toujours.  
- Cette rive, ma chère,  
On ne la connaît guère  
Au pays des amours.

Dites, la jeune belle,  
Où voulez-vous aller?  
La voile ouvre son aile,  
La brise va souffler!

**Where would you like to go?**

Say, my young beauty,  
Where would you like to go?  
The sail opens its wing,  
The breeze begins to blow!

The oar is of ivory,  
The pennant is of silk,  
The rudder is of fine gold;  
I have, for ballast, an orange,  
For sail an angel's wing,  
For cabin-boy a seraph\*.

Say, my young beauty,  
Where would you like to go?  
The sail opens its wing,  
The breeze begins to blow!

Is it to the Baltic?  
To the Pacific Ocean?  
To the island of Java?  
Or rather, is it to Norway,  
To gather the snow flower,  
Or the flower of Angsoka?

Say, my young beauty,  
Where would you like to go?  
The sail opens its wing,  
The breeze begins to blow!

Lead me, said the beauty,  
To the faithful shore  
Where one loves forever!  
- That shore, my darling,  
Is hardly known at all  
In the land of love.

Say, my young beauty,  
Where would you like to go?  
The sail opens its wing,  
The breeze begins to blow!

\* An angelic being, regarded in traditional Christian angelology and ancient Judaism as belonging to the highest order of the ninefold celestial hierarchy, associated with light, ardor, and purity.

**Gounod: "Le soir," CG. 441**

Text by Alphonse Marie Louis de Lamartine (1790 - 1869) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

**Le soir**

Le soir ramène le silence.  
Assis sur ces rochers déserts,  
Je suis dans le vague des airs  
Le char de la nuit qui s'avance.

Vénus se lève à l'horizon ;  
À mes pieds l'étoile amoureuse.  
De sa lueur mystérieuse  
Blanchit les tapis de gazon.

Tout à coup détaché des cieux,  
Un rayon de l'astre nocturne,  
Glissant sur mon front taciturne,  
Vient mollement toucher mes yeux.

Doux reflet d'un globe de flamme,  
Charmant rayon, que me veux-tu?  
Viens-tu dans mon sein abattu  
Porter la lumière à mon âme?

Descends-tu pour me révéler  
Des mondes le divin mystère?  
Ces secrets cachés dans la sphère  
Où le jour va te rappeler?

Viens-tu dévoiler l'avenir  
Au cœur fatigué qui t'implore?  
Rayon divin, es-tu l'aurore  
Du jour qui ne doit pas finir?

**The evening**

The evening brings back silence.  
Seated on these deserted rocks  
I follow, in the hazy air,  
The chariot of the advancing.

Venus rises on the horizon;  
At my feet, the amorous star  
With its mysterious radiance  
Turns the lawn's carpet white.

Suddenly freed from the heavens,  
A ray from that nocturnal star  
Glides upon my solemn brow  
And arrives to gently touch my eyes.

Gentle reflection of that globe of flame,  
Charming ray, what do you want from me?  
Do you come to my dejected heart  
To bring light to my soul?

Do you descend to reveal to me  
The divine mystery of worlds?  
Those secrets hidden in the sphere  
To which day will call you back?

Do you come to reveal the future  
To the tired heart which implores you?  
Divine ray, are you the dawn  
Of the day which is to never end?

## Gounod: "Aimons-nous!" CG. 449

Text by Paul Jules Barbier (1825 - 1901) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### Aimons-nous!

Au fleuve le ruisseau se mêle,  
Et le fleuve à la mer  
Au vent la brise unit son aîle,  
Se confond dans l'air!

Femme, c'est la loi suprême!  
Ange, c'est la douce loi!  
Tout vent s'unir à ce qu'il aime!  
M'aimes-tu, dis-moi?

Vois les cieux dorer les cîmes!  
Vois s'unir les flots heureux!  
Vois se pencher sur les abîmes  
ces lierres amoureux!

Le soleil étreint la terre!  
L'oiseau chante et pleure, hélas!  
Pourquoi ce divin mystère  
Si tu n'aimes pas!

Comme ces rayons de flamme,  
Et ces flots, et ces zéphirs,  
Mon âme cherche dans ton âme  
L'écho de ses soupirs!

Comme ces oiseaux fidèles,  
Dans le nid de leurs amours,  
Blottis et pliant leurs ailes,  
Aimons nous toujours!

### Let us love!

To the river, the stream merges,  
And rivers into the sea.  
To the wind, the breeze unites its wing,  
They blend in the air!

Woman, this is the law supreme!  
Angel, this is the sweet law!  
Winds unite with what they love!  
Do you love me? Tell me.

See the heavens adorn the mountains!  
See the waves embrace each other!  
See, entwined over the abyss,  
the ivy of lovers!

The sun embraces the earth!  
The bird sings and cries, alas!  
Why is there such divine mystery  
If you too do not love!

Like these flaming rays of flame,  
And the waves, and zephyrean\* winds,  
My soul seeks in your soul  
The echo of his sighs!

Like these faithful birds  
In the nest of their love,  
Huddled and clasped in their wings,  
Let us love forever!

\* Relating to, or like a zephyr; full of or containing light breezes. Reference to the Greek god of the west wind, Zephyrus; known as the fructifying wind and a messenger of spring

## Saint-Saëns: "Sonnet"

Based on an excerpt of *The Corsair* by Lord Byron (1788 - 1824) | Translated into French by Benjamin Laroche (1797 - 1852)

Ce tendre sentiment, dans mon âme il habite;  
et je le cache à tous les yeux  
si ce n'est quand mon coeur à ton regard palpite  
puis revient silencieux.

Un invisible feu, flamme éternelle et sombre,  
là, brûle lentement comme dans un tombeau.  
En vain le désespoir le couvre de son ombre;  
toujours il resplendit, inutile flambeau!  
Pense à moi, lorsqu'après de ma tombe récente  
tu viendras à passer; pense alors, pense à moi!  
Il n'est plus qu'un malheur dont mon coeur s'épouvante:  
C'est que mon souvenir ne plane plus sur toi.

Pour la dernière fois ma voix résonne encore;  
on peut donner des pleurs à qui dort sans retour;  
une larme de toi, c'est tout ce que j'implore:  
Seul prix, hélas! de tant d'amour!

Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,  
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,  
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,  
Then trembles into silence as before.

There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp  
Burns the slow flame, eternal — but unseen;  
Which not the darkness of Despair can damp,  
Though vain its ray as it had never been.  
Remember me — Oh! pass not thou my grave  
Without one thought whose relics there recline:  
The only pang my bosom dare not brave  
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

My fondest — faintest — latest accents hear —  
Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove;  
Then give me all I ever asked — a tear,  
The first — last — sole reward of so much love!

### Saint-Saëns: "Clair de lune"

Text by Catulle Mendès (1841 - 1909) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

#### Clair de lune

Dans la forêt que crée un rêve,  
Je vais le soir dans la forêt:  
Ta frêle image m'apparaît  
Et chemine avec moi sans trêve.

N'est-ce pas là ton voile fin,  
Brouillard léger dans la nuit brune?  
Ou n'est-ce que le clair de lune  
A travers l'ombre du sapin?

Et ces larmes, sont-ce les miennes  
Que j'entends couler doucement?  
Ou se peut-il réellement  
Qu'à mes côtés, en pleurs, tu viennes?

#### Moonlight

In a forest of a dream,  
I go at night:  
Your frail image appears to me  
And walks with me endlessly.

Isn't that your thin veil,  
The fog in the dark night?  
Or is it only the moonlight  
Through the shade of the firs?

And these tears, they are mine  
That I hear flowing gently?  
Or can it really be  
That to my side, in tears, you have come?

### Saint-Saëns: "Extase"

Text by Victor Hugo (1802 - 1885) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

#### Extase

Puisque j'ai mis ma lèvre à ta coupe encore pleine;  
Puisque j'ai dans tes mains posé mon front pâli;  
Puisque j'ai respiré parfois la douce haleine  
De ton âme, parfum dans l'ombre enseveli;

Puisqu'il me fut donné de t'entendre me dire  
Les mots où se répand le coeur mystérieux;  
Puisque j'ai vu pleurer, puisque j'ai vu sourire  
Ta bouche sur ma bouche et tes yeux sur mes yeux;

Puisque j'ai vu briller sur ma tête ravie  
Un rayon de ton astre, hélas! voilé toujours;  
Puisque j'ai vu tomber dans l'onde de ma vie  
Une feuille de rose arrachée à tes jours;

Je puis maintenant dire aux rapides années:  
- Passez! passez toujours! je n'ai plus à vieillir!  
Allez-vous-en avec vos fleurs toutes fanées;  
J'ai dans l'âme une fleur que nul ne peut cueillir!

Votre aile en le heurtant ne fera rien répandre  
Du vase où je m'abreuve et que j'ai bien rempli.  
Mon âme a plus de feu que vous n'avez de cendre!  
Mon coeur a plus d'amour que vous n'avez d'oubli!

#### Ecstasy

Since I put my lips to your cup still full;  
Since I have placed my pale forehead in your hands;  
Since I sometimes breathed the sweet breath  
Of your soul, perfume buried in the shadow;

Since it was given to me to hear you say to me  
The words in which the mysterious heart spreads;  
Since I have seen your tears, since I saw you smile  
On my mouth and your eyes on my eyes;

Since I saw a shine on my delighted head  
A beam, from your star, alas! Still veiled;  
Since I saw the wave of my life fall,  
A rose petal torn from your days;

I can now say to the swift years:  
"Pass away! Always always! I no longer have to grow old!  
Go away with your flowers all withered;  
I have in my soul a flower that no one can pick!"

If your wing strikes it - it will not spill anything  
From the vase where I drink and have filled well.  
My soul has more fire than you have ashes!  
My heart has more love than you have oblivion!

## Saint-Saëns: "Si vous n'avez rien à me dire"

Text by Victor Hugo (1802 - 1885) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### Si vous n'avez rien à me dire

Si vous n'avez rien à me dire,  
Pourquoi venir auprès de moi?  
Pourquoi me faire ce sourire  
Qui tournerait la tête au roi?  
Si vous n'avez rien à me dire,  
Pourquoi venir auprès de moi?

### If you have nothing to tell me

If you have nothing to tell me,  
Why do you come so close to me?  
Why do you make me smile in such a way  
That would turn a king's head?  
If you have nothing to tell me,  
Why do you come so close to me?

Si vous n'avez rien à m'apprendre,  
Pourquoi me pressez-vous la main?  
Sur le rêve angélique et tendre,  
Auquel vous songez en chemin,  
Si vous n'avez rien à m'apprendre,  
Pourquoi me pressez-vous la main?

If you have nothing to teach me,  
Why do you squeeze my hand?  
On this angelic and tender dream  
You contemplated on your journey here,  
If you have nothing to teach me,  
Why do you squeeze my hand?

Si vous voulez que je m'en aille,  
Pourquoi passez-vous par ici?  
Lorsque je vous vois, je tressaille:  
C'est ma joie et c'est mon souci.  
Si vous voulez que je m'en aille,  
Pourquoi passez-vous par ici?

If you wish me to go,  
Why do you pass by here?  
When I see you, I tremble:  
It is my joy, and it is my worry.  
If you wish me to go,  
Why do you pass by here?

## Saint-Saëns: "Danse macabre"

Text by Henri Cazalis (1840 - 1909) | Translation by Ellen Goodnight

### Danse macabre

Zig et zig et zig, la mort en cadence  
Frappant une tombe avec son talon,  
La mort à minuit joue un air de danse,  
Zig et zig et zag, sur son violon.

### Dance of Death

Zig and zig and zig, Death rhythmically  
Taps upon a tomb with his heel;  
Death at midnight plays a dance,  
Zig and zig and zig on his violin.

Le vent d'hiver souffle, et la nuit est sombre,  
Des gémissements sortent des tilleuls;  
Les squelettes blancs vont à travers l'ombre  
Courant et sautant sous leurs grands linceuls.

The winter wind blows and the night is dark,  
Moans come from the lime trees;  
White skeletons move through the shadows,  
Running and jumping under their large shrouds.

Zig et zig et zig, chacun se trémousse,  
On entend claquer les os des danseurs,  
Un couple lascif s'assoit sur la mousse  
Comme pour goûter d'anciennes douceurs.

Zig and zig and zig, everyone is moving,  
We hear the bones of the dancers crackling,  
A lascivious couple sits upon the moss  
As if to taste of past delights.

Zig et zig et zag, la mort continue  
De racler sans fin son aigre instrument.  
Un voile est tombé! La danseuse est nue!  
Son danseur la serre amoureusement.

Zig and zig and zag, Death continues,  
Scraping endlessly on his sour instrument.  
A veil has fallen! The dancer is nude!  
Her partner grasps her amorously.

La dame est, dit-on, marquise ou baronne.  
Et le vert galant un pauvre charron -  
Horreur! Et voilà qu'elle s'abandonne  
Comme si le rustre était un baron!

The lady, they say, is a marquise or baroness,  
And the young gallant a poor cartwright -  
Horrors! And look, she gives herself to him  
As though the boor were a baron!

Zig et zig et zig, quelle sarabande!  
Quels cercles de morts se donnant la main!  
Zig et zig et zag, on voit dans la bande  
Le roi gambader auprès du vilain!

Zig and zig and zig, what a saraband!  
What circles of the dead, all holding hands!  
Zig and zig and zag, we see in the crowd  
The king frolicking with the peasants!

Mais psit! tout à coup on quitte la ronde,  
On se pousse, on fuit, le coq a chanté.  
Oh! La belle nuit pour le pauvre monde!  
Et vive la mort et l'égalité!

But shh! Suddenly we leave the round,  
One pushes, one flees, the rooster crows.  
Oh! A beautiful night for the poor world!  
And long live death and equality!

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Italian bass-baritone **Luca Pisoni** has established himself as one of the most charismatic and versatile singers performing today. Since his debut at age 26 with the Vienna Philharmonic at the Salzburg Festival, led by Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Pisoni has continued to bring his compelling artistry to the world's leading opera houses, concert halls, and festivals. In the 2019/20 season, he returned to the Wiener Staatsoper to star as the Four Villains in Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. He sang the title role of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in a concert staging with the Sinfonieorchester Basel at the George Enescu Festival, and Pizarro in Beethoven's *Fidelio* with the Orchestre Métropolitain under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Pisoni returned to the Metropolitan Opera for two productions this season: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Figaro) and *Così fan tutte* (Guglielmo).

Pisoni's 2019/20 concert appearances included Mozart's Requiem with the Orchester Wiener Akademie, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with NHK Symphony Orchestra, and a concert with I Virtuosi del Teatro alla Scala at Zaryadye Hall in Moscow. In recital, Luca appeared at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence, at The Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, and at UBC Opera in Vancouver for their "Singer Behind the Song" series. Pisoni reunited with baritone Thomas Hampson for their acclaimed "No Tenors Allowed" concert series at Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. Performances canceled or rescheduled due to the global pandemic include the title role of *Don Giovanni* with the Opéra National de Paris and the Opernhaus Zürich, and Leporello at the Bayerische Staatsoper.

In the 2018/19 season, Pisoni returned to the Teatro Real to sing Méphistophélès in a production of Gounod's *Faust* by La fura dels Baus, followed by a role debut as the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Festspielhaus Baden-Baden. He later made his house debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu as Mustafà in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Additionally, Mr. Pisoni returned to The Metropolitan Opera stage for his highly anticipated debut in the title role of *Don Giovanni*. He then traveled to the Houston Grand Opera for the world premiere of Tarik O'Regan's *The Phoenix*, where he created the role of the young Lorenzo da Ponte. Pisoni debuted Méphistophélès in Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* with the Pittsburgh Orchestra, and he returned to the Staatsoper Berlin as Golaud in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. His operatic season concluded at the Royal Opera House in his premiere appearances as Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen*.

Mr. Pisoni's operatic work includes (but is not limited to) portrayals of Golaud in *Pelleas et Melisande* at the Opéra National de Paris; Mahomet II in *Le Siège de Corinthe* at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro; Méphistophélès in *Faust* at Houston Grand Opera; Enrico VIII in *Anna Bolena* at Opernhaus Zürich; Conte Rodolfo in Bellini's *La Sonnambula* and Mustafà in *L'italiana in Algeri* at Wiener Staatsoper; Giorgio in *I Puritani* and Caliban in *The Enchanted Island* at the Met; Pizarro in *Fidelio* at Teatro alla Scala; *Le nozze di Figaro* at Opéra National de Paris, San Francisco Opera, and the Bayerische Staatsoper; Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at Teatro alla Scala, The Metropolitan Opera, Salzburg Festival, and at Tanglewood; Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* at Glyndebourne and the Salzburg Festival; Argante in *Rinaldo* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* for the Wiener Festwochen.

His concert performances include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 at the Gewandhaus and at the Konzerthaus Dortmund with Andris Nelsons; Haydn's *Die Jahreszeiten* under the direction of Nikolaus Harnoncourt; Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with Franz Welser-Möst; Schumann's *Faustszenen* with Daniel Harding and the Berlin Philharmonic, as well as Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the LSO and Michael Tilson-Thomas. He has also been a featured soloist in Mozart's Requiem with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic; Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* under the baton of Edo de Waart; and Mendelssohn's *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. He regularly collaborates with his father-in-law, baritone Thomas Hampson for their "No Tenors Allowed" program featuring gems of the operatic, musical theater, and American Songbook repertoires, in concert on premiere international stages.



In addition to his extensive opera and concert appearances, Pisaroni has presented critically lauded recitals at Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Teatro de la Zarzuela, the Concertgebouw, Edinburgh Festival, Vienna's Musikverein, the Vancouver Recital Society, the Grand Théâtre de Genève, the Pierre Boulez Saal, and the Dortmund Konzerthaus, among other prominent international venues. Mr. Pisaroni has recorded for all major labels, his discography includes *Don Giovanni* and *Rinaldo* from the Glyndebourne Festival; *Così*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Figaro* from the Salzburg Festival; Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* with the Wiener Symphoniker, and recordings of *Don Giovanni* and *Figaro* with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

In 2019, Luca Pisaroni was honored as one of five recipients of the Opera News Award at a ceremony hosted in New York City. Luca is a Peace Ambassador for the international non-profit organization Opera for Peace, promoting unity through artistic excellence, global collaborations, and social justice endeavors. Luca lives in Vienna with his wife, Catherine. Their golden retriever Lenny 2.0 and miniature dachshund Tristan are the singer's constant traveling companions.



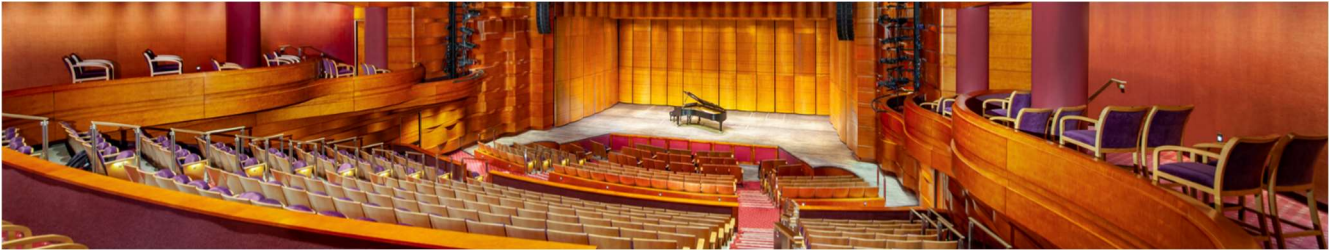
Pianist soloist, chamber music player and accompanist of famous singers, **Maciej Pikulski** already appeared on the stage in 300 concert halls on 5 continents. He was awarded a piano, chamber music and vocal accompaniment diploma at the Paris Superior Conservatory. Then he was admitted to the post graduate cycle and became prize-winner of the France Telecom Foundation.

A disciple of Dominique Merlet and Clive Britton (himself a former pupil of Claudio Arrau) Maciej Pikulski has performed as soloist the Liszt's "Totentanz" and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue in Trancoso Festival in Brasil, the Gershwin's Concerto in F in Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires and Sala Sao Paulo; the Rachmaninoff's Concerto n. 2 in Logroño, Spain, the Beethoven's Concerto no. 5, "Emperor" in Biarritz, France, the Chopin's

Concerto no. 2 in Olsztyn, Poland, and made piano recitals in Uruguay, Russia, India, Sri Lanka, Italy, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Poland and Belgium.

Meanwhile, he developed a career as a vocal accompanist of world leading singers: he performed with José van Dam- concerts in Carnegie Hall New York, La Scala Milano, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Bruxelles, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam; Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires; Théâtre des Champs Elysées in Paris, Renée Fleming- concerts in Salle Pleyel in Paris, Musikverein in Vienna, Grand Theatre de Genève, Barbican in London, Festspielhaus in Baden-Baden, Dublin Concert Hall, Rudolfinum in Prague, Thomas Hampson, Natalie Dessay, Diana Damrau, Dame Felicity Lott, Maria Bayo, Sumi Jo, Anna-Caterina Antonacci, Luca Pisaroni, Laurent Naouri, Nicolas Testé, Joseph Calleja, and Patricia Petibon.

Maciej Pikulski recorded 15 CD's and DVD's and gave masterclasses in China, Brazil, India, Belgium, Holland, and France. He is also professor with tenure at the Superior Conservatory of Music of San Sebastian (Spain). The press recognized his "poetic sensitivity" (*Globe and Mail*, Toronto), his "powerful technique" (*New York Times*) and called him "magnificent musician" (*Le Figaro*) and "great pianist" (*Corriere de la Serra*).



## ABOUT VOCAL ARTS DC

The mission of VADC is to nurture and promote the classical voice recital genre and to introduce new audiences to the richness, cultural diversity, and beauty of the classical song literature. VADC is the only organization anywhere in North America, and one of the few in the world, which presents a full concert season solely devoted to classical voice recitals. As such, it has made Washington DC a magnet for the world's greatest stars of the opera and concert stage. VADC presents a season of six to eight recitals, usually in the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, occasionally in other venues. These generally feature world-renowned singers, although VADC also attempts to introduce to its audience emerging artists whom it considers to be on the threshold of international stardom. Beginning with our 25th anniversary season of 2015-2016, Vocal Arts DC made a firm commitment to broaden the contemporary library of solo vocal works by commissioning new works from living composers. Toward that goal, we have presented world premieres of new works by Tyshawn Sorey, Gregory Spears, and Lowell Liebermann, and will offer first hearings of new pieces by Kathleen Tagg and Jake Heggie during our 2021-2022 season. In addition to its main stage performances, VADC operates an in-school educational program for secondary and high school students in collaboration with the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, DC.

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Intro with Richard Stilwell filmed by  
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