

# Wednesday Noon Hours

Chan Centre for the Performing Arts  
November 17, 2021 | 12:00pm

## There Is a Season

Robyn Driedger-Klassen *soprano*, Terence Dawson *piano*

### Programme

#### **Songs of the Seasons**

Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

Text: Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

*Poème d'automne*

*Winter Moon*

*Young Love in Spring*

*Summer Storm*

*Songs of the Seasons*, with text by Langston Hughes (1902-1967) set to music by Black composer Margaret Bonds (1913-1972), is a compendium of styles embracing the African American tradition in music. In *Young Love in Spring* and *Winter Moon*, Bonds' own cultural heritage is subtly evident. The former song has sweeping vocal lines and a power that is rhapsodic while the latter is rather short with static vocal lines. The African American vocal tradition is manifest in *Poème d'Automne* and *Summer Storm*. The *Poème* is dark and bluesy, while the virtuosic vocal lines and jazzy rhythms of *Summer Storm* describe Hughes' vividly emotional thunder, and the wonder of being in love.

#### **At the Statue of Venus**

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

Text: Terrence McNally (b.1938)

*Jake Heggie describes this work as a "musical scene". After collaborating with Terrence McNally on the opera The Walking Dead, these artists again join forces with At the Statue of Venus. While on a blind date, the main (and sole) character searches her emotions which, initially, may be seen as a jumble of hope, uncertainty and self-doubt.*

*"A WOMAN enters. Her name is ROSE. She wears well-cut black slacks, low heels and a crisp blouse with a reasonable cleavage. A modest necklace and earrings complete her look which is best described as open, honest, direct. She stands a moment, looking around and getting her bearings, then looks at her watch and begins to wait." J. Heggie and T. McNally*

*We gratefully acknowledge that we are gathered together for this performance on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.*

## Robyn Driedger-Klassen soprano

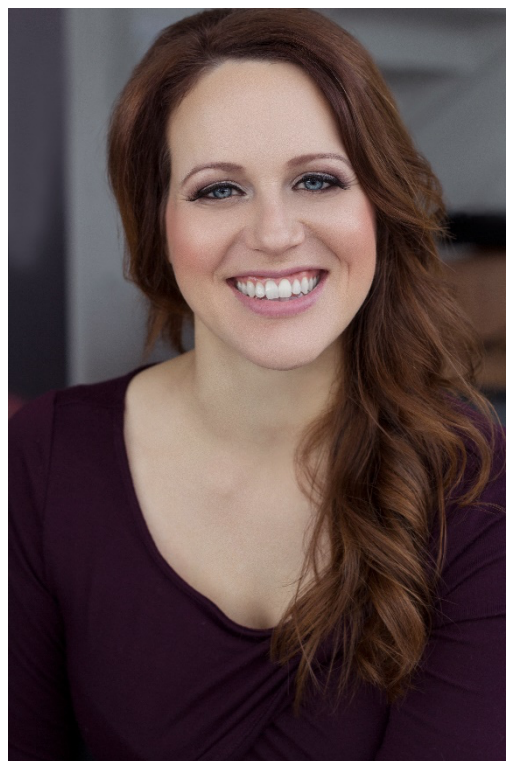
At the age of sixteen, Robyn Driedger-Klassen discovered that singing came more naturally than her attempts on the piano at Bach Preludes and Fugues. She won a few competitions in those early days and after a few years of dilly-dallying in other university programs, she decided that music was the only career for her so, she undertook the voice performance program at UBC with vigour.

Robyn has done lots of performing in lots of places. She loves the costumes and grandeur of opera and adores the personal and intimate side of recitals.

Several years ago, Robyn was hired by the Turning Point Ensemble to do a work for voice and ensemble by R Murray Schafer entitled *Arcana*. Faced with singing Egyptian hieroglyphs, Robyn found herself first at a complete loss, but soon fully enjoyed unravelling the mysteries found on the page. Schafer witnessed her successful performance and since then, Robyn has thrown herself whole-heartedly into performance of contemporary

vocal repertoire. Some of her favourites have been: a fully-staged performance of Libby Larsen's *Try Me Good King*, the final words and letters of the wives of Henry VIII; Kaaija Saariaho's *Lonh*, for soprano and electronics that make lovely bird sounds; Jake Heggie's *At the Statue of Venus*, a woman's inner monologue as she waits for a blind date; Brian Current's *Inventory*, a complicated piece about a woman's relationship with shoes; David McIntyre's *On the Road to Moose Jaw*, a soaring song about a prairie drive; Leslie Uyeda's *White Cat Blues*, a set of songs written for her with poems by Lorna Crozier; and *Perruqueries*, a commissioned set of songs about wigs from the weird and wonderful minds of Jocelyn Morlock and Bill Richardson. This is an exciting time to be working with North American composers and Robyn is thrilled to make their songs come alive. However, she will always make time to sing Mozart, Schubert or Richard Strauss!

Robyn is on the core faculty of the Vancouver International Song Institute, and is also pleasantly surprised to find herself Head of Voice at the Vancouver Academy of Music. Robyn loves books, geraniums, hikes, canoes, cups of tea and a clean house. Robyn lives with her husband and two vocal critics under the age of five. She can bake a wicked loaf of bread and in recent times, has learned a considerable amount about monster trucks, fast cars and dinosaurs.



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## Terence Dawson *piano*

His musicality described as “lucid” (Globe and Mail), his performances as “stunning” (Vancouver Sun), and possessing “trademark elegance and technical flair” (Georgia Straight), pianist Terence Dawson has earned a reputation as one of Vancouver’s most respected musicians. Repeat invitations to give both concerts and master classes from coast to coast across Canada, as well as in the USA, England and Asia affirm his versatility as a performer, dedicated teacher and engaging lecturer.

His career spans that of solo pianist and chamber musician in both small and large ensembles. He has appeared as concerto soloist with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, The National Arts Centre Orchestra, Curio Ensemble, and he is the collaborator of choice for numerous artists and ensembles.

Terence Dawson was principal pianist for the CBC Curio Ensemble and Artistic Director and pianist of Vancouver’s celebrated Masterpiece Chamber Music Series. He has recorded nine commercial discs of chamber repertoire, and is a familiar name to CBC radio audiences. Dr. Dawson has also served as a jury member for several important competitions, including the Canadian Music Competition, the Canadian Federation of Music Teacher’s National Piano Competition, and the Canada Council. He was a founding faculty member of the Vancouver International Song Institute, the VSO Summer Orchestral Institute, and the summer program of Strings and Keys, held in Bergen, Alberta – located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

Following doctoral studies with pianist Jane Coop, Terence Dawson has been a member of the School of Music faculty since 1991, serving for 9 years as Chair of the Keyboard Division and as Division Coordinator for 19 years. He currently teaches piano, chamber music and collaborative studies.



*Thank you for coming!*

*Join us in two weeks on December 1st to see  
VSO Principal Trombonist **Brian Wendel** and pianist **Bogdan Dulu** perform.*

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