



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Nicole Percifield, contralto

DMA Recital 3

Joel Goodfellow, piano

Grace Kyungrok Moon, viola

This recital is in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance.
Nicole Percifield is a student of Wendy Nielsen.

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 12:30 pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

Gestillte Sehnsucht (from *Zwei Gesänge*, Op. 91)

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Quatre Poèmes, Op. 5

Charles Martin Loeffler (1861-1935)

La Cloche fêlée

Dansons la gigue!

Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois

Sérénade

INTERMISSION

Three Songs, Op. 10

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Rain has fallen

Sleep now

I hear an army

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Nights Not Spent Alone (2015)

Jonathan Dove (1959-)

Recuerdo

What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why (Sonnet XLIII)

I too beneath your moon, almighty Sex

O my deir hert

When there is Peace

King David

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Lost in the Stars

Kurt Weill (1900-1950)

BIOGRAPHY

Contralto **Nicole Percifield** has featured in concert performances with New Haven Symphony (*Messiah*), Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (D. Scarlatti's *Salve Regina* and Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*), North Bay Symphony (Elgar's *Sea Pictures*), Mandle Philharmonic (Mahler's *Symphony no. 2*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*), the UTSO (Beethoven's *Mass in C*), Deep River Symphony, and Minnesota Orchestra. Recently, Percifield performed Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at the Banff Centre and Handel's *Messiah* with the Elmer Iseler Singers. A skilled interpreter of art song, Percifield received the 2024 Norcop Prize in Song, was a 2024 Fellow with Toronto Summer Music and Académie Francis Poulenc, performed Debussy's *Chansons Baudelaire* at Carnegie Hall, and featured on CBC's *Tapestry* program. A graduate of Yale Opera, Percifield has worked with Minnesota Opera (*Salome*, *Faust*), Santa Fe Opera (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Rigoletto*), Central City Opera (*Werther*, *Cendrillon*), the Banff Centre (*Die Zauberflöte*), and Opera Theatre of St. Louis (*Ghosts of Versailles*). She can be heard singing the roles of Cathleen (*Riders to the Sea*), and Hostess (*At the Boar's Head*), recorded live at the Beethoven Festival in Warsaw, Poland. The International Classical Music Awards nominated the recording for Best Opera Album, 2017.

Joel Goodfellow, from Vernon, British Columbia, has been working as a collaborative musician for over fifteen years and has his Bachelor of Music in piano performance from the University of Lethbridge. Joel studied collaborative piano at the University of Toronto under Steven Philcox, where he was the 2021 winner of the Koldofsky Prize and a FCAVA grant recipient to study at the Académie Francis Poulenc in Tours, France. He has performed as a soloist with the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra, Kamloops Symphony Orchestra, and Youth Symphony of the Okanagan, and in recitals across Canada, the UK, Austria, and France, with critics praising his musical sensitivity and fresh interpretations. With the release of his debut crossover percussion and piano duo album, *Detours*, Joel was added to the PARMA recording artists roster under the Big Round Records label. Since the summer of 2022, he has also been part of the faculty of AIMS in Graz, Austria as a repetiteur and the pianist for the AIMS Spiritual Ensemble. More recently, he has worked as music director for Summer Opera Lyric Theatre (*La vie*

parisienne), assistant musical director for Toronto Operetta Theatre (*The Mikado - Revisited*), and will soon be conducting *Lost in the Stars* for Opera in Concert.

Grace Kyungrok Moon is a Korean Canadian violist whose dynamic artistry has established her as a versatile presence in Canada's classical music scene. She is the Principal Violist of the Kingston Symphony Orchestra and performs frequently with leading ensembles including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Concert Orchestra, and Sinfonia Toronto. Moon holds two master's degrees in performance: a Master of Music in Viola Performance from the University of Toronto, where she studied with Teresa Rudolph and Rémi Pelletier and won the Felix Galimir Chamber Music Award, and a Master of Music in Violin Performance from the University of Alberta under Robert Uchida and Guillaume Tardif. Her achievements include winning the Alberta Baroque Ensemble Competition and receiving numerous distinctions such as the Beryl Barns Memorial Scholarship, Queen Elizabeth II Scholarship, Alberta Graduate Student Scholarship, and Kathy Hogan Memorial Scholarship. She has participated in masterclasses with renowned artists including Nancy Dahn, Taras Gabora, Jonathan Crow, and Juan-Miguel Hernandez. Moon's festival appearances span both national and international stages, including the Toronto Summer Music Festival, Salt Spring Chamber Music Festival, Del Lago International Music Festival in Mexico, Schlern International Music Festival in Italy, and the Shanghai Music Festival. With a career shaped by curiosity, dedication, and a rich dual background in violin and viola, she continues to contribute vibrantly to Canada's musical landscape.

PROGRAM NOTES - IN THE EVENING

Brahms published '**Gestillte Sehnsucht**' in 1884, pairing it with his reworked piece, "Geistliches Wiegenlied." The work was both a gift and an attempt to repair the rift that had appeared in the marriage of Brahms' close friends, violin prodigy Joseph Joachim and contralto Amalie Weiss. The choice of viola, the contralto voice, and the low setting of the piano, written mostly in the bass clef, bring out the richness of Friedrich Rückert's (1788-1866) poetry, bathing the listener in "golden evening light." Troubling thoughts and desires emerge in the minor second section of Brahms' ternary form, interrupting the quiet of the evening. This is reconciled by the inevitable return to nature when "the winds and the birds whisper my longing, my life, to sleep."

Charles Martin Loeffler also had a connection to Joseph Joachim, studying violin with him while attending the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin from 1874-1877; but it is his time studying violin and composition in France, working with Debussy's teacher Ernest Guiraud, that most influenced his musical sensibility. Loeffler immigrated to America in 1881, where he became a prominent figure in Boston society, serving as assistant concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra for twenty years. He set several poems for voice, viola and piano in 1893, four of which were later published as **Quatre poèmes** in 1904. The work sets poetry of the French Symbolist poet Paul Verlaine (1844-1896), and the poet that highly influenced the Symbolist movement, Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867). The poetry evokes a sense of both bitterness and pleasure, and Loeffler juxtaposes these ideas musically, setting rich, impressionistic harmonies

against minor, dark colors and sharp rhythmic figures. Memories drift up in smoke during a cold night in '**La Cloche fêlée,**' as we hear the chiming of distant bells and the echo of "Dies irae," a theme Loeffler weaves throughout the cycle. The piece reaches a climax as the speaker yearns for the ability to cry out despite their "cracked soul." Instead, they find themselves immobile, as though trapped under "a great pile of the dead." Loeffler then repeats the first stanza of the poetry, returning the listener to the atmospheric, frozen setting of a winter evening. Jumping in with a sprightly, folk-style melody, the viola sets the scene of a broken-hearted lover dancing away their sorrows in '**Dansons la gigue!**' Loeffler's setting meanders tonally as the lover reminisces but is inevitably brought back to the insistent theme of the dance. The bittersweetness of a winter's sunset permeates '**Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois**' as the breeze, the mournful sound of the horn, and the "blood-flecked setting sun" are depicted in impressionistic interludes between the viola and piano. A cruel and tender evening '**Sérénade**' closes the set, with macabre comparisons drawn between death and desire, sung to the plucking of the mandolin.

Written between 1935-1937, while Barber was attending the American Academy in Rome, **Three Songs** sets the poetry of James Joyce (1882-1941). Taken from Joyce's collection *Chamber Music*, published in 1907 when Joyce himself was in Rome, the songs trace the end of a relationship. They are prime examples of Barber's commitment to poetry and lyricism, with changes in meter that reflect the rhythm of the text and a piano setting that interprets the poem's meaning and imagery. Through memory, a plea for sleep, and anxious dreams, the songs trace the progression of the evening. At the end of the day, memories rise in '**Rain has fallen**' as the piano echoes the gentle drops of rain on wet leaves, before building to an impassioned plea. '**Sleep now**' is an unsettled lullaby that longs for the peace sleep can bring to an "unquiet heart." The rocking motion passes between the piano and the voice with multiple changes of meter creating a fragile restlessness, interrupted by the adamant call from "the voice of the winter." Sleep, however, does not provide the desired respite, but rather a crashing, rampaging dream in '**I hear an army.**'

Jonathan Dove's **Nights Not Spent Alone** was composed for mezzo soprano Kitty Whately, who suggested the works of American poet Edna St Vincent Millay (1892-1950). Dove was drawn to "the tension between the formal control of the verse and the anarchic passions to which it testifies." His settings follow this tension, with broad musical patterns that increase in passion and intensity throughout each piece. "**Recuerdo**" ('memory' in Spanish) traces the magic of an evening spent doing nothing with a new love; the mundane is elevated simply by being in their presence. Dove builds to a climax in the second stanza, as the figures in the treble of the piano ascend higher and higher with the rising sun, "a bucketful of gold." Set in a sparse, shifting quintuple meter, "**What lips my lips have kissed**" recalls the ghosts of lovers past, encompassing the longing and regret found in the quiet solitude of the present. Driving rhythms and repetitions of Millay's text in '**I too beneath your moon**' create a relentless, restless energy, as the speaker grapples with embracing their shadowy side that emerges in the evening, composed of "anguish, pride, and burning thought."

The last set returns us to the contemplative aspect of evening with three early pieces by Herbert Howells. The brothers Wedderburn (1495-1553) based the poetry of **'O my deir hert'** on stanza thirteen and fourteen of Martin Luther's (1483-1546) German text. 'Ach, mein herzliebes Jesulein, Mach dir ein rein, sanft Bettelein....' This quiet prayer to Jesus, set in the Dorian mode with a gentle rocking motion, reflects the English Renaissance style typical of Howells. This was due to his work assisting in the transcription of Tudor manuscripts during a period of illness between 1915-1920. Written while Howells was still a student at the Royal College of Music, the poetry of **'When there is Peace'** was written under the pen name of Fiona Macleod, used by Scottish poet William Sharp (1855-1905). Howell's cast this collection aside, and *'Five Songs for Low Voice and Piano,'* Op.7 was not performed until 1998. The piece develops over long phrases and multiple chromatic shifts that highlight the "sea," "stars" and "heart." **'King David'** is perhaps Howells most well-known and beloved song, setting the poetry of his friend Walter de la Mare (1873-1956). As King David moves to the garden, the piece makes a sudden shift from E flat minor to E major, and the nightingale is heard "jargoning on" in the treble of the piano. Empathizing with the nightingale creates a moment of connection and peace for King David in the cool of the evening moon.

The night's sky is not quite so comforting in Weill's **'Lost in the Stars,'** from his musical of the same name with lyrics by Maxwell Anderson (1888-1959). However, Weill still imbues the peace with a sense of camaraderie and charm, as we are all, perhaps, lost together in the starry night.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

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Gestillte Sehnsucht

Friedrich Rückert

In goldnen Abendschein getaucht,
Wie feierlich die Wälder stehn!
In leise Stimmen der Vöglein hauchet
Des Abendwindes leises Wehn.
Was lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein?
Sie lispeln die Welt in Schlummer ein.

Ihr Wünsche, die ihr stets euch reget
Im Herzen sonder Rast und Ruh!
Du Sehnen, das die Brust beweget,

Assuaged Longing

Translation by Richard Stokes

Bathed in golden evening light,
How solemnly the forests stand!
The evening winds mingle softly
With the soft voices of the birds.
What do the winds, the birds whisper?
They whisper the world to sleep.

But you, my desires, ever stirring
In my heart without respite!
You, my longing, that agitates my breast-

Wann ruhest du, wann schlummerst du?
Beim Lispeln der Winde, der Vögelein,
Ihr sehnsüchtigen Wünsche,
wann schlaft ihr ein?

Ach, wenn nicht mehr in goldne Fernen
Mein Geist auf Traumgefieder eilt,
Nicht mehr an ewig fernen Sternen
Mit sehnsüchtem Blick mein Auge weilt;
Dann lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein
Mit meinem Sehnen mein Leben ein.

Quatre Poèmes,

La Cloche fêlée

Charles Baudelaire

Il est amer et doux,
pendant les nuits d'hiver,
D'écouter, près du feu
qui palpète et qui fume,
Les souvenirs lointains lentement s'élever
Au bruit des carillons
qui chantent dans la brume.

Bienheureuse la cloche au gosier vigoureux
Qui, malgré sa vieillesse,
alerte et bien portante,
Jette fidèlement son cri religieux,
Ainsi qu'un vieux soldat
qui veille sous la tente!

Moi, mon âme est fêlée,
et lorsqu'en ses ennuis
Elle veut de ses chants
peupler l'air froid des nuits,
Il arrive souvent que sa voix affaiblie

Semble le râle épais
d'un blessé qu'on oublie
Au bord d'un lac de sang,
sous un grand tas de morts
Et qui meurt, sans bouger,
dans d'immenses efforts.

When will you rest, when will you sleep?
The winds and the birds whisper,
But when will you,
yearning desires, slumber?

Ah! when my spirit no longer hastens
On wings of dreams into golden distances,
When my eyes no longer dwell yearningly
On eternally remote stars;
Then shall the winds, the birds whisper
My life – and my longing – to sleep.

The Cracked Bell

Translation by Wallace Fowlie

It is bitter and sweet,
during winter nights,
To listen, near the fire
which crackles and smokes,
To the distant memories slowly rising
At the noise of chimes
singing in the fog.

Happy is the bell with the vigorous throat
Which, despite its age,
alert and strong,
Faithfully sends forth its religious cry,
Like an old soldier
standing sentinel under the tent!

My soul is cracked,
and when in its boredom
It wishes to fill the cold air of night
with its songs,
It often comes about that its weak voice

Resembles the thick rattle
of a wounded man forgotten
On the edge of a lake of blood,
under a great pile of the dead,
And who dies, without moving,
after tremendous efforts.

Dansons la gigue!

Paul Verlaine

Dansons la gigue!

J'aimais surtout ses jolis yeux
Plus clairs que l'étoile des cieux,
J'aimais ses yeux malicieux.

Dansons la gigue!

Elle avait des façons vraiment
De désoler un pauvre amant,
Que c'en était vraiment charmant!

Dansons la gigue!

Mais je trouve encore meilleur
Le baiser de sa bouche en fleur
Depuis qu'elle est morte à mon coeur.

Dansons la gigue!

Je me souviens, je me souviens
Des heures et des entretiens,
Et c'est le meilleur de mes biens.

Dansons la gigue!

Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois

Paul Verlaine

Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois
D'une douleur on veut croire orpheline
Qui vient mourir au bas de la colline
Parmi la brise errant en courts abois.

L'âme du loup pleure dans cette voix
Qui monte avec le soleil qui décline
D'une agonie on veut croire câline
Et qui ravit et qui navre à la fois.

Pour faire mieux cette plainte assoupie,
La neige tombe à longs traits de charpie
A travers le couchant sanguinolent,

Let's dance a jig!

Translation by A.S. Kline

Let's dance a jig!

I loved, above all, her pretty eyes
Brighter than stars in the skies,
I loved her malicious eyes likewise.

Let's dance a jig!

She for sure, she knew the art
Of breaking a poor lover's heart,
How charmingly she played the part.

Let's dance a jig!

But I find it even better
That kiss of her mouth in flower
Now, in my heart, she is dead.

Let's dance a jig!

I recall, oh I recall
The hours, the words we let fall,
And this the very best of all.

Let's dance a jig!

The sound of the horn

Translation by Richard Stokes

The sound of the horn wails to the woods
With an almost orphan sorrow
Which fades away at the foot of the hill
Amid the gusts of the fierce North wind.

The soul of the wolf weeps in that voice
Which rises with the setting sun
With an almost soothing agony,
Which delights and distresses all at once.

To muffle better this lament,
The snow falls in long strips of lint
Across the blood-flecked setting sun,

Et l'air a l'air d'être un soupir d'automne,
Tant il fait doux par ce soir monotone
Où se dorlote un paysage lent.

Sérénade

Paul Verlaine

Comme la voix d'un mort qui chanterait
Du fond de sa fosse,
Maîtresse, entends monter vers ton retrait
Ma voix aigre et fausse.

Ouvre ton âme et ton oreille au son
De la mandoline:
Pour toi j'ai fait, pour toi, cette chanson
Cruelle et câline.

Je chanterai tes yeux d'or et d'onyx
Purs de toutes ombres,
Puis le Léthé de ton sein, puis le Styx
De tes cheveux sombres.

Comme la voix d'un mort qui chanterait
Du fond de sa fosse,
Maîtresse, entends monter vers ton retrait
Ma voix aigre et fausse.

Puis je louerai beaucoup, comme il convient,
Cette chair bénie
Dont le parfum opulent me revient
Les nuits d'insomnie.

Et pour finir, je dirai le baiser
De ta lèvre rouge,
Et ta douceur à me martyriser,
— Mon Ange ! — ma Gouge !

Ouvre ton âme et ton oreille au son
De ma mandoline:
Pour toi j'ai fait, pour toi, cette chanson
Cruelle et câline.

And the air has the air of an autumn sigh,
So mild is this monotonous night
Where a languid landscape takes its ease.

Serenade

Translation by A.S. Kline

As the voice of a dead man might sing
From the depths of the grave,
My Mistress, tuneless and shrill, echoing
Towards you, the voice that I raise.

Open your soul and hear the sound
Of my mandoline:
For you I wrote this song, for you, I found
This cruel, tender thing.

I will sing your eyes of gold and onyx,
Clear of every shadow,
Then the Lethe of your breast, the Styx
Of your hair's dark flow.

As the voice of a dead man might sing
From the depths of the grave,
My Mistress, tuneless and shrill, echoing
Towards you, the voice that I raise.

Next I will praise, above all
That blessed flesh
Whose opulent perfumes recall
Insomnia's distress.

To conclude, I will tell of the kiss
Of your red lip,
And how sweet my martyrdom is,
— My angel! — My Whip!

Open your soul and hear the sound
Of my mandoline:
For you I wrote this song, for you, I found
This cruel, tender thing.

Three Songs
James Joyce

Rain has fallen

Rain has fallen all the day.
O come among the laden trees:
The leaves lie thick upon the way
Of mem'ries.

Staying a little by the way
Of mem'ries shall we depart.
Come, my beloved, where I may
Speak to your heart.

Sleep now

Sleep now, O sleep now,
O you unquiet heart!
A voice crying "Sleep now"
Is heard in my heart.

The voice of the winter
Is heard at the door.
O sleep, for the winter
Is crying "Sleep no more."

My kiss will give peace now
And quiet to your heart –
Sleep on in peace now,
O you unquiet heart!

I hear an army

I hear an army charging upon the land,
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their knees:
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with flutt'ring whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battlename:
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long, green hair:
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, why have you left me alone?

Nights Not Spent Alone

Edna St Vincent Millay

Recuerdo

We were very tired, we were very merry—
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
It was bare and bright, and smelled like a stable—
But we looked into a fire, we leaned across a table,
We lay on a hill-top underneath the moon;
And the whistles kept blowing, and the dawn came soon.

We were very tired, we were very merry—
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry;
And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,
From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere;
And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,
And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.

We were very tired, we were very merry,
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
We hailed, "Good morrow, mother!" to a shawl-covered head,
And bought a morning paper, which neither of us read;
And she wept, "God bless you!" for the apples and pears,
And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why (Sonnet XLIII)

What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
Under my head till morning; but the rain
Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh
Upon the glass and listen for reply,
And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain
For unremembered lads that not again
Will turn to me at midnight with a cry.

Thus in the winter stands the lonely tree,
Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one,
Yet knows its boughs more silent than before:
I cannot say what loves have come and gone,
I only know that summer sang in me
A little while, that in me sings no more.

I, too, beneath your moon, almighty Sex

I, too, beneath your moon, almighty Sex,
Go forth at nightfall crying like a cat,
Leaving the ivory tower I laboured at
For birds to foul and boys and girls to vex
With tittering chalk; and you, and the long necks
Of neighbors sitting where their mothers sat
Are well aware of shadowy this and that
In me, that's neither noble nor complex.
Such as I am, however, I have brought
To what it is, this tower; it is my own;
Though it is reared To Beauty, it is wrought
From what I had to build with: honest bone
Is there, and anguish; pride; and burning thought;
And lust is there, and nights not spent alone.

O my deir hert

Wedderburn Brothers

O my deir hert, young Jesus sweet,
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,
And I shall rock thee in my hert
And never mair from thee depart.

But I shall praise thee evermair
With sangis sweet unto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert shall I bow,
And sing that richt Balulalow!

When there is Peace

Fiona Macleod

There is peace on the sea tonight
Thought the fish in the white wave:
There is peace among the stars tonight
Thought the sleeper in the grave:
There is peace in my heart tonight
Sighed love beneath its breath;
For God dreamed in the silence of His might
Amid the earthquakes of death
There is peace tonight.

King David

Walter de la Mare

King David was a sorrowful man:
No cause for his sorrow had he;
And he called for the music of a hundred harps,
To ease his melancholy.

They played till they all fell silent:
Played and play sweet did they;
But the sorrow that haunted the heart of King David
They could not charm away.

He rose; and in his garden
Walked by the moon alone,
A nightingale hidden in a cypress tree,
Jargoned on and on.

King David lifted his sad eyes
Into the dark-boughed tree --
"Tell me, thou little bird that singest,
Who taught my grief to thee?"

But the bird in no-wise heeded;
And the king in the cool of the moon
Hearkened to the nightingale's sorrowfulness,
Till all his own was gone.

Lost in the Stars

Maxwell Anderson

Before Lord God made the sea and the land,
He held all the stars in the palm of His hand,
And they ran through his fingers like grains of sand,
And one little star fell alone.

Then the Lord God hunted through the wide night air
For the little dark star on the wind down there
And he stated and promised he'd take special care
So it wouldn't get lost again.

Now, a man don't mind if the stars grow dim
And the clouds blow over and darken him,
So long as the Lord God's watching over them,
Keeping track how it all goes on.

But I've been walking through the night and the day
Till my eyes get weary and my head turns gray
And sometimes it seems maybe God's gone away
Forgetting the promise that we heard him say

And we're lost out here in the stars,
Little stars, big stars, blowing through the night,
And we're lost out here in the stars,
Little stars, big stars, blowing through the night,
And we're lost out here in the stars.

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