



AMERICAN CLASSICS



Living in the Body

Songs of **LORI LAITMAN**

Check • Emerson • Gruber
Jordheim • McKay, Soprano

Gawrysiak, Mezzo-soprano
Taylor, Countertenor

Armstrong • Rideout, Tenor
Scarlata, Baritone

Thomas Kraines, Cello

Gary Louie, Saxophone

Emily Skala, Flute

Warren Jones

Lori Laitman

Andrew Rosenblum

Kirsten Taylor, Piano



Lori
LAITMAN
(b. 1955)
Living in the Body

CD 1			74:47
The Joy of Uncreating (2013, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Joan Joffe Hall, 1940–2013)</i>	4:38	Living in the Body (2001, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Joyce Sutphen, b. 1949)</i>	16:14
1 Illumination	1:42	13 Burning the Woods of My Childhood	3:12
2 The Joy of Uncreating	3:54	14 Living in the Body	3:00
The Blood Jet (2008, rev. 2010/2017)* <i>(Text: Sylvia Plath, 1932–1963)</i>	14:14	15 Not for Burning	4:14
3 Morning Song	3:57	16 Lost at Table	1:21
4 The Rival	3:26	17 Bring on the Rain	1:31
5 Kindness	3:53	18 Crossroads	2:53
6 Balloons	2:53	19 Todesfuge ('Death Fugue') (2010, rev. 2013)* <i>(Text: Paul Celan, 1920–1970, English translation by John Felstiner, 1936–2017)</i>	6:03
Sable Pride (2013, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Countee Cullen, 1903–1946)</i>	7:34	20 'Tis Philosophy (2011, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Emily Dickinson, 1830–1886)</i>	1:33
7 A Brown Girl Dead	2:06	Five Lovers (2004, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Jāma Jandrovkić, b. 1967)</i>	9:26
8 Incident	2:49	21 On Meeting Again	2:43
9 Tableau	2:35	22 Lovely in his Bones	0:54
10 And I Will Bring Them (2001, rev. 2003/2009/2017)* <i>(Text: Isaiah 56:7)</i>	2:55	23 This Morning	1:15
Two William Carlos Williams Songs (1997, rev. 2006/2017)* <i>(Text: William Carlos Williams, 1883–1963)</i>	2:51	24 Second Date	2:26
11 Full Moon	1:29	25 July, 95 Degrees	2:03
12 Light Hearted William	1:21	26 Dear Future Roommate (2015, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Mike Gioia, b. 1993)</i>	5:00
		27 What You Wanted (2011, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Joyce Sutphen)</i>	3:03

CD 2			78:58
1 I Am In Need of Music (1999, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Elizabeth Bishop, 1911–1979)</i>	4:12	12 The Silver Swan (2007)* <i>(Text: Orlando Gibbons, 1583–1625)</i>	3:09
On the Green Trail (2007, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Jeff Gundy, b. 1952)</i>	12:24	13 On a Photograph (2004, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: John Wood, b. 1947)</i>	4:22
2 On the Green Trail	2:59	The Soul Fox (2013, rev. 2017) <i>(Text: David Mason, b. 1954)</i>	18:20
3 Looking at My Hands	5:15	14 The Man Who Lied	2:13
4 Small Night Song from Oneonta	4:03	15 Sarong Song	6:51
5 Journey (2005, rev. 2014/2017)*	4:32	16 Aubade	1:51
River of Horses (2005, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Charles Baudelaire, 1821–1867, English translations by Jack Collings Squire, 1884–1958; 6, James Wright, 1927–1980; 7, 10, James Dickey, 1923–1997; 8, Traditional Navajo song; 9)</i>	16:38	17 Night Song	4:40
6 My Hand Forever	1:08	18 The Soul Fox	2:27
7 A Blessing	6:05	19 Lullaby (2000)*	1:44
8 A Birth	3:33	Short Songs for Edward (2017)* <i>(Text: Lori Laitman, b. 1955)</i>	2:33
9 The War God's Horse Song	1:29	20 Avocado and Goat Cheese	0:27
10 Two Horses Playing in the Orchard	4:12	21 When You Have to Make A Poo	0:26
11 The Act (2010, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: H.L. Hix, b. 1960)</i>	5:45	22 Sometimes You Get A Boo-Boo	0:35
		23 Please and Thank You	0:55
		24 You Leave Me Bent (2016, rev. 2017)* <i>(Text: Dana Gioia, b. 1950)</i>	4:59
*WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING			
Jennifer Check [CD 2 6–10 14–16], Ashley Emerson [CD 2 11], Sari Gruber [CD 1 3–6 20, CD 2 1], Alisa Jordheim [CD 1 21–23], Maureen McKay [CD 1 13–18, CD 2 12 20–23], Soprano Margaret Gawrysiak, Mezzo-soprano [CD 1 1–2 27, CD 2 13 24] Darryl Taylor, Countertenor [CD 1 7–10] Dominic Armstrong [CD 2 2–4 11], Vale Rideout [CD 1 11–12 25], Tenor Randall Scarlata, Baritone [CD 1 19, CD 2 1 13] Thomas Kraines, Cello [CD 1 19] • Gary Louie, Alto saxophone [CD 1 13–18, CD 2 5 19] Emily Skala, Flute [CD 2 12] Warren Jones [CD 2 2–4 6–10 14–18], Lori Laitman [CD 1 3–6 10–12 26, CD 2 12 13 24], Andrew Rosenblum [CD 1 1–2 7–9 20–25 27, CD 2 1 11 20–23], Kirsten Taylor [CD 2 5 19], Piano			

Lori Laitman (b. 1955)

Living in the Body

The Joy of Uncreating sets two poems by the late Joan Joffe Hall, who died of cancer in 2013. The work was commissioned by Dr. Adelaide Whitaker as a parting gift for Joan. *Illumination* was written in response to the eye surgery of a friend and *The Joy of Uncreating* in response to a friend's photograph.

Dr. Adelaide Whitaker also commissioned *The Blood Jet*, which is dedicated to soprano Sari Gruber. Different facets of Plath's life are presented in these four poems, with the first and last focusing on Plath's love for her children. Word painting is used throughout and the sparseness of the piano in *Kindness* is meant to capture the dulled emotions of depression.

Sable Pride was commissioned by countertenor Darryl Taylor and the cycle sets three poems by Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen. Cullen's poems display great lyricism, craft and powerful content, and each poem addresses the issue of race from a different angle. *A Brown Girl Dead* focuses on the profound bond between mother and child. The language in *Incident* is simple, but the use of the "N" word creates a searing portrait of a child whose life was forever scarred by racial hatred. To capture this enormous emotional impact, I employ a leitmotif in the piano, where the piano descends to the bottom of its range over a sustained pedal, creating a booming, blurred and dark atmosphere. To end the cycle, I looked for a poem that would provide an antidote to hatred, and found this in *Tableau*. The poem tells the story of racial harmony (and most likely homosexual love). The beautiful image of the two boys, one white and one black, walking arm in arm, is mirrored by the use of the piano. Overlapping in range, the left hand plays on the white keys, while the right hand plays on the black keys, thus creating a physical representation of interlocked arms. The cycle ends with the piano descending, almost as if pulling back cinematically from the scene.

And I Will Bring Them is my only Biblical setting. It was commissioned by Temple Beth Ami in Rockville, MD

for the dedication of their new temple building. The song has a distinctly Jewish flavor, with its modal harmonies and "lei-lei-lei" interludes. Halfway through a portion of the text is sung in Hebrew before reverting to English.

I composed a draft of *Two William Carlos Williams Songs* in 1997 for soprano and piano. They remained in manuscript form until the summer of 2006, when I was contacted by Judith Carman, music reviewer for *The Journal of Singing*. Judith asked me to honor master teacher Richard Miller with a short cycle, which I did by retrieving and revising these songs. *Full Moon* is a slow waltz in A-B-A form, with harmonies reminiscent of French songs. *Light Hearted William* is fast-paced, and the frequent grace notes and chromaticism in the accompaniment create a spirit of playfulness.

Living in the Body sets the poetry of Joyce Sutphen, who is currently serving as Poet Laureate of Minnesota. The work was commissioned through a Special Projects Grant from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at Georgia Southern University for soprano Sandra McClain and saxophonist Carolyn Bryan.

Joyce Sutphen is one of my favorite poets. I find her poetry to be full of beauty, humor and honesty. Choosing these six poems allowed me to create a cycle about love, memory and resilience as a woman ages. The cycle's title and the title of this album comes from the second song, which progresses from humor to deepest truth. This is the poem I read at my mother's funeral.

Todesfuge ("Death Fugue"), was commissioned by Austrian baritone Wolfgang Holzmair. The poem was written in Romanian in 1944 by Paul Celan, but published in German in 1948. The work is one of Celan's most famous and was one of the first to address the horrors of the Holocaust by using strikingly grim images to create an atmosphere of extreme and haunting power.

The poem's unusual structure borrows from the concept of a musical fugue, with phrases that repeat and recombine. I mirror this musically, with miniature leitmotifs that repeat and recombine – a challenge, in

that the repetition of musical content requires different considerations than the repetition of words.

I composed two settings: one in the original German and one using the English translation by John Felstiner. Slight musical changes accommodate for differences in grammar and the songs can be sung separately or together.

Tis Philosophy was written as a birthday gift for my friend, the great opera director Beth Greenberg. Despite the poem's short length (mirrored by the duration of the music), the words speak volumes.

Five Lovers sets five autobiographical poems by Jāma Jandroković. The poems follow her journey as a newly divorced woman in New York City. The wistful *On Meeting Again* contrasts with the lilting, sexy appeal of *Lovely in His Bones*, which leads to the forward-driving, wishful thinking of *This Morning*. The absurdly repetitive piano accompaniment in *Second Date* – representative of two lovers at a table, trying to reach out to each other but never quite connecting, captures the awkwardness of the situation as well as the boredom. *July, 95 Degrees* uses a sustained pedal and dueling rhythms in the accompaniment to create a blurred sound, which suggests not only water, but the haziness associated with a hot July day.

Dear Future Roommate was commissioned by Lyric Fest of Philadelphia and was my first "letter" song. Tasked with finding a humorous letter to set, I searched in vain, until my frequent collaborator, Dana Gioia, suggested that I consider this letter, which was part of his son Mike's application to Stanford.

Mike's sense of humor, language and evocative descriptions made this letter perfect for song. The rhythms of "My father is a poet" become a leitmotif in the piano, where it is used extensively and in various iterations – thus underscoring the idea that the "trials" of Mike's childhood were a direct result of his father's occupation.

The text allowed me to incorporate some Broadway tunes (from *The King and I* and *Oklahoma*), as well as a famous Yale song, *Goodnight, Poor Harvard*. (Disclosure: I am a Yale.) The song was originally scored for baritone and piano and composed in the summer of 2015. The tenor version was created in 2017 specifically for this recording.

Joyce Sutphen again nails the humorous truths of everyday life in *What You Wanted*. Starting with a bouncing accompaniment, the song proceeds through the different emotional stages of ordering something new.

I Am In Need of Music was composed as a gift for the wonderful collaborative pianist Martin Katz. The gently swaying motif introduced at the start figures prominently and captures the flowing nature of the poem. The duet has been arranged for several different voice types.

In April of 2006, Dr. Michelle Latour of Bluffton University approached me about composing a song cycle utilizing texts by a Mennonite poet. I was delighted to discover the poetry of Jeff Gundy, also on the Bluffton faculty. For *On the Green Trail*, I chose three poems from *Deerflies*, identifying with Jeff's love of nature and awe for the world.

Each song was composed in a creative burst, as I had to carve time out from composing my first opera, *The Scarlet Letter*. *On the Green Trail* was composed in June 2007, and a lyrical vocal line is set above a somewhat driving accompaniment, full of word painting. *Looking at My Hands* was composed in September of 2007, and I felt that the poem's humor provided a good contrast to the opening. The beautiful philosophy expressed in the lines "Who was it/said we must be able to see that things are hopeless/and still fight to make them otherwise?" is a quote from James Baldwin. *Small Night Song from Oneonta* was composed in October of 2007. I adapted a Mennonite hymn *I to the hills will lift my eyes* (from the Mennonite Hymnal, #169) for the accompaniment, drawn to it by the fluidity of the melodic line. The first phrase of the hymn is used throughout the songs as a counterpoint to a lyrical vocal line. This poem also focuses on the beauty of nature and an appreciation for life.

Journey started out as a song with words, but due to a misunderstanding with the poet, permission to set the poem was withdrawn. So I re-envisioned the song as a piece for saxophone and piano. As the poem was about a slave mother's harsh reality traveling on a slave boat from Africa, I felt the timbre of the saxophone perfectly captured the sorrow of the original words.

River of Horses was composed between April and November of 2005 for soprano Jean Del Santo. The cycle reflects on the loving bond between humans and horses, and the healing power that can result from such a love. Due to unforeseen events for both Jean and myself, the work lay dormant for over a decade. Finally, in March of 2017, I unearthed the work, revising it substantially. This recording marks its premiere.

Baudelaire's famous poem, *La Chevelure*, is adapted to serve as an ode to a horse, and the cycle begins exuberantly. A different portrait is painted in *A Blessing* by James Wright – of “two Indian ponies” and their loving natures. A sense of hypnotic calm is created by the piano's repetitive accompaniment under the soprano's soaring lines. *A Birth*, by James Dickey, speaks to the power of imagination and memory. The music flows with changing meters and tempi. *The War God's Horse Song*, based on a traditional Navajo song, is another tribute to the majesty of horses. The music is quick and spirited, with voice and piano joyously tumbling through a multitude of meters. The cycle concludes with *Two Horses Playing in the Orchard* by James Wright. The vocal line is distinguished by the melismatic word settings and a wordless hummed refrain.

From the moment I read *The Act*, I was wowed by Harvey Hix's intriguing narrative about a circus knife-thrower and his wife. In the song, I changed the presentation of the points of view of husband and wife by interweaving them. The music is circus-like and off-kilter, and the song builds to a dramatic close.

When Dr. Carol Kimball approached me about composing a new setting of *The Silver Swan*, I was very hesitant, as I consider the original Gibbons madrigal so perfect. As a result, setting these words was a particularly difficult task, and I wound up destroying many attempts in the process. The song is lyrical and flowing, and the melody glides over the accompaniment the way the swan glides over the water. The swan's own speech is preceded by wordless “aaahs” – as if the swan were warming up to the task of speaking. Carol Kimball commented: “I think the song has – like all good death scenes – its own particular ‘operatic moment,’ when the

emotions of the text are underlined in an especially poignant way.” For Carol, this moment was the high note phrase accompanying “Farewell all joys.” The last low note, held for as long as possible, represents the swan's dying breath. The song has been scored with and without flute *obbligato*, and this is the premiere recording of the version with flute.

John Wood's vivid imagination drew me to *On a Photograph*. In this poem, he imagines the daily life of two people from an old photograph (visible in “Photos” on my website, www.artsongs.com). Due to the poem's long sentence structures, the melodic lines in this song are quite extended. There is also much flexibility in the tempi, to match the conversational tone of the poem. Time seems to explode as the poem builds to its climax with the lovers loving, and the hands of the pianist move over the keyboard, just as a lover's hands might move over a lover. And then, just as after love making, a calmness ensues. The original melody and harmonies return, slightly altered to fit the final words. The song ends with the piano quoting the music to “back when my grandparents were children” – leaving the song's harmonies unresolved and floating in the air.

The Soul Fox was commissioned by James Zakura and Reach Out Kansas, Inc. (ROKI) for soprano Julia Broxholm and pianist Russell Miller. After presenting several poetic possibilities for song cycles to Julia and Russell, we all agreed upon these five poems by my frequent collaborator, poet David Mason. I composed the music between March 3 and April 14, 2013, subsequently revising the score in April 2017. Premiere performances by Julia and Russell took place September 22, 2013 at The University of Kansas School of Music and on October 2, 2013 at Eastman School of Music, with their album released in March of 2017.

Despite a long history of working with Dave, setting these particular poems was a unique experience. Dave had recently undergone a huge upheaval in his life, reflected by these autobiographical poems written between April and November of 2011. The five poems I chose create a narrative that progresses from the pain of lying and the dissolution of Dave's marriage, to his

happiness and subsequent marriage to poet Cally Conan-Davies (aka Christine Allinson/Chrissy Mason). Setting these poems for soprano (as opposed to a male voice) creates an extra layer of interest – and gives the singer an opportunity to truly become another character.

Lullaby was composed in 2000 for saxophonist Gary Louie and pianist Kirsten Taylor, before the birth of their first child. The saxophone's lilting melody floats above the lush harmonies of the piano.

My first grandchild, Edward Milton Rosenblum, was born in August 2015. I composed *Short Songs for Edward* for him around the time of his second birthday. He enjoys them and sings them with gusto.

Dana Gioia and I have collaborated for over a decade. *You Leave Me Bent* is the first in what we hope will become a series of cabaret songs. I found these comic lyrics a challenge to set, so the song emerged slowly. I began in early 2015, completed the song in time for a 2016 premiere, then revised it again in 2017. The song contains several episodes which track the moods of the poem, and the opening music is reused for the ending. I am proud of my insertion of the Jewish phrase “oy-yoy-yoy” into the word “annoying”.

Lori Laitman

I dedicate this music to the memory of my parents, Josephine Propp Laitman (1918–2014) and Milton Abraham Laitman (1916–2016), whose love and guidance shaped my life. – Lori Laitman

Recorded: 12 [CD 2 [2–4](#) [11–14](#)–[18](#)] and 13 [CD 1 [19–21](#)–[25](#), CD2 [6–10](#)–[20](#)–[23](#)] December 2017 at the Scorca Hall, National Opera Center, New York, NY; 19 [CD 1 [11–12](#)–[26](#), CD 2 [5](#)–[12](#)–[19](#)] and 20 [CD 1 [13–18](#)] July, 21 [CD 1 [3–6](#)–[7](#)–[10](#)–[20](#), CD 2 [1](#)–[13](#)] and 22 [CD 1 [1](#)–[27](#), CD 2 [24](#)] June 2017 at the Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church, Silver Spring, MD, USA

Jennifer Check



Photo: Kristin Hoeberrmann

Celebrated by *The New York Times*, Jennifer Check is a regular at the Metropolitan Opera, having performed as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Elena in *Mefistofele*, and in *Otello*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *Norma* and *Così fan tutte*. She has performed with the Opéra national de Montpellier, Houston Grand Opera, the Opéra National de Lorraine à Nancy, and Utah Opera, among others, and performed Verdi's *Requiem* with the Milwaukee, Utah, Virginia, Greensboro and Detroit Symphony Orchestras, the Chicago and Reno Philharmonics, Brevard Music Center and the Berkshire Chorale, The Washington Chorus, the Cathedral Choral Society and at Spoleto Festival USA.

www.jennifercheck.com

Ashley Emerson



Photo: Rebecca Fay

In her 200-plus performances at the Metropolitan Opera, soprano Ashley Emerson has appeared in roles including Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, Giannetta in *L'elisir d'amore*, Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and The Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*. Emerson has also sung leading roles with The Atlanta Opera, The Dallas Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opéra National de Bordeaux, Opera Philadelphia, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, Seattle Opera and Washington National Opera among others.

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Sari Gruber



Photo: Arielle Doneson

Soprano Sari Gruber has given hundreds of performances singing leading operatic roles with New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Firenze, Saito Kinen Festival, Nederlandse Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and concerts with the Boston, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Houston, Indianapolis and Milwaukee Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society, and Boston Baroque. Winner of the 2005 Naumburg Competition, she has presented solo recitals throughout the US including at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the New York Festival of Song.

www.sarigruber.com

Alisa Jordheim



Photo: Fay Fox

Soprano Alisa Jordheim has performed with the Opéra national de Paris, San Diego Opera, Palm Beach Opera, The Atlanta Opera, Florentine Opera, Central City Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Caramoor International Music Festival, Teatro Nuovo, Boston Midsummer Opera, San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, Grant Park Music Festival, Ensemble Pygmalion, the Milwaukee, Baltimore and Madison Symphony Orchestras, New Philharmonic, and the Las Vegas Philharmonic, among others. She created the role of Lola in the world premiere of *Sister Carrie* and appeared on its recording on Naxos (8.669039-40).

www.alisasuzannejordheim.com

Maureen McKay



Photo: Simon Pauly

Soprano Maureen McKay has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, Komische Oper Berlin, Seattle Opera, Opera Colorado, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Bayerische Staatsoper, San Diego Opera, Washington National Opera, Portland Opera, Virginia Opera, The Atlanta Opera, Opera Philadelphia and the New Orleans Opera. She has also performed with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Washington Concert Opera, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and at the Edinburgh International Festival, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Bolshoi Theater, Saito Kinen Festival and Teatro Carlo Felice.

www.maureenmckay.com

Margaret Gawrysiak



Photo: Kristin Hoebemann

Known for her powerful voice and galvanizing performances, mezzo-soprano Margaret Gawrysiak has appeared with the Seattle Opera, The Dallas Opera, Virginia Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Florida Grand Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, among others. In concert she has performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and the American Symphony Orchestra. She can be heard on the world premiere recording of Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter*.

www.maggiemezzo.com

Darryl Taylor



Photo: Sean Kenny

Darryl Taylor's performances are noted for their compelling artistry, with repertoire ranging from Bach to the present day. Recent highlights include the title role in Phillip Glass' *Akhnaten* (Long Beach Opera), *Dido and Aeneas* (Los Angeles Opera); both Pergolesi's and Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* with the Lyra Baroque Orchestra of St. Paul, Minnesota, and performances with Bach Collegium San Diego and The City Choir of Washington and at Carmel Bach Festival. Founder of the African American Art Song Alliance, his recordings for Naxos and Albany Records have received lavish praise.

www.darryltaylor.com

Dominic Armstrong



Photo: Fay Fox

Dominic Armstrong is an avid recitalist and art song collaborator. Recent recitals have included the complete *Shropshire Lad* and selections of Wolf's *Mörke* and Goethe *Lieder* with the Brooklyn Art Song Society, the collected songs of Duparc with soprano Susanna Phillips, as well as performances of Brahms' *Die schöne Magelone*, recitals for the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago, the George London Foundation, and Twickenham Festival. He has participated in the Steans Institute at the Ravinia Festival, and in 2009 was named winner of the Liederkrantz Song Competition. He can be heard on the world premiere recording of Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter*.

www.dominicarmstrong.com

Vale Rideout



Photo: James Farley

Vale Rideout has performed with the San Francisco, Palm Beach, Boston Lyric, Kentucky, Central City, Tulsa and Nashville opera companies. He has also appeared with the New York, New Orleans and Los Angeles Philharmonics, the Seattle, Jacksonville, Nashville, Detroit and Toledo Symphonies, The Washington Chorus and at Trinity Church Wall Street. His discography includes *Elmer Gantry* (8.669032-33), Philip Glass's *Fifth Symphony*, Don Davis's *Rio de sangre*, John Musto's *The Inspector*, Carlisle Floyd's *Wuthering Heights*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, *Carmina Burana* and his debut album of Britten and Finzi songs on the Acis Productions label.

www.valerideout.com

Randall Scarlata



Photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Hailed for his warm, expressive sound, baritone Randall Scarlata is one of the most highly regarded, versatile singers of his generation. He has appeared with top orchestras, opera companies, and on concert stages across the world. Scarlata is co-artistic director of AlpenKammerMusik, and serves on the faculty of Peabody Conservatory and the Tanglewood Music Center. His recording of Schubert's *Winterreise* was honored with a GRAMMY-Award nomination for Best Classical Vocal Solo.

www.randallscarlata.com

Thomas Kraines



Photo: JJ Tiziou www.jjtiziou.net

Thomas Kraines has forged a multifaceted career, equally comfortable with avant-garde improvisation, new music, and traditional chamber music and solo repertoire. Cellist of the Daedalus Quartet, he has also appeared with ensembles such as Music from Copland House, The Transformational Music Ensemble, the East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO), and the Network for New Music. As a composer, his works have been performed by artists such as pianists Awadagin Pratt and Wayman Chin and violinists Corey Cerovsek and Jennifer Frautschi. Kraines has taught at the Peabody Conservatory, the Longy School of Music, Killington Music Festival, Yellow Barn, Princeton University, and currently teaches at the University of Pennsylvania.

www.daedalusquartet.com

Gary Louie



Photo: Britt Olsen-Ecker

Gary Louie is internationally recognized as one of the leading saxophone virtuosos of our time. His career has long been distinguished by his successful efforts to break boundaries and integrate the saxophone and its repertoire into the mainstream of classical music life.

www.garylouie.net

Emily Skala



Photo: Christian Colberg

Emily Skala's musical passion has led to experiences with ten professional orchestras on three continents. Her album of Brahms and Schubert is critically acclaimed. Skala has performed as a soloist with renowned maestros Marin Alsop, Juanjo Mena, David Zinman, Mario Venzago, and has recorded with Christoph Eschenbach, David Zinman, and Marin Alsop since joining the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 1988. At Alsop's invitation she acted as guest principal for Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo (OSESP). Skala has also acted as principal of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. She is currently a member of the faculty of the Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University.

www.bsomusicians.org/public_html/team_member/emily-skala/

Warren Jones



Pianist and conductor Warren Jones was born in Washington DC and currently lives in New York City. He is a long-time member of the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music and is Principal Pianist for Camerata Pacifica. His many recital partners include Tamara Wilson, Stephanie Blythe and Anthony Dean Griffey and he was selected as 'Collaborative Pianist of the Year' by *Musical America*. As a musical jurist he has served on the panel of the Van Cliburn and First China Piano Competition, and the Montreal International Voice Competition. On numerous occasions he has performed at the White House and the Supreme Court of the United States. His discography comprises 31 recordings in a wide variety of styles and periods.

www.warrenjones.com

Andrew Rosenblum



Photo: Aleksandr Karjaka

Andrew Rosenblum enjoys a multifaceted career as a pianist and harpsichordist. Second Prize winner in the harpsichord categories of the Leipzig International Bach Competition and the Prague Spring International Music Competition, he has appeared as a soloist with the Leipziger Barockorchester and Collegium 1704. Rosenblum has performed at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, and has worked as a pianist for the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Lyric Opera of Chicago, The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He serves on the Harpsichord and Piano Faculty of the Heifetz International Music Institute.

www.classicalkeys.com

Kirsten Taylor



Kirsten Taylor has received critical recognition as a leader in the new generation of American women pianists. She began her concert career at the age of eleven when she performed Mozart's *Concerto in D minor* with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Sought after as both a soloist and chamber musician, she has since appeared throughout the US, Canada, Europe and Asia to enthusiastic critical acclaim.

Lori Laitman



Lori Laitman has composed multiple operas and choral works, and hundreds of songs setting texts by classical and contemporary poets, including those who perished in the Holocaust. Her music is widely performed, including at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Benaroya Recital Hall, the Concertgebouw and Wigmore Hall, among many others, and has generated substantial critical acclaim. In May 2016, Opera Colorado presented the world premiere of Laitman's opera *The Scarlet Letter*, with a libretto by David Mason. The 2017 Naxos release of the live recording was highly praised by *Gramophone* magazine, awarded a Critic's Choice by *Opera News* and was named one of the top five albums of 2018 by *Fanfare* magazine. Laitman and Mason also collaborated on *Vedem*, a Holocaust-themed oratorio commissioned and premiered by Music of Remembrance, a new production of which will be mounted by Indianapolis Opera in April 2020. Their collaboration will continue with *Ludlow*, an opera-in-progress which explores the US immigrant experience through the lens of the 1914 Colorado mining town disaster. *The Three Feathers*, Laitman's children's opera with librettist Dana Gioia, is based on a Grimms' fairy tale, and was commissioned by the Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech, where it premiered in October 2014. Seattle Opera commissioned an abridged version of the work, which toured Washington State in 2018. The Hartt School premiered the orchestral abridged version in January 2019.

L'arietta Singapore will present the international premiere in November 2019, and Opera Steamboat will mount a full production in August 2020. *Uncovered*, Laitman's opera-in-progress with librettist Leah Lax, based on her memoir, was a finalist for the 2018 Pellicciotti Opera Prize and is now being commissioned by a consortium of colleges to premiere in the spring of 2021. Laitman continues to receive prestigious commissions, including from the BBC, Opera America, Opera Colorado, Seattle Opera, Grant Park Music Festival, Washington Master Chorale, Virginia Choral Society, Alexandria Choral Society, Music of Remembrance, The Howard Hanson Institute for American Music, The Susan B. Anthony Center for Women's Leadership and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Her works have been featured on Thomas Hampson's *Song of America* radio series and website, and in *The Grove Dictionary of American Music*. Laitman is a *magna cum laude* Yale graduate and received her Master of Music from the Yale School of Music. In May 2018, Laitman was the recipient of the Yale School of Music's Ian Mininberg Alumni Award for Distinguished Service.

www.artsongs.com

**Lori
LAITMAN**
(b. 1955)

Living in the Body

**Includes The Blood Jet, Sable Pride,
Living in the Body, Five Lovers,
On the Green Trail, River of Horses,
The Soul Fox and Short Songs for Edward**

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Sari Gruber, Alisa Jordheim,
Maureen McKay, Soprano**

Margaret Gawrysiak, Mezzo-soprano

Darryl Taylor, Countertenor

Dominic Armstrong, Vale Rideout, Tenor

Randall Scarlata, Baritone

Thomas Kraines, Cello

Gary Louie, Alto saxophone

Emily Skala, Flute

Warren Jones, Lori Laitman,

Andrew Rosenblum, Kirsten Taylor, Piano

A detailed track list and full recording details can be found inside the booklet. The sung texts can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/559872.htm

Producers: Lori Laitman, Beth Greenberg, Andrew Rosenblum

Engineer: Edward John Kelly

Editors: Lori Laitman, Edward John Kelly

Booklet notes: Lori Laitman

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Lori Laitman is one of America's leading vocal composers. These 49 songs were composed between 1997 and 2017 to texts by celebrated poets including Elizabeth Bishop, Paul Celan, Dana Gioia, David Mason, Sylvia Plath, and Joyce Sutphen, on topics that range from the profound emotional impact of the Holocaust, to humorous truths of everyday life, and the comedy and tenderness of childhood. The recording also includes two instrumental pieces for saxophone and piano. This stunning program of world premiere recordings is performed by an all-star cast that includes the composer herself.

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