



# Martin Katz & Friends What's in a Song? Hugo Wolf's Complete Mörrike Songs

Martin Katz / *Piano*

Sarah Shafer / *Soprano*

Susan Platts / *Mezzo-soprano*

Daniel McGrew / *Tenor*

Jesse Blumberg / *Baritone*

January 10 & 12, 2020

Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

Ann Arbor

## **CONTENT**

Notes on the Programs	3
Part I Friday, January 10	7
Part II Sunday, January 12	15
Artists	20

## MÖRIKE-LIEDER (1888)

Hugo Wolf

*Born March 13, 1860 in Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia*

*Died February 22, 1903 in Vienna*

Eduard Mörike

*Born September 8, 1804 in Ludwigsburg, Germany*

*Died June 4, 1875 in Stuttgart, Germany*

On countless occasions, UMS has invited me to contribute notes to accompany performances in order to help audiences appreciate what they would be hearing. Some of these notes were for concerts when I was on stage; others not so. I have always been particularly eager to communicate my excitement over any extraordinary features of that evening's vocal repertoire. My musings have included Schubert's *Winterreise*, written in the painful last years of his short life; Benjamin Britten's *Canticles*, which create mini-staged dramas in a concert hall with barebone forces; the last speeches of Ophelia, set to music by Strauss, who had to literally re-invent his musical language to depict her insanity also come to mind. I could go on forever listing amazing musical and poetic events, for they are inevitably the stuff of the most thrilling vocal concerts presented for us, many as part of the UMS Song Biennial, created just a few years ago.

Hugo Wolf's first important song collection, the 53 gems of the *Mörike-Lieder*, deserves no less attention, no less admiration, and certainly merits inclusion in the Art Song Hall of Fame, even if it is not as well-known or celebrated as other similarly colossal achievements. Wolf had already

written two-dozen songs before the winter of 1888, including some to excellent poetry by Heine and Kerner, but no words had truly unlocked his genius. With his acquaintance of Eduard Mörike's poetry, a miraculous explosion of inspiration took place in the composer, an explosion not dissimilar to Robert Schumann's year of song in 1840, when almost all the *Lieder* we know and love were born. In only 238 days — a shorter period than two U-M semesters — Wolf fashioned these "sung poems," sometimes creating three in a single day. Even more astounding, the Mörike manuscripts show few changes to his original ideas, with neat fair copies rivaling those of Mozart.

Although he had little influence at the time of the publication of these songs, Wolf requested that the volume's title page read: "Fifty-three poems of Eduard Mörike, set to music by Hugo Wolf." (Note the word "poems"; nowhere does the word "song" appear.) The composer's stubborn insistence on this specific wording tells us almost everything we need to know about him, and certainly validates Wolf's being commonly called "The Poet's Composer." In comparing these Mörike songs with his previous efforts, Wolf now declared: "What I write now, I write for

posterity.”

How did Wolf's reverence for the text manifest itself in his compositional technique? Native German speakers inevitably attest to the fact that they hear the sung words precisely as they would hear them spoken by a narrator. Before putting pen to paper, Wolf would recite the poems aloud endlessly until he felt he had found the correct rhythms and pitches for their inflected sentences. Bear in mind that there is no rhythmic notation which can perfectly capture the rhythms of speech; Wolf's choices, however, come closer to the true timing and inflection of speech than any other composer in the German language.

Of course there is some sacrificing to be made in order to achieve this verbal-musical fusion; one can't have it all. With the *Mörrike-Lieder* we do not frequently find vocal melodies which make instrumentalists envious as we so often do in songs by Schubert and Brahms. And yet as purely musical creations, these Wolf songs do not lack beauty or integrity in any way. These are not poems spoken with incidental music in the background. What other composers had reserved exclusively for the singer is now shared by both performers, with the pianist often winning the day in terms of melody. Ask any singers studying Wolf songs — from this songbook or any others — and they will always speak of confronting complications of rhythm and pitch, and the necessity of intense investigation which would not be required with simple symmetrical melody and accompaniment. Fusion is expensive technically and artistically, but the reward chez Wolf is immense.

Lest you think from these preceding paragraphs that Wolf is only about the strategies of scientifically setting text to music, let me hasten to add that the composer only *began* the task of creating a song with putting those essentials in place. Then came the challenge of creating the specific pictorial and emotional atmosphere for each and every poem. In fact, no two songs are alike, and the musical materials are changed for the demands of each poem.

One must say that Wolf was fortunate indeed to live when and where he did. His illustrious predecessors, Schubert and Schumann, had no access to Wagner's revolutionary techniques, and although Brahms had heard Wagner's operas, he professed no interest in the new music-drama. Wagner had created harmonies which redefined our very notion of how emotions sound. In addition, the Bavarian giant had invented a new relationship between voice and accompaniment, one in which the orchestra provides the scenery *and* the psychology inside and around the words. It is no accident that Wolf has been dubbed the “Wagner of the *Lied*,” for voice and piano interact the same way in his *Lieder* as Isolde and her orchestra do in the *Liebtestod*, for example. Finally, yet another lucky chronological accident for Wolf was living in the era of Sigmund Freud; the dawn of psychoanalysis was only two years before the Mörrike songs were composed. If a composer wants to create a small music-drama of each song — as was clearly Wolf's consistent goal — how amazing to have the subconscious and the new

appetite for intense emotional investigation available at the same time, and even in the same language! Wolf, Wagner, and Freud...one might call it a kind of perfect storm for song composition in 1888.

Although Wolf found his inspiration in Eduard Mörike's texts, there were vast differences in the lives and philosophies of the two men. The poet was ultra-conservative and rather rigid in his Catholic religious beliefs; Wolf was a confirmed atheist. Mörike adored Mozart, with his strict musical rules and regulations; Wolf's heroes were Schumann and Wagner, both of whom worked significant romantic changes upon vocal music. If the truth be told, Mörike, who died in 1875, had not achieved much celebrity and was not widely read outside of academic circles. Wolf's *Mörike-Lieder* put a spotlight on his poetry which it had never enjoyed previously. Today Mörike is taught and respected in great part because of Wolf's attention to him.

Wolf was attracted to many recurring motifs in Mörike's poetry. Ballads such as "Der Feurreiter" and "Die Geister am Mummelsee" gave the composer huge canvases for storytelling. Magic and mysticism are common themes too, and Wolf found perfect ways to portray this in music, as in "Um Mitternacht" or the two "Peregrina" songs. Both men were fascinated by tiny things, and many of the best moments in the *Mörike-Lieder* are populated by elves, fairies, butterflies, and the like. Parody and humor, even of a shocking sexual nature, are easily found in the songbook too. "Nimmersatte Liebe," "Abschied," and "Storchenbotschaft"

are high water marks of these laugh-producing, slightly off-color experiences. The dozen songs on religious themes would seem to belie Wolf's lack of theistic commitment, but we must remember that Wolf's goal was to "become" the poem. One would never guess from "Karwoche," "Seufzer," or "Wo find ich Trost?" that the composer was imitating a piety he did not possess.

In these concerts we are maintaining Wolf's choices for first and last songs of the set. Curiously, the song Wolf placed at the head of the published volume of the *Mörike-Lieder* was not the first to be composed. That honor goes to "Der Tambour," the portrait of the young sentry on duty all night, missing both mother and sweetheart, in that order. Instead, Wolf chose "Der Genesene an die Hoffnung," to be the book's flagship, and it is the song with which we begin these concerts. This can easily be seen as an autobiographical choice, for in the poem, the cured one thanks the god of hope and begs forgiveness for not acknowledging him sooner. With these *Mörike-Lieder* Wolf felt "cured" of mediocrity and paucity of inspiration and thanks his muse. This song *had* to be first.

He closes the opus with a hysterical revenge on his critics. Wolf had worked as a music critic for three years before dedicating himself to composition, and later endured harsh words from the anti-Wagner camp in Vienna, so he was personally well-acquainted with criticism from both sides. Which of us would not enjoy wreaking a bit of havoc on our own critics? Kicking one down a staircase and then indulging in a classic

Viennese waltz is Wolf's vendetta of choice. Apart from these "bookend" songs, the remaining songs are presented in an order which neither conforms to their composition dates, nor the published order as prescribed by Wolf. The *Mörike-Lieder* are not in any way a song-cycle; rather they constitute an enormous one-man art exhibition, wherein many performing orders can serve excellently.

It is interesting to note that Wolf chose never to craft music for a poem if he respected and admired another composer's efforts on the same text. Even though the texts are regarded as masterpieces and may cry out to become *Lieder*, we find no "Erkönig," no "Gretchen am Spinnrade," nor "Von ewiger Liebe" or "Ich grolle nicht" among his creations. Apparently he admired those songs of Schubert, Schumann, and, yes, even Brahms. As a consequence, when we do find a Wolf song to the same text chosen by another, it must be considered as a lack of approval on Wolf's part. In all the 53 Mörike poems, we find only five which have become songs by other accepted masters of *Lieder* composition: "Das verlass'ne Mägdlein," "An eine Aolsharfe," "Agnes," "Der Gärtner," and "Er ist's!" are the members of that elite club. Personally, I admire Schumann's "Er ist's!" for its delicacy; clearly Wolf read this poem with different glasses, for he creates an explosion of springtime. Brahms's version of the ode to an Aeolian lyre is lyrically gorgeous and very touching, but apparently Wolf did not agree. Many who have written extensively about Wolf and his songs have felt that once one encounters Wolf's

synthesis of a particular poem and his music, one cannot imagine that text in any other musical clothing. In this regard, "Das verlass'ne Mägdlein" certainly comes to mind.

With this songbook, Wolf found what is truly golden in Mörike's words; he also presented his credentials as a magnificent songwriter, and in the course of that, made the literary world pay more attention to Mörike than it ever had. Wolf captures both the letter and the spirit of each poem. He does this in the precise rhythm of the German language, rarely sacrificing optimum prosody to any other value. Then, as eminent musicologist Eric Sams opines, "when his work is finished, Wolf disappears behind the poem."

It must be abundantly clear by now how very much I admire the work of Hugo Wolf, and in particular this first large-scale production of songs, the *Mörike-Lieder*. I know my partners on stage in these concerts feel similarly. None of us would have undertaken this project without that admiration; it would simply be a great deal of work and little reward otherwise. We all feel very fortunate to know and perform these sung poems for you, and — who knows? — perhaps you will find yourself a bit more of a Wolf fan, which would be our biggest reward of all.

"When I can no longer compose  
songs, throw me on a dungheap!"  
— Hugo Wolf

*Program notes by Martin Katz.*

# Hugo Wolf's Complete Mörrike Songs: Part I

Martin Katz / *Piano*

Sarah Shafer / *Soprano*

Susan Platts / *Mezzo-soprano*

Daniel McGrew / *Tenor*

Jesse Blumberg / *Baritone*

Friday Evening, January 10, 2020 at 8:00

Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

Ann Arbor

32nd Performance of the 141st Annual Season

UMS Song Remix

This evening's performance is supported by the Maurice and Linda Binkow Vocal and Chamber Arts Endowment Fund.

Media partnership provided by WRCJ 90.9 FM.

Special thanks to Martin Katz, Scott Piper, Matthew Thompson, Stephen West, and the U-M Department of Vocal Performance for their participation in events surrounding this weekend's performances.

Special thanks to Nicholas Roehler for providing the translations and surtitles for this evening's performance.

Ms. Shafer appears by arrangement with IMG Artists.

Ms. Platts appears by arrangement with Matthew Sprizzo.

Mr. Blumberg appears by arrangement with ADA Artists.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.



## **PROGRAM**

*Hugo Wolf*

*Text by Eduard Mörike*

### **Mörike-Lieder**

Der Genesene an die Hoffnung (The Convalescent Addresses Hope)  
Zitronenfalter im April (Yellow Butterfly in April)  
In der Frühe (In the Early Morning)  
Jägerlied (Hunter's Song)  
Frage und Antwort (Question and Answer)  
Heimweh (Homesickness)  
Auf einer Wanderung (On a Walk)  
Schlafendes Jesuskind (Sleeping Christchild)  
Auf ein altes Bild (On an Old Picture)  
Zur Warnung (As a Warning)  
Das verlass'ne Mägdlein (The Abandoned Maiden)  
Nimmersatte Liebe (Insatiable Love)  
Wo find ich Trost? (Where Do I Find Comfort?)

### **Intermission**

Seufzer (Sigh)  
Gebet (Prayer)  
Die Geister am Mummelsee (The Spirits on Lake Mummel)  
Zum neuen Jahr (To the New Year)  
Karwoche (Holy Week)  
Auftrag (Instructions)  
An den Schlaf (To Sleep)  
Neue Liebe (New Love)  
Agnes (Agnes)  
Lied von Winde (Song of the Wind)  
Fussreise (Foot Journey)  
An die Geliebte (To the Beloved)  
Lebe wohl (Farewell)  
Storchenbotschaft (The Storks' Message)

“Interpreting Wolf’s *Lieder* is simply singing the poetry. It all fits without any pasting or staging necessary. I feel I can be more honest when I sing Wolf’s songs. Interpretation isn’t required; he writes the truth. There is no door to open; it’s all in front of me.”

*Louise McClelland, Professor Emerita, University of Maryland  
Recipient of the prestigious Hugo Wolf Medallion  
Translator of Wolf’s letters to his life-long beloved Melanie Köchert*

## **TIDBITS: PART I**

by Martin Katz

**Zitronenfalter im April**  
(Yellow Butterfly in April)

A perfect example of Wolf and Mörike's love of tiny things. Note that both the pianist's hands are in the treble clef throughout.

**In der Frühe**  
(In the Early Morning)

A single musical motive is used for this song. It morphs from a sleepless night to morning bells bestowing hope for the new day.

**Jägerlied**  
(Hunter's Song)

This is the only song in 5/4 time. Why? Read the poem. There is no other choice for Wolf.

**Schlafendes Jesuskind**  
(Sleeping Christchild)  
**Auf einen altes Bild**  
(On an Old Picture)

The first two religious songs of the evening. Note Wolf's use of fourths and fifths in the old picture to evoke antiquity. This is poetically one example of Mörike warning us not to assume anything as we observe a pastoral scene. This will be repeated in other songs.

**Zur Warnung**  
(As a Warning)

How does a hangover sound? How does a bad song sound?

**Nimmersatte Liebe**  
(Insatiable Love)

A fairly erotic song for its time. Wolf borrows a student song at its conclusion and asks for humor from the performers. The vicissitudes of romance haven't changed for centuries, we're told.

**Seufzer**  
(Sigh)

Incredible guilt is painted in dissonance. Only the very last chord is consonant.

**Gebet**  
(Prayer)

Here is the opposite. Wolf uses modest harmonies and four-part writing to create a prayerful, hymn-like impression.

**Die Geister am Mummelsee**  
(The Spirits on Lake Mummel)

A saga of a song, immersed in magic. One is reminded of Loewe's great ballads.

**Zum neuen Jahr**  
(To the New Year)

This song features the highest tessitura of the songbook. After all, an angel is singing.

**Lied von Winde**  
(Song of the Wind)

This few minutes of song could be dropped into Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* and absolutely seem part of that opera.

**An die Geliebte**  
(To the Beloved)  
**Lebe wohl**  
(Farewell)

These songs are markers of Mörike's affair with Louise Rau: deeply smitten, and then a wrenching farewell.

**Please refer to page 3 for further notes on this evening's program.**

“My love of *Lieder* dates from 1964 with a splendid performance by two distinguished members of the music faculty: the tenor John McCollum and pianist Eugene Bossart. *Dichterliebe* was an ideal introduction to *Lieder* because Schumann combined ravishing vocal melodies with beautifully seductive piano accompaniments. Shortly after that memorable performance, it was time for me to select a focus for my doctoral dissertation, and I settled on the *Lieder* of Hugo Wolf. As a pianist, I was particularly intrigued with the prominence given to the piano in Wolf’s song settings, with how he made the piano enhance and reinforce the imagery of the poetry, and with his free-wheeling harmonies. Wolf despised the music of Brahms and adored that of Wagner at the time when those two music titans inspired opposing “camps” among the cognoscenti. It may be said that Wagner’s influence led Wolf into a less orderly, wilder compositional approach. If his scores lack the compositional sophistication of the *Lieder* of Schubert and Brahms, they more than make up for it in the musical drama fired in Wolf’s imagination. Once smitten by his idiosyncratic but undeniably effective blending of words and musical imagery, one becomes a devotee for life. Bless you, Hugo Wolf!”

*Paul Boylan, Dean Emeritus, U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance*

One day in my freshman music literature class, we listened to Wolf's "Verborgenheit," a frequently performed Mörike song. I was hearing Wolf's music for the first time. His expressive setting of profound poetry hooked me and led me out of the world of a piano major and into the world of *Lieder*. While everyone was swooning over the Beatles, I became fanatical about Wolf. He was the reason I took three years of German!

My obsession with Wolf's songs led me to perform most of them as a pianist and later as a singer. I was privileged to perform most of the songbook with baritone Ralph Herbert, who came to U-M from the Metropolitan Opera where he was a celebrated character singer/actor. A Viennese by birth, Ralph had a direct connection to Wolf's world, and he interpreted the songs with a sense of drama that transfixed his audiences and me."

Deanna Relyea, mezzo-soprano  
Founder of Kerrytown Concert House

# Hugo Wolf's Complete Mörrike Songs: Part II

Martin Katz / *Piano*

Sarah Shafer / *Soprano*

Susan Platts / *Mezzo-soprano*

Daniel McGrew / *Tenor*

Jesse Blumberg / *Baritone*

Sunday Afternoon, January 12, 2020 at 4:00

Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

Ann Arbor

33rd Performance of the 141st Annual Season

UMS Song Remix

This afternoon's performance is supported by the Doris and Herbert E. Sloan Endowment Fund, and Prudence Rosenthal and Norman and Debbie Herbert on behalf of UMS Sustaining Directors.

Media partnership provided by WRCJ 90.9 FM.

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## **PROGRAM**

*Hugo Wolf*

*Text by Eduard Mörike*

### **Mörike-Lieder**

Der Knabe und das Immelein (The Boy and the Bee)  
Der Tambour (The Drummer Boy)  
Um Mitternacht (At Midnight)  
Der Gärtner (The Gardener)  
Im Frühling (In Springtime)  
Rat einer Alten (The Old Woman's Advice)  
Bei einer Trauung (At a Wedding)  
Er ist's! (It's Spring!)  
Auf eine Christblume I (On a Christmas Rose I)  
Auf eine Christblume II (On a Christmas Rose II)  
Begegnung (Meeting)  
Gesang Weylas (Weylas' Song)  
An einer Aolsharfe (To an Aeolian Harp)

### **Intermission**

Feuerreiter (Firerider)  
Selbstgeständnis (Confession)  
Verborgenheit (Seclusion)  
Elfenlied (The Elf's Song)  
Lied eines Verliebten (Song of One in Love)  
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag (Shortly Before Dawn)  
Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens (A Maiden's First Lovesong)  
Peregrina I (Peregrina I)  
Peregrina II (Peregrina II)  
Der Jäger (The Hunter)  
Denk' es, o Seele (Think about it, O Soul!)  
Nixe Binsefuss (The Reed Fairy)  
Abschied (Farewell)

“I was very lucky to have teachers who put me into Hugo Wolf’s hands very early in my teens... One of these was the great Lotte Lehmann. I am forever grateful that I learned so many of the difficult ones so young, because I was ignorant as to how hard they were!

Wolf certainly became one of my favorites to perform and I often have wondered why he has taken what seems to be a back seat to Richard Strauss in the programs of my younger colleagues. This is also fabulous music for pianists and I know they will be drawn to his music, along with the singers. UMS, I salute you for this very worthy project. Sorry I won’t be there in the audience. Lots of happy memories run through my mind of our many performances of this incredible output of music.”

*Marilyn Horne, mezzo-soprano  
National Medal of Arts award-winner and Kennedy Center Honoree  
Performed under UMS auspices five times from 1972–1997;  
2002 UMS Distinguished Artist Award Recipient*

## **TIDBITS: PART II**

by Martin Katz

### **Um Mitternacht**

(At Midnight)

Wolf creates a texture for the piano where pitches are obscured. Mystery and mysticism pervade here.

### **Der Gärtner**

(The Gardener)

Wolf chooses to depict the charming princess on her pony, rather than the title character.

### **Im Frühling**

(In Springtime)

The composer manages to paint nameless desire, mingled with idle musing. He uses aching half-steps and wandering tonality.

### **Rat einer Alten**

(The Old Woman's Advice)

This senior citizen gives not-so-friendly advice to a young woman.

### **Bei einer Trauung** (At a Wedding)

The ultimate song of deadpan humor.

### **Elfenlied**

(The Elf's Song)

Wolf always had a specific scene in mind when composing. He told a friend that here he saw a lovely woman sitting on a rock, accompanying herself on a harp.

### **Gesang Weylas**

(Weylas' Song)

A testament to Wolf's love of tiny things. Except for the first phrase, only the top half of the keyboard is used. Wolf recited this poem for his friends in a nasal falsetto and was convulsed with giggling.

### **Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens**

(A Maiden's First Lovesong)

This highly erotic poem surprises us, considering Mörike's conservative views. Wolf said this music could lacerate glass!

### **Denk es, o Seele**

(Think about it, O Soul!)

Here, as earlier in "Auf einen alten Bild," we learn to take nothing for granted; what is lovely today can change completely. Wolf uses enigmatic harmonies and twisted circular motives to depict intense thinking.

**Please refer to page 3 for further notes on this afternoon's program.**

## ARTISTS

One of the world's busiest collaborators, **Martin Katz** has been in constant demand by the world's most celebrated vocal soloists for more than four decades. He has appeared and recorded regularly with Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Karita Mattila, David Daniels, Jose Carreras, Cecilia Bartoli, Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, and Lawrence Brownlee, just to name a few. Season after season, the world's musical capitals figure prominently in his schedule.

Mr. Katz is a native of Los Angeles, where he began piano studies at the age of five. He attended the University of Southern California and studied the specialized field of accompanying with its pioneer teacher, Gwendolyn Koldofsky. While yet a student, he was given the unique opportunity of accompanying the master classes and lessons of such luminaries as Lotte Lehmann, Jascha Heifetz, Pierre Bernac, and Gregor Piatigorsky.

In recent years, conducting has played an increasingly frequent role in Mr. Katz's professional life. He has partnered several of his soloists on the podium for orchestras of the BBC, and in Houston, Washington DC, Tokyo, New Haven, and Miami. He has also been pleased to conduct several productions for the University of Michigan's Opera Theatre, the Music Academy of the West, and San Francisco Opera's prestigious Merola program.

Finally, the professional profile of Mr. Katz is completed with his commitment to teaching. For almost three decades, Michigan has been his home, where he has been happy to chair the U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance's program in collaborative piano. He has been a pivotal

figure in the training of countless young artists, both singers and pianists, who are working all over the world. The University has recognized this work, naming him a Distinguished University Professor. He is a regular guest for master classes throughout the US, Europe, and Japan. Mr. Katz's comprehensive guide, *The Complete Collaborator*, published by Oxford Press, is widely seen as the standard for textbooks on this subject.

Praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for her "crystalline sound, perfectly true intonation, glowing warmth, and total presence" and named "remarkable, artistically mature... a singer to watch" by *Opera News*, American soprano **Sarah Shafer** actively appears on the leading operatic and concert stages of the world. The current season sees Ms. Shafer returning to Opera Philadelphia for Iris in *Semele*, Cupid in John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* with Opera Lafayette, and on the roster of the Metropolitan Opera in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Continuing her thriving concert career, Ms. Shafer will appear with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra singing Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* with Nicola Luisotti, Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* with the Cincinnati Symphony, a concert entitled "Emerging Voices" with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* with Omaha Symphony, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* with the Spokane Symphony, and a world-premiere work entitled *Karkinos* by Jacob Bancks with Quad City Symphony.

Highlights of recent opera include Pamina in the Jun Kaneko production of *Die Zauberflöte*, Zerlina in Jacopo Spirei's new production of *Don*

*Giovanni*, and the world premiere of Marco Tutino's *Two Women* in the role of Rosetta, opposite Anna Caterina Antonacci and conducted by Nicola Luisotti, both with San Francisco Opera. An avid recitalist and chamber musician, Ms. Shafer enjoys an active collaboration with legendary pianist Richard Goode, having performed Schumann and Brahms *Lieder* at Carnegie Hall and Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* with clarinetist Anthony McGill at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society. Ms. Shafer was a resident artist at the Marlboro Music Festival for five summers.

A native of State College, Pennsylvania, Ms. Shafer holds degrees in voice and opera from the Curtis Institute of Music, and is currently based in Philadelphia.

British-born Canadian mezzo-soprano **Susan Platts** brings a uniquely rich and wide-ranging voice to concert and recital repertoire for alto and mezzo-soprano. She is particularly esteemed for her performances of Gustav Mahler's works. In May 2004, as part of the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, world-renowned soprano Jessye Norman chose Ms. Platts as her protégée from 26 international candidates, and Ms. Norman continued to mentor her until her recent passing.

Ms. Platts has performed at Covent Garden, Royal Albert Hall, Teatro alla Scala, Teatro di San Carlo, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center; as well as with the Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Minnesota orchestras; Orchestre de Paris; BBC Symphony Orchestra; National Arts Centre Orchestra; Montreal, Toronto, American, Detroit, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Houston symphonies; Les Violons du Roy; Boston's Handel & Haydn Society; and the Los Angeles and St. Paul chamber

orchestras. She has collaborated with many of today's leading conductors, and has appeared on many distinguished art song series including the Vocal Arts Society at the Kennedy Center, Ladies' Morning Musical Club in Montreal, Aldeburgh Connection in Toronto, and both the Frick Collection's and Lincoln Center's "Art of the Song" series in New York City.

Ms. Platts' recent opera highlights include her Royal Opera House debut in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, John Adams' *Nixon in China* (BBC Symphony), Britten's *Albert Herring* (Pacific Opera, Vancouver Opera), Erda in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (Pacific Opera), and Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* (Montreal Symphony Orchestra). On the concert stage, she recently performed Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and premiered a new work by Howard Shore with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* with the Vancouver Symphony, and Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Third Symphony with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Ms. Platts was on a recent Naxos release of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (chamber version) with JoAnn Falletta conducting.

Praised for his "lovely, nuanced tenor" (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*), tenor **Daniel McGrew** is an active performer of a broad range of repertoire spanning opera, musical theater, early, and new music. Recently at Tanglewood, he appeared as François in Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* and participated in the annual Festival of Contemporary Music with a performance of Kurtág's *Three Ancient Inscriptions* the *Boston Globe* called "viciously beautiful." An early music specialist, Mr. McGrew has

## UMS ARCHIVES

**Martin Katz** makes his 43rd and 44th UMS appearances this weekend following his UMS debut in November 1976 in recital with bass-baritone Justino Díaz in Hill Auditorium. He has appeared on UMS stages over the past four decades with singers including Cecilia Bartoli, Kathleen Battle, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Marilyn Horne, Karita Mattila, Lawrence Brownlee, David Daniels, and Frederica von Stade. Two of Mr. Katz's earliest UMS appearances included performances of songs from Hugo Wolf's *Italian Songbook* with soprano Judith Blegen in October 1982 and in November 1984 with Ms. Blegen and baritone Håkan Hagegård in Hill Auditorium. He most recently appeared under UMS auspices in January 2018 in recital with soprano Janai Brugger in the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre. This weekend's performances mark **Susan Platts'** eighth and ninth UMS appearances following her UMS debut in April 2000 in a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Ann Arbor Symphony and UMS Choral Union conducted by Thomas Sheets in Hill Auditorium. She most recently appeared under UMS auspices in February 2015 in a performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Ann Arbor Symphony and UMS Choral Union conducted by Jerry Blackstone in Hill Auditorium. **Jesse Blumberg** makes his sixth and seventh UMS appearances this weekend following his UMS debut in December 2010 in performances of Handel's *Messiah* conducted by Jerry Blackstone in Hill Auditorium. Mr. Blumberg most recently appeared at UMS in March 2016 in a performance of Bach's *St. John Passion* with Apollo's Fire conducted by Jeannette Sorrell at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. UMS welcomes **Sarah Shafer** and **Daniel McGrew** as they make their UMS debuts this weekend.

performed Bach with conductors including Matthew Halls, John Harbison, David Hill, and Masaaki Suzuki, and toured India and the Baltic region with *Juilliard415* and Yale University's Schola Cantorum. He participated in the symphonic premiere of James Lapine's *Sondheim on Sondheim* with the Boston Pops Orchestra and appeared in David Loud's Sondheim revue, *A Good Thing Going*.

Last season, Mr. McGrew performed in recital with Brooklyn Art Song Society, Five Boroughs Music Festival, and the New York Festival of Song. Upcoming engagements include concerts at the Tucson Desert Song Festival, debut appearances with the Mirror Visions Ensemble in New York and Paris, his second summer in residency at the Marlboro Music Festival, and a world premiere of songs by John Harbison at SongFest in Los Angeles.

He holds degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and Yale University, and is currently pursuing a DMA at the University of Michigan. He is a committed pedagogue, having taught studio voice, lyric dictions, and music history at U-M, Oberlin Conservatory, Bowling Green State University, and Adrian College.

Baritone **Jesse Blumberg** enjoys a busy schedule of opera, concerts, and recitals, performing repertoire from the Renaissance and Baroque to the 20th and 21st centuries. His performances have included the world premiere of *The Grapes of Wrath* at Minnesota Opera, Bernstein's *Mass* at London's Royal Festival Hall, various productions with Boston Early Music Festival, and featured roles with Atlanta Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Atelier, and Boston Lyric Opera. He has made concert appearances with American Bach Soloists, Boston Baroque, Apollo's Fire,

Oratorio Society of New York, Montréal Baroque Festival, Arion Baroque, Early Music Vancouver, Pacific MusicWorks, and on Lincoln Center's *American Songbook* series. His recital highlights include appearances with the Marilyn Horne Foundation and New York Festival of Song, and performances of *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise* with pianist Martin Katz. Mr. Blumberg has given the world premieres of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Green Sneakers*, Lisa Bielawa's *The Lay of the Love and Death*, Conrad Cummings' *Positions 1956*, and Tom Cipullo's *Excelsior*, and works closely with several other renowned composers as a member of the Mirror Visions Ensemble.

This season, Mr. Blumberg returns to American Bach Soloists, Apollo's Fire, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Voices of Music, and Boston Early Music Festival, and debuts with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Nova Scotia Symphony. He will make his role debut as Hawkins Fuller in *Fellow Travelers* at Boston Lyric Opera, and will perform recitals in Minnesota, Michigan, Connecticut, Toronto, and New York City.

**THANK YOU TO SUPPORTERS OF  
THIS WEEKEND'S PERFORMANCES**

*Friday evening's performance is supported by*

**Maurice and Linda Binkow Vocal  
and Chamber Arts Endowment Fund**

*Sunday afternoon's performance is supported by*

**Doris and Herbert E. Sloan Endowment Fund  
Prudence Rosenthal and  
Norman and Debbie Herbert  
on behalf of UMS Sustaining Directors**

**MAY WE ALSO RECOMMEND...**

- 2/6 Cécile McLorin Salvant and Aaron Diehl  
2/16 Angélique Kidjo's *Remain in Light*  
4/5 Apollo's Fire and Chorus: J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

*Tickets available at [www.ums.org](http://www.ums.org).*

**ON THE EDUCATION HORIZON...**

- 1/16 No Safety Net Keynote: In Conversation with Oskar Eustis  
(Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty Street, 5:00 pm)  
*Presented with the Penny Stamps Distinguished Speaker Series.*
- 1/25 No Safety Net: Active Bystander Training  
(Pierpont Commons East Room, 2101 Bonisteel Boulevard, 10:00 am)  
*\$30 paid advance registration required on [ums.org](http://ums.org).*
- 2/14 UMS 101: Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán  
(Hill Auditorium Mezzanine Lobby, 6:00 pm)  
*Paid registration required at <http://bit.ly/UMSClasses> (case sensitive).*

*Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.*