



Hold Fast to Dreams

Aubrey Adams-McMillan

Mezzo-soprano

Carol Anderson

Piano

I

Ach, bleibe doch, mein liebstes Leben, by Johann Sebastian Bach, (BMW 11) No 1

Emily Day-Shumway, violin

“Qui Sedes ad Dexteram”, by Antonio Vivaldi from *Gloria* in D major

II

Haï luli! by Pauline Viardot

Ariette, by H.H.A. Beach, text by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Liebst du um Schönheit, by Clara Schumann, text by Friedrich Rückert

Hold Fast to Dreams, by Florence B. Price, text by Langston Hughes

III

‘Air des Lettres’, from *Werther*, by Jules Massenet

IV

Dreams, lyrics and music by Dolores O’Riordan and Noel Hogan, arranged by Jared Oaks

A Million Dreams, lyrics and music by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, arranged by Jared Oaks

Emily Day-Shumway, violin

Liz Lambson, bass

Jared Oaks, piano

Rainy Days and Mondays, by Roger Nichols, arranged by Jared Oaks

Sally Humphreys, flute

Erin Douglas Voellinger, clarinet

The Impossible Dream, by Mitch Leigh, arranged by Jared Oaks

Nicole Pinnell, cello

*To contact the composer for this music, email: jaredoaks@gmail.com

V

You'll Be in My Heart, words and music by Phil Collins, arranged by Kurt Bestor

Time after Time, words and music by Cyndi Lauper and Rob Hyman, arranged by Kurt Bestor

Nicole Pinnell, cello

Kurt Bestor, piano

Bridge over Troubled Water, words and music by Paul Simon, arranged by Kurt Bestor

Loveliness to Sell, Lyrics from the poem "Barter" by Sara Teasdale, music and additional lyrics by Kurt Bestor

Videography and Sound by Daniel Tuutau

*To contact the composer for this music, email: kurt@kurtbestor.com

On behalf of our entire ensemble, we invite you after this recital to go to Aubrey's YouTube channel and listen to the arrangements written for this album by Nicholas Maughan. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we were not able to perform his works on this recital, but they were programmed for you to view and enjoy. Nic's arrangements are so beautifully written for the voice. The arrangements are *World is Waiting for Sunrise*, *Brighten the Corner*, and *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*.

Aubrey's YouTube channel can be found by searching Aubrey Adams-McMillan, the Album is "Beautiful Dreamer." Thank you for taking the time to enjoy his amazing contributions to this album.

*To contact the composer for this music, email: favoritenic@hotmail.com

Translations

Ach, bleibe doch, mein liebstes Leben

Ah, stay yet, my dearest life,
ah, do not flee so soon from me
Your departure and your early leaving
bring me the greatest suffering.
Ah then, still stay here;
otherwise I shall be quite overwhelmed with sorrow.

Qui Sedes ad Dexteram

Who sits at the right hand of the father, have mercy on us.

Hai! Luli

I am sad, I am anxious,
I no longer know what's to become of me.
My lover was to have come,
And I wait for him here alone.
Hai luli, hai luli,
How sad it is without my lover!

I sit down to spin my wool,
The thread snaps in my hand:
Well then! I shall spin tomorrow,
Today I am too upset.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Where can my lover be?

Ah! If it's true that he's unfaithful,
And will one day abandon me,
Then let the village burn
And me too along with the village!
Hai luli, hai luli,
What point is there in living without a lover?

Liebst du um Schönheit

If you love for beauty,
O love not me!
Love the sun,
She has golden hair.
If you love for youth,
O love not me!
Love the spring
Which is young each year.
If you love for riches,
O love not me!
Love the mermaid
Who has many shining pearls.
If you love for love,

Ah yes, love me!
Love me always,
I shall love you ever more.

Air des Lettres'

Werther ... Werther ...
Who would have told me the place that in my heart
he occupies today?
Since he left, in spite of me, everything tires me!
And my soul is full of him!

These letters! these letters!
Ah! I read them again and again ...
With what charm ... but also what sadness!
I should destroy them ... I cannot!

"I write to you from my little room:
to the gray and heavy skies of December
weigh on me like a shroud,
And I am alone! only! always alone!"
Ah! no one near him!
not a single testimony of tenderness or even pity!
God! how did this sad courage come to me,
to order this exile and this isolation?

"Happy screams of children come up under my window,
Cries of children! And I think of this sweet weather.
Where all your dear little ones were playing around us!
Will they forget me? "
No, Werther, in their memory your image remains alive ...
and when you come back ... but must he come back?

Ah! this last note chills me and frightens me!

"You told me: at Christmas, and I shouted: never!
We will soon know who told us true!
But if I do not have to reappear on the appointed day, in
front of you, do not accuse me, cry me! "

" Do not accuse me, cry me! "

"Yes, with those eyes so full of charms, these lines ...
you will re-read them, you will wet them with your tears ...
O Charlotte, and you will shudder!"... you will shudder!!

Program notes

Although an eclectic array of musical selections, this program is thoughtfully compiled after being asked to perform works from my recent album, “Beautiful Dreamer” for the Cal-Western Regional conference of NATS. In addition to wanting music from the album, there was also a request for classical selections at my discretion.

First, I want to provide some background. The album “Beautiful Dreamer” was born during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. In just one weekend, I had an entire year of performances canceled, and like so many, I was swimming in grief. My dear friend, Jared Oaks dared Kurt Bestor on Facebook to write an arrangement of “You’ll Be in My Heart” for me, Nicole and Kurt. (I had just posted my first quarantine Karaoke version of one of my favorite songs I sing to my kids, when they are down and in need of comfort.) My offering on Facebook was my way of releasing some of my grief while also offering solidarity and comfort to others.

Kurt graciously took the dare and wrote a beautiful arrangement for me. What a gem of a person. From there, we recorded our portion, alone, in our homes, sent the files to Kurt who offered to mix it and make a video. From there, the video was posted, and support came in with promises of backing for us to make an album!!

They were serious. I was trepidatious and full of self-doubt. Then my phone rang. “Aubrey, listening to your voice and this arrangement was the first time I have felt peace in months. MAKE THE ALBUM.”

Six months later and after lots of market research, I came to a decision. I came up with a budget, made a spreadsheet, contacted all the musicians, we agreed upon terms, and off we went. I wanted every person to feel like an important component of the project. Each arrangement was created with them in mind and every person was paid for their work. To say that this project became the very essence of my purpose during the pandemic is an understatement. The more time I put into the people making the music, the more vibrant and beautiful the mission of the album became. As the question of branding came up, I really despised the idea of having me be the center piece for the cover, so I commissioned Liz Lambson, the one and ONLY to create the album cover. It is an actual painting on canvas that we later had digitized so that it could be enjoyed on all platforms. I have let my children know, that if the house is on fire, they must first find each other, then the pets, and then the painting!!

I am so incredibly grateful for the passion that each artist brought to this project. I’m incredibly grateful to the people who supported us in financial backing and in cheerleading. Perhaps the strongest supporter with the quietest voice was my husband Ryan, who never once let me doubt in this project or myself. In the end, we all became “Beautiful Dreamers”, and we genuinely hope you too, will be a “Beautiful Dreamer.”

Spirituality, grief, connection, and hope.

In selecting the classical pieces for this program, I felt that it was important to highlight the things in life that make dreaming possible. **Spirituality:** The program begins with the Bach church cantata that I selected for those who may have lost a friend, family member, or colleague during the pandemic. The comfort often provided from spirituality can carry us through hardship. As I reflected on the stories in the news, I kept hearing in my head, the text of “Qui Sedes”, from *Gloria*, “have mercy on us.” **Grief:** In the bleakest of times, we all experience grief and the uncertainty around grief can be so overwhelming. I instantly thought of Charlotte from *Werther* and her trial to navigate the uncertainty and grief of Werther whose letters plague and consume her. **Connection:** The art songs in this recital were selected to amplify my thoughts about holding fast to dreams. Connection is a crucial component of our ability to believe in a brighter tomorrow. Which is essentially, **Hope:** Holding fast to dreams is often an acceptance and surrender to our own spirituality, and grief. Through connection we find hope. The art song section purposely ends with Florence Price’s setting of the famous Langston Hughes poem.

Thank you for this opportunity to present my work to the Cal-Western region of NATS. Thank you to the officers for giving me and my team this opportunity and Ruth Ellis for being an amazing Governor and facilitating the behind-the-scenes: a crucial component to our success as performers. My teaching and singing continues to be more informed with the wealth of knowledge I learn from the people within this amazing organization. Thank you!

Thank you, Carol Anderson, Emily Day- Shumway, Jared Oaks, Liz Lambson, Nic Maughan, Nicole Pinnell, Erin Voellinger, Sally Humphreys and Kurt Bestor!! In addition to having an amazing collaboration of musicians, we were immensely taken care of by Daniel Tuutau, who graciously offered to assist us in recording this project for the conference. I am so grateful for his eye and his ear!!

Enjoy!

Aubrey Adams-McMillan