



VOX 3

a vocal music collective

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VOX 3 PRESENTS A RECITAL OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ART SONG

FREE PERFORMANCE TO INAUGURATE NEW CHICAGO VOCAL COLLECTIVE ART SONG SERIES

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(Chicago, IL) VOX 3, a new Chicago-based vocal music collective, presents a new monthly series of recitals to celebrate the rich heritage of art song around the world. The first performance, a program of contemporary American art song entitled *North and South*, occurs at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on May 16, 2007, and marks one of the only privately sponsored art song series in the Chicago area. The evening includes works by American composers Samuel Barber, John Harbison, Lee Hoiby, and Domenick Argento. Featured vocalists are soprano Dana Campbell, soprano Alexia Kruger, and mezzo-soprano Bernadette Garza. Pianist Dana Brown provides accompaniment for the concert.

“Between the spheres of university and superstar professional singers, there is very little support for art song as a genre,” says VOX 3 Artistic Director Brian von Rueden. “Our new monthly series hopes to rectify that with solid musical performances of diverse repertoire. This concert blends a trio of stunning talented ladies, a dynamic pianist, a jumble of rich poetry, and a spectacularly varied slate of compositions to explore the fascinating field of contemporary American art song.”

American music brims with an intensity and freedom of expression found in the art music of few other traditions. Beginning with composers like Samuel Barber, American vocal music in particular has been recognizable for its expansive lines, spinning lovely, familiar-sounding melodies while pushing harmonic, rhythmic, and expressive boundaries. Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* has achieved an important place in the soprano concert repertory, thrillingly characterizing a summer’s evening in its colorful exposition of James Agee’s poem. Two works by Wisconsin composer John Harbison fuse elements of other musical traditions including gamelan and jazz with Western art music to create two modern masterpieces: *Mirabai Songs* and *North and South*. Complex rhythms and angular melodies punctuate the powerful mystic poetry of Mirabai, while bluesy chords and sweet tunes accompany the wise words of Elizabeth Bishop in these cycles. Lee Hoiby turns an investment company’s treatise on the joys and perils of tropical living into heavenly music in the duet *Bermudas*. Here, Hoiby’s brilliant pianistic composition supports ravishing vocal harmonies. Scattered throughout the evening are selections from Domenick Argento’s hilarious cycle *Miss Manners on Music*. With texts taken from actual columns by the etiquette guru, our singers will advise the audience how to truly appreciate classical and contemporary music. Accomplished pianist Dana Brown joins a trio of spectacular soloists including soprano Dana Campbell, soprano Alexia Kruger, and mezzo-soprano Bernadette Garza as VOX 3 presents its first monthly program of art song.

Canadian soprano **Dana Campbell** was selected by Maestro Chosei Komatsu to perform with his Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra upon her winning the Wilfrid Laurier University Concerto Competition. Since then she has performed with Fabio Mastrangelo and his Virtuosi di Toronto, appeared as a soloist with Jurgen Petrenko’s Toronto Classical Singers and the Talisker Players, and toured central Italy as a featured soloist with Toronto’s Palestrina Chamber Chorus. A winner of Montreal’s Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques competition, Campbell was the second artist to be granted the Fred Gaviller

Memorial Fund award, and was subsequently presented in her debut recital at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto. She made her debut with Toronto Operetta Theatre, singing the title role in the Canadian première of Gonzalo Roig's zarzuela *Cecilia Valdes*. For Chicago's Millennium Chamber Players, she has performed three roles: Mimì in *La Bohème*, Alison in Holst's *The Wandering Scholar* and Female Chorus in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Other operatic roles include Donna Elvira, Countess Almaviva, Sandman/Dewfairly and Marguerite. Most recently Campbell appeared in concert with the AIMS Festival Orchestra in Graz, Austria, under the baton of Edoardo Müller. Soprano **Alexia Kruger** grew up nearby in the southwest suburb of Bolingbrook, and moved on to receive a B.M. in Vocal Performance from Valparaiso University and an M.M. in Vocal Performance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has performed such operatic roles as Giulietta in Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the title role in Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Lola in Douglas Moore's *Gallantry*, and Marianne in Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*. Musical theatre highlights include *Children of Eden* (Eve), *A Little Night Music* (Desiree Armfeldt), *Guys and Dolls* (Adelaide), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey), and *South Pacific* (Nellie Forbush). A member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the Grant Park Chorus, the Lira Ensemble and the Morning Choir at Fourth Presbyterian, Kruger has also been a soloist with such groups as the Illinois Chamber Orchestra, the Polish American Symphony, Grace Community Orchestra, the Valparaiso University Symphony Orchestra, the Whirlwind Project, the Irish-American Center, and the UIUC Concert Choir. Mezzo-soprano **Bernadette Garza** is a Master of Music graduate of Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University where she studied with soprano Judith Haddon. At Roosevelt, she appeared in productions of *The Mikado* and *The Impresario*, and played Dorabella in a co-production with the Chicago Opera Theatre diploma program. Partial roles include Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Annio in *La clemenza di Tito* and Meg Page in *Falstaff*. She has also appeared with Light Opera Works in Evanston and Chicago Opera Theater as chorus member and understudy to Third Secretary in *Nixon in China*.

Pianist **Dana Brown** is the Assistant Professor of Opera and Vocal Coaching at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. He has musically directed *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *L'Amico Fritz*, *Albert Herring*, *the Mikado*, *the Impresario*, *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and the Chicago premiere of Ronald Perera's *The Yellow Wallpaper*. In addition, he is on the coaching staff of the Opera Theater and Music Festival of Lucca, Italy, sponsored by the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and has served on the faculty of Northwestern University. As a pianist, he has been heard at the Ravinia Festival, the Tanglewood Festival and on WFMT Radio, both as a soloist and as a collaborator. A frequent accompanist to many of the finest singers in Chicago, he also has performed frequently with Chicago Opera Theater, L'Opera Piccola and Light Opera Works of Evanston, in addition to many concerts at the Chicago Cultural Center. Recently he has been heard in recital with soprano Michelle Areyzaga on the College Church Concert Series in Wheaton, with soprano Jonita Lattimore at the Ravinia Festival and on WTTW's "Chicago Tonight", and with mezzo-soprano Tracy Watson on the Fazioli Salon Series heard live on WFMT. He holds the Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Piano Chamber Music and Accompanying from the University of Michigan, where he studied with renowned accompanist Martin Katz.

VOX 3 is a collective of artists who educate both performers and audience through varied presentations of vocal music. The group's members perform music, execute administrative functions in the organization and educate the public about vocal music through concerts and quarterly publications of original articles.

Tickets to *North and South* are free, although donations are welcome. The concert begins at 8pm on Wednesday, May 16, 2007. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is located at 1218 West Addison Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60613.