BROADWAY MEETS JAZZ: 
THE SPLENDOR OF AMERICAN MUSIC

Dr. Carolyn Finley, mezzo-soprano
Dr. Bruce Thornton, clarinets/saxophones
Dr. Edward Turley, piano
With special guest
Dan Chouinard, jazz piano

Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, Saint John’s University
Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:30 pm
FAE/ARTE Performance

Program

Set I: Paying homage to some favorite singers.

“Never Never Land” from Peter Pan by Jule Styne (1905 – 1994)

Born to Be Blue by Robert Wells, text (1922 – 1998)
Mel Torme, music (1925 – 1999)

Blue Monk by Abbey Lincoln, text (1930 – 2010)
Thelonius Monk, music (1917 – 1982)
Blue Skies

Irving Berlin
(1888 – 1989)

Set II: Ellington and composer/performers having relationship with Ellington’s big band.

Lush Life (1936)  Billy Strayhorn
(1915 – 1967)

Jack the Fieldstalker (1953)  Oscar Pettiford
(1922 – 1960)

In a Sentimental Mood (1935)  Duke Ellington
(1899 – 1974)

Caravan (1936)  Duke Ellington and Juan Tizol
(1900 – 1984)

Set III: Musical Theater songs for older women.

"Liaisons" from A Little Night Music  Stephen Sondheim
(b. 1930)

"So What?" from Cabaret  Fred Ebb, text
(1928 – 2004)
John Kander, music
(b. 1927)

"The Ladies Who Lunch" from Company  Stephen Sondheim

"That Dirty Old Man"
from A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum  Stephen Sondheim
**BIographies**


*Dr. Carolyn Finley*, Mezzo-Soprano, performs and adjudicates throughout the upper Midwest and is currently a Professor of Music on the faculties of the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University, teaching voice and related topics. A Texas native, Carolyn was a three-year member of the Houston Opera Studio where she performed roles in both the Studio and Main House productions. She has toured with Midwest Opera Theater as Musetta in *La Bohème* as well as with Nebraska Opera Theater’s production of *Hansel and Gretel*. Carolyn sang the role of Queen Kristina in the American premiere of Eskil Hemberg’s Swedish opera, St. Erik’s Crown produced by the Plymouth Music Series in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Regional orchestral engagements have included performances with the Duluth-Superior and Rochester Symphony Orchestras. Carolyn performed as mezzo soloist in Stephen Paulus’ Holocaust Oratorio, *To Be Certain of the Dawn* in Minnesota, France and Germany. Until recently, she performed regularly with the CSB/SJU chamber music ensemble, PASTICHE. With her pianist husband Edward Turley, she has produced five art song CD’s: “Uncommon Daisies: The Vocal Music of Bryan Beaumont Hays”, “Under These Skies: Art Song by American and British Composers”, and “The Pleasures of Nature and Youth: Songs by Obradors, Granados, Guastavino, Montsalvatge & Wynn-Anne Rossi.” Additionally, two CD’s produced with Soprano Dr. Patricia Kent and Dr. Edward Turley can be found on CSB/SJU Digital Commons: “ Mostly Minnesota Art Song: Songs by Barber, Campbell, Erickson, Larsen, Maurer, Phipps-Kettlewell and Rossi; and “Songs in Portuguese, Catalan, and Spanish”, with guest artist Deidre Harkins.

*Dr. Bruce Thornton* is an Associate Professor of Music at the College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University, where he teaches clarinet and saxophone, woodwind methods, and courses in jazz. Dr. Thornton appears frequently as guest conductor, clinician, and soloist. His numerous jazz and klezmer works for clarinet ensemble are published by Really Good Music. Dr. Thornton also performed at the 1990 International Association of Jazz Educators Convention in New Orleans, and most recently was a guest soloist with the University of Notre Dame Concert Band at Carnegie Hall.
Dr. Thornton leads an active career as a free-lance professional musician in the Twin-Cities area, including recent performances with Barry Manilow, Olivia Newton John, Bobby Caldwell, Johnny Mathis, Marvin Hamlisch, and Bernadette Peters, groups such as Kansas, the Four Tops, and the Spinners, as well as numerous Broadway musicals at the Ordway, State, Guthrie, and Orpheum Theaters in the Twin Cities. He has also performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Opera, North Star Opera, JazzMN, and the Plymouth Music Series. He has a deep interest in Klezmer and Bulgarian music and has performed with the group Klezmerica in New York, Miami, and Israel. He also performs with Leisure Valley (jazz quartet), JC Sanford’s Triocracy, and the Thornton Jazz Quartet. With Leisure Valley, he recently released a CD of his own compositions entitled “Welcome to the Valley.”

Having joined the faculty of the College of St. Benedict|St. John’s University in 1981, Dr. Edward Turley has been featured as soloist and collaborative pianist throughout the upper Midwest. He has served as instructor in piano, piano literature, piano pedagogy, and has developed a special area of interest in teaching courses for the non-major music student. He was the recipient of the Sister Mary Grell Teacher of Distinction Award in 1996. He also served as chair of the CSB/SJU Music Department for 19 years. In addition to his solo recitals and performances with various mid-western regional orchestras (Minneapolis Chamber Symphony, St. Cloud Symphony, Bloomington Symphony and Heartland Symphony), he has performed frequently in a chamber music capacity with colleagues in the CSB/SJU faculty chamber music ensemble - Pastiche. He has also performed on seven CD recordings: "Music for Trumpet and Piano I & II" and "The Invincible Cornet" with Dr. Dale White; "The Vocal Music of Bryan Beaumont Hayes", "Under These Skies - British and American Art Song", and "The Pleasures of Nature and Youth" with spouse Dr. Carolyn Finley (mezzo-soprano) and other colleagues; and "Due Cappuccini" with colleague Dr. Richard Dirlam (saxophone).

One Artist Statement

Classical versus Musical Theater Singing: The journey of an aging diva!

What does a classically trained singer perform once she ‘retires’ from classical singing? Fun musical theater roles which are age and voice appropriate! This set of songs is what happens when an aging diva gets a bit bored just teaching her wonderfully talented students. I still have a need to communicate through music, so I chose genres that have had famous singers—even older than me--singing late into their careers with a style easier to maintain through speech-singing.
Voice teachers today need to train resilient singers who can perform in any style to be marketable in the arts. Personally, I still think that using a classical singing technique built upon vibrancy in tone and a flexible instrument should be foundational for singers wanting to perform in any commercial style of singing. Performers in the musical theater genre need to have optimum health and stamina to perform as many as eight shows a week after weeks of rehearsal. Issues such as postural alignment, breath management, flexible range, resonance, registration, articulation, and expressive ability are of great importance to all styles of singing even though there are different adjustments needed in these criteria per repertoire style. The beautiful spinning vibrato stylistic of classical singing is not useful in musical theater singing except in the older Golden Age Musicals or what we call legitimate roles. Even in that repertoire, vibrato is delayed but used on the last note of a phrase. Today’s singing in musicals requires more of a speech singing approach. Even the rounded unified vowels (‘chiaroscuro’) that classical singers work so hard to acquire are spread wider in popular singing to mimic speaking and produce a throatier brighter sound. Depending on the volume and range of the role, this type of heavy mechanism singing is called either ‘mix’ or ‘belt’...both muscular adjustments require a lot from the voice in terms of stamina and breath pressure. Without a proper balance of all the technical areas mentioned above, many young singers can fatigue and go hoarse after a demanding session if not careful. Singers must always respect the needs and parameters of their individual instruments. Many voices are lighter by nature and better suited for roles not requiring belt or extended mixing of vocal qualities, i.e. chest and head registers. The more lyrical voice who might sing “Green Finch and Linnet Bird” from Sondheim’s Sweeney Todd would be inappropriate if cast to sing “I Will Marry the Miller’s Son” from A Little Night Music. Even though speech singing is required for this genre, the colors and weight of the voice will change from role to role, based on many factors inherent in the role.

Tonight’s Set III songs are sung by a woman over the age of 45 – 50 using more of an alto range. Ageism isn’t as big a factor in musical theater, because acting and communicating the story or libretto, supersedes the beautiful vocalism required for classical singing. I have chosen songs for strong older women and I would use these songs to audition for shows having older women characters.

I would encourage all of you ‘would be’ aspiring singers to take voice lessons here at CSB/SJU or later at a community school similar to MacPhail in the cities. My colleagues and I would welcome you and help you explore your unique voice so you can sing all the country western, pop, theater, gospel songs that are ‘fit to sing!’ (We might sneakily throw in an Italian song for your ‘vocal vegetables.’).
Set I

Jule Styne (1905-1994) was originally born in London but came to New York in his twenties. He was a pianist and vocal coach for many years before going to Hollywood to compose musical theater shows. He received numerous awards for shows such as *Peter Pan*, *People*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *Bells Are Ringing*, etc. and has collaborated with great lyricists such as Sammy Cahn, Frank Loesser, Betty Comden, and Adolphe Green. This song, originally from a musical theater production, has been a favorite of numerous jazz singers including Jane Monheit and Madelaine Eastmann.

Mel Torme (1925-1999) and Robert Wells (1922-1998) collaborated on songs during the period from 1945-1949. They were both song writers and lyricists, best known for their collaboration “The Christmas Song: Chestnuts Roasting” composed in 1945 and “Born to be Blue” in 1946. Robert Wells has written or co-written over 400 published songs. Mel Torme had a beautiful high tenor singing voice which he began to capitalize on in 1947, soon after his collaboration with Wells ended. He was also a drummer, song writer, and an excellent scat singer.

Thelonious Monk (1917-1982) is best known for his innovative charts for cool jazz and hard bebop. He was a pianist who had a percussive approach to this instrument, and was known for his love of tonal clusters of 2nd intervals (which often sounded like wrong notes!) He wrote “Blue Monk” in 1956. Jazz singer and Civil Rights activist Abbey Lincoln (1930-2010) wrote the text for this melody which was not originally intended for a singer. Carmen McCrae, another fabulous jazz singer, recorded Monk songs in 1990 on a CD entitled *Carmen Sings Monk*, and she also wrote lyrics to Monk’s songs.

Irving Berlin (1888-1989) wrote numerous songs found in the Great American Songbook. He was inducted into the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame in 1970. “Blue Skies”, a song from the film/musical *Blue Skies*, with Fred Astaire premiered in 1946. It explores a love triangle between a dancer, showgirl and a nightclub owner. This is another musical theater song often performed by jazz singers such as Ella Fitzgerald, Mel Torme, Diana Krall, and country western singer Willie Nelson.

Set II

Duke Ellington (1899-1974), composer, pianist and leader of a jazz orchestra from 1923-1974, called his music “American Music”. With the help of radio his group became famous through broadcasts from the Cotton Club in Harlem. While in Pittsburg, Ellington met pianist/composer Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967) who was then 21. Strayhorn composed impressive songs such as “Lush Life”, “Chelsea Bridge”, “Take the A Train”, and others. It was said that they inspired each other compositionally, and Strayhorn remained with Ellington’s band for 29 years.
Oscar Pettiford (1922-1960) was a renowned jazz bassist who was the first to actively promote the use of cello in jazz. He recorded with pianist Thelonious Monk, tenor saxophonist Ben Webster, pianist Earl Hines and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie. A regular performer at Minton’s Playhouse in New York City, he played with Duke Ellington’s band for three years.

Puerto Rican Trombone player Juan Tizol (1900-1984) met Ellington in DC in 1929. He had a distinctive warm tone which would influence Ellington to feature the trombone section along with the trumpet and saxophone sections. Tizol wrote “Caravan” and “Perdido” for the Ellington Band and his charts featured more Latin elements.

Set III
“Liaison”, *A Little Night Music* - sung by Madame Armfeldt in Act I.

Based on the film *Smiles of a Summer Night* by Ingmar Bergman and set in Sweden around 1900, *A Little Night Music* deals with several love relationships. Madam Armfeldt is the aged mother of the actress Desiree Armfeldt, who still has strong feelings for a previous lover, the married lawyer Fredrik Egerman. The mother has had a lucrative life as a courtesan, having had sexual relationships with royalty in exchange for financial gain and property. In this song, she reflects on her experiences and decries the modern approach to quenching desire without a lucrative arrangement. Madame Armfeldt has been raising Desiree’s daughter, Fredrika, who will be by her side when she peacefully passes away in her sleep during the final scene.

“So What?”, *Cabaret* – sung by Fraulein Schneider in Act 1

This riveting musical was based on a semi-autobiographical novel by Christopher Isherwood entitled *Goodbye to Berlin* and is set in Berlin around 1929 before Hitler became Germany’s Chancellor. Through the antics in Berlin’s Kit Kat Club, we see something similar to America’s “Roaring Twenties” in terms of a permissive societal response to sexuality and personal expression. In this song, Fraulein Schneider, a 60-ish boarding house landlord is negotiating a room for the American writer, Cliff. Fraulein Schneider rents rooms to anyone willing to pay and looks the other way as needed. Later in the show, Fraulein Schneider will have to make a difficult decision about her budding romance with an elderly Jewish man and tenant, Herr Schultz due to new Nazi restrictions on relationships.

“The Ladies Who Lunch”, *Company* – sung by Joanne in the final scene

The 35 year-old Bobby is still commitment adverse despite numerous relationships and the encouragement and coaching of several married couples. Joanne and Larry are his oldest married friends. In the last scene of the show, Joanne, Larry (Joanne’s third husband) and Bobby are attending a nightclub. Joanne becomes increasingly drunk and angry at the people around her who are watching her behavior. Prompted by her usual need to be the center of attention,
she proposes a toast to mock all the rich New York women who do nothing but live off of their wealth while they drink their lives away. Her own pain and disappointment in life is reflected in this song.

“Leave You, Leave You”, *Follies* – sung by Phyllis just before the final scene.

*Follies* opened in 1973 with Hal Prince directing. It is a story about the reunion of ex showgirls who worked at the Weismann Follies theater during the years between the world wars. The old and crumbling theater is set for demolition. Phyllis Stone, past showgirl and married to Ben Stone, a diplomat and rich philanthropist, has been dealing with a strained marital relationship for years. Just before her song late in the show, she tells Ben (after randomly kissing a young waiter) that their marriage can’t continue the way it has been. Ben, who also has not been faithful in their marriage and is no longer in love with his wife, replies by saying that he wants a divorce. Angry and hurt, Phyllis considers whether to grant his request as she reminisces their married life together.


Premiered in 1962, this show was the first musical where Stephen Sondheim wrote both the lyrics and the music. It is based on stories by the Roman playwright, Plautus in the first century A.D. Domina is married to Roman Senator Senex and they have one son, Hero. The farcical plot takes place soon after both Domina and Senex leave town to visit her mother. Senex, clearly a victim of Domina’s domineering ways, returns home to run an errand for her. While with her mother, she has a premonition that he is misbehaving in some way with the women in the brothel next door. She returns home, in this song, she encounters her slave Hysterium and shares her insecurity with her marriage as well as her fears of Senex being unfaithful.