

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE

at the University Center for the Arts

Virtuoso Series Concert:

TIFFANY BLAKE, SOPRANO
WITH **TIM BURNS, PIANO**

OCTOBER 7, 2024 | 7:30 P.M.
ORGAN RECITAL HALL



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VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT: TIFFANY BLAKE, SOPRANO

WITH TIM BURNS, PIANO

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 7:30 P.M., ORGAN RECITAL HALL

Cowboy Songs

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Bucking Bronco

Lift me into Heaven slowly

Billy the Kid

from though love be a day

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)

thy fingers make early flowers

after all white horses are in bed

maggie and milly and molly and may

from At the Statue of Venus

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

A Lucky Child

INTERMISSION

Facing Forward/Looking Back

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

Motherwit

Grounded

Mother in the Mirror

Facing Forward

Dr. Nicole Asel, mezzo-soprano

Try me, good King

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Catherine of Aragon

Anne Boleyn

Jane Seymour

Anne of Cleves

Praised by *Opera News Online* for her “...truly virtuoso performance....immaculate tone, good support and breath to spare.”, soprano, **DR. TIFFANY BLAKE**, received her D.M.A. in Vocal Performance with a minor in Opera Stage Direction from the Eastman School of Music, where she also earned her M.M. and was awarded the prestigious Performer's Certificate.

Dr. Blake's operatic roles include Desdemona in *Otello*, Marguerite in *Faust*, the title role in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, and Mercedes in *Carmen* among others. Solo engagements have included appearances with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Missouri Symphony Orchestra, and Opera Fort Collins. Dr. Blake has a special interest in song literature, and has given several recitals in Scotland, France, Salzburg, and across the U.S., appearances with Chicago's Arts at Large and the Odyssey Chamber Music concert series in Columbia, Missouri, and a vocal chamber music recital with Salzburg International Chamber Music Concerts.

Students of Dr. Blake have been accepted at major conservatories and music programs across the United States, including the Eastman School of Music, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and the University of North Texas. She has served on the faculties of the University of Missouri-Columbia, Syracuse University, Alfred University, and Sonoma State University.

She currently serves as associate professor of voice and director of the Charles and Reta Ralph Opera Program at Colorado State University.

Pianist **TIMOTHY BURNS** is a versatile performer and collaborator, with significant instrumental, vocal, and choral accompanying experience. He holds degrees in piano performance, music theory pedagogy, and collaborative piano from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, studying with Carol Schanely-Cahn, David Allen Wehr, and Jean Barr. Currently, Dr. Burns serves as supervisor of piano accompanying and coordinator of piano proficiency at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, where he frequently collaborates with faculty, guest artists, and students.

Dr. Burns has performed throughout the United States and Canada. He has served as staff accompanist for the 2010 King Award Competition, the 2012 International Viola Congress, the 2013 International Society of Bassists Competition and Conference, the 2017 and 2019 International Horn Competition of America, and the 2019 International Keyboard Odysiad, U.S.A. Recent performances include concert tours with saxophonist Peter Sommer, with clarinetist Wesley Ferreira, and as trio member with violinist John Michael Vaida and cellist Theodore Buchholz. Other major performances include the world premiere of James David's *Swing Landscapes* (2018) for Piano and Wind Orchestra, duo performances with clarinetist Wesley Ferreira at the 2016 ClarinetFest International Conference, and a 2015 chamber music

performance on the Frick Collection's "Salon Evening" concert series in New York City with members of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

As an avid supporter for new and current music, Dr. Burns has performed works by current composers such as Mari Esabel Valverde, Margaret Brouwer, Mathjis van Dijk, Baljinder Sekhon, and James M. David. Past summer residences have included the New York State Summer School of the Arts Choral Studies Program in Fredonia, New York, the Performing Arts Institute at the Wyoming Seminary near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the Eastman School of Music's "Summer@Eastman" program in Rochester, New York, the Lift Clarinet Academy in Fort Collins, Colorado, and the Just Chamber Music program in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Dr. Burns currently resides in Broomfield, Colorado with his wife and collaborative pianist, Suyeon Kim, and his four-year old son, Stephen.

Mezzo-soprano, **NICOLE ASEL**, serves as an associate professor of Voice at Colorado State University where she teaches Applied Voice, Vocal Pedagogy, and Freshman Voice Studio. She has performed internationally throughout the United States in operatic, concert, and recital repertoire.

Recent performances include mezzo-soprano soloist in Mahler's Third Symphony with the Colorado State University Symphony Orchestra, alto soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Fort Collins Symphony, mezzo-soprano soloist in Händel's *Messiah* with Pro Musica Chamber Ensemble and Larimer Chorale, Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* with the Sam Houston State University Symphony Orchestra, and Rufus Wainwright's *Songs for Lulu* in Vancouver, BC. She is also working on an innovative new film, *The Baby Book Project*, featuring Lauren Spavelko's song cycle *Baby Book* with Art Song Colorado, more can be found on Art Song Colorado's website.

A finalist in the 2010 Rocky Mountain Regional Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions, she is a devoted operatic performer and recitalist. Dr. Asel has a passion for new American opera and art song and has been active in creating and promoting new works. She has collaborated with some of today's most accomplished living composers including Mark Adamo, Kirke Meachem, Robert Livingston Aldridge, Hershel Garfein, Daniel Kellogg, and Robert Spillman. Her world premiere recording of Robert Livingston Aldridge's *LoveSongs* with Robert Spillman at the piano was released under the Centaur label and can be found on all streaming platforms and widely for purchase.

Dr. Asel's students have won district and regional NATS auditions in both classical and musical theatre categories as well as having been accepted to prestigious graduate and summer programs. Her students have competed and placed at regional Opera competitions as well as national NATS student auditions. An advocate of body wellness in the voice studio, Dr. Asel's teaching is based on vocal pedagogy research and scholarship, Alexander technique, and yogic philosophy.

She holds a D.M.A. in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from The University of Colorado at Boulder, an M.M. from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and a B.M. from Ithaca College. Previously, she was on faculty at Sam Houston State University and The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley where she taught voice, diction, and opera.

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