



~ *Nocturnal* ~

*A Collection of Pieces to Mark
the End of Daylight Saving Time*

*Saturday, November 2, 2013
5:00pm*

*St. Philip's in the Highlands
1101 Route 9D
Garrison, NY 10524*

~ Nocturnal ~

Program

Starry Night

from Album for the Young - Lowell Liebermann
Speare Hodges - piano

Sleep

from Five Elizabethan Songs - Ivor Gurney
André Herzegovitch - tenor
Michael Wittenburg - piano

Beau Soir

Claude Debussy
Julie Heckert - soprano
Paul Heckert - piano

Lullaby

from The Consul - Gian Carlo Menotti
Linda Speziale - soprano
Michael Wittenburg - piano

Moonfall

from The Mystery of Edwin Drood - Rupert Holmes
Laura Danilov - mezzo soprano
Michael Wittenburg - piano

Réverie

André Caplet
Madeleine DeNitto - flute
Michael Wittenburg - piano

Après un rêve

Gabriel Fauré
Madeleine DeNitto - soprano
Speare Hodges - piano

Nocturne, Op. 55, No. 1

Frédéric Chopin
Speare Hodges - piano

~Special Acknowledgements~

Thank you to Frank and Sarah Geer for their enthusiasm to include tonight's concert with the annual cocktail event.
Thank you to Durward Entrekin for his inspiring work with the choir of St. Philip's. A special thank you to musicologist,
Dr. Malena Kuss and pianist, Dr. John DeNitto for music consulting for tonight's program.

~Performer Bios ~

Laura Danilov ~ mezzo soprano

Currently performing with The Lonely – playing the music of Roy Orbison & Friends and producing a musical based on his life. Facebook.com/lonelyband. Favorite performances include: *The Beggar's Opera* (Philipstown Depot Theatre), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Princeton Rep Shakespeare Festival), *Violet* (Putnam County Theatre), *The Gift* (Terry Schreiber Studio), *Hidden Voices* (Pillars: An Utopian Ensemble), *Godspell* (Oasis Theatre Co.) In addition to performing, Laura is a Life Coach, & runs an inspirational book club. Past teaching jobs include private singing coach and movement specialist in the Williamson Technique for Actors at the Actors Movement Studio in NYC. Laura lives in Cold Spring with her husband and her amazing son, Aleksander.

Madeleine DeNitto ~ soprano - flute

During her decade of performance with a professional opera company, Madeleine was on stages regularly in major productions, including such great operas as *Suor Angelica*, *Don Pasquale* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She was also very honored to have been chosen to perform in rare works, including *Riders to the Sea*, as well as special opportunities to perform in honor of Queen Anne and Princess Sophie of Romania. Proficient in sacred and early music, Madeleine was also one of eight members of an elite madrigal group for several years. In late 2012, Madeleine had a role in *The Beggar's Opera* performed at The Philipstown Depot Theatre, which marked her return to the music world after a ten year hiatus. She is also the proud mother of two adult children in New York City; one daughter, a former ballerina, and one son, a classically trained pianist. For over 13 years, Madeleine has been the proud owner of STRESSED.PRESSED.MESSED Professional Organizing Services and as of late summer, 2012, she also started Garrison Concierge. She is a member of the choir at St. Philip's in the Highlands Episcopal Church and the Philipstown Garden Club.

Julie Heckert ~ soprano

Julie Heckert grew up in Garrison, went away to school, traveled the country with the last Bus & Truck touring company of *EVITA* under the direction of Hal Prince. She returned to New York, met husband Paul Heckert while she was singing back up in a rock band and he was playing piano. Reverend Geer married them in 1994, and they've been making beautiful music ever since. In 2002 they moved to Garrison to raise their two boys. Julie is currently the House Manager at The Philipstown Depot Theatre. In 2012, she was cast in *The Beggar's Opera*. Julie is also a member of the choir at St. Philip's in the Highlands Episcopal Church.

Paul Heckert ~ piano

Paul Heckert is a graduate of the New England Conservatory in Boston. Locally he has supported adult and child productions at The Philipstown Depot Theatre as well as productions across the river at James I. O'Neill High school. Paul is music director at St. John's Episcopal Church in Cornwall.

André Herzegovitch ~ tenor

is an actor and vocalist. He was last seen in Garrison at The Philipstown Depot Theatre's production of *The Beggar's Opera* directed by Gordon Stewart. He is a member of The Greenwich Village Chamber Singers in NYC, under the direction of Mark Mangini. Their concert with The Choral Society of the Hamptons of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and Bach's *Cantata 79* this past summer was a critical success. As an actor, André recently portrayed Count Orsini-Rosenberg in *Amadeus* with Elmwood Playhouse in Nyack and The Photographer in Tennessee Williams' *Vieux Carre* with Mississippi Mud Productions. He has studied voice with Michel Grace in Greenwich, CT and has studied acting with Austin Pendleton at HB Studios in NYC. Andre is excited to participate in this evening of song.

Speare Hodges ~ piano

Having to attend his mother's constant choir and opera rehearsals, Speare began to show an interest in music. Soon, he and his sister were performing in major venues, sometimes alongside their mother. His early proficiency with technical skills and theory led to hundreds of piano lessons, theatre classes and fencing lessons. At age six, he auditioned for a highly acclaimed choir and began touring internationally with them by age eleven, as well as recording commercials. He later auditioned for LaGuardia Arts High School where he continued to study piano and was chosen for the part of Claude in their professional production of *Hair*. After graduation from LaGuardia, Speare attended Emory University, where he served as a chapel accompanist while majoring in International Studies. Being that Speare was accustomed to international travels with his choir and fluent in Spanish, he was able to study abroad in Nicaragua for eight months before graduation. He was then accepted into the Peace Corps and stationed in Peru for two years, where he was honored with the Volunteer Excellence Award in 2012. Following his time in the Peace Corps, Speare returned to New York as a paralegal and is currently preparing for law school. With his main interests being that of law and music, he is also active with extreme adventures, such as climbing glacier mountains, jumping off of bridges and out of planes, as well as participating in a recent Tough Mudder.

Linda Speziale ~ soprano

Linda has worked as a singer, director, and actress, throughout the Midwest and New York, in professional opera and musical theatre companies. She has Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Vocal Performance from the University of Michigan School of Music, and was Opera Department Director and Voice Instructor at Eastern Michigan University before pursuing her own successful singing career. Linda currently teaches privately in her business, Linda Speziale Voice Studio. Additionally, she coaches for auditions, performance, and NYSSMA, and has been vocal coach for Philipstown Recreation Department's Middle/High School musical theatre productions at The Depot Theatre for the past three summers.

Michael Shane Wittenburg ~ piano

Hailed as a "real virtuoso" by the late Ruth Laredo, pianist and conductor Michael Shane Wittenburg made his professional opera conducting debut with Amore Opera's recent production of *Faust* and has served with multiple opera companies including in Nashville, Orlando and Sarasota. As an Assistant Professor of music at Lee University, he was Music Director of both the Chamber Orchestra and Opera Theatre. He has made solo appearances as pianist with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, The Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Eastman Wind Ensemble and the Ocala Symphony as both pianist and conductor. He has also appeared in collaborative recital with such artists as Metropolitan Opera soprano Stell Zambalist and concert violinist Livia Sohn.

~ Composer Trivia ~

Lowell Liebermann

Lowell Liebermann was commissioned by the Juilliard School to celebrate its 100th anniversary with his second opera *Miss Lonelyhearts*, to a libretto by JD McClatchy after the novel by Nathanael West. He was the first composer to win the Composers' Invitational Award of the Van Cliburn Piano Competition for his *Three Impromptus, Op. 68*. Currently, he is found on the composition faculty of Mannes College The New School for Music where he is the conductor of the Mannes American Composers Ensemble, a large ensemble dedicated to the works of living American composers.

Ivor Gurney

Known as one of the great poets of World War I, Ivor Gurney, a very promising composer suffered from mood issues and being that his studies were interrupted by the war, he then suffered physically, as well and later succumbed to tuberculosis at age 47. In the mid-1980's, in honor of his work, a stone was set in Poet's Corner at Westminster's Abbey.

Claude Debussy

As a Prix de Rome winner in 1884, Claude Debussy is famed not only for his music, but for his reputation with women. Before succumbing to cancer in 1918, he led a life as full as he could until his mid-50's and is revered as one of the most influential composers of his time.

Gian Carlo Menotti

For many years, Gian Carlo Menotti lived in Mount Kisco, NY with his partner, Samuel Barber. Known for his magnificent operas, Menotti founded the well celebrated Spoleto Festival, which he severed ties with over artistic differences in the early 1990's. He passed away at age 94.

Rupert Holmes

Though born in the United Kingdom, Rupert Holmes grew up in Nanuet, NY. He is best known for his 1979 Billboard hit, *Escape*, known as the "*Pina Colada*" song. He was later acknowledged for a Tony Award for *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, from which tonight's *Moonfall* piece comes, showing his versatility as a composer.

André Caplet

As a close friend of Claude Debussy, André Caplet won the Prix de Rome over Maurice Ravel in 1901. Though he had such great gift in composing, his works are rather overlooked and sadly, he passed away in his 40's after being gassed during his time serving in World War I.

Gabriel Fauré

As an infant, Gabriel Fauré was raised by a foster nurse for the first four years of his life. By the time he was nine, Fauré was sent to Paris to study music and among his teachers was Camille Saint-Saëns, who became a lifelong friend. In 1870, Fauré enlisted in the army and took part in the action to raise the Siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War. Though he was a heavy smoker and suffered poor health in his late years, he lived to be seventy-nine.

Frédéric Chopin

Born in Poland, Frédéric Chopin lived in poor health for much of his life. Having a start of concerts as early as seven years of age, he left Poland just before the Polish-Russian War, eventually finding comfort in Paris. He later kept a fairly troubled courtship with the French writer George Sand for several years. Chopin was yet another composer passing away at a young age. His body lies in Paris, while his heart was actually buried in his birthplace of Warsaw, Poland. In 1926 a beautiful statue of Chopin, was placed in Warsaw's Royal Baths Park. In 1940 the statue was destroyed by the Nazis but was later reconstructed after the war in the late 1950's.