

The University of Virginia
Music Department

presents

A Distinguished Major Recital

Jack Siegel

bass-baritone

Saturday, March 29, 2025

8:00 pm

Old Cabell Hall

University of Virginia

Recital Program

Jack Siegel, *bass-baritone*

Karen Dalton, *piano*

I.

“For behold... the people that walked in darkness” George Frederic Handel
From *Messiah* (1685-1759)

“I rage, I melt, I burn!... O ruddier than the cherry”
From *Acis and Galatea*

II.

Drei Gedichte von Michelangelo Hugo Wolf
Wohl denk ich oft (1860-1903)
Alles endet, was entsteht
Fühlt meine seele

III.

“La vendetta” Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
From *Le nozze di Figaro* (1756-1791)

“Pa-pa-pa-Papageno!”
From *Die Zauberflöte*

“Don Giovanni, a cenar teco”
From *Don Giovanni*

IV.

“Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre” Georges Bizet
From *Carmen* (1838-1875)

V.

Chansons de Don Quichotte Jacques Ibert
Chanson du départ (1890-1962)
Chanson à Dulcinée
Chanson du Duc
Chanson de la mort

VI.

Epiphany

From *Sweeney Todd*

Stephen Sondheim
(1930-2021)

Stars

From *Les Misérables*

Alain Boublil (b. 1941)
Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944)

I am the very model of a modern major general

From *The Pirates of Penzance*

Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)
W.S. Gilbert (1836-1911)

About the Performers



Jack Siegel is a fourth-year student from Memphis, TN, studying Political Philosophy, Policy, and Law (PPL) and Music. Always balancing a love for music with his other pursuits, Jack sang in choirs from elementary school onwards; he made frequent appearances at state and regional honor choirs, going on to choral scholar positions at The Church of the Holy Apostles (Collierville, TN) and St. Paul's Memorial Church (Charlottesville, VA). Jack was the music director of his acapella group, the Academical Village People; he plays electric bass and sings with his band, Name Game; and he has been a regular

member of UVA's University Singers and Chamber Singers.

Under the direction of his fantastic voice teacher, Pamela Beasley, Jack has grown immensely as a solo singer, and he frequently sings across his community. He is the most recent winner of the Charlottesville Symphony Orchestra's Concerto Competition, performing several arias in their February 2025 concerts; his other solo appearances have included collaborations with the University Singers (*Considering Matthew Shepard*), Charlottesville Symphony Orchestra ("You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch!"), the Westminster Presbyterian Church (selections from *Messiah*), and the Savannah Bananas ("The Star-Spangled Banner"). Jack is also a Wednesday Music Club Student Scholar, and he is very grateful for their continued friendship.

Outside of his passion for music, Jack is also an aspiring public servant. He most recently interned for U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner, and is the founder of UVA's Civil Discourse Initiative, a Leonard D. Schaeffer Fellow in Government Service, a Karsh Institute Student Dialogue Fellow, and a writer for the Virginia Undergraduate Law Review. He enjoys building communities across lines of difference - a feat that can be accomplished through music or through speech. This spring, he will also complete an honors thesis in political philosophy examining the epistemological duties of representatives.

Upon graduation, Jack hopes to work in government service and continue singing.



Karen Dalton has been active in the Charlottesville music community since 1995. She is manager for the Virginia Consort, a premier choral society in Charlottesville, VA. She has served as Music Director for various churches. She has accompanied the Virginia Consort, the Oratorio Society, Heritage Theater, and the UVA Drama Department. Karen received her Bachelor of Arts (piano) at Samford University in

Birmingham, AL, where Professor Witold Turkiewicz was her principal teacher. Karen went on to earn her Masters of Church Music (organ), studying with Professor James W. Good at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. While in Louisville, Karen was Company Manager of The Kentucky Opera. Karen and her husband, Gary, reside in Keswick, VA and are proud parents of a son, Thomas, and a daughter, Emily.

About the Program

Singing is a uniquely people-centered art. We use it to express our feelings, share ideas, and tell stories in ways that are only possible through the combination of words and notes. So, this recital is dedicated to people—to characters, to ensembles, to expressiveness. Every piece tonight has a story to tell, and much of my work has gone into being authentic to those stories. Although UVA has very few chances for us to put on scenes (much less operas), I saw this as the perfect opportunity to unite myself, my friends, and my work with you—the audience—in a way that will be special and rewarding to everyone involved.

—Jack

For Full Notes, Lyrics & Translations



Program Notes

I.

“For behold... the people that walked in darkness” - G.F. Handel, *Messiah*

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) was a German-British composer known for his prolific writing for orchestra. He revolutionized music in England, where he was a naturalized citizen, through his skill choruses and counterpoint. Many of his English works are still frequently played, especially *Messiah* (1741), the legendary oratorio telling the story of Christ. Handel composed it with zealous speed, finishing the entire work in 24 days, and its legacy has lasted beyond 240 years.

The recitative-aria pair “For behold... the people that walked in darkness” showcases Handel’s text painting and chromaticism alongside his traditional strengths. The recitative’s commanding declaration (“For behold”) sets a scene of murky uncertainty, languishing in closely voiced chords, preparing Isaiah’s proclamation in “The people that walked in darkness.” As if portraying the people of Israel, the singer stumbles chromatically in shadowy tones, until he triumphantly discovers light and beckons listeners to come before God.

“I rage... O sweeter than the berry” - G.F. Handel, *Acis and Galatea*

Acis and Galatea (1718) alternatively presents Handel in the pastoral style, which uses light instrumentation and trite plots to glamorize rural life. In the comedic “I rage, I melt, I burn!” we meet the buffoonish cyclops Polyphemus, whose thunderous unrequited love for the nymph Galatea is shown through wanton chromatic harmony and word-chewing. But in the following aria, “O ruddier than the cherry,” Handel hilariously forces the bass Polyphemus to be nimble, hopping about his clef like a coloratura soprano and giddy in his love for Galatea. Perhaps the courtly audiences who saw him, like modern ones, laughed at the aria’s comic stature but still saw its virtuosic challenge—a contrast that keeps it, and *Acis*, in the canon today.

II.

Hugo Wolf, *Drei Gedichte Von Michelangelo*

“Wohl denk ich oft”

“Alles endet, was entsteht”

“Fühlt meine seele”

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903) was an Austrian composer, child prodigy, and critic known for his eclectic and unique art songs. He was educated classically,

but worshipped pre-modernist Richard Wagner, who he stalked during his visits to Vienna. Accordingly, Wolf was known for breaking conventions of form, harmony, and voice-leading, tending to write with sharp dissonance and frequent chromaticism—and he vocally criticized those who didn't.

Michelangelo-lieder, the last of his works, is a capstone on Wolf's fitful life. Set to poems by Michelangelo, another obsessive artist, the three songs picture an author overwhelmed by longing and existential dread—a fatalistic swan-song from both poet and musician. "Wohl denk ich oft" first imagines a triumphant but sour rise to fame, moving with grand fanfare from minor to major, but with a stinging unresolved tension. Then, in "Alles endet, was entstehet," a plain and resigned ode to ephemerality and death, the singer must maintain a decrepit stoicism. Through challenging and frequent shifts in tonality, he wallows in entropy. Finally, the remarkably human "Fühlt meine seele" recalls earlier motifs to transform fatalism into a forward-moving conflict. Wolf's final romantic gesture, the sincere cadence that ends the piece, shines certainty on the tumultuous events of the cycle—and by extension the life of a tormented artist.

III.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was a prolific genius whose talent eternally defines classical music. He composed ceaselessly as one of the world's first freelancing composers, and he had delicate finesse with the voice, especially in opera. His instrumental works are acclaimed for their memorable, songlike melodies. In his later period, when these selections were written, Mozart began to incorporate new genres into his style; he took on debt, he became more superstitious, and he dramatically addressed the political, the dark, and the sublime.

"La vendetta" - W.A. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*

The dually political and hilarious comic opera *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) features many cunning villains, and the first that we meet is the scheming lawyer Don Bartolo, who threatens to thwart the marriage of the titular hero Figaro. Tricked by Figaro in Beaumarchais' *The Barber of Seville* (1773), he promises to exact his vengeance ("La vendetta") using every trick in the law-book. Bartolo patters tongue-twisting text to Mozart's furious orchestration and expert harmony—making him a memorable, if narcissistic, staple of the repertoire.

"Pa-pa-pa-Papageno" - W.A. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*

The spectacle *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), Mozart's final opera, was full of the Masonic, mystic, and fantastic—so when the hero's affable sidekick, Papageno the bird-catcher, rang his magic bells and wished for a wife, why

wouldn't his wish be granted? At once, "Pa-pa-pa-Papagena!" announces his soulmate, modeled in his image. In the ensuing duet, they make a popcorn of 'pa,' then soar together, planning their many children: first one Papageno, then another Papagena, then another Papageno! Mozart's expertise shows in the hilarious text-dressing and light harmony of this beautiful duet.

"Don Giovanni, a cenar teco" - W.A. Mozart, *Don Giovanni*

Don Giovanni (1788), Mozart's master drama, gave breath to the legendary, haughty, and murderous Don Juan. Nobleman and manservant meet their end together when the Commendatore, who Juan has murdered, invites them to dine with him in hell ("Don Giovanni, a cenar teco"). With frightful diminished chords, tense polyphony, chromaticism, and a demon chorus, Mozart gives the Commendatore command of the scene. But nothing can stop the inevitable end of this haunting piece—as the Commendatore declares his sentence, all are whisked away by spiritual forces.

IV.

"Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre" - Georges Bizet, *Carmen*

Georges Bizet (1838-1875) was a native Parisian who won the Prix de Rome and composed the illustrious opera *Carmen* (1875) before his early death at 37. He did not live to see *Carmen* or his other operas, *Les pêcheurs de perles* (1863), and *La jolie fille de Perth* (1867) become famous; but in the contemporary era, Bizet is recognized as a master composer who could have significantly impacted the musical world.

The Toreador Song, "Votre toast," is among the most popular songs ever composed. It showcases *Carmen's* winning features—immortal melody, expert orchestration, and immersive drama—by recreating a bullfighting arena in the Spanish hills. The bullfighter ("toreador") Escamillo sets his eyes on the titular Carmen, a fiery gypsy, and peacocks himself before an adoring crowd. He compares himself to soldiers, returning their toast ("Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre"), and then narrates his thrilling scene. Bizet's composition shows off in words and in technique: the bass-baritone "toreador" is set against a high tessitura, a booming orchestra, challenging diction, and wide vocal leaps. All of it can be overcome with daring bravado! After each verse, he congratulates himself with a triumphant shift from minor to major, repeating the rewarding refrain that "l'amour t'attend" (love awaits) after a trial. The Toreador Song reminds all of us that the greatest challenges reap the greatest rewards.

V.

Jacques Ibert, *Quatre Chansons de Don Quichotte*

“Chanson de depart”

“Chanson a Dulcinee”

“Chanson du Duc”

“Chanson du mort”

Jacques François Antoine Marie Ibert (1890-1962) was a multitalented French composer who eclectically interpolated genres. He entered the Paris Conservatoire at a young age, and at 29, he won the Prix de Rome. Despite two World Wars in his lifetime and a brief exile, he would go on to direct the French Academy in Rome, the Paris Opera, and the *Opéra Comique*. Ibert is remembered best for symphonic works including *Escales* (1924) and his score of Orson Welles’ film *Macbeth* (1948). Henry Dutilleux wrote: “His art is timeless... what whimsy along with balance, what feeling amid restraint!”

Ibert’s take on Don Quixote, written for G.W. Pabst’s film *Don Quixote* (1933), is an effortlessly dramatic and tastefully Spanish-influenced homage to the world’s first novel hero. Just like its source text, its story is told in four acts: the departure of the newly maddened Don Quixote (“Chanson du depart”), his love of the peasant-girl-turned-maiden Dulcinea (“Chanson a Dulcinee”), his meeting with an actual Duke (“Chanson du Duc”), and his tragic demise (“Chanson de la mort”). In the beginning, Quixote is brash, strumming a Spanish guitar; upon reading one too many chivalrous romances, he dons his armor, mounts his steed, and admires the beauty of the castle he encounters (which is really a brothel). As he and his poor confidant Sancho encounter trials along the way in mystical, stinging melodies, he soon begins sobering to the reality of his impending death. Finally, spurned by the beauty Dulcinea and with his books burned, he awakes a sane man, just as Sancho has finally bought in to the fantasy. By then, it’s too late: Don Quixote, having learned his mortality and made peace with himself, comforts Sancho with an ode to life and a faint, lingering last breath.

VI.

“Epiphany” - Stephen Sondheim, *Sweeney Todd*

“Epiphany,” composed by American Broadway legend **Stephen Sondheim** (1930-2021), is an unsettling aria of madness from the hit musical *Sweeney Todd* (1979). Demonstrating Sondheim’s extended tonality, impressionist influences, and deeply personal storytelling, it captures the breaking point of the demon barber as he fails his plot for vengeance. Sudden changes in key, attitude, and dialogue throughout the song mark Sweeney’s mood swings as

he leaves behind his wishes, his hopes, and his belief in the world—and only a triumphant, murderous resolve remains. While Todd has been inhabited by the diverse voices of Tveit, Groban, and Terfel, he will always haunt the classical and pop repertoire.

“Stars” - Schoenberg and Boublil, *Les Misérables*

The character-defining aria “Stars,” with lyrics by **Alain Boublil** (1941-) and music by **Claude-Michel Schonberg** (1944-), is a staple from the eternal *Les Misérables* (1980). It sets both noble poetry and a lasting melody to Inspector Javert’s oath of vengeance against the hero Jean Valjean—an oath sworn according to the unwavering, divine stars above him. The stars are orchestrated with a shimmering airiness that gradually swells to a wave of rich harmony as Javert pictures the fallen Lucifer under his sword. And, although more a lullaby than a march, “Stars” paints its singer expertly as a man who keeps literally within his rhythm and figuratively on his course.

“I am the very model of a modern major general” - Gilbert and Sullivan, *Pirates of Penzance*

Sullivan and **Gilbert** wrote most expert words and melody;

and *Pirates of Penzance*? It was their best in popularity.

For duty, honor, education, all were mocked with levity,

and opera’s most silly show is blessed with much longevity!

When Pirate Kings take aim at ladies, they are not amenable,
their rescue comes *ex machina*: the noble Major General!

He sings so fast, and knows so much, the pirates seem to halt before...

he dazzles with verbosity and learnedness in *an encore*!

In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,

his influence would not be overstated, then, as pivotal—

and even Veggie Tales refrains the “modern major general!”

Acknowledgements

I am graciously joined by several of my friends who are helping the stage come to life. Thank you for your many hours and beautiful voices: Margaret Berberian, Ellen Woodard, Mags Worden, Janelle Lawson, Keegan Rhyu, Connor Chang, and Andy Heil.

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To my family, especially Emily, thank you for inspiring me to follow art, to always speak my mind, and to find new musical horizons. You are all dear to me and to my musical journey.

To my voice teacher, Pam, thank you for your strength, encouragement, and humanity.

To Karen, my collaborative pianist of four years, who has always gone above and beyond: thank you for being a true friend and colleague, and for your tireless effort towards music.

To everyone who taught me music—especially my high school choir director Emily Taylor, Professor Michael Slon, and my late voice teacher Chris Owens—thank you for showing me what I was capable of, especially when I couldn't see it for myself.

To Professor Daniel Sender, ever professional and stalwart: thank you for lighting a fire under me, helping me find the best version of myself, and for late-night program advice.

To all the musicians who know me at UVA—professors, students, community members alike—thank you for your friendship, your support, and your resources that have helped me grow and succeed. It takes a village (an Academical Village?) and I can't do anything without you all by my side.

And finally, thank you for being here with me tonight. I hope this experience is magical.

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