



CAL PERFORMANCES
AT HOME

Streaming Premiere – Thursday, April 29, 2021, 7pm

Renée Fleming’s “Music and the Mind”

featuring
Renée Fleming, *soprano*
Robert Ainsley, *piano*
Ehud Isacoff, *neuroscience*

Filmed exclusively for Cal Performances
at the Kreeger Museum, Washington, DC,
on March 16, 2021.

VOCAL SELECTIONS

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

“Calm thou my soul” from *Alexander Balus*
[Thomas Morell]

“To fleeting pleasures” from *Samson*
[Newburgh Hamilton]

HUGO WOLF (1860–1903)

“Die Spröde”
[Johann Wolfgang von Goethe]

“Mignon III” (“So lasst mich scheinen”)
[Johann Wolfgang von Goethe]

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845–1924)

“Prison”
[Paul Verlaine]

CLAIRE DELBOS (1906–1959)

“Dors”
[Cécile Sauvage]

HENRI DUPARC (1848–1933)

“Le manoir de Rosemonde”
[Robert de Bonnières]

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898–1937)

“Fascinating Rhythm”
[Ira Gershwin]

TOD MACHOVER (b. 1953)

VocaGammified (World Premiere)
for soprano, string quartet, and Gamma electronics
Based on *Gammified*, commissioned by Kronos Quartet
as part of the Fifty for the Future project.

Recording of string quartet used by permission of Kronos Quartet.

The *Cal Performances at Home* Spring 2021 season
is dedicated to Gail and Dan Rubinfeld, leading supporters of Cal Performances
and the well-being of our artists for almost 30 years.

This performance is made possible, in part,
by Patron Sponsors Michael A. Harrison and Susan Graham Harrison.

*Note: following its premiere, the video recording of this concert
will be available on demand through July 28, 2021.*

Renée Fleming is one of the most highly acclaimed singers of our time, performing on the stages of the world's greatest opera houses and concert halls. Honored with four Grammy awards and the US National Medal of Arts, she has sung for momentous occasions including the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony and the Diamond Jubilee Concert for Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. In 2014, Fleming brought her voice to a vast new audience as the first classical artist ever to sing the "Star-Spangled Banner" at the Super Bowl. On January 20, she sang for the private church service attended by President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris, along with congressional leaders of both parties, prior to the inauguration ceremony.

In May, Fleming launched *Music and Mind LIVE*, a weekly web series exploring the intersection of music and arts with human health and the brain. In 19 episodes, the show amassed more than 650,000 views from 70 countries. Fleming was inspired to launch the series by the Sound Health initiative she leads as Artistic Advisor to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in partnership with the NIH. She has given presentations with scientists and practitioners on this subject around the world.

Fleming has recorded everything from complete operas and song recitals to jazz and indie rock. Her voice is featured on the soundtracks of Best Picture Oscar winners *The Shape of Water* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. In 2019, she appeared opposite Ben Whishaw in *Norma Jean Baker of Troy* to open The Shed in New York City. Later that year, she appeared in the London premiere of *The Light in the Piazza*, subsequently bringing the acclaimed production to Los Angeles and Chicago. Fleming earned a Tony Award nomination for her performance in the 2018 Broadway production of *Carousel*.

Her other awards include the Fulbright Lifetime Achievement Medal, Germany's Cross of the Order of Merit, and France's Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. www.reneefleming.com.

Active as an opera fanatic and factotum since 2001, **Rob Ainsley** has explored every facet of the art form across the country, and lives to pass

on his enthusiasm to others. He is an alumnus of the University of Cambridge, Mannes College of Music, and the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera. Since then, he has been the co-founder and principal conductor of the Greenwich Music Festival, guest chorus master at the English National Opera, associate music director at Portland Opera, head of the music staff and chorus master at Minnesota Opera and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and a faculty member at Westminster Choir College's CO-OPERATIVE Program.

Ainsley is now the director of the Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artists program and the American Opera Initiative, seeking out and preparing the finest young American singers, composers, and librettists for international careers. His artists have performed on the world's leading stages, won the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, been finalists in Operalia, and performed with Ainsley at the 2018 White House State Dinner for the President of France. Most recently, he was featured in recital with Renée Fleming as part of the Metropolitan Opera's "Met Stars Live in Concert" series.

Ainsley has conducted his own realizations of 17th-century operas, collaborated on a string of world premieres, presented programs of art song in a recital series of his own creation, and lectured on everything from John Adams to Alexander von Zemlinsky. Through it all, he has inspired hundreds of young artists and thousands of audience members to share his passion; he prides himself on the friendships he has formed along the way.

Spearheading the Berkeley Brain Initiative, **Ehud Isacoff** is the director of the Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute and of the Weill Neurohub East, which—in partnership with UC San Francisco and University of Washington—aims to speed transformative innovations in neuroscience from basic research and technology development to clinical care.

Isacoff's lab research focuses on the molecular and biophysical basis of the electrical signaling of neurons and the chemical signaling

that occurs at synaptic connections between neurons. He has pioneered optical neurotechnologies to observe and remote control the activity of brain cells and synapses. Innovations from his lab enable precise mapping of the functional strength and experience-dependent “plasticity” of synapses that underlie memory and go awry in psychiatric disorders. Isocoff is applying these approaches to restore vision in cases of diseases that cause blindness and movement disorders.

A member of the National Academy of Sciences, Isocoff received his education at McGill University and UCSF before joining UC Berkeley as a professor of neurobiology. He finds the beauty and mystery of music and literature as motivating as those of the brain and sees that much is to be gained by exploring the connections between the natural and social sciences and the humanities.

Tod Machover has been called a “musical visionary” by the *New York Times* and “America’s most wired composer” by the *Los Angeles Times*. He is the Muriel R. Cooper Professor of Music and Media at the MIT Media Lab, where he is

also Academic Head and directs the Opera of the Future group. Machover’s compositions have been commissioned and performed by many of the world’s most prestigious ensembles and soloists, and he is particularly well known for his groundbreaking operas, including the audience-interactive *Brain Opera* and the “robotic” *Death and the Powers*. Machover is also recognized for designing new technologies for music such as Hyperinstruments, “smart” performance systems that extend expression for virtuosi from Yo-Yo Ma to Prince, and also for the general public. The popular video game *Guitar Hero* grew out of Machover’s lab, and his Hyperscore software is used throughout the world to teach music composition and creativity to young people. Machover’s City Symphony projects “have reinvented the symphony as a community event” (*Musical America*), and travel next to India, the Koreas, and throughout the United States. Machover is also devoted to discovering theories, techniques, and tones that allow music to promote well-being and combat diseases that range from Alzheimer’s to depression to a variety of COVID-related conditions.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

“Calm thou my soul” from *Alexander Balus*
[Thomas Morell]

Calm thou my soul, kind Isis,
with a noble scorn of life,
ideal joys, and momentary pains,
that scatter, or disturb this waking dream.

Convey me to some peaceful shore,
where no tumultuous billows roar,
where life, though joyless, still is calm,
and sweet content is sorrow’s balm.
There, free from pomp and care to wait,
forgetting and forgot, the will of fate.

“To fleeting pleasures” from *Samson*
[Newburgh Hamilton]

Sung by Dalila and based on Milton’s
Samson Agonistes

To fleeting pleasures make your court,
no moment to lose, for life is short!
The present now’s our only time,
the missing that our only crime.

HUGO WOLF

“Die Spröde”

[Johann Wolfgang von Goethe]
 An dem reinsten Frühlingsmorgen
 Ging die Schäferin und sang,
 Jung und schön und ohne Sorgen,
 Daß es durch die Felder klang,
 So la la! le ralla!

Thyrsis bot ihr für ein Mäulchen
 Zwei, drei Schäfchen gleich am Ort,
 Schalkhaft blickte sie ein Weilchen;
 Doch sie sang und lachte fort:
 So la la! le ralla!

Und ein Andrer bot ihr Bänder,
 Und der Dritte bot sein Herz;
 Doch sie trieb mit Herz und Bändern
 So wie mit den Lämmern Scherz,
 Nur la la! le ralla!

“Mignon III” (“So lasst mich scheinen”)

[Johann Wolfgang von Goethe]
 So lasst mich scheinen, bis ich werde,
 Zieht mir das weisse Kleid nicht aus!
 Ich eile von der schönen Erde
 Hinab in jenes feste Haus.

Dort ruh' ich eine kleine Stille,
 Dann öffnet sich der frische Blick;
 Ich lasse dann die reine Hülle,
 Den Gürtel und den Kranz zurück.

Und jene himmlischen Gestalten,
 Sie fragen nicht nach Mann und Weib,
 Und keine Kleider, keine Falten
 Umgeben den verklärten Leib.

Zwar lebt' ich ohne Sorg' und Mühe,
 Doch fühlt' ich tiefen Schmerz genug.
 Vor Kummer altert' ich zu frühe;
 Macht mich auf ewig wieder jung!

“The coy shepherdess”

On the clearest of spring mornings
 The shepherdess went out and sang,
 Carefree, young and beautiful,
 Till it echoed through the fields,
 So la la! le ralla!

Thyrsis offered her for a kiss
 Two, three lambs without delay,
 She looked on archly for a while;
 But went laughing and singing on her way,
 So la la! le ralla!

And another offered ribbons,
 And a third bid his heart;
 But she made fun of heart and ribbons,
 As she had done with the lambs,
 Only la la! le ralla!

—Translation © Richard Stokes

“Mignon III”

Let me appear an angel till I become one;
 Do not take my white dress from me!
 I hasten from the beautiful earth
 Down to that impregnable house.

There in brief repose I'll rest,
 Then my eyes will open, renewed;
 My pure raiment then I'll leave,
 With girdle and rosary, behind.

And those heavenly beings,
 They do not ask who is man or woman,
 And no garments, no folds
 Cover the transfigured body.

Though I lived without trouble and toil,
 I have felt deep pain enough.
 I grew old with grief before my time;
 O make me forever young again!

—Translation © Richard Stokes

GABRIEL FAURÉ

[Paul Verlaine]

“Prison”

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme!
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

The sky, up above the roof,
So blue, so calm!
A tree, up above the roof,
Waves its foliage.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,
Doucement tinte.
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit
Chante sa plainte.

The bell, in the sky that one can see,
Softly rings.
A bird, on the tree that one can see,
Sings her lament.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là,
Simple et tranquille.
Cette paisible rumeur-là
Vient de la ville.

My God, my God, life is there,
Simple and tranquil.
This peaceful murmuring
Comes from the town.

Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

What have you done, O you there,
Weeping ceaselessly,
Say, what have you done, you there,
With your youth?

CLAIRE DELBOS

“Dors”

[Cécile Sauvage]

Dors dans le nid douillet
de ma chair maternelle
Dors sans émoi,
sans rêve et sans larmes encore;
Demain tu connaîtras ce que pèse ton aile
Et ton coeur tremblera de pressentir la mort.

“Sleep”

Sleep in the cozy nest
of my maternal flesh;
Sleep without emotion,
Without dreams and as yet without tears;
Tomorrow you will know the weight
on your wings
And your heart will tremble with the
foreboding of death.

HENRI DUPARC

“Le manoir de Rosemonde”

[Robert de Bonnières]

De sa dent soudaine et vorace,
Comme un chien l'amour m'a mordu...
En suivant mon sang répandu,
Va, tu pourras suivre ma trace...

Prends un cheval de bonne race,
Pars, et suis mon chemin ardu,
Fondrière ou sentier perdu,
Si la course ne te harasse!

En passant par où j'ai passé,
Tu verras que seul et blessé
J'ai parcouru ce triste monde.

Et qu'ainsi je m'en fus mourir
Bien loin, bien loin, sans découvrir
Le bleu manoir de Rosemonde.

“The manor of Rosemonde”

With his sudden and voracious tooth,
Like a dog, love has bitten me...
Following my spilled blood,
Go, you will be able to track me.

Take a thoroughbred horse,
Set out, and follow my arduous way,
Through ravine and lost trails,
if the race doesn't fatigue you!

Passing where I passed,
you will see that alone and hurt
I traveled through this sad world,

And this is how I came to die
far away, far away, without ever finding
the blue manor of Rosemonde.

GEORGE GERSHWIN

“Fascinating Rhythm”

[Ira Gershwin]

Got a little rhythm, a rhythm, a rhythm
That pit-a-pats through my brain.
So darn persistent, the day isn't distant
When it'll drive me insane.
Comes in the morning without any warning,
And hangs around all day.
I'll have to sneak up to it,
Someday, and speak up to it,
I hope it listens when I say:
“Fascinating Rhythm
You've got me on the go!
Fascinating Rhythm
I'm all a-quiver.
What a mess you're making!
The neighbors want to know
Why I'm always shaking

Just like a flivver.
Each morning I get up with the sun,
(Start a-hopping never stopping)
To find at night, no work has been done.
I know that
Once it didn't matter
But now you're doing wrong;
When you start to patter
I'm so unhappy.
Won't you take a day off?
Decide to run along
Somewhere far away off
And make it snappy!
Oh, how I long to be the man I used to be!
Fascinating Rhythm,
Oh, won't you stop picking on me!”

CREDITS

Renée Fleming appears by arrangement with IMG Artists, www.imgartists.com.

Ms. Fleming is an exclusive recording artist for Decca and Mercury Records (UK).

Ms. Fleming's jewelry is by Ann Ziff for Tamsen Z.

reneeefleming.com

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