



CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

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presents a

VOCAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE CONCERT

Dr. Cynthia Wohlschlager, ensemble coach and coordinator

Ralitsa Georgieva-Smith, piano

Jingang Ye, piano

Saturday, April 25, 2026

7:30pm, Kulas Hall

Wider den Übermut

Joseph Haydn
(1732–1809)

Emilie Williams, soprano
Caroline Friend, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

Abendlied zu Gott

Jessica Bell, soprano
Morgan Potts, mezzo-soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

Der Greis

Chuting Huang, soprano
Hanyue Zhang, soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Leo Pravskii, baritone

Die Warnung

Catya Carrington, soprano
Cali Jacobs, soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Die Beredsamkeit

Ella Sobkowicz, soprano
Ariel Wong, soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Alles hat seine Zeit

Jordan Fowler, soprano
Ziyi Han, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Leo Pravskii, baritone

Die Harmonie in der Ehe

Cassie Dixon, soprano
Cali Jacobs, soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Der Augenblick

Fifi Huang, soprano
Caroline Friend, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

Abschiedslied der Zugvögel
Gruss

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

Jordan Fowler, soprano
Cecelia Morrison, soprano

Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Rede, Mädchen
Am Gesteine rauscht
O die Frauen!
Wie des Abends schöne Röte

Emilie Williams, soprano
Caroline Friend, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

Die grüne Hopfenranke
Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel

Fifi Huang, soprano
Caroline Friend, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

Wohl schön bewandt war es
Wenn so lind dein Auge mir

Ella Sobkowicz, soprano
Ariel Wong, soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Am Donaustrande
O wie sanft die Quelle

Chuting Huang, soprano
Hanyue Zhang, soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Leo Pravskii, baritone

Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen
Schlosser auf, und mache Schlösser

Cassie Dixon, soprano
Cali Jacobs, soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Vögelein durchrauscht die Luft
Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar

Chuting Huang, soprano
Hanyue Zhang, soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Leo Pravskii, baritone

Nachtigall, sie singt so schön

Jordan Fowler, soprano
Ziyi Han, mezzo-soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Leo Pravskii, baritone

Ein dunkeler Schacht ist Liebe

Catya Carrington, soprano
Cali Jacobs, soprano
Connor Vrooman, tenor
Colin DeMatteo, baritone

Nicht wandle, mein Licht
Es bebet das Gesträuche

Jessica Bell, soprano
Morgan Potts, mezzo-soprano
Jingdian Zhou, tenor
Drew Russell, baritone

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Dr. Cynthia Skelley-Wohlschlager's career reflects an international artistic presence encompassing stage direction, performance, scholarship, and advanced vocal pedagogy. A sought-after educator and scholar, she has presented masterclasses and lectures for major professional and academic organizations including the Indonesian Voice Association, NATS, AMEA, VOCl, Nightingale Opera Theatre, LOOC, and Sessione Senese per la Musica et l'Arte. Her work exploring diversity, memory, and Holocaust remembrance in opera has been featured by *The Jewish Independent*, *Australian Arts Review*, and Radio RRR Melbourne. Wohlschlager's research, *Shared Dramatic Pacing in Jake Heggie's Three Decembers* (ProQuest), examines stage direction, performance dramaturgy, and motivic tracing in 21st-century opera.

As a performer, she maintains an active career in opera, oratorio, and recital, with role highlights including Mrs. DeRocher (*Dead Man Walking*), Principessa (*Suor Angelica*), Secretary (*The Consul*), Alma March (*Little Women*), Lola/Lucia (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Ludmilla (*The Bartered Bride*), and Marthe (*Faust*). Her commitment to arts education and community engagement includes extensive outreach collaborations with Opera Cleveland on Tour and the Akron Children's Concert Society. Honors include the O.D. Taliaferro Opera Award, Max Berman Award for Outstanding Vocal Performance, Dewey and Mary Gilley Award for Distinguished Opera, prizes from the Tuesday Musical Competition, and Doug Davis Composition and Performance Award. An accomplished stage director with more than 35 full productions to her credit, Wohlschlager is recognized for innovative interpretations of both contemporary and standard repertoire. Recent productions include *Two Remain* and *If I Were You* (Heggie), *Cendrillon* (Viardot), *Pinocchio* (Dove), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Todd), *Gallantry* (Moore), *A Certain Madness* (Heruth), and *Little Women* (Adamo). Her directing portfolio also encompasses cornerstone works of the operatic canon, including *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Finta Giardiniera*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Trial by Jury*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

In her 24th year of teaching voice and opera in higher education, Wohlschlager holds a DMA in voice performance, pedagogy, and literature from James Madison University and earned a Professional Studies diploma from CIM. She has held full time faculty positions at Northern Arizona University (voice faculty and director of lyric theatre), Malone University (voice coordinator and director of opera), Cleveland State University (voice coordinator and director of vocal theatre workshop), and Kennesaw State University (voice faculty and director of opera theatre). This summer, she looks forward to teaching for the Patti and Allan Herbert Frost School of Music Program in Salzburg, Austria.

Wohlschlager's students have achieved successes, earning top honors in prestigious national and international competitions, including Osaka International, London International Virtuoso, Schloss-Mirabell, Classical Singer, Orpheus, New York Lyric Opera, Metropolitan Opera Laffont, and Irma Cooper competitions. Their artistry has graced renowned venues such as Carnegie Hall, Severance Hall, and Weill Recital Hall, and they have been selected for esteemed programs, including Aspen, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Opera Lucca, Emerald City, CoOperative, Ice Factory, Anywhere Festival, NISHMI, and the New York Theater Institute at Juilliard. Graduates of Wohlschlager's studio have pursued advanced studies at Yale, Indiana University, Rice University, San Francisco Conservatory, UMKC, Royal Central School of London, Vanderbilt, and other distinguished institutions. They have performed with organizations such as The

Metropolitan Opera, Wolf Trap, San Francisco Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, The Atlanta Opera, Opera Saratoga, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Sarasota Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Ohio Light Opera, Opera Colorado, Cleveland Pops Orchestra, and as leading actors in the television miniseries *Inventing Anna* and the television series *Grey's Anatomy*.

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Ralitsa Georgieva-Smith received her BM and MM in piano performance from the State Conservatory of Music - Sofia, Bulgaria, a second MM in piano performance from University of South Florida where she studied with Dr. Svetozar Ivanov, and a PS in collaborative piano from CIM under Anita Pontremoli. Upon graduation from CIM the Bulgarian born pianist joined the collaborative piano department at CIM. Georgieva-Smith is a recipient of the Steinway Top Teacher Award for 2016, 2017, and 2022 for her achievements as an educator and performer, and her dedication to community and charity work. Her successful teaching career brought her students to many prestigious venues to perform, including Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. She has been involved with the Cleveland International Piano Competition as a member of the Audience Committee and as a performer at many community concerts around Cleveland throughout the years.

Georgieva-Smith is the founder and artistic director of Music for Our Children, a concert series to benefit UNICEF - Children's Disaster and Emergency Relief Organization. Established in 2014, the concert series fulfills one of her personal beliefs to help children and youth in need all across the world, through music, concerts, and continuously bringing awareness to the crisis circumstances sometimes children live in. A new addition to this project, is her recently founded Songs of the Books program which focuses on bringing music performances to local crisis nursery, Providence House and the Ronald McDonald Charity House.

Some of her performing engagements include performances as a guest artist at Chautauqua Institute, Interlochen Center of the Arts, Playhouse Square, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Ballet, University of South Florida's Steinway Piano Series, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival in Burlington, Vermont, "Peter the Great" Festival in the Netherlands, and Chamber Music from the Twentieth Century Festival in Perugia. Her professional collaborators include Cleveland Orchestra members and CIM faculty Carolyn Warner, Brian Thornton, Bryan Dumm, Yasuhito Sugiyama, Michael Sachs, Scott Dixon, Charles Carleton, Derek Zadinsky, Matthew Vaughn (assistant principal trombone, Philadelphia Orchestra), Blair Bollinger (bass trombone, Philadelphia Orchestra), Carol Jantsch (tuba, Philadelphia Orchestra), Oystein Baadsvik (International Tuba Soloist), and Haim Avitsur (trombone faculty, Manhattan School of Music), as well as internationally recognized pianists, educators, performers, and Steinway artists Emanuela Friscioni and Caroline Oltmanns.

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