SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Finding Home

Sara Lwin, soprano
Rie Yamaguchi, piano

November 20, 2026 | 7:00PM | PepsiCo Recital Hall

Program

Three Browning Poems — Amy Beach (1867-1944)
- I. The Year's at the Spring
- II. Ah, Love, but a Day!
- III. I Send my Heart up to Thee

Selections by Reynaldo Hahn — Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947)
- D'une Prison
- L'Heure Exquise
- Si mes vers avaient des ailes

Bituing Marikit — Nicanor Abelardo (1893-1934)

Mein gläubiges Herze — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
From *Also hat Gott die welt geliebt*

Songs my Mother Taught Me — Antonin Dvořak (1841-1904)
From *Gypsy Melodies*

A Soft Place to Land — Sara Bareilles (b. 1979)
From *Waitress*

Kaylynn Langham, Soprano
Sophia Yang, Soprano

When you're Home — Lin-Manuel Miranda (b. 1980)
From *In the Heights*

Jadon Turner, Tenor

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the BME in Music Education. Ms. Lwin is a student of Dr. Gwendolyn Alfred. The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited. Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Program Notes

Three Browning Poems **Amy Beach**

Amy Beach (1867-1944) was regarded in her time as one of the most prominent American women composers. From New England, she started playing piano and composing at a young age. In 1925, she co-founded and was the first president of the Society of American Women Composers, which aimed to support and promote women in classical music and composition.[1] She took inspiration from many composers, being mostly self taught, building upon their work in her own unique way. She was especially inspired by Claude Debussy and Antonin Dvořák and their use of folk idioms within symphonic music and parallel chords. She is most known for her piano and vocal scores, which often contain shifts in tonal centers, nature imagery and adventurous harmonies.

Robert Browning (1812-1889) is an English poet and playwright known for his dramatic monologue and explorations of psychological issues.[2] Although Browning did not often write children's literature, he is most known for writing "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," which is frequently used and adapted within modern children's tales. The three poems that Amy Beach chose for this set show off Browning's optimistic and nature focused poetry, along with a sincere trust in God.

Amy Beach writes with incredible emotional expression, and her song cycle, *3 Browning Songs*, written in 1900, exemplifies this. The songs feature many modulations, tied to Beach's synesthesia, so that each part of the cycle could match the correct color associated with the poetry.[3] The first song, "The Year's at the Spring," is an emotionally static song that expresses an intense excitement and optimism for the world.[4] The excitement is shown through the fast tempo, triplet rhythmic patterns in the piano, and short phrases. "Ah, Love, but a Day" comes next and is about the enduring nature of memory through fleeting happiness and the fear of losing it. The fear and anxiety of the narrator is expressed through the heavy chromaticism in the music. Tonal centers are moved through quickly so that they are hard for a listener to pick out, using text painting to create an atmosphere of instability. The set ends with "I send my heart up to thee," which is about sending a deep love and devotion to someone from across a distance. This song is the slowest and calmest of the three, with flowing, ascending lines as if the narrator's love is rising to their lover.

I chose this set as a representation of change and the discomfort that comes with that. Through this set, I imagine the times I've moved, knowing that "the world has changed." I have said goodbye to friends and loved ones, longing to stay in touch, but ultimately knowing that I may not see them again. This comes with its own form of grief, as I cling on to the memories of the people and places that I love, begging them not to change. Within the third song, there's acknowledgment that I can love something from a distance. I can hold onto these memories and cherish them as I remember my home.

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[1] Block, "Beach, Amy Marcy," 12-17.

[2] "Robert Browning," https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/robert-browning.

[3] Winzenried, "Who was Amy Beach?" https://www.chambermusicsociety.org/about-the-music/composers/amy-beach.

[4] Spodek, "Perspectives on Amy Beach's Three Browning Songs."

The Year's at the Spring

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven–
All's right with the world!

Ah, Love, but a Day

Ah, Love, but a day,
And the world has changed!
The sun's away,
And the bird estranged;
The wind has dropped,
And the sky's deranged;
Summer has stopped.

Look in my eyes!
Wilt thou change too?
Should I fear surprise?
Shall I find aught new
In the old and dear,
In the good and true,
With the changing year?

I Send my Heart up to Thee

I send my heart up to thee, all my heart
In this my singing,
For the stars help me, and the sea bears part;
The very night is clinging
Closer to Venice' streets to leave one space
Above me, whence thy face
May light my joyous heart to thee its dwelling place.

Selections by Reynaldo Hahn **Reynaldo Hahn**

Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947) is a Venezuelan-born French composer, conductor, singer, and writer. He was a child prodigy who started composing at eight years old and began at the Paris Conservatoire when he was ten.[5] Contemporary of composers like Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and Gabriel Fauré, Hahn wrote in the impressionist style that was popular in France at the time. This style emphasized flowing melodic lines, ambiguous harmonies, and a beautifully simple sound. One of Hahn's biggest successes was his composition, *Ciboulette*, written in the early 1920s about the nostalgia of an old market in 19th century Paris. Musical elements that Hahn regularly used included a smooth, moving piano accompaniment and surprising intervals and cadences, as well as several settings to poetry by Victor Hugo and Paul Verlaine.

Paul Verlaine (1844-1896) was a French poet and writer.[6] He strove to write poems in a musical way, prizing elegant rhythms, metric virtuosity, and euphony, which is why many composers chose to set his poems to music. Debussy was the first prominent composer to use Verlaine's music, followed by Fauré, Hahn, and many others, so that Verlaine was among the most popular French poets of his time for musical settings.

Victor Hugo (1802-1885) was a French author and politician, best known for writing the novels *Les misérables* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.[7] Hugo was a strong activist who opposed social hierarchies and fought for democracy, which led to his exile for nearly two decades due to his opposition to Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte. His work often expanded on ideas of freedom, power, and the grotesque, leading to both criticism and acclaim.

"D'une Prison", which translates to "of a prison," is about the beauty of the world and the longing for a fulfilled life. The poetry is by Paul Verlaine, who wrote this poem when he was imprisoned, so it speaks of real regret and mourning. The slow and calm melody reflects the beauty of the outside world, which contrasts with the declamatory middle section to emphasize the wish for something more. "L'Heure Exquise," also by Paul Verlaine, means "the exquisite hour," and is about being still and appreciating the beauty around us. The song does not have any moments of great tension, as it is just a simple expression of beauty. This set ends with "Si mes vers avaient des ailes," which was Hahn's first claim to fame, composed when he was thirteen years old to a poem by Victor Hugo. It speaks of a desire for escape and return to a place of comfort and love. The title, meaning "if my verses had wings," repeats itself at the end of each verse, using the imagery of wings to capture the longing for home and the desire to return there.

This set represents a longing for home and the discontentment that comes with that. The first song speaks of a wish to live life fully in the outside world, which I relate to my wish to return home. All three songs speak of something beautiful and perfect, and for me, that is the memory of my home where I grew up. When I am here, I long to be there. When I am there, I am happy and content. As the third song says, "if my verses had wings," I would fly away home.

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[5] O'Connor, "Hahn, Reynaldo," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.12169.
[6] Griffiths, "Verlaine, Paul," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.29214.
[7] Laster, "Hugo, Victor(-Marie)," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.13519.

D'une Prison

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

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

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

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

Of a Prison

The sky, over the roof, is
So blue, so calm!
A tree, over the roof,
Is rocking its fronds.

The bell, in the sky that you see,
Gently rings.
A bird on the tree that you see,
Plaintively sings.

My God, my God, life is there,
Simple, and sound.
That peaceful murmuring there
Comes in from the town.

What have you done, O you,
Now shedding endless tears,
Tell me, what have you done,
O you, With your young years?

Translation: Amy Burton and Regan Kramer

L'Heure Exquise

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...
Ô bien aimée.

L'étang reflète, profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...
Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...
C'est l'heure exquise.

The Exquisite Hour

The white moon
Gleams in the woods;
From every branch
There comes a voice
Beneath the boughs...
O my beloved.

The pool reflects, deep mirror,
The silhouette
Of the black willow
Where the wind is weeping...
Let us dream, it is the hour.

A vast and tender
Consolation
Seems to fall
From the sky
The moon illuminates...
Exquisite hour.

Translation: Richard Stokes

Si mes vers avaient des ailes

Mes vers fuiraient, doux et frêles,
Vers votre jardin si beau,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l'oiseau.

Ils voleraient, étincelles,
Vers votre foyer qui rit,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l'esprit.

Près de vous, purs et fidèles,
Ils accouraient nuit et jour,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l'amour.

If my Verses had Wings

My verses would flee, sweet and frail,
To your garden so fair,
If my verses had wings,
Like a bird.

They would fly, like sparks,
To your smiling hearth,
If my verses had wings,
Like the mind.

Pure and faithful, to your side
They'd hasten night and day,
If my verses had wings,
Like love!

Translation: Richard Stokes

"Bituing Marikit" — Nicanor Abelardo

Nicanor Abelardo (1893-1934) was a Filipino composer, known as the father of Kundiman, a genre of Filipino art song.[8] Abelardo was a child prodigy and wrote his first song, "Ang unang buko" ("The First Fruit"), for his grandmother when he was just seven years old. He was the first Filipino to write a concerto and a sonata and contributed greatly to the repertoire of Filipino music. Some of his most popular songs include "Nasaan ka irog?" ("Where are you, Beloved?"), "Mutya ng Pasig" ("Muse of Pasig River"), and "Bituing Marikit" ("Beautiful Star"), all kundiman and examples of how he developed this genre of love songs into an art song form.

Servando de los Angeles (1885-1972) was a Filipino author, playwright, and pharmacist who wrote the lyrics for "Bituing Marikit."[9] He was heavily interested in socio-political issues and deeply valued culture, which is where a lot of his lyrics come from. He is most known in Filipino theater history for writing multiple Tagalog zarzuelas, one of them entitled "Bituing Marikit."

"Bituing Marikit," translating to "Beautiful Star," was written in 1926 when he was teaching at the University of the Philippines, and it is one of the most popular Filipino art songs. It is about a deep unrequited love as the singer compares their love to a star, bright and beautiful but unreachable. This piece has become a kind of anthem for some Filipinos, who know this song as a love letter to their country.

[8] Kasilag, "Abelardo, Nicanor," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.50001.
[9] Reyes, "The Last Timawa," https://uhpress.hawaii.edu/title/the-last-timawa-a-novel-by-servando-de-los-angeles/.

The “beautiful star” that I sing about in this song is my home in Manila. It is beautiful and I love it, but it is far away. My time spent growing up there shaped who I am and what I value, and although I will never live there again as it was, those experiences are memories that guide my life now. I wanted to sing a Filipino song as a thank you to the country that I call home and an acknowledgment that it will always have a place in my heart.

Bituing marikit sa gabi ng buhay
Ang bawat kislap mo’y ligaya ang taglay
Yaring aking palad iyong patnubayan
At kahit na sinag ako’y bahaginan.

Natanim sa puso ko yaong isang pag-ibig
Na pinakasasamba sa loob ng dibdib
Sa iyong luningning laging nasasabik
Ikaw ang pangarap Bituing marikit.

Lapitan mo ako, halina bituin
Ating pag-isahin ang mga damdamin
Ang sabik kong diwa’y huwag mong uhawin Sa
batis ng iyong wagas na pag-giliw.

Beautiful star, in this night of life
Your every twinkle brings joy
Guide and control my fate
Give me a ray of your light.

Planted in my heart is a love
That I worship inside my heart
Your shining light is what I long for
You are my dream, beautiful star.

Draw closer to me, come star
Let us make our feelings into one
Do not leave my heart thirsty
In the stream of your perfect affection.

Translation: Kelsey Miguel

“Mein gläubiges Herze” from *Also hat Gott die welt geliebt* **Johann Sebastian Bach**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a German Baroque composer and organist, widely regarded as one of the greatest composers in history, with his music still being commonly performed today.[10] He came from a family of musicians and grew up learning string and keyboard instruments. He was a prodigious composer, best known for writing cantatas, fugues, Masses, and concertos. He worked as an organist and composer at many churches, so many of his songs have a sacred influence.

Christiana Mariana von Ziegler (1695-1760) was a German Baroque poet and writer who wrote the libretto for *Also hat Gott die welt geliebt* and is best known for her nine cantatas which Bach set to music.[11] The original texts that Bach used in his cantatas were lost, but von Ziegler republished her texts in 1728 in a collection of poetry entitled *Versuch in gebundener Schreib*.

“Mein gläubiges Herze” is the second in Bach’s 68th cantata, entitled *Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt*, meaning “God so loved the world.”[12] He wrote this cantata in 1725 for Pentecost Monday about divine love, faith, and salvation, creating a contrast between joyful belief and divine judgement. “Mein gläubiges Herze,” which translates to “My faithful heart,” is a joyful celebration of faith, proclaiming that the heart can rest because Jesus is here.

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[10] Wolff, "Bach, Johann Sebastian," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.6002278195.
[11] “Christiane Mariane Von Ziegler,” https://www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Ziegler.htm.
[12] “Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt,” https://www.vmii.org/bwv-68-also-hat-gott-die-welt-geliebt.

This song serves as a joyful reminder that I don't need to feel lost or alone when I can turn to Jesus. My true and forever home is in Heaven, so there is no need to worry on Earth. He is with us through every difficult moment, so each repetition of the lyrics is a new reminder that God is watching over me. As the lyrics read, "Jesus is here."

Mein gläubiges Herze,
Frohlocke, sing, scherze,
Dein Jesus ist da!

Weg Jammer, wek Plagen,
Ich will euch nur sagen:
Mein Jesus ist nah.

My faithful heart,
Exult, sing, make merry,
Your Jesus is there!

Away with sorrow, away with lamenting,
To you I wish to say:
My Jesus is here.

Translation: Michael Marissen

"Songs my Mother Taught Me" from *Gypsy Melodies* **Antonin Dvořák**

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904) was a Czech composer in the late Romantic era, mostly known for his many concertos and symphonies, although he composed in a vast variety of genres.[13] He drew on Native American and African American musical traditions to influence a new sound of American music that incorporated Romantic era aesthetics and Slavic musical styles. Dvořák made clear use of themes and motifs in a way that sounded beautifully simple, although behind that is richness, complexity, and brilliance.

Adolf Heyduk (1835-1923) is a Czech poet and writer, best known for writing his poem cycle, *Gypsy Melodie*s. Heyduk's work was often inspired by Slovak culture and folklore, taken from his many travels to Slovakia to visit family. Heyduk wrote this poem cycle after a trip to visit his brother in Slovakia, being inspired by the romanticization and exoticism of Romani culture that was popular at the time. The songs were translated to German by Heyduk after he wrote them in the original Czech, and versions of Dvořák's song cycle are widely performed in Czech, German, and English.

"Songs my mother taught me" is the fourth in Dvořák's song cycle, *Gypsy Melodies*, composed in 1880. Dvořák composed this cycle to a set of seven poems by Adolf Heyduk at the request of a prominent tenor. The poems are thought to be an allegory for the Czech nation's struggle for freedom, drawing on ideas of the bond between humans and nature, the need for music, and the value of freedom. "Songs my mother taught me" is the most popular and widely performed of the set, with its deep emotional draw and simple melody.[14] This song is about a mother's enduring love, and the promise to keep her memory alive by passing on her song to your children.

[13] Döge, "Dvořák, Antonín," https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.51222.
[14] "Gypsy Songs," https://www.antonin-dvorak.cz/en/work/gypsy-songs-op55-b104/.

I dedicate this song to my mother, grandmother, and family, who have been my biggest supporters in my life. I've learned everything from my parents, and they inspire me every day to be better. As I sing this song, I think about my grandmother, who, as my mother tells me, was a very musical woman with a beautiful voice and a kind and joyful heart. I think of how my mom has passed down her legacy in a way that makes me lucky to be a witness to it. I only hope I can live up to these two incredible women before me. Thank you, Mama, for everything you have done.

Když mne stará matka zpívat, zpívat učívala,
podivno, že často, často slzívala.
A ted' také pláčem snědé líce mučim,
když cigánské děti hrát a zpívat učim!

When my old mother taught me songs to sing,
Tears would well strangely in her eyes.
Now my brown cheeks are wet with tears,
When I teach the children how to sing and play!

Translation: Natalie Macfarren

"A Soft Place to Land" from *Waitress* **Sara Bareilles**

Sara Bareilles (b. 1979) is an American singer-songwriter and pianist who grew up singing and acting in her school choir and theater.[15] She had always loved the performing arts and aspired to become a musician, releasing her first album in 2004, followed by her first hit song in 2007 entitled "Love Song." Barielles' heartfelt voice and moving lyrics captured the attention of audiences and she gained rapid popularity. She is able to create complex vocal arrangements and dramatic musical set-ups that engage audiences, leading to her three Grammy nominations for her music.

Waitress is a Broadway musical written by Sara Bareilles in 2016 based off of the 2007 movie of the same name. It follows the story of a waitress and baker named Jenna, who finds out she is pregnant by her abusive husband. She struggles to come to terms with the direction her life has taken, and dreams of making a new life for herself and her future baby by hoping to win a pie contest to escape from her husband. "A Soft Place to Land" is sung by Jenna and her closest friends, Becky and Dawn, who are also waitresses at the diner. They sing it right after Jenna talks about her plans to win the cash prize in a pie contest so that she can leave her husband, and the three sing about their dreams of finding a peaceful escape from the harsh realities of life.

I chose this song as a reminder that home is in people and memories. Moving to a new place is scary and unsettling, but it can instantly feel like home when there is just one friendly face. Because of that, I wanted to dedicate this song to my friends. Thank you all for who you are and how you have shaped me. You make me feel at home here and I am so grateful to know each and every one of you. I'm so lucky that our paths crossed in this large world.

[15] "Sara Bareilles - Songs, Brave & Gravity," https://www.biography.com/musicians/sara-bareilles.

Sugar, butter, flour
Sometimes I still see her
My mother, the dreamer
She'd say, "Nothing's impossible child"

A dream needs believing
To taste like the real thing
Like some stranger you recognize

So pure, so electric
So sure, so connected
To those little believers inside
May we all be so lucky

But dreams are elusive
The kind we've gotten used to
Is nothing I can feel
Nothing I can hold
Nothing I can have
Nothing that I know
Dreams come and they go

But hold them and keep them
And know that you need them
When your breaking point's all that you have
A dream is a soft place to land
May we all be so lucky

"When you're Home" from *In the Heights* **Lin-Manuel Miranda**

Lin-Manuel Miranda (b. 1980) is a Puerto Rican-American musical theater composer, best known for writing *Hamilton* in 2015.[16] Miranda grew up with a passion for music and theater, as well as an interest in hip-hop, R&B, and other contemporary genres. His first claim to fame was his musical, *In the Heights*, released in 2008, which mixed Latin sounds with showtunes to great success. He went on to write *Hamilton*, a ground-breaking musical about Alexander Hamilton that gained widespread popularity and won eleven Tony awards, including best musical and best original score. Miranda has also made great strides in film, writing the music for *Moana* (2016) and *Encanto* (2021), among others. He continues to be a household name, inspiring many up and coming musical and movie composers with his distinctive style.

In the Heights, set in a Hispanic community in Upper Manhattan, follows the stories of multiple characters who live there, focusing on their lives, dreams, struggles, and hopes for a brighter future.[17] It is a celebration of culture in a tight-knit community, told through expressive music that blends hip-hop, merengue, salsa, and soul. "When you're home" is a duet between Nina, a Stanford student home for the summer, and Benny, her love interest and friend. Nina struggled at college and felt out of place, so Benny walks her through the neighborhood, reminding her of her home.

This song is one I've dreamed of singing in my recital since sophomore year. I relate to Nina's character and how she loves her community and her family, worked hard to reach her dreams, but still felt out of place in college. Since growing up overseas, I never know how to answer the question, "where are you from?" and I've always struggled with where my home is, which led me to choose "home" as the theme of my program. This song is a culmination of my search for home, with the acceptance that my home is wherever I choose it to be. It is Manila, Steamboat, and Forth Worth. It is with my family, my friends, and my community, whether that be here or across the globe. "I'm home" here and now, and I couldn't be more grateful to God for placing me here.

[16] "Lin-Manuel Miranda - Wife, Hamilton & Moana," https://www.biography.com/actors/lin-manuel-miranda.
[17] Fainstein, "In the Heights Synopsis & Character Guide," https://www.pcs.org/features/in-the-heights-synopsis-character-guide.

I used to think we lived at the top of the world
When the world was just a subway map
And the one slash nine climbed a dotted line to my place
There’s no nine train now

I used to think the Bronx was a place in the sky
When the world was just a subway map
And my thoughts took shape
On that fire escape
Can you remind me of what it was like at the top of the world?

Come with me!

We begin July with a stop at my corner fire hydrant
You would open it every summer
I would bust it with a wrench
'Til my face got drenched
'Til I heard the sirens
And then I ran like hell
I remember well

To your father's dispatch window
"Hey, let me in, yo! They're coming to get me!"
You were always in constant trouble
Then your dad would act all snide
But he'd let me hide, you were there inside
Life was easier then

Nina, everything is easier when you're home
The street's a little kinder when you're home
Can't you see that the day seems clearer
Now that you are here, or is it me?
Maybe it's just me

We gotta go, I wanna show you all I know
The sun is setting, and the light is getting low
Are we going to Castle Garden?
Maybe, maybe not but way to take a shot when the day is hot
I go a perfect shady spot a little ways that oughta cool us down
Welcome back to town

Now back in high school, when it darkened
You'd hang out in Bennet Park and-
Usnavi would bring his radio
As I walked home from Senior Studies
I'd see you rapping with your buddies
With the volume high
I walked on by

When you're home
Oh, the summer nights are cooler when you're home
Now that you're here with me
And that song you are hearing
Is the neighborhood just cheering you along
Don’t say that.

When I was younger I'd imagine what would happen if my parents had stayed in Puerto Rico.
Who would I be if I had never seen Manhattan,
If I lived in Puerto Rico with my people?
I feel like all my life I've tried to find the answer;
Working harder, learning Spanish, learning all I can.
I thought I might find the answers out at Stanford
But I'd stare out at the sea
Thinking, where am I supposed to be?
So please don't say you're proud of me, when I've lost my way

Then can I say,
I couldn't get my mind off you all day
Now listen to me, that may be how you perceive it
But Nina please believe that when you find your way again
You're gonna change the world and then
We're all gonna brag and say
We knew her when this was your home

I'm home
Welcome home
When you're here with me
I used to think that we lived at the top of the world
Welcome home
I'm home
You're finally home
I'm home!

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