

**Sonoma State University**  
**Department of Music**  
**presents**



**Melodies Transformed:**  
**A Vocalist's Passage**

**John Kirk, Baritone, Senior Recital**

From the studio of Mark Kratz, with accompanist Yvonne Wormer

**29th of April, 2024**

**7:30PM Schroeder Hall**

**John Kirk is from the voice studio of Mark Kratz.**

**This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Music.**

**John is accompanied by Yvonne Wormer, collaborative pianist.**

# Melodies Transformed: A Vocalist's Passage

*John Kirk's Senior Recital*

## ***ITALIAN - "It's complicated"***

Sebben, crudele  
Come raggio di sol

Antonio Caldara  
(1670–1736)

## ***GERMAN - Life and Death***

From *Die schöne Müllerin*, op. 25, D 795

Das Wandern  
Die liebe Farbe

Franz Peter Schubert  
(1797–1828)

## ***FRENCH & SPANISH - Love Problems***

Le secret

Gabriel Fauré  
(1845–1924)

“Suena guitarrico mío”  
from *El guitarrico*

Agustin Pérez Soriano  
(1895–1951)

## ***MODERN MUSIC - Music of My Own Making***

Decisions

John Kirk  
(b. 1997)

Lighthouse  
from *CAGES*

C.J. Baran  
(b. 1990)

With audio arranged by, recorded by, and mixed by John Kirk

## ***MUSICAL THEATER - Love of Self and Country***

Love Who You Love  
from *A Man of No Importance*

Stephen Flaherty  
(b. 1960)

Anthem  
from *Chess*

Benny Andersson, Tim Rice, Bjorn Ulvaeus

## Notes, Texts & Translations

### *ITALIAN - "It's complicated"*

Antonio Caldara was fairly successful in his time, not just as a composer. He was *maestro di cappella* in Rome twice, as well as vice-*Kapellmeister* in Vienna. His greatest contribution to musical history though was indeed his development of Italian opera and oratorio. Please enjoy this selection of a mere two songs out of his approximately 3,400 compositions.

#### ***Sebben, crudele***

Canzonetta

*Sebben, crudele* tells of a love unrequited. The singer is lamenting to his love that she is so cruel to make him languish for her. He is certain that through his faithfulness and servitude to her that he will wear her down to make her love him in return. Perhaps a servant is trying to win over the heart of his mistress.

Sebben, Crudele, mi fai languir  
Sempre fedele ti voglio amar.  
Con la lunghezza del mio servir  
La tua fierezza saprò stancar.

Although, cruel one, you make me languish,  
I am always faithful, I want to love you.  
With the length of my servitude  
Your pride I will wear down.

#### ***Come raggio di sol***

Aria

Text by an anonymous poet

This piece is one of contrast and deception. It reminds the listener that although someone may appear happy, they may be sad inside; so too may be the case in love. "A cheerful smile may hide a grieving heart."

Come raggio di sol mite e sereno  
Sovra placidi flutti si riposa,  
Mentre del mare nel profondo seno  
Sta la tempesta ascosa.  
Così riso talor gaio e pacato  
Di contento, di gioia un labbro infiora,  
Mentre nel suo segreto il cor piagato  
S'angoscia e si martora.

Like a ray of sunlight, mild and serene  
Resting peacefully upon the waves,  
While in the depths of the sea  
The raging storm remains hidden.  
So laughter, sometimes gay and peaceful  
With contentment, will bring a smile to the lips,  
While in its secret recesses, the wounded heart  
Suffers and torments itself.

## ***GERMAN - Life & Death***

Although Franz Schubert was not exactly the first composer to write a song cycle, his works are considered to have most firmly established the *Liederkreis* as a genre. Thus, *Die schöne Müllerin* is often regarded as the premiere and pinnacle of song cycle repertoire. The cycle is based on 20 poems by Wilhelm Müller, and the selection I will be performing for you are the first and the sixteenth pieces from this cycle.

### ***Das Wandern***

A hardworking miller attempts to convince his master to give him some time off so that he can wander through nature.

Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust,  
Das Wandern!  
Das muss ein schlechter Müller sein,  
Dem niemals fiel das Wandern ein,  
Das Wandern.

To travel is the miller's joy,  
Traveling!  
That must a poor miller be,  
Who never thought of traveling,  
Traveling!

Vom Wasser haben wir's gelernt,  
Vom Wasser!  
Das hat nicht Rast bei Tag und Nacht,  
Ist stets auf Wanderschaft bedacht,  
Das Wasser.

We have learned it from water,  
From water.  
It does not rest by day or night,  
It is always focused on traveling,  
The water.

Das seh'n wir auch den Rädern ab,  
Den Rädern!  
Die gar nicht gerne stille steh'n,  
Die sich mein Tag nicht müde geh'n,  
Die Räder.

We can also see this in the wheels,  
The wheels!  
Which do not like to stand still,  
Which do not make themselves tired by turning  
day and night, the wheels.

Die Steine selbst, so schwer sie sind,  
Die Steine!  
Sie tanzen mit den muntern Reih'n  
Und wollen gar noch schneller sein,  
Die Steine.

The stones themselves, as heavy as they are,  
The stones!  
They dance together their cheerful ring-dance,  
And want to go even faster,  
The stones.

O Wandern, Wandern, meine Lust,  
O Wandern!  
Herr Meister und Frau Meisterin,  
Lasst mich in Frieden weiterzieh'n,  
Und wandern.

Oh hiking, traveling, my joy,  
Oh traveling!  
Master and mistress,  
Let me move on in peace,  
And travel!

### ***Die liebe Farbe***

A man struggles to cope with the passing of his beloved, and considers joining her in a grave in the green.

In Grün will ich mich kleiden,  
In grüne Tränenweiden;  
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.  
Will suchen einen Zypressenhain,  
Eine Heide von grünen Rosmarein.  
Wohlauf zum fröhlichen Jagen!  
Wohlauf durch Heid' und Hagen!  
Mein Schatz hat's Jagen so gern.  
Das Wild, das ich jage, das ist der Tod;  
Die Heide, die heiß ich die Liebesnot.  
Grabt mir ein Grab' im Wasen,  
Deckt mich mit grünem Rasen;  
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.  
Kein Kreuzlein schwarz, kein Blümlein  
bunt,  
Grün, alles grün so rings und rund!

I will clothe myself in green,  
In green weeping willows;  
My sweetheart likes green so much.  
I will seek out a cypress grove,  
A heath of green rosemary.  
Away then to the joyous hunt!  
Away then through heath and hedge!  
My sweetheart likes the hunt so much.  
The beast that I hunt, it is Death;  
The heath, I call it heartbreak.  
Dig for me a grave in the turf,  
Cover me with green grass;  
My sweetheart likes green so much.  
No little cross black, no colorful little  
flower,  
Green, everything green all around!

### ***FRENCH & SPANISH - Love Problems***

These songs are about people who feel unable to tell the people they love about their feelings.

#### ***Le secret***

A man cannot decide whether he wants to keep his love a secret, or proclaim it to the world.

Je veux que le matin l'ignore  
Le nom que j'ai dit à la nuit,  
Et qu'au vent de l'aube, sans bruit,  
Comme une larme il s'évapore.  
Je veux que le jour le proclame  
L'amour qu'au matin j'ai caché,  
Et sur mon cœur ouvert penché  
Comme un grain d'encens il l'enflamme.  
Je veux que le couchant l'oublie  
Le secret que j'ai dit au jour,  
Et l'emporte avec mon amour,  
Aux plis de sa robe pâlie!

I wish that the morning were unaware  
Of the name that I told to the night;  
And that in the dawn wind, silently,  
Like a tear it would evaporate.  
I want the day to proclaim it,  
The love I have hidden from the morning,  
And leaning over my open heart  
Like a grain of incense sets it on fire.  
I want the sunset to forget it,  
The secret that I told to the day,  
And carry it away with my love  
In the folds of its pale robe!

*Suena guitarrico mío*

Zarzuela

Text by Luís Pascual Frutos (1870-1939) and Manuel Fernández de la Puente (1860?-1955)

A man lacks the confidence to tell a woman about his intense feelings for her, and wishes instead that the sound of his skillful guitar playing could be “accidentally” carried on the wind to confess to her for him.

Suena guitarrico mío, suena guitarrico  
suena,  
Y no te importe que el viento  
Vaya barriendo tus quejas  
Como el viento es para todos  
Puede tropezar con ella.  
Dila si la ves cruzar, dila pero muy bajito,

Dila que estoy medio loco, dila que loco  
perdido.

Dila que la Inquisición,  
Dila que era un gran tormento  
Pero que aquello no es nada  
Para lo que estoy sufriendo.

Dila muchas cosas, dila que la quiero,  
Dila que no vivo, dila que me muero,

Dila que me mire, siquiera un poquito,

Dila que se apiade

De este baturrico.

Suena guitarrico mío.

Dila que mi corazón, dila que lo estoy  
buscando,

Dila que en ella lo puse,

Dila que ónde lo ha echado,

Dila que calme mi amor,

Dila que escuche mis quejas,

Dila que me estoy muriendo,

Y quiero vivir para ella.

Calla guitarrico mio.

Play my little guitar, play, little guitar, play,

and don't let it concern you that the wind  
may go sweeping your complaints  
as the wind is for everybody,  
it can accidentally meet her.

Tell her if you see her cross [the street], but  
tell her very quietly,

Tell her that I am half-crazy, tell her [that I  
am] completely crazy.

Tell her that the Inquisition,  
tell her that it-was a great torment  
but that it is nothing  
compared with my suffering.

Tell her many things, tell her that I love her,  
tell her that I can't live [without her], tell her  
that I [will] die,

tell her that she [should] notice me, even a  
little bit,

tell her to take pity on

this little Aragonese peasant.

Play my little guitar.

Tell her that I am looking for my heart,

tell her that I gave it to her,

tell her that wherever she has put it,

tell her that she-soothes my love.

Tell her that she-may-listen-to my  
complaints,

tell her that I am dying,

and I-want to-live for her.

Be quiet, my little guitar.

## ***MODERN MUSIC - Music of My Own Making***

As a songwriter and music producer myself, my senior recital wouldn't feel truly *me* if it didn't include music which I myself have made.

### ***Decisions***

For anyone who isn't already aware, my passion is writing songs using singing synthesis software. I first discovered that there was such a thing as singing synthesis in roughly 2011, and I first began using the software myself in 2013, shortly after I began using music creation software in general. *Decisions* was originally written for one such singing synthesis voice, however I tried to write it in a way that it could easily be sung by a human as well. I'm very excited to be singing one of my own songs for an audience, which is quite the rare treat given that I usually write songs for non-human singers. The electronic version of this song which features the synthetic vocalist will be published on my YouTube channel sometime after this performance, as I thought it'd be more special to let the version with my own human vocals be what premieres to the world first. The meaning of the piece is made fairly obvious from the lyrics: an individual struggles with decision making in many different aspects of life.

Decisions, decisions  
How am I s'posed to make  
Any decisions, decisions?  
Should I go or should I stay?

I never feel like I can decide  
On anything, although I try.  
Whether it's big or small  
I've gotta think about all of my options.

How could I possibly make up my mind  
When I'm given choices which aren't well-defined?  
And even when I commit,  
How will I know I'm gonna get what I wanted?

What flavor should I get for my birthday cake?  
Do I want an ice cream, or should I get a milkshake?  
Should I keep on working, is it time for a break?  
I know I'm gonna make a mistake!

I worry about the choices I've already made  
I say that I'm happy, but it's just a charade  
All the possibilities, they make me afraid,  
And that's why I don't wanna make  
Any decisions, decisions

What color would I pick if I dyed my hair?  
Should I keep these shoes or should I buy a new pair?  
Trying to choose, it feels like a nightmare,  
Plus not every choice is fair.

If I don't like what I've chosen I'll feel bummed out  
Feigning confidence while I'm full of self-doubt  
All this worrying makes me so stressed out  
It makes me want to shout  
I hate decisions, decisions!

Analysis paralysis  
I miss the olden days, ignorance was bliss  
When all of my choices were inconsequential  
And didn't cause crises existential

Choosing a job, taking out a loan,  
Going from renting to owning a home,  
Who's gonna get my assets when I die  
Are just a little of why  
I never feel like I can decide  
On anything at all in my life.  
Whether it's big or small  
I know I'll stress over all of the options.



## ***Lighthouse***

This song comes from the immersive multimedia theatrical experience CAGES. The creators of CAGES hesitate to call it a musical (and so do I, following suit), because, while it is a musical, it is so much more than JUST a musical, and its creators have been quoted calling it “future theater.” I can’t recommend enough that one go and experience it themselves. Without spoiling too much of the plot of the show, Lighthouse is sung by an older, mentor-type character when the main character is in the midst of a highly emotional journey. This mentor reminds the main character that although he should allow himself to feel sad, he can’t let himself drown in a sea of sadness, and offers to guide the main character back to the metaphorical shore.

All that being said, although I myself didn’t write this selection from CAGES, nor did I have any involvement with any of the original productions (aside from being an audience member twice), this rendition of Lighthouse does not come from the CAGES official soundtrack, but instead was arranged, recorded, and mixed all by me for my final project of MUS 359 - Audio and Recording Production II. This project wouldn’t have been possible without the contributions of many other music students, listed below. Additionally, you will hear a synthetic version of my own voice singing some of the pre-rendered vocal harmonies on this piece.

Ash Rydell on Flute

Ryan Ristine on Trumpet

John Kirk on Tuba

Yvonne Wormer on Piano

Zander Voge on Violin

'Lulu' Weidman on Viola

Leif Dering on String Bass

It’s vulnerable to sail these waters,  
To navigate the heart.  
A war between the muse and author,  
The battle is the art.

If your ship goes astray  
And the storms begin to blow,  
I will be your compass,  
I will guide you home (guide you home).

In the dead of the night,  
When you’re lost and all alone,  
I will be your lighthouse,  
I will guide you home.

There’s trouble in your story.  
It’s written in your blood.  
A martyr sees no glory.  
No life is what we know

## *MUSICAL THEATER - Love of Self and Country*

These two songs are both about people who need reassurance or reminder to not be afraid to hide their love; that they deserve to be proud of their love, whether it's for themselves, for another person, or their home land.

### *Love Who You Love*

This piece is one that I connect very strongly with, despite that I have yet to see the musical that this piece comes from. This song is about reassuring a friend that their sexual identity is valid, and that they shouldn't feel afraid to love whoever they truly love.

I'm not one to lecture.  
How could I dare?  
Someone like me who's been mainly nowhere.  
But in my experience, be as it may,  
You just have to love who you love.

Your common sense tells you "best not begin,"  
But your fool heart cannot help plungin' in,  
And nothing and no one can stand in your way.  
You just have to love who you love.

People can be hard sometimes  
And their words can cut so deep.  
Choose the one you choose, love,  
and don't lose a moment's sleep.  
Who can tell you who to want?  
Who can tell you what you were destined to be?  
Take it from me...

There's no fault in loving,  
No call for shame.  
Everyone's heart does exactly the same.  
And once you believe that, you'll learn how to say:  
"I love who I love who I love."  
Then just go and love who you love.

### *Anthem*

This piece is a monologue of a man reassuring himself of his love for his homeland. In the original context of Chess, the man's homeland is the former Soviet Union; however, when I perform this piece I prefer to think about the countless Native Americans who were forced off their indigenous lands by the growth and development of the United States. In either case, the man bittersweetly recounts his memories from before the time of conflict, and remains resolute in his love for his nation.

No man, no madness,  
Though their sad power may prevail,  
Can possess, conquer my country's heart,  
They rise to fail.

She is eternal, long before nations' lines were drawn.  
When no flags flew, when no armies stood,  
My land was born.

And you ask me why I love her  
Through wars, death and despair.  
She is the constant, we who don't care.  
And you wonder, will I leave her?  
But how?  
I cross over borders but I'm still there now.

How could I leave her?  
Where would I start?  
Let man's petty nations tear themselves apart.  
My land's only borders lie around my heart.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my wonderful pianist, Yvonne Wormer, not only for backing me up, quite literally, but also for our lovely, probably-too-long conversations, and for the time you've given to help me find my musicality for all my pieces.

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I would like to thank my former voice teacher, Christa Durand, for giving me the vital fundamental building blocks on which I could further build my vocal abilities with Mark Kratz.

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I would like to thank another former music instructor of mine, Professor Bill Macpherson, for giving me such incredibly valuable knowledge about the music industry, for encouraging collaboration amongst my peers, and for getting me to use my own voice on a microphone.

## **About John Kirk**

John Kirk has been a musician since the age of 13, when he started playing euphonium in his junior high school band. In high school he played tuba in both symphonic band and marching band. Once he reached community college he decided to shift his musical direction to write and produce electronic music under the alias Biohazard-P. Most of this electronic music features the use of singing synthesis technology. Upon reaching Sonoma State University, John decided to shift his musical direction yet again to use his own voice to sing. John participates in vocal repertory, receives private voice lessons from Mark Kratz, sings in both concert choir and SonoVoce, and also plays tuba in concert band.

Many of John Kirk's original musical works (as well as recordings from this performance, eventually) can be found on his Biohazard-P YouTube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/@BiohazardP>