

Faculty and Guest Artist Recital

2011–12 Season
175th Concert

Tuesday 15 November 2011
Dalton Center Recital Hall
8:15 p.m.

CARL RATNER, Baritone
VERA DANCHENKO-STERN, Piano
“From Saint Petersburg to Broadway”

Mikhail Glinka
1804–1857

Do Not Tempt Me Needlessly (Не искушай меня без нужды)

Pyotr Tchaikovsky
1840–1893

Six Romances Opus 38

- II. It Happened in Early Spring (То было раннею весной)
- IV. Oh, If Only You Could (О, если б ты могла)
- III. At the Ball (Средь шумного бала)
- I. Don Juan’s Serenade (Серенада Дон Жуана)

Sergei Rachmaninoff
1873–1943

Aleko’s Cavatina from *Aleko*

Sergei Rachmaninoff

In the Silent Night (В молчаньи ночи тайной)
Opus 4, Number 3

God Took Everything from Me (Всё отнял у меня)
Opus 26, Number 2

Oh, Never Sing to Me Again (Не пой, красавица, при мне)
Opus 4, Number 4

I Came to Her (Я был у ней) Opus 14, Number 4

intermission

Dmitri Shostakovich
1906–1975

Four Romances on Texts by Pushkin Opus 46

- I. Rebirth (Возрождение)
- II. A Youth, Bitterly Reproached by a Jealous Maiden (Юношу, горько рыдая, ревнивая дева бранила)



Isaak Dunaevsky 1900–1955	“Silence” (Молчание) from the film <i>Merry Stars</i> (Весёлые звёзды) “So Many Nice Girls” (Как много девчушек хороших) from the film <i>Jolly Fellows</i> (Весёлые ребята)
Igor Stravinsky 1882–1971	<i>Summer Moon</i>
Aaron Copland 1900–1990	“I Bought Me a Cat” from <i>Old American Songs</i>
George Gershwin 1898–1937	“By Strauss” from <i>The Show is On</i>
Irving Berlin 1888–1989	“Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor” from <i>Miss Liberty</i>
Leonard Bernstein 1918–1990	“Easily Assimilated” from <i>Candide</i>
Jay Gorney 1894–1990	“Brother, Can You Spare a Dime” from <i>New Americana</i>

Special thanks to Igor Fedotov, Gunta Laukmane, David Colson, and Margaret Merrion, without whom this program would not be possible.

If the fire alarm sounds, please exit the building immediately. All other emergencies will be indicated by spoken announcement within the seating area. The tornado safe area in Dalton Center is along the lockers in the brick hallway to your left as you exit to the lobby behind you. In any emergency, walk—do not run—to the nearest exit. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance. Because of legal issues, any video or audio recording of this performance is prohibited without prior consent from the School of Music. Thank you for your cooperation.

TRANSLATIONS

Glinka, *Do Not Tempt Me Needlessly*

Do not tempt me needlessly with a return of your tenderness.
To a disillusioned man all enticements from former days seem foreign.

I no longer believe in promises. I no longer believe in love.
And I cannot be deceived again by phantom visions.

Do not increase my silent pain; do not repeat your former words.
And, dear friend, do not awaken a sick man from his repose.
I sleep; my slumber is sweet. Forget the dreams of the past!
You will awaken only anxiety in my weary soul, not love.

Tchaikovsky, *It Happened in Early Spring*

It was in early spring; the grass was barely showing;
The stream was flowing, the air mild; the trees were turning green;
In the early morning, the shepherd's pipe as yet was silent,
The ferns were still tightly furled in the pinewoods.

It was in early spring, and in the shade of the birch trees
When, with a smile, you lowered your eyes before me...
In reply to my love you lowered your glance...
O life! O forest! O sunlight! O youth! O hopes!

And I wept before you, looking into your sweet face.
It was in early spring, and in the shade of the birch trees!
It was the morning of our life! O happiness! O tears!
O forest! O life! O sunlight! O fresh scent of birch trees!

Tchaikovsky, *O, if Only You Could*

O, if you could, just for a single moment,
Forget your sadness, forget your troubles,
O, if only once I could see the look you wore
As I knew it in happier times.

When in your eyes a tear glistens,
O, if that grief could pass in a flash,
Like a warm spring thunderstorm
That flies through and is gone,
Like shadows of clouds
Running across fields of grain!

Tchaikovsky, *At the Ball*

In the midst of a ball, and the bustle of the crowd,
I saw you by chance, but your features were hidden.
I saw your sad eyes, heard your marvelous voice.
Like the sound of a distant flute, or the waves playing on the sea.
Your delicate form entranced me, and your pensiveness,
Your sad yet merry laughter has filled my heart since then.
And in the lonely hours of the night, when I lie down to rest,
I see your sad eyes, hear your merry laugh,
And sadly I fall asleep in mysterious dreams.
I don't know if I love you, but it seems to me that I do!

Tchaikovsky, *Don Juan's Serenade*

Darkness descends on Alpujara's golden land.
My guitar invites you, come out my dear!
Whoever says that there are others who can be compared to you,
Whoever burns for your love, I challenge them all to mortal combat!
Now the moon has lit the sky
Come out, Nisetta, quickly onto your balcony

From Seville to Granada, in the silence of the night
One can hear the sound of serenades and the clashing of swords.
Much blood, many songs, pour forth for the lovely ladies; And I,
for the loveliest one of all, am ready to give my song and my blood.
Now the moon has lit the sky
Come out, Nisetta, quickly onto your balcony.

Rachmaninoff, *Aleko's Cavatina*

The whole camp is asleep. The moon shines in midnight beauty.
Why does my poor heart tremble? Why am I languishing in sadness?

Without cares, without regrets, I spent my days in nomadic roaming.
Feeling contempt for the shackles of civilization.
I was free, I lived without acknowledging the power
Of a blind and malevolent fate.
But, my God, how passion plays with my gullible soul!

Zemfira! How she loved me!
How tenderly she pressed against me in the empty silence
And there she spent the night hours!
How often with her speech and her entrancing kisses
She was able to dispel my melancholy in a moment.

I remember how, with passionate sensuousness she whispered to me
"I love you! I am in your power! Yours, Aleko, forever!"

She made me forget everything as I listened to her words.
And like a madman I kissed Zemfira's enchanting eyes,
The strands of her beautiful hair, darker than night, and her lips.
While she, full of voluptuousness and passion,
Held me close and gazed into my eyes.

But what has happened? Zemfira is unfaithful! Zemfira has grown cold
to me.

Rachmaninoff, *In the Silent Night*

In the silence of the mysterious night,
your alluring speech, smiles and glances,
your fleeting glances, the locks of your rich hair, locks pliant under my
fingertips –

I try to get rid of the images only to call them back again;

I will be repeating and correcting in a whisper
the words I've told you, the words full of awkwardness,
and now, drunk with love, contrary to reason,
I awaken the night's darkness with your cherished name.

Rachmaninoff, *God Took Everything From Me*

The punishing God took everything from me:
Health, Strength, Will, Breath, Sleep.
You alone he left to me,
So that I might still pray to him.

Rachmaninoff, *Oh, Never Sing to Me Again*

Do not sing to me, lovely maiden, your sad songs of Georgia;
they remind me of that other life and distant shore.

Alas, your cruel melodies remind me of the steppe,
the night and the moonlit features of a poor, distant maiden!

That sweet and fateful apparition I forget when you appear;
but you sing, and before me I picture that image anew.

Rachmaninoff, *I Came to Her*

I came to her; she said to me: "I love you, my dear friend!"
But she strictly implored me to keep this secret from her girlfriends.

I came to her. She swore never to trade me for golden riches;
To burn with passion only for me; to love me, love me like a brother.

I came to her; I will always live bound to her soul.
Let her betray me, but I will be no traitor.

CARL RATNER, baritone, was awarded a 2010–11 Fulbright grant to perform, teach, give master classes, direct an American chamber opera, and research Russian art songs at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia. In the spring and summer of 2011 he toured the United States with a recital of Russian and American songs, including a performance at the Russian Cultural Center in Washington, D.C.

Recent engagements include the role of Ping in *Turandot* and the Marquis in *La Traviata* with the Kalamazoo Symphony and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with the Battle Creek Symphony. Other operatic roles include Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, John Proctor in *The Crucible*, and the title roles in Verdi's *Falstaff* and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*.

His concert work includes Bach's *Magnificat and Mass in A Major* with The Bach Ensemble of Naples, Vaughan Williams's *Dona Nobis Pacem* and Copland's *Old American Songs* with the Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale, and performances of the Fauré *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and David Gillingham's *Lifesongs*. He recently toured Germany and the Czech Republic as baritone soloist in a program of "Songs, Psalms, and Spirituals." His recital programs, remarkable for their breadth and creativity, have included works ranging from Rameau's *Thétis* to Bolcom's *Cabaret Songs*. He has performed in 13 languages.

Ratner's career also includes over two decades of experience as an opera director. He learned his craft assisting directors at major opera houses including Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, Munich Opera, San Francisco Opera, English National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Spoleto Festival in Italy, where he worked with eminent composer Gian Carlo Menotti. He served as Artistic Director for Chicago Opera Theater from 1994–99 and Chamber Opera Chicago from 1984–93.

He currently serves as Associate Professor of Voice for the School of Music at Western Michigan University, where he teaches applied voice, vocal literature, and French and German diction. From 2001–10 he served as WMU's Director of Opera, teaching the opera workshop class and staging the annual opera production. He received his bachelor's degree from the Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio and also participated in an internship at The Juilliard School in New York City. He earned a Master of Arts in vocal pedagogy at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago and his Doctor of Music degree in Performance from the School of Music at Northwestern University.

VERA DANCHENKO-STERN was born in Moscow into a family of professional musicians. She graduated from the Gnessin Institute of Music in Moscow with honors in piano, solo performance, chamber music, and vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Danchenko-Stern taught at the Gnessin Institute and toured as an accompanist throughout Russia and Europe before emigrating to Canada in 1979, where she joined the faculty of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. She has performed highly acclaimed concerts with her brother, violinist Victor Danchenko, in major cities for sold-out houses throughout the world.

Since moving to Washington, D.C. in 1990, her concert appearances include voice recitals with Medea Namoradze, Mikhail Manevitch, Sergei Leiferkus, Jerome Barry, and Nikita Storoyev. In 1997 she accompanied soprano Carmen Balthrop singing Rachmaninoff's romances at the Carnegie Hall gala in honor of the 850th anniversary of the founding of Moscow.

Danchenko-Stern has completed several tours in Russia. In 2001 she brought her singer-students from the Peabody Conservatory on The Golden Ring Russian tour with performances in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Yaroslavl. Their recital in St. Petersburg took place at the residence of the Consul General of the United States. The success of this performance led to an invitation to participate in the International Festival of Conservatories in 2002, dedicated to the 140th anniversary of the founding of the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

Danchenko-Stern serves as a Russian diction coach for the Washington National Opera and has served in a similar capacity at the Hawaii Opera Theater and the Baltimore Symphony. Deeply committed to the development of young artists, Danchenko-Stern continues to serve on the faculty of the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. She is sought after as a judge, master teacher, and chamber pianist and has been included in the centennial edition of *Who's Who in American Women* and is a National Associate Artist of Sigma Alpha Iota, the International Music Fraternity for Women.