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Faculty Tuesdays

Foursquare Cathedral

Andrew Garland, baritone

Jeremy Reger, piano

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Grusin Music Hall

PROGRAM

From *Songs of Travel* (1904)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

1. The Vagabond
7. Whither Must I Wander
8. Bright is the Ring of Words

War Prayer (2013)

Steven Mark Kohn (b. 1957)

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

Here, Bullet (2019)

Kurt Erickson (b.1970)

Brian Turner (b. 1967)

1. Here, Bullet
2. Eulogy
3. A Soldier's Arabic
4. Curfew

Intermission

From *Cantos de Cifar y el mar dulce* (2004/2007)

Gabriela Frank (1972)

Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1912-2002)

I. El Nacimiento de Cifar

XVIII. Primer parte: El rebelde

XVIII. Segund parte: Tomasito, el cuque

XVIII. El niño

Last Letter Home (2006)

Lee Hoiby (1926-2011)

Pfc. Jesse Givens (1969-2003)

Foursquare Cathedral (2017)

Matt Boehler (b. 1976)

Todd Boss (b. 1968)

1. Ruin

2. My house is Small and Almost

3. The Wallpaper

4. What Yesterday Appeared a Scar

5. Another Hand

PROGRAM NOTES

On my bucket list is to sing every solo vocal work of Ralph Vaughan Williams. As of now, I am approaching the half-way point. I came to this cycle—***Songs of Travel***—relatively late at the age of 35 (while most 18-year-old beginners had already sung “The Vagabond,” and maybe some other hits from that cycle.) I first programmed the complete *Songs of Travel* for a Carnegie Neighborhood concert with Warren Jones. My hometown musical friends gave me lots of opportunities to sing my favorite [early] 20th Century English composer. Steven Karidoyanes and the Masterworks Chorale engaged me to sing *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Five Mystical Songs, and the rare Epithalamion. The Boston POPS gave me a 15-show run of *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* (and my old friend Steven conducted one of those). Keith Lockhart had me at Brevard for *A Sea Symphony*. I sang “Linden Lea” at Silver Lake Regional High School (thanks again, Mr. Glass!) I am sure I sang *The Turtle Dove* at UMass.

What is it about Vaughan Williams that we love so much? Honestly, for me it is association. “The Call” is one of the hymns in my church hymnal. I was singing this with my choir and congregation long before I knew who Vaughan Williams was or what an art song was. But there must be something more to “uncle Ralph” (as Andover Native and fellow Vaughan Williams devotee Marcus Deloach calls him.) It can’t be just that I heard and sang his songs at a formative time and place in my life. (With all due respect, I don’t have the same undying devotion to Sherri Porterfield or Kirby Shaw.) What is it about his music in particular? It is always carefully crafted. (He studied with Maurice Ravel who was very strict and said of the young composer “he was the only pupil who

did not write my music.”) And at the same time, it honors and is heavily influenced by folk song. All of the above pieces (and some more on my bucket list) are choral works. Vaughan Williams was also a choir director and very interested in community and bringing people together. Vaughan Williams was an atheist and yet he wrote some of the most uplifting sacred music of all the ages. He even arranged and edited the entire English Hymnal. When asked about why he wrote so much music for the church, he answered “if they’re going to be there, they might as well have something good to listen to.” Since you all are here, I say you ought to have something good to listen to as well.

The remainder of the program notes are written mostly by the composers themselves. I do have a close personal connection with all of them, and I am grateful and excited for the opportunity to share some of their songs with you today. To that I will add that Jeremy and I recorded *Here*, *Bullet* and *Foursquare Cathedral* right here in Grusin Hall and along with Margaret McDonald, producer and Kevin Harbison, engineer, plan to release the recording later this year.

One more note from Andy Garland: “I did not print the texts for Songs of Travel (Vaughan Williams) War Prayer (Kohn) and Last Letter Home (Hoiby) to give you the audience less material to scroll through and allow you to focus on the music and the action onstage. If you have not already, I invite you to look at the texts for *Cifar* (Frank) and *Foursquare Cathedral* (Boehler) during intermission.”

Mark Twain wrote *The War Prayer* in 1904–05 to protest America’s involvement in the Spanish-American War. His family convinced him to keep it from publication, fearing it was too controversial. It was published after his death. Twain made the case that if God causes all things to happen and blesses select people, then He must also, willingly, deny others his blessing. It is the other side of prayer, the unspoken side, which Twain so brilliantly characterized in *The War Prayer*. It is not my goal to demean anyone’s faith or enter into a theological debate. I see Twain’s essay not as an indictment of religion, but as an impassioned anti-war statement, the kind of which will always have resonance. Those familiar with this work will recognize the astonishing liberties taken in adapting it. Whole passages were cut, phrases were moved around and words were deleted or replaced with my own, all in the interest of concision, storytelling and the considerations one makes when fitting words to music. But the essence of Twain’s tone and message has not been altered.

—Steven Mark Kohn, 2013

In 2004 renowned poet/author Brian Turner returned from a tour of duty in the Iraq War and penned his firsthand poetic descriptions in a book that has become an instant classic of its genre. In 2018, I took four of the poems and fashioned them into an 18-minute song set written for 30 baritones during the Covid shortened 2019-2020 season.

The work traces a narrative arc that takes us from a place of trauma to a state of wonder and acceptance.

Here, Bullet won First Prize in the 2020 NATS Art Song Composition Competition, received performances throughout North America, features in print and online media, podcasts interviews, performed at 9/11 commemorative ceremonies, performed on master's and doctorate recitals, and served as the subject of a recently published doctoral dissertation titled *A Performance Guide to Kurt Erickson's Here, Bullet*. Recent international performances have taken place at Deutsche Oper Berlin (baritone Thomas Lehman and pianist John Parr) and at Scotland's St Andrews University.

Here, Bullet is currently being made into a short film by Tony-nominated actor/director Will Chase. The soundtrack was recently recorded at New York's Power Station in a version created for the Sybarite5 string ensemble—shooting will begin Spring 2025. Perhaps most satisfying, the *Here, Bullet* creative team will work alongside clinicians and mental health professionals, using the work in 3-month arts therapy programs as a vehicle for helping veterans struggling with PTSD and trauma. Partner organizations include: San Francisco VA Medical Center, Concord Vet Center, and Solano Vet Center Outstation.

Here, Bullet addresses important social issues that affect us all: PTSD, gun violence and amplifying the voice of the veteran experience. The songs find moments of beauty and vulnerability in the midst of the chaos of armed conflict. Our hope is that singers of all voice types and experiences will perform the work and find ways to engage in these often difficult but necessary conversations.

—Kurt Erickson

Songs of Cifar and the Sweet Sea is a work in progress, and its first version is projected to be an evening-length song cycle for baritone, soprano and piano.

Under the sponsorship of the Marilyn Horne Foundation, two new songs were penned for a premiere in Carnegie Hall in January of 2007 by the baritone-piano team of Andrew Garland and Donna Loewy. While the songs are created to flow as a narrative set, certain songs can be performed as stand-alones or with a select number of others from the cycle... While my own experience accompanying singers tells me that the piano is an admirable partner-in-crime, I would like to create another version scoring the piano for full orchestra.

Songs of Cifar and the Sweet Sea draws on poetry by the Nicaraguan poet, Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1912-2002). As a young man, Cuadra spent more than two decades sailing the waters of Lake Nicaragua, meeting peasants, fisherman, sailors, woodcutters, and timber merchants in his travels. From such encounters, he was inspired to construct a cycle of poems that recount the odyssey of a harp-playing mariner, Cifar, who likewise travels the waters of Lake Nicaragua. In my initial reading of the poems, I was struck by how Cuadra writes of commonplace objects and people but ties them to the undercurrents of his country's past of indigenous folklore. Despite Cuadra's plain vocabulary, ordinary things are thus rendered mythical, revealing Cifar's capacity for wonder and passionate lyricism. The poems, which begin with Cifar's birth and end with his death as an old man, still clinging to an oar some forty-odd poems later, are rich material for a composer's imagination, indeed.

With this treasure trove of poetry to spark my imagination, I initially chose to compose music for baritone and piano only, limiting myself to a chosen selection of poems. (The poems are carefully cobbled together without changing the Cuadra's cadence or phrasing so that more than one poem may be featured in any given song.) After my initial foray in this project, I soon decided to embark on setting the entire collection, making for a full evening-length program ... Hence, the first version of this song cycle is projected to come to life in the tradition of the great lieder by composers like Schumann and Schubert—In an intimate performance setting of just solo singers and collaborating pianist.

As a work in progress, approximately eight songs for baritone and piano have been composed so far, totaling approximately thirty minutes.

I. El Nacimiento de Cifar (The Birth of Cifar)

In this first song, we are introduced to our protagonist at the time of his birth. Already, hints of blood, danger, and a supernatural presence in his life are evident. The explosive vocal release at the ends of short phrases is typical of Miskito Indian music of Nicaragua. The quick repeated notes in the piano harmonizing the vocal line emulate Nicaraguan marimba performance practices.

XVIII. Primer Parte: El Rebelde (Part One; The Rebel)

In this mysterious song, a scene is coolly described of preparation being made for rebellion. We do not know if Cifar is a willing participant or not.

XVIII. Segund Parte: Tomasito, el cuque (Part Two: Tomasito, the Cook)

A scene is described of a ship's cook being tortured. Chillingly, it is not clear what Cifar's role is.

XVIII. Tercer Parte: El Niño (Part Three: The Child)

Cast in the solo style of “velorio” funeral singing from Latin American cultures, the vocal writing emphasizes a rise and fall of line, and grace note-inflected tenuto pulsations to mimic the sound of sobs. Cifar cries for the child that used to be him, for a lost innocence.

—Gabriela Frank

Last Letter Home: Private 1st Class Jesse Givens of Springfield, Missouri was killed in Iraq on May 1, 2003, when the riverbank on which his tank was parked gave way, drowning him in the Euphrates River. Two weeks earlier, he had written a letter to his pregnant wife Melissa, his six-year-old stepson Dakota (nicknamed “Toad”), and his unborn son, with instructions that it be opened only in the event of his death. The letter arrived a month after his funeral, and was delivered to his wife in the maternity ward where she had just given birth to the child he never saw.

Composer Lee Hoiby read the letter after it was published in The New York Times. “I thought right away of this soldier sitting in his barracks at night, probably chewing a pencil, and trying to find words for such a message. It was a very intimate letter. The kind of a letter that you would never expect to read from a husband to his wife. That's what lends it further power.”

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Foursquare Cathedral is a setting of five poems from poet Todd Boss' critically lauded debut volume, *Yellowrocket*. The cycle was commissioned by Arthur Jacobson and Peninah Petruck for bass-baritone Benjamin de la Fuente and pianist Jocelyn Dueck. It was premiered on March 6, 2016 as part of the Hot Air Music Festival at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, with the composer singing, and Kevin Korth at the piano. The cycle was shortly thereafter chosen as winner of the 2017 National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Art Song Composition Competition, and it is now published by E. C. Schirmer.

—Matt Boehler

“This song cycle is absolutely brilliant, from the first note to the last. The composer brought the words to life through inventive word settings, intriguing harmonies, and interesting and varied accompaniment which contributed to the understanding of the text, an engaging dramatic sense, and a wonderful choice of poems.”

—Lori Laitman

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Here, Bullet (2019)

Kurt Erickson (b.1970)

Brian Turner (b. 1967)

Here, Bullet

Text by Brian Turner

Here, bullet

If a body is what you want

then here is bone and gristle and flesh.

Here is the clavicle-snapped wish,

the aorta's opened valves, the leap

thought makes at the synaptic gap.

Here is the adrenaline rush you crave,

that inexorable flight, that insane puncture

into heat and blood. And I dare you to finish

what you've started. Because here, Bullet,

here is where the world ends every time.

Eulogy

Text by Brian Turner

It happens on a Monday, at 11:20 A.M.,

as tower guards eat sandwiches

and seagulls drift on by the Tigris River.

Prisoners tilt their heads to the west

though burlap sacks and duct tape blind them.

The sound reverberates down concertina coils

the way piano wire thrums when given slack.

And it happens like this, on a blue day of sun,

when Private Miller pulls the trigger

to take brass and fire into his mouth:
the sound lifts the birds up off the water,
a mongoose pauses under the orange trees,
and nothing can stop it now, no matter what
blur of motion surrounds him, no matter what voices
crackle over the radio in static confusion,
because if only for this moment the earth is stilled,
and Private Miller has found what low hush there is
down in the eucalyptus shade, there by the river.

PFC B. Miller

(1980 - March 22, 2004)

A Soldier's Arabic

Text by Brian Turner

The word for love, habib, is written from right
to left, starting where we would end it
and ending where we might begin.

Where we would end a war
another might take as a beginning,
or as an echo of history, recited again.

Speak the word for death, maut,
and you will hear the cursives of the wind
driven into the veil of the unknown.

This is a language made of blood.
It is made of sand, and time.
To be spoken, it must be earned.

Curfew

Text by Brian Turner

At dusk, bats fly out by the hundreds.
Water snakes glide in the ponding basins
behind the rubble palaces. The mosques
call their faithful in, welcoming
the moonlight as prayer.

Today, policemen sunbathed on traffic islands
and children helped their mothers
string clothes to the line, a slight breeze
filling them with heat.

There were no bombs, no panic in the streets.
Sgt. Gutierrez didn't comfort an injured man
who cupped pieces of his friend's brain
in his hands; instead, today,
white birds rose from the Tigris.

From *Cantos de Cifar y el mar dulce* (2004/2007)

Gabriela Frank (1972)

Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1912-2002)

I. El Nacimiento de Cifar

Hay una isla en el playón
pequeña
como la mano de un dios indígena.
Ofrece frutas rojas
a los pájaros
y al naufrago
la dulce sombra de un árbol.

Allí nació Cifar, el navegante
cuando a su madre
se le llegó su fecha, solitaria
remando a Zapatera.
Metió el bote en el remanso
mientras giraban en las aguas
tiburones y sábalos
atraídos por la sangre.

*Los dedos en el arpa
y ya empieza
el mal de lontananza.*

*Cifar
calla tu canto.*

*Cifar
no recubras
de música tu oído:*

Ese ilimitado

*Azul
te llama.*

I. The Birth of Cifar

There is an island in the shallows
small
as the hand of an indigenous god.
It offers red fruit
to the birds
and, to the shipwrecked,
the sweet shade of a tree.
There, Cifar the sailor was born

as his mother's time came
while she was rowing, alone, to Zapatera.
She steered the boat into a pool
while there circled in the waters
sharks and shad,
attracted to the blood.

*Fingers in the harp,
and at once begins
a longing, sickness, for he faraway.*

Cifar

quiet your song.

Cifar

do not cover

your ears with music:

That infinite

Blue

calls you.

XVIII. Primer parte: El Rebelde

Todavía al aurora
no despierta el corazón
de los pájaros y ya Cifar
tira la red en el agua
oscura. Sabe que es la hora
de la sirena y no teme
el silencio.

Cifar espera

la señal en las lejanas
serranías. Antes del alba

encenderán sus fogatas
los rebeldes.
Les lleva peces
y armas.

XVIII. First part: The Rebel

Dawn has still not
awakened the heart
of the birds, and already
Cifar casts his net into the dark
water. He knows it is the hour
of the siren, and he is not afraid
of the silence.

Cifar waits
for a signal from the faraway
mountains. Before daybreak
the rebels will fire up
their bonfires.
He takes them fish
and weapons.

XVIII. Segund parte: Tomasito, el cuque

“¿En qué lancha las llevaron?
¡Contesta, Tomás, contesta!
¿Desde cuál isla zarparon?
¡Jodido, Tomás, contesta!
“¿A quiénes las entregaron?
¡Hijo de puta, Tomás!
¿Quiénes llevaron las armas?
¡Cabrón, contesta, Tomás!

Pero no habla Tomás.
¡Qué huevos de hombre. No habla!
¡Ya nunca hablará
Tomás!

XVIII. Second part: Thomas, the cook

“What boat did they carry them in?
Answer, Tomás, answer!
“From which island did they sail?
Damn it, Tomás, answer!
“Who did they deliver them to?
Son of a whore, Tomás!
“Who carried the weapons?
You bastard, answer, Tomás!
But Tomás won’t talk.
What balls on this guy! He doesn’t talk!
Now Tomás
will never talk again!

XVIII. Tercer Parte: El Niño

El niño que yo fui
no ha muerto
queda
en el pecho
toma el corazón
como suyo
y navega dentro
lo oigo cruzar
mis noches
o sus viejos

mares de llanto
remolcándome
al sueño.

XVIII. Third part: The Child

The child I was
has not died
he remains
in my breast
taking my heart
as his own
and sails inside me
I hear him cross
my nights
or his old
seas of tears
towing me along
to dreams.

Foursquare Cathedral (2017)

Matt Boehler (b. 1976)

Todd Boss (b. 1968)

1. Ruin

Text by Todd Boss

Ruin

was rumored

to be rooming

up the road

where

a neighbor's barn'd

burned down.

Their heyday

a payday

away,

Pride,

Ruin's bride-to-be,

paced our property

in the long

laced gowns

of afternoons,

while Ruin

rode shotgun

in Dad's old Ford

and pulled the wheel

hard toward

cabarets.

Dad had

work, but

Ruin had ways.

2. My House Is Small and Almost

Text by Todd Boss

My House Is Small and Almost
a hundred years old. Inside,
the oaken posts and beams
make the living room seem
like a glade. When friends
pronounce it comfortable,
it's 1910 that comforts them,
and nothing I have done.

There must be a room
in the human heart
that's older than the body.
And it's good to be there
in that foursquare cathedral
where nothing has changed
since before we were made.

3. The Wallpaper

Text by Todd Boss

The Wallpaper
says hello.

The wallpaper
misses you something
awful.

The wallpaper
can't stop wondering when
you were thinking of
coming home.

The clock's
moved on.
The sink's ten
million tears are dry.
Our floors have gotten
over you, or so they
claim
and claim.
The windows
clearly feel the same.
But call me.
Call me
soon, my love,
and tell me
what to say
next time
the fading and
tedious
wallpaper whispers
your
beautiful household
name.

4. What Yesterday Appeared a Scar

Text by Todd Boss

What Yesterday Appeared a Scar
of brilliant green
in the icy lake, today
arcs blue across its face and far.
And where this morning

still is frozen,
coming hours will warm until
the water's softer
nature's finally chosen.

Half my life is gone
to others' business,
which, well done or not, it
matters not but that it's gone
and won't be gotten back.

And half my love is wasted too.
Wasted not on you, where all my
deeps and deeps of love
are dammed and so belong,
but on loving you
wrong. My sorrow
is tomorrow's only season,
and it comes on now

like this cold thaw comes
upon the lake,
or like a soft song one sings to sing
the past to sleep,
only to keep it wide awake.

5. Another Hand

Text by Todd Boss

Here—here's a day—
and here—here's another,

says God feeling chancy,
says God feeling grand.

Hell—here—look—
a stack of days—a week,

says God nonchalant,
a penny candy in his cheek,

the glimmer in his eye
never giving him away.

Good old God,
he's a player alright.

Across a blue cloth
as he antes them over

the gold coins shimmer
from his fat black purse.

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Kelli Hirsch

Senior Program Manager for Events

Mikaela Rich

Program Manager for Stewardship and Donor Relations

Shih-Han Chiu

Development Assistant

Christie Preston

Operations Director and Head Piano Technician

Ted Mulcahey

Scheduling Manager

Kayla Pierce

Head Recording Engineer and Technical Director

Kevin Harbison

Assistant Recording Engineer

Kristofer Twadell

Operations and Facilities Assistant

Peggy Hinton

Lead Piano Technician

Mark Mikkelsen

Media Specialist

Dustin Rumsey

Piano Technician

Phil Taylor

CU PRESENTS

Executive Director

Andrew Metzroth

Marketing and PR Director

Laima Haley

Director of Ticketing and Patron Services

Adrienne Havelka

Front of House Director

Rojana Savoye

Marketing Manager

Elise Zabala

Multimedia Content Manager

Sarita Narayanswamy

Publications Manager

Sabrina Green

Senior Marketing Assistant

Maya Reno

Marketing Assistant

Maija Brandt

Box Office Services Coordinator

Dylan Thierry

Tessitura CRM Specialist

James Whalen

Lead Box Office Assistants

Caitlin Amero

Aidan Biffinger

Box Office Assistants

Macy Crow

Remy DeParis

Joel Ferst

Johnette Martin

Sallu Young

MACKY AUDITORIUM

Director, Macky Auditorium and Artist Series

Rudy Betancourt

Assistant Director for Administration

Sara Krumwiede

Assistant Director for Production

Trevor Isetts

Assistant Director for Patron Services and Stakeholder Services

Amanda Wells

Assistant Director of Operations

Paige Wiedemann

Production Managers

Richard Barrett

Scott Wickham

Front of House Director

Rojana Savoye

Senior House Manager

Devin Hegger

House Managers

Aleighya Dawkins

Pearl Enssle

Brosnan Szabo

*Personnel lists current as
of Oct. 1, 2025. [Visit the
most up to date staff directory
at this link.](#)*