

# EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC



*Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service*

## THE ROCHESTER, NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INCORPORATED SCHOLARSHIP CONCERT

*Young, Gifted, and Black:  
A Search for Excellence*

# NYLA THOMAS, SOPRANO

Sunday, April 23, 2023  
Kilbourn Hall  
3:00 PM



**EASTMAN**  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC  

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UNIVERSITY *of* ROCHESTER

# PROGRAM ORDER

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## WELCOME

Aqua Y. Porter, President  
The Rochester (NY) Chapter of The Links, Inc.

## INTRODUCTION OF ARTIST

Sharon Legette-Sobers, Arts Chair

## **NYLA THOMAS, soprano**

From the studio of Katherine Ciesinski  
with Jenny Choo Kirby, piano

## PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Aqua Y. Porter, President  
Sharon Legette-Sobers, Arts Chair

## REMARKS

Aqua Y. Porter, President

## MEET THE ARTIST

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**Nyla Thomas** is a first-year Master's student studying Vocal Performance and Literature at the Eastman School of Music. She currently studies and coaches with Professor Katherine Ciesinski and Dr. Allison d'Amato. She is from Southaven, Mississippi where she started her journey as a vocalist at her church, Christ Communion Temple COGIC, at a young age. She received her Bachelor of Music Education from Mississippi State University (MSU), where she performed as a soloist with MSU's choral ensembles, MSU Opera Workshop, Black Voices, gospel group Vessels of Worship (V.O.W.), and First Presbyterian Church of Columbus Loft Choir. Along with being a student at Eastman, she serves as a Graduate Assistant for the Music Education Department. She teaches Voice Class to Music Education (instrumental) students and enjoys seeing students' vocal progress. Nyla has recently performed the role of Mabel in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* with the Golden Triangle Theatre Troupe in Columbus, Ms. Nyla was a finalist at the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) in Natchitoches, Louisiana. During the summer of 2021, she participated in Opera Viva!, a week-long study abroad focused on cultivating young artists in opera. While at Opera Viva!, she competed in the organization's first Italian Opera Aria Competition and was awarded second prize in the Collegiate Division. She is an aspiring opera singer who dreams of performing internationally and hopes to one day share the gift of music to children in Mississippi by opening a chain of performing arts schools that will allow them to cultivate their dreams and desires of becoming performing artists.

## PROGRAM

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**Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
III. Tu virginum corona – Andante (1756-1791)  
IV. Alleluja – Molto allegro

**“Prendi, per me sei libero”** from *L’elisir d’amore* Gaetano Donizetti  
(1797-1848)

**Singet nicht in Trauertönen** Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

**Die Bekehrte** Hugo Wolf  
(1860-1903)

**Suleika I, D. 720** Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

### INTERMISSION

**Zdes’ Khorosho, Op. 21, No. 7** Sergei Rachmaninoff  
(1873-1943)

**Oh What a Beautiful City** Negro Spiritual  
arr. Edward Boatner

Kayla Sconiers, mezzo-soprano

**Quatre chansons de jeunesse** Claude Debussy  
I. Pantomime (1862-1918)  
IV. Apparition

**Steal Away (1921)** Negro Spiritual  
arr. Harry Thacker Burleigh

**“Give Me No Body Without Your Soul ”** from William Grant Still  
*Blue Steel* (1934) (1895-1978)

**“Home”** from *The Wiz* (1978) Charlie Smalls  
(1943-1987)

# TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

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## **Tu virginum corona**

*Unknown*

Tu virginum corona,  
Tu nobis pacem dona,  
Tu consolare affectus,  
Unde suspirat cor.

## **You, o crown of virgins**

You, o crown of virgins,  
Grant us peace,  
Console our feelings,  
From which our hearts sigh

## **Prendi, per me sei libero**

*Felice Romani*

Prendi, per me sei libero  
Resta nel suol natio,  
non va'ha destin  
Che non si cangi un di,  
resta!  
Qui, dove tutti t'amano, saggio, amoroso,  
Sempre scontento e mesto no, non sarai così

## **Take it, through me you are free**

Take it, through me you are free  
Stay here in your hometown, there is no destiny  
that is so bitter,  
That it cannot be changed in a day stay here!  
Here, where everyone loves you: wise, loving, and  
honest,  
Always unhappy and sad, no, you will not always  
be this way.

## **Singet nicht in Trauertönen**

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Singet nicht in Trauertönen  
Von der Einsamkeit der Nacht;  
Nein, nie ist, o holde Schönen,  
Zur Geselligkeit gemacht.

Könnt ihr euch des Tages freuen,  
Der nur Freuden unterbricht?  
Er ist gut, sich zu zerstreuen;  
Zu was anderm taugt er nicht.

Aber wenn in näch'tger Stunde  
Süsser Lampe Dämmerung fließt  
Und vom Mund zum nahen Munde  
Scherz und Liebe sich ergießt,

Wenn der rasche, lose Knabe,  
Der sonst wild und feurig eilt,  
Oft bei einer kleinen Gabe  
Unter leichten Spielen weilt,

Wenn die Nachtigall Verliebten  
Liebevoll ein Liedchen singt,  
Das Gefangnen und Betrübten  
Nur wie Ach und Wehe klingt:

Mit wie leichtem Herzensregen  
Horchet ihr der Glocke nicht,  
Die mit zwölf bedächtgen Schlägen  
Ruh und Sicherheit verspricht.

Darum an dem langen Tage  
Merke dir es, liebe Brust:  
Jeder Tag hat seine Plage,  
Und die Nacht hat ihre Lust.

## **Do not sing in mournful tones**

*Trans. Richard Stokes*

Do not sing in mournful tones  
Of the solitude of night;  
No, fair ladies, night is made  
For conviviality.

Can you take delight in day,  
Which only curtails pleasure?  
It may serve as a distraction;  
But is good for nothing else.

But when in hours of darkness  
The sweet lamp's twilight flows,  
And love as well as laughter  
Streams from almost touching lips,

When impulsive, roguish Cupid,  
Used to wild and fiery haste,  
In return for some small gift,  
Often lingers, dallying,

When, full of love, the nightingale  
Sings a little song for lovers,  
Which to the imprisoned and sad  
Seems only to tell of grief and pain:

With what lightly pounding heart  
Do you then listen to the bell,  
That with twelve solemn strokes  
Pledges security and rest!

And so remember this, dear heart,  
Throughout the livelong day:  
Every day has its troubles,  
And every night its joys.

# TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

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## Die Bekehrte

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Bei dem Glanz der Abendröte  
Ging ich still den Wald entlang,  
Damon saß und blies die Flöte,  
Daß es von den Felsen klang,  
So la la!

Und er zog mich zu sich nieder,  
Küßte mich so hold, so süß.  
Und ich sagte: „Blase wieder!“  
Und der gute Junge blies,  
So la la!

Meine Ruh' ist nun verloren,  
Meine Freude floh davon,  
Und ich hör' vor meinen Ohren  
Immer nur den alten Ton,  
So la la, le ralla!

## Suleika I

*Marianne von Willemer*

Was bedeutet die Bewegung?  
Bringt der Ost mir frohe Kunde?  
Seiner Schwingen frische Regung  
Kühlt des Herzens tiefe Wunde.

Kosend spielt er mit dem Staube,  
Jagt ihn auf in leichten Wölkchen,  
Treibt zur sichern Rebenlaube  
Der Insekten frohes Völkchen.

Lindert sanft der Sonne Glühen,  
Kühlt auch mir die heißen Wangen,  
Küsst die Reben noch im Fliehen,  
Die auf Feld und Hügel prangen.

Und mir bringt sein leises Flüstern  
Von dem Freunde tausend Grüße;  
Eh' noch diese Hügel düstern,  
Grüssen mich wohl tausend Küsse.

Und so kannst du weiter ziehen!  
Diene Freunden und Betrüben.  
Dort wo hohe Mauern glühen,  
Dort find' ich bald den Vielgeliebten

Ach, die wahre Herzenskunde,  
Liebeshauch, erfrischt es Leben  
Wird mir nur aus seinem Munde,  
Kann mir nur sein Atem geben.

## Converted

*Trans. Richard Stokes*

In the red glow of sunset  
I wandered quietly through the wood,  
Damon sat and played his flute,  
Making the rocks resound,  
So la la!

And he drew me down to him,  
Kissed me so gently, so sweetly.  
And I said: 'Play once more!'  
And the good lad played,  
So la la!

Now my peace is lost,  
My joy has flown away,  
And ringing in my ears I hear  
Nothing but the old refrain,  
So la la, le ralla!

## Suleika I

*Trans. Richard Wigmore*

What does this stirring portend?  
Is the east wind bringing me joyful tidings?  
The refreshing motion of its wings  
cools the heart's deep wound.

It plays caressingly with the dust,  
throwing it up in light clouds,  
and drives the happy swarm of insects  
to the safety of the vine-leaves.

It gently tempers the burning heat of the sun,  
and cools my hot cheeks;  
even as it flies it kisses the vines  
that adorn the fields and hillsides.

And its soft whispering brings me  
a thousand greetings from my beloved;  
before these hills grow dark  
I shall be greeted by a thousand kisses.

Now you may pass on,  
and serve the happy and the sad;  
there, where high walls glow,  
I shall soon find my dearly beloved.

Ah, the true message of the heart,  
the breath of love, renewed life  
will come to me only from his lips,  
can be given to me only by his breath.

## TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

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### Zdes' khorosho

*Glafira Adol'jonna Galina*

Zdes' khorosho...  
Vzgljani, vdali  
Ognjom gorit reka;  
Cvetnym kovrom luga legli,  
Belejut oblaka.  
Zdes' net ljudej...  
Zdes' tishina...  
Zdes' tol'ko Bog da ja.  
Cvety, da staraja sosna,  
Da ty, mechta moja!

### Pantomime

*Paul Verlaine*

Pierrot, qui n'a rien d'un Clitandre,  
Vide un flacon sans plus attendre,  
Et, pratique, entame un pâté.

Cassandre, au fond de l'avenue,  
Verse une larme méconnue  
Sur son neveu déshérité.

Ce faquin d'Arlequin colombine  
L'enlèvement de Colombine  
Et pirouette quatre fois.

Colombine rêve, surprise  
De sentir un cœur dans la brise  
Et d'entendre en son cœur des voix.

### Apparition

*Stéphane Mallarmé*

La lune s'attristait. Des séraphins en pleurs  
Rêvant, l'archet aux doigts, dans le calme  
des fleurs

Vaporeuses, tiraient de mourantes violes  
De blancs sanglots glissant sur l'azur des  
corolles.

—C'était le jour béni de ton premier baiser.  
Ma songerie aimant à me martyriser

S'enivrait savamment du parfum de tristesse  
Que même sans regret et sans déboire laisse

La cueillaison d'un Rêve au cœur qui l'a  
cueilli.

J'errais donc, l'œil rivé sur le pavé vieilli,

Quand avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans la  
rue  
Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue  
Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté

Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils d'enfant  
gâté

Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains mal  
fermées  
Neiger de blancs bouquets d'étoiles  
parfumées.

### How fair is the spot

*Trans. Philip Ross Bullock*

All is well here...  
Look, in the distance  
The river glows like a fire;  
The meadows are like a colourful carpet,  
And there is the whiteness of clouds.  
There is nobody here.  
All is quiet...  
Here I am alone with God.  
And the flowers, and the old pine,  
And you, my dream...

### Pantomime

*Trans. Richard Stokes*

Pierrot, who is no Clitandre:  
He gulps down a bottle without delay.  
Being practical, starts on a pie.

Cassandre, at the end of the street,  
Cries an unnoticed tear for his disinherited  
nephew.

That rogue of a Harlequin schemes:  
How to abduct Colombine?  
He pirouettes four times.

Columbine dreams, amazed  
Sensing a heart in the breeze; voices in her  
heart.

### Apparition

*Trans. Richard Stokes*

The moon grew sad. Weeping seraphim,  
Dreaming, bows in hand, in the calm of hazy  
flowers

Drew from dying violets  
White sobs that glided over the corollas'  
blue.

— It was the blessed day of your first kiss.  
My dreaming, happy to torment me,

Grew skillfully drunk on the perfumed  
sadness That—without regret or bitter after-taste—

The harvest of a Dream leaves in the  
reaper's heart.

And so I wandered, my eyes fixed on the old  
paving stones,

When with sun-flecked hair, in the street and  
in the evening,  
You appeared laughing before me  
And I thought I glimpsed the fairy with her  
cap of light

Who long ago crossed my lovely spoilt  
child's slumbers,  
Always passing from her half-closed hands  
White bouquets of scented flowers to snow.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### **Prendi, per me sei libero**

Gaetano Donizetti

Donizetti's aria comes from the comic melodrama, *L'elisir d'amore*. Adina is a smart, wealthy landowner who conceals her love for Nemorino. Nemorino is a young villager who is desperately in love with Adina and believes she is beyond his reach. The aria takes place in Adina's home in a small village. Although she has not displayed any love towards Nemorino throughout the opera, this aria finally reveals the unspoken love she has for him. Adina has purchased Nemorino's enlistment papers back from the army. She has realized that she loves him and wants him to stay. She implores him to stay home where everyone loves him.

### **Zdes' Khorosho**

Sergei Rachmaninoff

*Zdes' Khorosho* is the seventh song in Rachmaninoff's *Twelve Romances*. The song is about the relationship between God, man, and nature. The character describes the scenery including water that "glows like a fire," the grass being a "colorful carpet," and the "whiteness of clouds." The dynamics, which never reach forte, give the song a secretive quality. They become even softer when God is mentioned, lowering to pianissimo. The piece concludes with a beautiful piano postlude that continues the pleasant and secretive tone.

### **Pantomime**

Claude Debussy

Poet Paul Verlaine writes and describes the characters from commedia dell'arte: Pierrot who is portrayed as a drunkard buffoon, Cassandre is a man concerned about his disinherited nephew, Harlequin is in love with Columbine and plans to kidnap her, and Columbine is considered a noble, sweet girl. Debussy composes the four musical sections to display the different personalities of the characters.. There is a humorous quality to the music in its angular rhythms, playful accompaniment and melodic lines. Three of the four sections have chaotic music harmonically and rhythmically. The fourth section about the noble damsel, Columbine has a long, lyrical melodic line which displays her dream-like qualities. The darkly comical music of the opening, embellished with the wordless melismas of the voice, concludes the song.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### **Apparition**

Claude Debussy

Debussy effectively captures the ethereal setting of Mallarmé's text with the high registration in the piano line. The music captures the passions of the drunkard buffoon, Pierrot as he reflects on "the sacred day" of his and his beloved's first kiss and her appearance before him in the cobblestone streets. The piano accompaniment is active, painting an intricate picture in tones of Mallarmé's scene.

### **Give Me No Body without Your Soul**

William Grant Still

Neola's aria comes from William Grant Still's *Blue Steel*. Neola falls in love with Blu Steel, an outsider of her village, and she is conflicted with choosing to go against her father, the high priest of the village, or going away with the stranger. Neola is unsure of the intentions of her new lover, and the aria is her attempt to communicate with Blue Steel her love, but she is wanting Blue Steel to confess his love.



# THE ROCHESTER, NY CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INC.

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*Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service*

## **THE LINKS, INCORPORATED** Rochester, New York Chapter

The **Rochester (NY) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated** was established May 5, 1984. The Links, Incorporated is an international not-for-profit corporation established in 1946. It consists of over 17,000 professional women of color in 299 chapters located in 41 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, and the United Kingdom. The late Sarah Scott and Margaret Hawkins founded the organization in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1946. It is one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations of extraordinary women who are committed to enriching, sustaining, and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry.

Every chapter of The Links, Incorporated is constitutionally committed to implementing the national program facets in the area where the chapter is located. In Rochester, The Links organization is proud of its continuing programs in the areas of The Arts, Services to Youth, National Trends and Services, International Trends and Services, and Health and Human Services.

Today's event is the result of a cooperative effort between The Links, Incorporated and the Eastman School of Music. Our purpose is to identify and recognize extraordinary talent and to invite the Rochester community to join us in recognition and celebration.

We have met a need by committing our efforts to network at a national level and by enhancing the career aspirations of the Links artists.

The Rochester Links recital and scholarship award is given each year in April. At this time, we invite the Rochester Community to join us in Kilbourn Hall in our salute to a young, gifted black artist of exceptional talent.

We thank the faculty and staff at the Eastman School of Music for their continuing support and cooperation.

For more information, contact: *Rochester Chapter, The Links, Inc.*  
*P.O. Box 22873*  
*Rochester, New York 14692*  
*Website: [www.linksinc.org](http://www.linksinc.org)*

# THE ROCHESTER, NY CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INC.

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## Young, Gifted, and Black: A Search for Excellence

Scholarship Concert  
at the Eastman School of Music  
University of Rochester

### PREVIOUS LINKS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

<i>2021-2022</i>	Jacob Hunter	<i>2002-2003</i>	Zia Tahirih Nizin
<i>2020-2021</i>	Brianna Garcon	<i>2001-2002</i>	Isrea L. Butler
<i>2019-2020</i>	Travon Walker	<i>2000-2001</i>	Michael Jorgensen
<i>2018-2019</i>	Alexis Peart	<i>1999-2000</i>	Lee Wright
<i>2017-2018</i>	Veena Akama-Makia	<i>1998-1999</i>	Madeline Neely
<i>2016-2017</i>	Adam Sadberry	<i>1997-1998</i>	Gary Roebuck
<i>2015-2016</i>	Clarence Tyrone Allen II	<i>1996-1997</i>	Abram Wilson
<i>2014-2015</i>	Leonard Hayes	<i>1995-1996</i>	Janeen Ceparano
<i>2013-2014</i>	Carmen Johnson Pájaro	<i>1994-1995</i>	Jeffrey Ziegler
<i>2012-2013</i>	Keenan McCoy	<i>1993-1994</i>	Authur Ross, III
<i>2011-2012</i>	Sterling Tyler	<i>1992-1993</i>	Vali Phillips
<i>2010-2011</i>	Alex Gonzalez	<i>1991-1992</i>	Kelly Hall
<i>2009-2010</i>	Nicholas A. Wiggins	<i>1990-1991</i>	Nicole Rose
<i>2008-2009</i>	Jazmine Byas	<i>1990-1991</i>	Frederick Harris
<i>2007-2008</i>	André Washington	<i>1989-1990</i>	Heather Caulton
<i>2006-2007</i>	Richard Williams	<i>1988-1989</i>	Kenneth Law
<i>2005-2006</i>	Jason Holmes	<i>1987-1988</i>	Mellasenah Morris
<i>2004-2005</i>	Cory Hunter	<i>1986-1987</i>	Kimberly Harris
<i>2003-2004</i>	David E. Berry		

# THE ROCHESTER, NY CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INC.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS AT EASTMAN

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Monday, April 24, 2023

### WORLD MUSIC SERIES

#### Gamelan

Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 PM

Free Admission

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

### Collegium Musicum

Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 PM

Free Admission

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

### CHAMBER MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA

#### Duo Piano

Hatch Recital Hall, 2:00 PM

Free Admission

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

### CHAMBER MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA

#### Winds and Piano

Hatch Recital Hall, 6:00 PM

Free Admission

Stay in tune! Scan this code and join Eastman's mailing list to be the first to know about concert listings and special events and offers!



*We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.*

Find information about upcoming Eastman concerts and events at:

[esm.rochester.edu/events](http://esm.rochester.edu/events)

[www.facebook.com/ConcertsAtEastman](https://www.facebook.com/ConcertsAtEastman)

**Kilbourn Hall** fire exits are located along the right and left sides, and at the back of the hall. In the event of an emergency, you will be notified by the stage manager. If notified, please move in a calm and orderly fashion to the nearest exit.

**Please note:** The use of unauthorized photographic and recording equipment is not allowed in this building. We reserve the right to ask anyone disrupting a performance to leave the hall.

**Restrooms** are located on the main floor of Kilbourn Hall. Fully-accessible restrooms are available on the first floor of the Eastman School. Our ushers will be happy to direct you to them.

**Supporting the Eastman School of Music:**

For information on making a gift, please contact the Advancement Office at (585) 274-1040, or visit the Advancement website at [www.esm.rochester.edu/advancement](http://www.esm.rochester.edu/advancement).