

GUEST ARTIST RECITAL

Wednesday, October 26, 2022
Recital Hall
7:00 p.m.

I VOCI DELLE LEONESSE
MEGHAN MERCIERS, CLARINETS
GRETCHEN WINDT, MEZZO-SOPRANO

PROGRAM

Yoga Heart-Lines on the Six Perfection (rev. 2022)

Peter Temko
(b.1942)

- I. Dana Paramita - Giving - *Like Water*
- II. Shila Paramita - Kindness - *Just Be*
- III. Kshanti Paramita - Patience - *Sadhana - After Ho Sen*
- IV. Virya Paramita - Joyful Effort - *Lovers Count Laughter*
- V. Dhyana Paramita - Stillness - *Eight-Bar Meditation*
- VI. Prajna Paramita - *The Six Perfections*

Songs from the Cotton Grass (1999-2004)

Hilary Tann
(b.1947)

- I. A Girl's Song to Her Mother (1999)
- II. Wings of the Grasses (2003)

PROGRAM NOTES

Yoga Heart – Lines on the Six Perfections (rev. 2022)

Jewish-American composer, Dr. Peter Temko (b.1942) is a retired educator, theorist, and clarinetist who taught at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga from 1974-1999. His commissioned works enjoyed much regional success and often included the clarinet. *Yoga Heart* was first performed at the 2014 Southeastern Composer's League Forum and was recently revised and premiered at the American Single Reed Summit in Columbia, South Carolina by I voci delle leonesse.

The book of poetry from which the texts for these songs was drawn is titled, *Yoga Heart – Lines on the Six Perfections*. The poet, Leza Lowitz, is a writer and yoga teacher in Tokyo. Author of over 17 books, her debut young adult novel, *Jet Black and the Ninja Wind* (Tuttle, 2013) received the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times* online, *The Huffington Post*, *Shambhala Sun*, *Best Buddhist Writing 2011*, and *Yoga Journal*. Lowitz's *Yoga Poems: Lines to Unfold By*, was a #1 Amazon bestseller. Its companion volume, *Yoga Heart: Lines on The Six Perfections* is inspired by the Buddhist precepts for living a happy life.

Songs from the Cotton Grass (1999-2004)

Welsh-born composer, Hilary Tann (b. 1947), lives in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and serves as Professor of Music Emerita at Union College. She has completed composer residencies with the Women in Music Festival at Eastman and the Women Composers Festival of Hartford. Her highly praised compositions blend lyricism and formal balance with Tann's strong identification with the natural world. The cycle, *Songs of the Cotton Grass*, evolved over several years with texts by Welsh poet Menna Elfyn. These "reverse lullabies" -- in which a daughter lulls her mother to sleep -- recall the open, high moorland of South Wales.

The first song, "A Girl's Song to Her Mother," which premiered July 30, 1999, opens with a plaintive, syncopated motive. The second song, "Wings of the Grasses," characterized by oscillating sixteenth-note figures, premiered August 25, 2003. In 2004, a third song was commissioned, "Vale of Feathers," with a refrain that echoes back to the first song of the cycle. Originally composed for voice and oboe (or other melody instrument), this performance features voice and clarinet in C performing "A Girl's Song to Her Mother" and "Wings of the Grasses."

INDIVIDUAL BIOS

Dr. Meghan Merciers is Executive Director of the School of the Arts and Associate Professor of Music at the University of North Alabama. She is an active soloist and collaborative musician and frequently performs recitals/lectures with her chamber ensembles, Una Duo, Trio Leo, I voce delle leonesse, and Devil Sticks. Dr. Merciers has performed internationally with the French-American Chamber Orchestra in Lyon, France; in Puebla, Mexico, with Teatro Tinglado; in Vancouver, Canada, and Assisi, Italy, at ICA's ClarinetFest; and at numerous state, regional, national and international conferences. She is endorsed as a Silverstein Pro Team Artist, Backun Artist, and Yamaha Performing Artist. Dr. Merciers earned a Doctor of Musical Arts from Michigan State University, a Master of Music from the University of New Mexico, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga. She was a student of Elsa Verdehr, Ted Oien, Keith Lemmons, Peter Temko, and Nikolasa Tejero.

Dr. Gretchen Windt, mezzo-soprano, channels her strong presence and engaging personality into performances in genres ranging from opera and operetta to symphonic repertoire, art song recitals, and musical theater. She has performed with companies including Sarasota Opera, Utah Opera, Ohio Light Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Southwest, Chesapeake Chamber Opera, Opera Idaho, OperaModa, Bowen Park Opera, and DuPage Opera Theatre. She has performed roles including Hansel (Hansel and Gretel), Cherubino (Le Nozze di Figaro), Prince Orlofsky (Die Fledermaus), Dorabella (Cosi fan tutte), Meg Page (Falstaff), Rosina (Il barbiere di Siviglia), and the title roles in Massenet's Cendrillon and Offenbach's La Perichole. Dr. Windt has degrees from the University of Utah, the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music, and North Park University. She is the Director of Vocal Studies and Associate Professor at the University of North Alabama.

ENSEMBLE BIO

I voci delle leonesse (Dr. Meghan Merciers, clarinet, and Dr. Gretchen Windt, mezzo-soprano) researches, commissions, and performs repertoire inspired by female creatives. They seek opportunities to expand beyond traditional Western Art Music performance and focus on various styles and genres, including folk music, art pop, musical theatre, operetta, electronic music, indie rock, and contemporary art music. Current projects include *Yoga Heart - Lines on the Six Perfections* (poetry of Leza Lowitz) by Peter Temko and *Songs of the Cotton Grass* (poetry of Menna Elfyn) by Hilary Tann.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Symphonic Band Concert

Monday, November 7
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Percussion Ensemble Concert

Tuesday, November 8
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

2 O'Clock Jazz Concert

Thursday, November 10
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

University Choirs Concert

Saturday, November 12
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Huxford Symphony Orchestra

Tuesday, November 15
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Concert Band Concert

Thursday, November 17
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Hilaritas

Friday, December 2
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Sunday, December 4
2:00 p.m., Concert Hall

Amahl And The Night Visitors

Sunday, December 11
3:00 p.m., Bryant-Jordan Hall

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