



LIVE FROM THE MADISON OPERA CENTER
AN EVENING OF FRIENDSHIP

Emily Fons, mezzo-soprano
Amanda Majeski, soprano
Scott Gendel, piano

November 21, 2020

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ATTORNEYS



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The Program

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Amanda Majeski, Emily Fons

Prenderò quel brunettino

W.A. Mozart (1756-91)

~

POLISH SONGS

Amanda Majeski

Życzenie (The Maiden's Wish)

Frédéric Chopin (1810-49)

Śliczny Chłopiec (The Handsome Lad)

Piosnka Litewska (Lithuanian Song)

Moja Pieszczotka (My Sweetheart)

~

AMERICAN SONGS

Emily Fons

Shady Grove

traditional; arranged by Celius Dougherty (1902-86)

The Colorado Trail

Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair

Stephen Foster (1826-64)

Beautiful Dreamer

~

ITALIENISCHES LIEDERBUCH (ITALIAN SONGBOOK)

Amanda Majeski

Schweig einmal still (Be silent for once!)

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen (My sweetheart invited me to dinner)

Mein Liebster ist so klein (My sweetheart is so small)

Du sagst mir, daß ich keine Fürstin sei (You tell me that I am no princess)

Ich hab in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen (I have a lover living in Penna)

~

AMERICAN SONGS

Emily Fons

Long Time Ago

traditional; arranged by Aaron Copland (1900-90)

Simple Gifts

Loveliest of Trees

John Duke (1899-1984)

White Fields

Richard Hundley (1931-2018)

~

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Amanda Majeski, Emily Fons

White Christmas

Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

Love, You Didn't Do Right By Me

Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep

Sisters

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Emily Fons, mezzo-soprano



Mezzo-soprano Emily Fons has made several exciting role and company debuts in recent seasons that have set her apart as a versatile, powerful, and engaging performer. Ms. Fons was hailed by *Opera News* as one of opera's rising stars and one of the best singing actresses of her generation, and received a Grammy nomination for her work on Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain*.

A native of Wisconsin, she debuted with Madison Opera at *Opera in the Park 2012*, returned as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* in 2015, and has frequently worked with the company's High School Apprentices.

Ms. Fons has been lauded for her virtuosic abilities in Baroque and bel canto repertoire, her winning portrayals of opera's traditional "trouser roles," and the dramatic commitment and musicality she brings to modern works. In the past few seasons Ms. Fons has sung with Canadian Opera Company, Seattle Opera, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Santa Fe Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the International Händel Festspiele, the Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Opera, San Diego Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Opéra de Lille, the Ongaku-Juku Festival, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

Upcoming engagements include a return to Boston Lyric Opera for a new production of *Hansel and Gretel*, and appearances in Nashville and Chicago. Ms. Fons also looks forward to the rescheduling of canceled performances of *The Barber of Seville* in San Diego, *Die Fledermaus* in Tokyo, and *Ariodante* with the International Handel Festival due to COVID-19.

Her 2019-20 season began with the title role in Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and continued with the title role in *La Cenerentola* at Atlanta Opera and Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* at the Canadian Opera Company. She began 2019 at Seattle Opera singing Laurene Powell Jobs in Mason Bates' *The [R]evolution of Steve Jobs*, then returned to Michigan Opera Theatre to sing Hansel, and finished the season in Seattle with a role debut as Maddalena in *Rigoletto*.

In summer 2018, Ms. Fons sang the title role in Cesti's *Oronthea* with the Haymarket Opera Company in Chicago. In the 2017-18 season, she returned to the Cleveland Orchestra as the mezzo soloist in the Mozart *Requiem*, and made her company debut with Opera North Carolina as Ruby Thewes in *Cold Mountain*, a role she had created in the opera's premiere at the Santa Fe Opera in 2015. Ms. Fons debuted with Kentucky Opera as Sister Helen Prejean in *Dead Man Walking*, and appeared in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, followed by performances of the title role in Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, first with the Berlin Philharmonic, and then in Japan as part of the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy. She had the honor of premiering art songs by James Stephenson on a recital at the Polish Center of Wisconsin, and performing for the second time Kathleen Ginther's "The River Merchant's Wife," which she had premiered in 2011.

Other notable performances include the title role in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* for Opéra de Lille, Stéphano in *Roméo et Juliette* with the Santa Fe Opera, Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Canadian Opera Company, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* at Opera Omaha, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with the Florentine Opera, the title role in Handel's oratorio *Susanna* with the International Händel Festspiele, and the title role in Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* with maestro Seiji Ozawa.

Ms. Fons is enjoying a successful international career while also staying committed to performing in and giving back to her community and home state through master classes, recitals, a scholarship fund, and by working with the high quality opera companies that Wisconsin is fortunate to have.

Amanda Majeski, soprano



Internationally renowned American lyric soprano Amanda Majeski is rapidly garnering critical acclaim for a voice of “silvery beauty” (*Musical America*). *The Guardian* says she “sings with remarkable commitment and radiance of tone... She sounds exquisite.”

A native of Gurnee, Illinois, she now lives in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and is joining Madison Opera for the first time with this recital.

Last season began with her debut with the Nürnberg Symphony, singing Strauss’s “Four Last Songs.” She returned to Lyric Opera of Chicago, the company that launched her international career, to sing Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, and also performed Wolf’s *Italienisches Liederbuch* at the 92nd Street Y.

Highlights from her 2018-19 season include rave reviews for her *Káťa Kabanová* at the Royal Opera House in London. She made her concert debuts with the Sydney Symphony, Colorado Symphony, and Music of the Baroque. She debuted at Staatsoper Stuttgart as the title role in *Iphigénie en Tauride* and returned to Santa Fe Opera as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*.

Ms. Majeski made her Metropolitan Opera debut on the opening night of the 2014-15 season as Countess Almaviva in a new production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, which was broadcast in HD internationally and on PBS across the United States. Since then, she has returned to the Met for revivals of *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, as well as a new production of *Così fan tutte* which was broadcast in HD in the 2017-18 season.

An alumna of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, she made her mainstage Lyric debut with only a few hours’ notice as Countess Almaviva. Named “Best Breakout Star” by *Chicago Magazine*, she has since continued her relationship with Lyric audiences as Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and Marta in *The Passenger*.

She made her critically-acclaimed role debut as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* at Oper Frankfurt, where she has also sung the Goose-Girl in Humperdinck’s *Königskinder*, Vreli in Delius’s *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, and the title role in *Rusalka*. She made her European debut at the Semperoper Dresden, where her performances included *Alcina*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Capriccio*. Her significant international debuts include the Glyndebourne Festival as Countess Almaviva and Eva; Opernhaus Zürich as Marguerite in *Faust*; and at the Paris Opera and Teatro Real as Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*. She debuted at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing as Eva and at Teatro Colón as Cleopatra in Handel’s *Giulio Cesare*.

Her U.S. career includes performances with Opera Philadelphia as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Pittsburgh Opera as Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, and her Washington National Opera debut as Countess Almaviva. Ms. Majeski’s long-standing relationship with the Santa Fe Opera includes her debut as Ottone in Vivaldi’s *Griselda*, Countess Madeleine in *Capriccio*, and the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Ms. Majeski holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and Northwestern University. She was a member of San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program, the Gerdine Young Artist Program at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and the Steans Institute at Ravinia. Awards include the George London Foundation Award, first prize of the Palm Beach Opera Vocal Competition, and a Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation.

Scott Gendel, piano



Scott Gendel is a composer, vocal coach, pianist, rock musician, theatrical music director, singer, keyboardist, composition teacher, and general musical polymath living here in Wisconsin. As a composer, his music has a wide-ranging scope, but Scott is particularly obsessed with the artistry of the human voice in all its forms, including opera, art song, choral music, musical theatre, pop songs, experimental music, and more. His music has been recorded by artists including cellist Yo-Yo Ma, soprano Julia Faulkner, and the Santa Clara Chorale & San Jose Chamber Orchestra. Recently Scott's opera *Super Storm!* was performed by Opera For The Young in nearly 200 elementary schools around the Midwest, and a recording of his song cycle *To Keep The Dark Away* was released on Navona Records.

As a collaborative pianist and keyboard player, Scott is the official pianist and principal vocal coach for Madison Opera. He also appears frequently in vocal and instrumental recitals around the country, plays in four different hard-to-categorize rock & electronic bands, coaches professional opera singers regularly, and has worked as a coach & pianist for companies including Atlanta Opera and Opera North. Scott's current projects include a large-scale choral work for the Madison Choral Project based on a story from NPR's "StoryCorps" and a concept album on the Cassandra myth, blending experimental pop songs with choral music, as part of The Parlour Trick. Please visit <http://www.scottgendel.com> for more information.

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SPECIAL THANKS

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SONG TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Prenderò quel brunettino

Fiordiligi

Sister, what do you say?

Dorabella

I'm stupefied at the devilish wit of that girl.

Fiordiligi

She's insane. Do you think we are likely to follow her advice?

Dorabella

Of course, if you turn the whole affair upside-down.

Fiordiligi

On the contrary, I'm looking at it the right way up. Don't you think it's scandalous for two engaged young women to do things like that?

Dorabella

She didn't say we should do anything wrong.

Fiordiligi

It would be bad enough getting ourselves talked about.

Dorabella

What if we say they come to see Despina?

Fiordiligi

Your conscience is too accommodating! And what will our lovers say?

Dorabella

Nothing, if they know nothing about it; if they know something, we can say they came to see her.

Fiordiligi

But our hearts?

Dorabella

They'll stay just as they are. If we amuse ourselves a bit so we don't die of melancholy, we're not being unfaithful, my dear sister.

Fiordiligi

That's true.

Dorabella

So?

Fiordiligi

So you do what you like; I don't want to be blamed if there's trouble later.

Dorabella

How could there possibly be any trouble, if we're careful?
But tell me, so we understand each other properly: which of the two do you prefer?

Fiordiligi

You choose, sister.

Dorabella

I've already decided.
I'll take the one with brown hair, who seems more fun to me.

Fiordiligi

And meanwhile I'll laugh and joke with the blonde one.

Dorabella

Playfully I'll reply to his sweet words.

Fiordiligi

Sighing, I'll imitate the other one's sighs.

Dorabella

He'll say to me, "My love, I'm dying!"

Fiordiligi

He'll say to me, "My dearest treasure!"

Dorabella

And meanwhile what pleasure...

Fiordiligi

And meanwhile what pleasure...

Both

...what fun I'll have!

POLISH SONGS

Życzenie (The Maiden's Wish)

If I were the sun shining in the sky,
I would shine only for you.
Not on lakes or forests, but for all time,
under your window and only for you,
if I could change myself into sunshine.

If I were a bird of the grove,
I wouldn't sing in any foreign country.
Not on lakes or forests, but for all time,
under your window and only for you,
if I could change myself into sunshine.

Śliczny Chłopiec (Handsome Lad)

Sublime, slender, and young, oh, quite a beauty!
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

If he barely blinks an eye, it makes my heart beat faster.
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

When we're dancing together all eyes are on us.
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

If he is late, my heart grows faint and numb in me.
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

Every fond word he whispers clings in my heart and ear.
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

He's already told me I am everything in the world to him.
What more could I want?
Black hair and golden cheek!

Piosnka Litewska (Lithuanian Song)

Early one morning, the sun was rising as mother sat at the glass window.
“Where have you been, my daughter?,” she asks.
“Where did you get your scarf all wet?”

“It is no surprise that those who fetch water so early
might get dew on their scarves.”

“You made that up, my child!
You went into the field to talk with that boy!”

“True, true, Mother,” I confess.
“I saw my sweetheart in the field.
We talked for a few minutes and dew settled on my scarf.”

Moja Pieszczotka (My Sweetheart)

When my darling is in a happy mood,
she sings, trills, and chirps as a bird.
I enjoy each sweet moment,
and dwell on each happy note.
I dare not interrupt or say a word.
I only want to listen, listen, listen.

But when her singing makes her eyes bright
and her cheeks red as berries,
and her pearly teeth shine between coral lips,
then boldly I gaze deeply into her eyes,
and I no longer want to listen.
I only want to kiss kiss kiss her!

AMERICAN SONGS

Shady Grove

Shady grove, my true love.
Shady grove, I know.
Shady grove, my true love.
I'm bound for the shady grove.

Some come here to fiddle and dance,
some come here to tarry.
Some come here to fiddle and dance,
I come here to marry.

Shady grove, my true love.
Shady grove, I know.
Shady grove, my true love.
I'm bound for the shady grove.

Wish I had a fiddle string,
made of golden twine.
Every tune I'd pick on it is
"I wish that boy were mine."

Shady grove, my true love.
Shady grove, I know.
Shady grove, my true love.
I'm bound for the shady grove.

Peaches in the summertime,
apples in the fall.
If I can't have the boy I love,
I won't have none at all.

Shady grove, my true love.
Shady grove, I know.
Shady grove, my true love.
I'm bound for the shady grove.

The Colorado Trail

Eyes like the morning star, cheeks like the rose.
Sally was a pretty gal, God almighty knows.
Weep, all ye little rains. Wail, winds, wail.
All along, along, along the Colorado Trail.

Sweet as the lilac grows, fair in the sun.
Sally was a pretty gal, God almighty knows.
Weep, all ye little rains. Wail, winds, wail.
All along, along, along the Colorado Trail.

Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair

I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
borne, like a vapor, on the summer air.
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
happy as the daisies that dance on her way.
Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour,
many were the blithe birds that warbled them o'er.
Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeanie with the day-dawn smile,
radiant in gladness, warm with winning guile.
I hear her melodies, like joys gone by,
flitting round my heart o'er the fond hopes that die.
Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,
wailing for the lost one that comes not again.
Oh! I long for Jeanie, and my heart bows low,
never more to find her where the bright waters flow.

I sigh for Jeanie, but her light form strayed
far from the fond hearts 'round her native glade.
Her smiles have vanished and her sweet songs flown,
flitting like the dreams that have cheered us and gone.
How the nodding wild flowers may wither on the shore
while her gentle fingers will cull them no more.
Oh! I sigh for Jeanie with the light brown hair,
floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

Beautiful Dreamer

Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me.
Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee.
Sounds of the rude world heard in the day,
lulled by the moonlight have all passed away.

Beautiful dreamer, queen of my song,
list' while I woo thee with soft melody.
Gone are the cares of life's busy throng.
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

Beautiful dreamer, out in the sea.
mermaids are chanting the wild lorelei.
Over the streamlet vapors are borne,
waiting to fad at the bright coming morn.

Beautiful dreamer, beam on my heart,
e'en as the morn on the streamlet and sea.
Then will all clouds of sorrow depart.
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

ITALIENISCHES LIEDERBUCH (ITALIAN SONGBOOK)

Schweig einmal still! (Be silent for once!)

Be silent for once, you detestable babbler!
Your cursed singing makes me sick.
And if you carried on so until tomorrow morning,
you would still not manage a decent song.
Be silent for once, and lay yourself on the ear.
I would prefer the serenade of a donkey!

Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen (My sweetheart invited me to dinner)

My sweetheart invited me to dinner
and yet had no house in which to receive me,
no wood nor hearth to do the cooking or roasting.
The pot had long since been broken in two.
No wine-cask was there either,
and no glasses did he have in use.
The table was narrow, the tablecloth no better,
the bread stone-hard, and the knife totally blunt!

Mein Liebster ist so klein (My sweetheart is so small)

My sweetheart is so small, that without stooping
he sweeps the floor for me with his locks.
When he went into the little garden to pick jasmine,
he was very frightened by a snail.
Then he went into the house to catch his breath,
and a fly knocked him over in a heap.
And when he stepped up to my little window,
a horsefly knocked him in his skull.
Cursed be all flies, gnats, and horseflies,
and all who have a tiny sweetheart from Maremma.
Cursed be all flies, gnats, and midges,
and all who must stoop so low for a kiss!

Du sagst mir, daß ich keine Fürstin sei (You tell me that I am no princess)

You tell me that I am no princess;
you are also not descended from the Spanish throne.
No, my dear fellow, you get up at cock's crow,
you ride to the field, and not in a state carriage.
You mock me for my lowliness,
but poverty does not harm nobility.
You jeer, that I am wanting a crown and coat-of-arms,
and you yourself only ride on Shank's pony!

Ich hab in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen (I have a lover living in Penna)

I have a lover living in Penna,
another one in the Maremma plain.
One in the lovely harbor of Ancona,
and for the fourth I must go to Viterbo.
Another one lives in Casentino,
the next lives in the same place as I,
and yet another one have I in Magione.
Four in La Fratta, ten in Castiglione!

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***AMERICAN SONGS***

***Long Time Ago***

On the lake where drooped the willow, long time ago.  
Where the rock threw back the billow, brighter than snow.  
Dwelt a maid beloved and cherished by high and low.  
But the autumn leaf she perished, long time ago.

Rock and tree and flowing water, long time ago.  
Bird and bee and blossom taught her love's spell to know.  
While to my fond words she listened, murmuring low,  
tenderly her blue eyes glistened, long time ago.

***Simple Gifts***

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free.  
'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
'twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,  
to bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed.  
To turn, turn will be our delight,  
'til by turning, turning we come 'round right.

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free.  
'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
'twill be in the valley of love and delight.

### *Loveliest of Trees*

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
is hung with bloom along the bough,  
and stands about the woodland ride  
wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
twenty will not come again,  
and take from seventy springs a score,  
it only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom,  
fifty springs are little room,  
about the woodlands I will go  
to see the cherry hung with snow.

### *White Fields*

In the winter time we go walking in the fields of snow,  
where there is no grass at all, where the top of every wall,  
every fence, and every tree is as white as white can be.

Pointing out the way we came, everyone of them the same.  
All across the fields there be prints in silver filigree.  
And our mothers always know by the footprints in the snow,  
where it is the children go.

~~~

WHITE CHRISTMAS

White Christmas

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,
just like the ones I used to know.
Where the treetops glisten and children listen
to hear sleigh bells in the snow.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,
with every Christmas card I write.
May your days be merry and bright,
and may all your Christmases be white.

Love, You Didn't Do Right by Me

Love, you didn't do right by me.
You planned a romance that just hadn't a chance,
and I'm through.

Love, you didn't do right by me.
I'm back on the shelf and I'm blaming myself,
but it's you.

My one love affair didn't get anywhere from the start.
To send me a Joe who had winter and snow in his heart,
wasn't smart.

Love, you didn't do right by me.
As they say in the song,
"You done me wrong!"

Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep

When I'm worried and I can't sleep,
I count my blessings instead of sheep.
And I fall asleep counting my blessings.

When my bankroll is getting small,
I think of when I had none at all.
And I fall asleep counting my blessings.

I think about a nursery and I picture curly heads
and one by one I count them as they slumber in their beds.

If you're worried and you can't sleep,
just count your blessings instead of sheep.
And you'll fall asleep counting your blessings.

Sisters

Sisters, sisters, there were never such devoted sisters.
Never had to have a chaperone, no, sir.
I'm there to keep my eye on her.

Caring, sharing, every little thing that we are wearing.
When a certain gentleman arrives from Rome,
she wore the mask and I stayed home.

All kinds of weather, we stick together,
the same in the rain or sun.
Two different faces, but in tight places,
we think and we act as one.

Those who've seen us,
know that not a thing could come between us.
Many men have tried to split us up, but no one can.
Lord help the mister, who comes between me and my sister.
And lord help the sister who comes between me and my man.