

"Queerness is not yet here...but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality."

-José Esteban Muñoz

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE

Third Year Recital: Queer Longing
in the American Musical



JUNE 9 2022 | 7:30 P.M.
WALTER HALL

This recital is in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance.
Camille Rogers is a student of Frédérique Vezina.

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE

CW: homophobia*, memory loss**, intimate partner violence***

The duration of the programme will be approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes, including a 10-minute intermission halfway through.

CAMILLE ROGERS, MEZZO

JOEL GOODFELLOW, PIANO

PROGRAM

"I Know it's Today" from <i>Shrek the Musical</i>	J. Tesori (b. 1961)
"Over the Rainbow" from <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>	H. Stothart (1885-1949)
"Take Me to the World" from <i>Evening Primrose</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)
"Out There" from <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	A. Menken (b. 1949)
"Part of Your World" from <i>The Little Mermaid</i>	A. Menken (b. 1949)
"Ring of Keys" from <i>Fun Home</i>	J. Tesori (b. 1961)
"Reflection" from <i>Mulan</i>	M. Wilder (b. 1953)
"Who You Think I Am" from <i>Just a Note</i>	C. M. L. Lee
"Gorgeous" from <i>The Apple Tree</i>	J. Bock (1928-2010)
"Just Breathe" from <i>Prom*</i>	M. Sklar (b. 1973)
"On the Steps of the Palace" from <i>Into the Woods</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)
"Into the Unknown" from <i>Frozen II</i>	K. Anderson-Lopez (b. 1972) & R. Lopez (b. 1975)

INTERMISSION

"I Remember" from <i>Evening Primrose**</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)
"Flowers" from <i>Hadestown</i>	A. Mitchell (b. 1981)
"I Know Things Now" from <i>Into the Woods</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)
"Heaven's Light" from <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	
"Somewhere That's Green" from <i>Little Shop of Horrors***</i>	A. Menken (b. 1949)
"I'm Not That Girl" from <i>Wicked</i>	S. Schwartz (b. 1948)
"No More" from <i>Into the Woods</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)
"Somewhere" from <i>West Side Story</i>	L. Bernstein (1918-1990)
"No One is Alone" from <i>Into the Woods</i>	S. Sondheim (1930-2021)

The land on which the University of Toronto operates is the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Known as Tkaronto, this area is governed by the pre-colonial treaty the "Dish With One Spoon" Wampum Belt covenant. The Dish nourishes us, and we all share one spoon. As treaty people we are all responsible for the well-being of the land and the creatures with whom we share it.

QUEER LONGING IN THE AMERICAN MUSICAL

In musicals there's a specific kind of song called an "I Want" song that appears in almost every show, usually in the first act sung by a main character. (The term was likely coined by Lehman Engel, a Broadway composer and conductor.) An "I Want" song lets the audience see what's in the character's heart, their deepest and perhaps most secret longings. It's that classic moment when a character gazes off into the middle distance, the music swells, and you know exactly what's coming—as the cliché goes, words alone aren't enough anymore, they just have to sing about it.

Sometimes a character expresses a longing for something specific—a house in the suburbs, a handsome prince, or even just one day spent in the sun. But sometimes the longing is more all-encompassing—the character is searching for something they can't quite name, a life beyond the one they know, a place they can barely imagine, where they can feel like they truly belong.

This kind of longing feels deeply queer to me, a longing for a world that is not yet in existence: one that lives only in our imaginations, but is still worth searching for. In the words of José Esteban Muñoz, "Queerness is not yet here... We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality... Queerness is a... mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present." (*Cruising Utopia* 2009). It doesn't feel like a coincidence that many of the most iconic "I Want" songs in the musical theatre canon were written by queer people, many of whom experienced, and in some cases did not survive, the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s.

I've collected here some of my favourite "I Want" songs, interpreting the genre generously. There are songs about wanting to be loved and seen by others, wanting your outside appearance to match how you feel inside, and even songs about disappointed desire and despair. What I find most interesting is how many of these songs reference some kind of "inside" or "outside"—either an entrance into another world, or an escape from the confines of a stifling situation. To me this speaks to the experience of "coming out," a term which now means declaring one's identity to a possibly hostile society, but which in an earlier form meant being welcomed into a queer community with open arms.

Sometimes the freedom of "out there" turns out to be disappointing or even dangerous, as in *Into the Woods* or *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Other times the promised safe haven of "inside" proves to be restrictive and oppressive, as in *Hadestown* or *Evening Primrose*. Sometimes even the burden of wanting seems like too much, as in the Baker's song "No More" or Elphaba's "I'm Not That Girl." And yet every time the curtain rises, the search continues: for love, for belonging, and for freedom.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

As a performer, Camille Rogers (they/them) has been praised for their "tremendous stage presence" and "real flair for comedy" (Operaramblings). Camille's "gossamer mezzo-soprano" (Mooney on Theatre) has been described as "even-keeled and grounded even in times of intense physicality" (Schmopera). Camille has also been recognized for their work as Co-Artistic Director of Toronto's queer opera collective OperaQ, and has been invited to speak at related events hosted by Against the Grain Theatre, Amplified Opera, the University of Toronto, Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, and VIVA! Youth Singers of Toronto.

Camille currently studies at the University of Toronto, pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts with a Collaborative Specialization in Sexual Diversity Studies. Their research, supported by the prestigious Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, investigates how problematic historical works of music theatre can be transformed and made relevant to today's audiences through the bodies of modern queer performers. Camille's studies will culminate in a recital telling the extraordinary life story of gender-non-conforming opera singer and duellist Julie d'Aubigny (1670-1707). With OperaQ, Camille is in the process of developing a one-act musical for young audiences exploring non-binary gender identity.

An active performer in many styles of opera, Camille most recently appeared as Suli/Suzie in Buddies in Bad Times's world premiere of *Pomegranate*, and as Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* with OperaQ. Other past engagements include the role of Lake in FAWN's collectively improvised techno opera *Belladonna*, Young Girl in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Opera Atelier, and the title role of *L'Italiana in Algeri* with MYOpera. Camille has also been featured as a soloist with the Toronto Bach Festival and Cor Unum Ensemble, and has presented solo recitals with Centric MusicFest and Lethbridge Pride.

Find out more at www.camillerogers.ca