

An Evening of Song



Morgan Harmison, soprano
Arias, Art Songs & Musical Theatre
Patricia Springer, piano

Saturday, May 20, 2006
7:30 p.m.

Berkeley Springs Presbyterian Church
206 South Mercer St.
Berkeley Springs, WV

**The Morgan County Forum for Arts,
Sciences and Technologies, Inc. (FAST)**

Welcome
Admission is Free
Donations are Tax-Exempt

Morgan Harmison has finished her Sophomore year as a Voice Performance major at Carnegie Mellon University. She credits much of her growing love of the theater to Interlochen Arts Camp, in Michigan, where she spent five summers. During those summers, she played Alicia in *Bring in the Morning*, was the understudy to Patience in *Patience*, was a member of the cast of *Children of Eden*, *Hello Dolly*, *Sweet Charity* and *Babes in Arms*, was Gianetta in *The Gondoliers*, and Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*. Morgan won the 2002 Fine Arts Award for Outstanding Performance in Voice at Interlochen Arts Camp; she also won the Fine Arts Award for Outstanding Performance in Theatre for performing as Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore* at Interlochen in 2004.

Her other major roles include Dolly in *Hello Dolly*, Dorothy in *The Wiz*, the Witch in *Into the Woods*, Anne in *Anne of Green Gables*, Joanna in *Treasure Island*, Purity in *Pure as the Driven Snow*, and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. For the past five years, Morgan won first place at the State and Regional levels of N.A.T.S (National Association of Teachers of Singing) voice competition. In 2004, she won honorable mention in the Presidential A.R.T.S. competition, placing in the top 4% of young performing artists in America.

Last October, Morgan was the featured soloist singing four German lieder with Andrea Springer in a program of the violin sonatas of Johannes Brahms. This February she performed with the Pittsburgh Pops under the direction of Marvin Hamlisch in "A Tribute to Cole Porter," and she was asked to sing in an all Gershwin program in the 2006-2007 season of the Pops.

Morgan studied piano with Patricia Springer for 13 years. She studied voice with Dr. Janette Ogg for six years at Shenandoah University, with Beverley Rinaldi during her summers at Interlochen, and with Douglas Ahlstedt for the past two years at Carnegie Mellon University. Morgan will be attending the Opera Theatre and Music Festival of Lucca this summer.

Program for the Evening

Introduction by Larry Springer
Program notes by Pat Springer

Italian songs (please hold applause until end of set)

In Uomini (<i>Così fan tutte</i>)	Wolfgang Mozart (1756-1791)
Amorosi miei giorni	Alberto Donaudy (1880-1941)
Morire	Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

German songs (please hold applause until end of set)

Er ist's	Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
Morgen	Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
Bitte	Joseph Marx (1882-1964)
Unvergänglichkeit (The Eternal, song cycle)	Erich Korngold (1897-1957)

English songs (please hold applause until end of set)

Love's Philosophy	Roger Quilter (1877-1953)
Will There Really Be a Morning?	Richard Hundley (b. 1931)
I Can Smell the Sea Air	Andre Previn (b. 1930)

Musical Theater (please hold applause until end of set)

This Place is Mine (<i>Phantom</i>)	Maury Yeston (b.193?)
Sunday (<i>Sunday in the Park with George</i>)	Stephen Sondheim (b. 1930)
Gorgeous (<i>The Apple Tree</i>)	Sheldon Harnick (b.1924) & Jerry Bock(b.1928)

Italian songs (please hold applause until end of set)

With *In uomini, in soldati*, Despina advises to enjoy and do what men do: love for convenience and vanity. As in all music by Mozart, clarity of technique is an important element of performance and in this case very important for the voice of Despina. This makes performing Mozart's music extremely difficult for any musician. As a pianist, I find the first reading of Mozart to be very simple. Still, a final performance takes months of practice. This aria begins with a recitative – a recitative is sung but it is literally a recitation setting the stage for what is to come.

Alberto Donaudy's songs are well known for warm, rich harmonic colors and the use of Italian language. Italian has long vowels – the sound by which singing is made. Because of vowel sounds – the tempo of *Amorosi miei giorni* is “rubato” – the bending and stretching of the tempo. What is “robbed” in one place is made up in another.

An art song is poetry set to music. *Morire* is a setting of a poem by Giuseppe Adami with music by Giacomo Puccini. Puccini is well known for his operas, less well known for his art songs. His operatic style was “verismo”, a type of opera depicting life in realistic terms in sometimes sordid and violent ways. This art song has a dark side. There is also a “recitative” at the end of the song, where it gives a review. Puccini was born in Lucca, near where Morgan will study this summer.

German songs (please hold applause until end of set)

German songs offer the most beautiful marriage of vocal line and piano accompaniment in all of song literature. Once again, language greatly influences the style of music. Consonants in a language make a problem in singing a “legato” line. Legato means smoothly connected. However, the long, compound German words make the challenge a bit easier. The trick is to keep the sound moving through the consonants.

The piano part of “*Er ist's*” sets the stage in this song by Hugo Wolf for the poem “*It is Spring!*” by Eduard Morike. In the accompaniment you can hear the rush of melting water and the excitement of the arrival of Spring.

“*Bitte*” has poetry written by Hermann Hesse and music by Joseph Marx. Marx's music is cerebral and understated. The piano and the voice intertwine so that when one leaves off the other continues the musical thought.

“*Morgen*” is from a poem by John Henry Mackay with music by Richard Strauss. The poetry is not of the same depth as the two previous songs but the song is one of the most beautiful in the literature. The piano part could be played as a solo.

"*Unvergänglichkeit*" (Release) has poetry by Eleonore van der Straten and music by Erich Korngold. Korngold is most often associated with creating the modern film score. He is a wonderful modern composer of opera and song who uses "motifs" in a way similar to Wagner. Motifs are fragments within the music that have significance (often psychological) to the total work.

English songs (please hold applause until end of set)

The art songs, "*Love's Philosophy*" and "*Will There Really be a Morning?*" are easier to understand because we speak the language. However, there are sometimes greater hurdles to overcome when singing in one's own language. The obvious one is the hope that everyone will know what you are saying. The diction should be impeccable – even when the poems are often obscure. Additionally, English is, like German, heavy with consonants. Unlike German, the number of one-syllable words in English interrupt the flow of the vowels. In both of these songs, the piano accompaniments have a great responsibility in keeping the legato line.

"*I Can Smell the Sea Air*" is from a work by Andre Previn.

Previn is well known in the world of music as an orchestral conductor, jazz musician, and song-writer. This piece presents a musical dialogue with dramatic content and ends with a recitative.

Musical Theater (please hold applause until end of set)

"*This Place is Mine*" is from "*Phantom*". No, not the one you are thinking of. This "*Phantom*" along with several others was written after the story came into public domain. Andrew Lloyd Weber beat Maury Yeston to the punch and Yeston lost his financial backing. In my opinion, Yeston's show is musically better than the popular one! This is a great song about an opera "diva".

"*Sunday*" is American Musical Theatre, but it is very French. The show is about George Seurat, a neo-Impressionist artist, the ultimate example of artist as scientist. He spent his life studying color theories. His style is called "pointillism", which is detached strokes of color creating subtle changes in form. Sondheim created detached chords depicting a walk in the park with words describing the parasols and colors. We try to approach the song as a painting.

"*Gorgeous*" is a fun song guaranteed to send you home with a beautiful picture of Morgan.

FAST and career development

Most people, when they hear a great artist perform, probably sit back and think how lucky that person was to be born with that enormous talent. Up to a point they are right. However, they would not be correct in thinking that such ability automatically turns into a full-blown Pavarotti or Renee Fleming or Yo-yo Ma. The financial and physical rigors of becoming one of the world's great classical artists can be overwhelming

An aspiring or already successful performing artist never has a day off. They have no weekends free. They have no holidays or long vacations. Each and every day requires hours of intensive study and practice. You know that if you take a day or two off to "kick back", the person across the hall (who may be your toughest competitor in a major competition) will be in a practice room singing and hoping you went to a movie.

Then, once you reach your goal, you must work just as hard to maintain the standard of excellence that got you there. This involves voice coaches and continuous study and practice needed to learn a musical comedy or opera role.

None of this works without immense outlays of money. Highly talented young athletes can pick and choose from a multitude of full scholarships from top colleges. Scholarships for equally talented young musicians pale by comparison. Usually the student still must pay much of his or her tuition and room and board. Attendance at summer workshops, both nationally and internationally, is NOT an option. Workshops are where contacts are made, roles are learned and the person across the hall is spending the summer. The expense involved in keeping this pace for years can become astronomical.

This benefit concert will help fund **FAST's** first Advanced Training award. Future awards will lighten the load for talented Morgan County people who are learning skills that enrich their lives and ours with advances in their chosen area of Art, Science or Technology.

Curious about Curiosity? Join the Morgan County Forum for Arts, Sciences & Technologies (**FAST**).

In 1743, Benjamin Franklin started the country's first forum where people could communicate their **records and interpretations of "all philosophical Experiments that let Light into the Nature of Things, tend to increase the Power of Man over Matter, and multiply the Conveniences or Pleasures of Life."** Then, the study of Nature that we now call science and technology was called "natural philosophy" and the club was called the American Philosophical Society.

Its members included doctors, lawyers, clergymen, merchants, artisans and tradesmen like Franklin. They helped America's economic independence by improving agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation. They also helped prepare Lewis and Clark about scientific, linguistic, and anthropological aspects of their exploration of the Louisiana Territory.

In 2003, the Morgan County Forum for Arts, Sciences and Technologies (**FAST**) began community discussions to help all Morgan County residents find ways to "**let Light into the Nature of Things, tend to increase the Power of Man over Matter, and multiply the Conveniences or Pleasures of Life.**"

This recital is the first of a series of benefits to support advanced training in arts, sciences and technologies for residents of Morgan County. **FAST** is a tax-exempt, non-profit charitable corporation under IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3). It is supported by grants, donations, membership dues, and other income related to its purpose. Its primary mission is informal education to advance the use of arts, sciences and technologies in the daily lives of individuals in Morgan County.

FAST supports community theater projects, radar speed signs, discussions of films and books on nutrition and health, the "*Morgan County Menu*" booklet, the Piano Laboratory, the Hands-On Room at the Morgan County Fair and the Fair Exhibit Contest Awards (information at <http://www.fastlearner.org>) plus a wide range of informal learning experiences, including advanced training.

People can send tax-exempt donations to **FAST**, P.O. Box 674, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411. The **FAST** Advanced Training Fund is making a travel grant that will help fund some of Morgan's travel costs to the Lucca Festival.

Visit the **FAST** website at <http://www.fastlearner.org>
or contact us at wemlands@att.net

Patricia Springer has collaborated with numerous singers in the Baltimore, Washington area. She was coach/accompanist at the Peabody Conservatory Preparatory School and at Morgan State University for over fifteen years. Since moving to Berkeley Springs she has been teaching piano and voice privately and has developed the piano program at Berkeley Springs High School. In 2005, Pat began playing chamber music with the Warm Springs Chamber Ensemble. She was Morgan's first piano and voice teacher making tonight a very special occasion.

Today's future for the Piano Lab

FAST was instrumental in planting the seeds for what is now one of the finest piano labs in West Virginia. In 2004, donors from **FAST** purchased ten small Casio keyboards for a laboratory to facilitate the growing piano program at Berkeley Springs High School. They also helped write a grant proposal to the Clay Foundation.

In June of 2005, The Clay Foundation, Delegate Charles Trump and several friends of music in Berkeley Springs made the dream of a full piano lab a reality.

Since last summer, 80 students have participated in piano classes at the high school and through the Adult Community Education Department. To date, there are 75 requests for classes at the high school for the next academic year. Community Education classes will undoubtedly grow each year. They make a wonderful opportunity to study piano for very low tuition cost.

Scientific evidence supports the benefit of piano lessons in developing certain parts of the brain when studied at a young age. Next season, the lab will be offered to more and more young children.

Future plans include adding computers and music software to encourage budding young composers in Morgan County. The new and future possibilities in musical technology are endless. **FAST** began an exciting adventure for everyone to share.

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and Technologies, Inc. (FAST)**
<http://www.fastlearner.org>