

Bard College Conservatory of Music

How We Move Forward

GRADUATE DEGREE RECITAL

Michael Alexander Aoun, *bass-baritone* & Viktória Sarkadi, *piano*

May 7, 2023 at 4 pm

László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building

Sonic Meditation XVI, from *Sonic Meditations*

Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016)

Poor Wayfaring Stranger, from *American Folk Song Set*

Steven Mark Kohn (b. 1957)

Night Song, from *Nightsongs*

H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932)

Bleuet

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Deux Mélodies

La souris

Nuages

*Daughter (2022)

John Paul Labno (b. 1981)

Quilt, from *Everyone Sang*

David Conte (b. 1955)

بكتوب اسمك يا حبيبي Bektoub Ismak Ya Habibi

الأخوين رحباني The Rahbani Brothers

~ INTERMISSION ~

Selections from *Mörike-Lieder*

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Jägerlied

An die Geliebte

Verborgenheit

Elfenlied

Abschied

Kenaston, from *Solo Piano II*

Chilly Gonzales (b. 1972)

Selections from *Cabaret Songs*

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

Waitin

At the Last Lousy Moments of Love

Thus, King of Orf

Love in the Thirties

Blue

George

* *Premiere*

Michael Alexander Aoun is a Lebanese-American bass-baritone whose passion for interdisciplinary and collaborative art inspires their professional work. An all-or-nothing person, Michael views music as a means of exploring one's whole self and creating something entirely unique. They feel strongly that their art reflect their personal values of authenticity and human connection.

Predominantly working in collaboration with other artists only fuels Michael's deep dedication to advocacy and social justice. Their gender expression/identity and neurodivergence (ADHD) have taught them to listen to those who are different and to stay engaged as a global citizen. Through their art, they seek to elevate and facilitate difficult conversations around xenophobia and systemic oppression.

Michael has most recently performed across New York State and abroad in Lebanon. In March, they performed the role of Strephon in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe* with The Orchestra Now (TÖN) and the Bard Conservatory Vocal Arts Program. In January, they traveled to Lebanon where they performed a voice and piano recital titled *An Hour of Song* with pianist collaborator Elias Dagher at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, and at Nabu Museum in El Heri, Lebanon. In December 2022, Michael sang as bass soloist with the Albany Symphony in a holiday performance of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio, Part VI*. Also in December, they co-curated a collaborative recital of music by American composers titled *alone.is.together.is*. Michael made their New York City debut in May 2022, performing in the concert series *Continuing Evolution: Yiddish Folksong Today* at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

Viktória Sarkadi is a Hungarian collaborative pianist and music educator. She has earned her bachelor's and master's degree in performance at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), and upon graduating, she became Collaborative Pianist at The University of Edinburgh's music department. As a chamber musician, she has performed in venues across Europe and the UK, and is regularly appearing in competitions alongside singers and instrumentalists, as well as in special events, notably, a celebratory concert for Classic FM's 25th anniversary in the presence of HRH King Charles, and Members of the Parliament's visit to The RCS. She has worked with the charity organization Live Music Now, aiming to bring live music to people of vulnerable groups, including people in hospitals, hospices, care homes. She is passionate about making music accessible outside of traditional spaces. From 2019, she is co-artistic director and chamber music coach of the Allegro Summer School in Hungary, an annual short course introducing the early experiences of chamber music to children aged 9-18. Viktória is currently in her first year as Collaborative Piano Fellow at Bard Conservatory.

I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to my coaches and professors Kayo, Stephanie, Erika, Liz, and Lucy who made certain I knew I belonged here and that I was given what I needed to succeed. I have learned so much from each of you, not just about music, but how to always bring my whole self and to live generously. Thank you to my voice teacher Richard Cox who has given me the technical tools to say exactly what I need to say. Finally, thank you friends (new and old) and family (birth and chosen).

~ Michael