

Faculty and Guest Artist Recital:

2019-03-25 – Mary Jane Claassen, mezzo-soprano, Christine Rutledge, viola and Jason Sifford, piano



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SCHOOL OF MUSIC



FACULTY/GUEST RECITAL

Mary Jane Claassen, *mezzo-soprano*

Christine Rutledge, *viola*

Jason Sifford, *piano*

Monday, March 25, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Voxman Music Building, Recital Hall

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Christine Rutledge, *viola*
Jason Sifford, *piano*

PROGRAM

- Wie Melodien zieht es mir
Dein blaues Auge
Von ewiger Liebe
Johannes BRAHMS
(1833–1897)
- Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91
Gestille Sehnsucht
Geistliches Wiegenlied
Christine Rutledge, *viola*
- Una voce poco fa from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*
Gioachino ROSSINI
(1792–1868)
- From *Carmen*
L'amour est un oiseau rebelle (Habañera)
Près des remparts de Séville (Seguidilla)
Georges BIZET
(1835–1875)
- Ah! Que j'aime les militaires
from *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*
Jacques OFFENBACH
(1819–1880)
- From *Quatre poèmes, Op.5*
1. *La cloche fêlée*
4. *Sérénade*
Charles Martin LOEFFLER
(1861–1935)
- Chère nuit
Alfred BACHELET
(1864–1944)
Christine Rutledge, *viola*
- The Miller's Son from *A Little Night Music*
Stephen SONDHEIM
(b.1930)
- Stars and the Moon from *Songs for a New World*
Jason Robert BROWN
(b.1970)
- Dividing Day from *The Light in the Piazza*
Adam GUETTEL (b.1964)
- Back to Before from *Ragtime*
Lynn AHRENS (b. 1948)
Stephen FLAHERTY (b. 1960)

BIOGRAPHIES

MARY JANE CLAASSEN, mezzo-soprano, makes her home on the operatic stage, the musical theater stage, oratorio and concert stage, and in worship settings as a mezzo-soprano. She has sung for Opera Memphis in multiple productions and outreach events, most recently singing the role of Zulma in their 2018 production of *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. She has appeared on stage for various other companies, including Theatre Memphis, Opera Omaha, Des Moines Metro Opera, and appeared in Revival Theatre's fall production of *Sunday in the Park with George* in Cedar Rapids, and most recently, in the same musical as a guest artist for the University of Iowa Theatre Department. In May, she will appear as leading lady Marguerite St. Just in *Scarlett Pimpernel* with City Circle Acting Company and, in June, she will perform the role of Kate in *Pirates of Penzance* for Quad Cities Opera.

As a concert soloist, she has sung with Rhodes Mastersingers and the Memphis Symphony in Bach's *B Minor Mass*, and a regional premier of Jennifer Higdon's *Ruminations* featured on a PBS special, "Articulate." A few other major works include Bach's *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, Handel's *Messiah*, and a performance of Haydn's *Harmonie Messe* at Carnegie Hall. She has been teaching voice for over seventeen years, most recently as an adjunct voice professor at the University of Memphis. She is also an accomplished pianist, primarily coaching and accompanying singers.

She received her Bachelor of Music degree in K-12 vocal music education from Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, where she also performed in numerous opera productions and assisted in directing operas under Robert L. Larsen. She was awarded best female musician of her class and graduated *summa cum laude*. Her Master of Music degree in vocal performance was then completed at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Having lived in Omaha, Dallas, and Memphis for the last twelve years, she has returned to her home state and is enjoying all that Iowa City has to offer.

CHRISTINE RUTLEDGE is a violist of varied talents and interests. She began her life-long love of viola in the third grade in the Detroit public schools and had the fortune of studying with several of the world's greatest teachers, including Karen Tuttle and Michael Tree at the Curtis Institute, William Preucil, Sr. at the University of Iowa, and David Holland at the Interlochen Arts Academy.

Rutledge is a devoted and passionate pedagogue. Her teaching career began at the University of Notre Dame, where she was also a member of the critically acclaimed Notre Dame String Trio. Since 1998, she has taught at the University of Iowa, where she is Professor of Viola. Her students have gone on to a variety of successful careers, including principal viola of the North Carolina and Columbus (Ohio) Symphony Orchestras; associate principal viola of the Toledo (Ohio) Symphony Orchestra; and viola sections in orchestras throughout the United States. Many former students hold important teaching positions at schools and universities. Others have gone on to successful careers in law, medicine, music therapy, library sciences, rock bands, and other creative fields.

As a performer, Rutledge has held prominent positions as assistant principal viola of the Louisville Orchestra; the Kentucky Center Chamber Players; the Ceruti Chamber Players; the New Opus Quartet; and the New Opus Trio (flute, viola, and guitar). Her work with the Notre Dame String Trio includes three critically acclaimed CDs: *Hindemith String Trios and Duo for Viola and Cello*; *David Diamond Chamber Music for Strings and Piano* (with Ralph Votapek); and the *Chamber Music of Ethan Haimo*. The trio performed throughout the United States. Their recordings and performances have been critically hailed in publications including: the *New York Times*, *Fanfare*, *American Record Review*, and the *New York Concert Review*.

(Bios. cont. on back)

A decade ago, Rutledge became fascinated with Baroque style and scholarship. This led to studies of Baroque viola with Stanley Ritchie, Robin Stowell, and Jane Starkman. Rutledge has performed on Baroque viola and lectured about Baroque performance style and technique throughout the United States and abroad, including South Africa and the United Kingdom. She is currently completing a new performance edition for viola of Bach's *Six Suites for Solo Cello*. She first published an edition of the suites in 2007, but has since been conducting research involving manuscript comparison of the handwriting of J. S. Bach and Anna Magdalena Bach, which forms the basis of her new edition. Rutledge founded Linnet Press Editions for Viola in 2007, which is devoted to scholarly-based performance editions and transcriptions of Baroque works for viola.

Though passionate about the Baroque repertoire, Rutledge is no stranger to music from all periods, especially contemporary music. She is a frequent collaborator with the world-renowned Center for New Music at the University of Iowa, with whom she has made several commercial recordings, including Jeremy Dale Roberts' *Lines of Life*. Roberts composed *Wieglied* for solo viola for Rutledge, who gave the premiere. She has also commissioned works from important American composers, including: Claude Baker, Zae Munn, CP First, and David Gompper.

Rutledge enjoys a busy schedule of performing and lecturing throughout the world. Her travels have taken her around the United States and to countries including South Africa, Sweden, Poland, Germany, Iceland, England, and Scotland. She has been a devoted member of the executive board of the American Viola Society for a total of twelve years.

JASON SIFFORD, NCTM, is a freelance pianist, teacher, and composer with a wide range of abilities and interests. He maintains a private teaching studio in Iowa City and is in demand as an adjudicator and clinician, lecturing on such diverse topics as Classical performance practice, jazz pedagogy, technical development in young pianists, composition, and music technology. He also appears regularly as a music director and theater musician for area theaters including Hancher Auditorium, the University of Iowa Theater Department, and the City Circle Acting Company of Coralville.

Currently, Dr. Sifford is Immediate Past President of the Iowa Music Teachers Association and serves on the Independent Music Teachers Committee for the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy.

As a composer, Jason is primarily interested in music for young pianists, and his catalogue includes four solo collections, a Baroque suite, and several arrangements of popular and traditional songs. His music is featured in the state syllabi for Iowa and Minnesota, the bulletin for the National Federation of Music Clubs, and the Royal Conservatory of Music (Canada). His music is published by the FJH Music Company and Willis Music, and he serves as a workshop clinician for Willis Music/Hal Leonard. Dr. Sifford holds degrees from Missouri State University, Louisiana State University, and The University of Michigan. (www.jasonsifford.com)

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