

# WAGNER COLLEGE

## DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

presents

**Kelli Griffin, soprano**  
with  
**Giovanni Longo, piano**

Sunday, May 7, 2023, at 5 p.m.  
Music Performance Center, Campus Hall

*Kelli Griffin is a student of Casandra LaMotte*

### *Program*

Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118 Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, K. 492 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-  
L'ho perduta, me meschina 1791)

I Only Have Eyes for You Harry Warren (1893-1981)

from *Cinq mélodies populaires grecques* Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)  
2. Là-bas, vers l'église  
3. Quel galant m'est comparable  
5. Tout gai!

from *Giant* Michael John LaChiusa (b. 1962)  
He Wanted a Girl

I'm Not Waiting Andrew Lippa (b. 1964)

### *Intermission*

from *Liebesfrühling* Clara Schumann (1819-1896)  
Liebst du um Schönheit

from *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812* Dave Malloy (b. 1976)  
No One Else

Fever

Otis Blackwell (1931–2002)

Eddie Cooley (1933–2020)

from *Sunday in the Park with George*  
Everybody Loves Louis

Stephen Sondheim (1930–2021)

Rainy Night House

Joni Mitchell (b. 1943)

from *Kinky Boots*  
The History of Wrong Guys

Cyndi Lauper (b. 1953)

*Translations*

**Gretchen am Spinnrade**

Meine Ruh' ist hin,  
Mein Herz ist schwer,  
Ich finde sie nimmer  
Und nimmermehr.

Wo ich ihn nicht hab'  
Ist mir das Grab,  
Die ganze Welt  
Ist mir vergällt.

Mein armer Kopf  
Ist mir verrückt  
Mein armer Sinn  
Ist mir zerstückt.

Nach ihm nur schau' ich  
Zum Fenster hinaus,  
Nach ihm nur geh' ich  
Aus dem Haus.

Sein hoher Gang,  
Sein' edle Gestalt,  
Seines Mundes Lächeln,  
Seiner Augen Gewalt.

Und seiner Rede  
Zauberfluss.  
Sein Händedruck,  
Und ach, sein Kuss!

Mein Busen drängt sich  
Nach ihm hin.  
Ach dürft' ich fassen  
Und halten ihn.

Und küssen ihn  
So wie ich wollt'  
An seinen Küssen  
Vergehen sollt'!

**Gretchen at the spinning-wheel**

My peace is gone  
My heart is heavy;  
I will find it never  
And nevermore.

When he's not with me,  
Life's like the grave;  
The whole world  
Is turned to bitterness.

My poor head  
Is crazed,  
My poor mind  
Is shattered.

It's only for him  
I gaze from the window,  
It's only for him  
I leave the house.

His proud bearing,  
His noble form,  
The smile on his lips,  
The power of his eyes,

And the magic flow  
Of his words,  
The clutch of his hand,  
And ah, his kiss!

My bosom forces itself  
After him.  
Ah! I must clasp  
And hold him,

And kiss him  
To my heart's content,  
And in his kisses  
Perish!

## **L'ho perduta, me meschina**

L'ho perduta, me meschina!  
Ah chi sa dove sarà?  
Non la trovo. L'ho perduta.  
Meschinella!  
E mia cugina? E il padron,  
cosa dirà?

## **I have lost it, woe is me!**

I have lost it, woe is me!  
Ah, who knows where it is?  
I can't find it. I have lost it.  
Miserable little me!  
And my cousin, and the boss,  
what will he say?

## **I Only Have Eyes for You**

My love must be a kind of blind love,  
I can't see anyone but you.  
And dear, I wonder if you find love  
An optical illusion too?

Are the stars out tonight?  
I don't know if it's cloudy or bright  
'Cause I only have eyes for you, dear.  
The moon may be high,  
but I can't see a thing in the sky,  
'Cause I only have eyes for you.

How can I live a day without you?  
I need your love to see me through.  
You're not here by my side.  
Maybe millions of people pass by,  
But they all disappear from view,  
And I only have eyes for you.

Are the stars out tonight?  
I don't know if it's cloudy or bright  
'Cause I only have eyes for you, dear.  
The moon may be high,  
but I can't see a thing in the sky,  
'Cause I only have eyes for you.

I don't know if we're in a garden  
Or on a crowded avenue.  
You are here, so am I,  
Maybe millions of people pass by,  
But they all disappear from view,  
And I only have eyes for you.

## **Cinq mélodies populaires grecques**

### **2. Là-bas, vers l'église**

Là-bas, vers l'église,  
Vers l'église Ayio Sidéro,  
L'église, ô Vierge sainte,  
L'église Ayio Costandino,

Se sont réunis,  
Rassemblés en nombre infini,  
Du monde, ô Vierge sainte,  
Du monde tous les plus braves!

### **There by the church**

Down there by the church,  
By the church of Saint Sideros,  
The church, O Holy Virgin,  
The church of Saint Constantine,

Are gathered together,  
buried in infinite numbers,  
The bravest people, O Holy Virgin,  
The bravest people in the world!

### 3. Quel galant m'est comparable

Quel galant m'est comparable,  
D'entre ceux qu'on voit passer?  
Dis, dame Vassiliki?  
Vois, pendus à ma ceinture,  
Pistolets et sabre aigu ...  
Et c'est toi que j'aime!

### 5. Tout gai!

Tout gai! gai, Ha, tout gai!  
Belle jambe, tireli, qui danse;  
Belle jambe, la vaisselle danse,  
Tra la la la la ...

### He Wanted a Girl

He wanted a girl who hates dusty roads.  
He wanted a girl who cries porcelain tears.  
He wanted a girl who'll put locks on the door  
to protect all those gemstones she's got in her  
ears.

But I am a girl who likes dusty roads,  
'Cause I am a girl who enjoys the outside.  
Yeah, I was that girl who could keep up with  
him and would follow him anywhere he chose  
to ride.

And we would ride!  
Barrel-assin' through the gullies,  
Pitching camp and chewing jerky,  
Showing off our scratches and favorite scars.  
Teaching me to hold my bourbon,  
Coaxing me to play my fiddle,  
Making up songs, singing 'em to the stars!

### What gallant can compare with me?

What gallant can compare with me?  
Among those seen passing by?  
Tell me, Mistress Vassiliki?  
See, hanging at my belt,  
Pistols and sharp saber...  
And it's you I love!

### So merry!

So merry, Ah, so merry;  
Lovely leg, piggy bank, that dances  
Lovely leg, the dishes dance,  
Tra la la la la ...

We'd laugh ourselves to sleep.  
That's something I can keep.  
That's something I can keep in my heart.

But hearts don't dress up in fancy new  
clothes,  
And hearts don't wear jewels or put locks on  
the door.  
Hearts are just drums that go beating with  
wanting, and he was the one that my heart  
wanted for.

He wanted a girl who hates dusty roads.  
He found him a girl who hates dusty roads.  
Their hearts was meant to fit.  
So I'll be the fiddle-playing,  
Bourbon-drinking,  
Girl who'll learn to live with it.

## **I'm Not Waiting**

Two years, Three years  
You have had my eye.  
Handsome, friendly,  
Someone else's guy.

I'll see you at a party  
And we will say, "Hello."  
We'll chatter at a party  
And I'll wonder if you know

I'm not waiting for you...  
I'm not waiting for you!

Single? Hardly!  
You can play the field.  
Friends say, "No way!"  
I just clutch my shield.

But I'll see you at a party  
And want to hold you so.  
I'll feel you at a party  
But I quickly whisper "No,"

I'm not waiting for you.  
I'm not waiting for you!

Am I old? Am I dumb?  
Do I wear the wrong kind of jeans?  
Am I flat? Am I slow?  
Do I read the wrong magazines?  
Am I tall? Am I cold?  
Am I all the wrong in-betweens?

I'm not changing. I'm not growing.  
You're not watching! I'm not going!  
We're not loving. You're not seeing  
I'm not waiting!  
I'm not waiting.

Four years, five years  
Finally get that call  
You're free, I'm free  
Free to disentrall  
But we stagger to a party  
As if it were an alibi  
You lose me at a party  
And I stop to wonder why

I've been waiting for you  
I'm not waiting for you

### **Liebst du um Schönheit**

Liebst du um Schönheit,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Sonne,  
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.

Liebst du um Jugend,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe den Frühling,  
Der jung ist jedes Jahr.

Liebst du um Schätze,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Meerfrau,  
Sie hat viel Perlen klar.

Liebst du um Liebe,  
O ja, mich liebe!  
Liebe mich immer,  
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

### **No One Else**

The moon —  
First time I heard your voice  
Moonlight burst into the room  
And I saw your eyes,  
And I saw your smile,  
And the world opened wide,  
And the world was inside of me,  
And I catch my breath, and I laugh and blush,  
and I hear guitars.  
You are so good for me.  
I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you  
I love you.

Oh, the moon.  
Oh, the snow in the moonlight,  
And your childlike eyes,  
And your distant smile.  
I'll never be this happy again.  
You and I

### **If you love for beauty**

If you love for beauty,  
O love not me!  
Love the sun,  
She has golden hair.

If you love for youth,  
O love not me!  
Love the spring  
Which is young each year.

If you love for riches,  
O love not me!  
Love the mermaid  
Who has many shining pearls.

If you love for love,  
Ah yes, love me!  
Love me always,  
I shall love you ever more.

And no one else.

We've done this all before.  
We were angels once.  
Don't you remember?  
Joy and life, inside our souls,  
And nobody knows, just you and me.  
It's our secret.  
This winter sky,  
How can anyone sleep?  
There was never such a night before!  
I feel like putting my arms round my knees  
And squeezing tight as possible  
And flying away like this...

Oh, the moon.  
Oh, the snow in the moonlight,  
And your childlike eyes,  
And your distant smile.

I'll never be this happy again.  
You and I, you and I, you and I  
And no one else.

Maybe he'll come today.  
Maybe he came already  
And he's sitting in the drawing room  
And I simply forgot.

## **Fever**

Never know how much I love you;  
Never know how much I care.  
When you put your arms around me,  
I get a fever that's so hard to bear.  
You give me fever,  
When you kiss me,  
Fever when you hold me tight.  
Fever in the morning',  
fever all through the night.

Sun lights up the day time;  
Moon lights up the night.  
I light up when you call my name,  
And you know I'm gonna treat you right.  
You give me fever,  
When you kiss me,  
Fever when you hold me tight.  
Fever in the morning',  
fever all through the night.

Everybody's got the fever:  
That is somethin' you all know.  
Fever isn't such a new thing;  
Fever started a long ago.

Romeo loved Juliet.  
Juliet, she felt the same.  
When he put his arms around her,  
He said, "Juliet ,baby, you're my flame,  
Thou givest fever  
When we kisseth,  
Fever with thy flaming youth.  
Fever, I'm on fire.  
Fever, yea, I burn forsooth!"

Now you've listened to my story,  
Here's the point that I have made:  
Chicks were born to give you fever,  
Be it Fahrenheit or Centigrade,  
They give you fever  
When we kiss them;  
Fever if you live, you learn.  
Fever till you sizzle;  
What a lovely way to burn!  
What a lovely way to burn.  
Oh, what a lovely way to burn!

## Everybody Loves Louis

Hello, George...  
Where did you go, George?  
I know you're near, George.  
I caught your eyes, George.  
I want your ear, George.  
I've a surprise, George...

Everybody loves Louis,  
Louis' simple and kind.  
Everybody loves Louis,  
Louis' lovable  
Seems we never know, do we,  
Who we're going to find?  
And Louis the baker is not what I had in  
mind.

But... Louis' really an artist  
Louis' cakes are an art.  
Louis isn't the smartest-  
Louis' popular.  
Everybody loves Louis,  
Louis bakes from the heart...

The bread, George.  
I mean the bread, George.  
And then in bed, George...  
I mean he kneads me-  
I mean like dough, George...  
Hello, George...

Louis' always so pleasant,  
Louis' always so fair.  
Louis makes you feel present,  
Louis' generous.  
That's the thing about Louis  
Louis always is "there."  
Louis' thoughts are not hard to follow,  
Louis' art is not hard to swallow.

Not that Louis' perfection-  
That's what makes him ideal.  
Hardly anything worth objection  
Louis drinks a bit, Louis blinks a bit.  
Louis makes a connection,  
That's the thing that you feel...

We lose things.  
And then we choose things.  
And there are Louis's  
And there are Georges-  
Well, Louis's  
And George.  
But George has George,  
And I need someone!  
Louis-

Everybody loves Louis,  
Him as well as his cakes.  
Everybody loves Louis,  
Me included, George.  
Not afraid to be gooey,  
Louis sells what he makes.  
Everybody gets along him.  
That's the trouble, nothing's wrong with him.

Louis has to bake his way,  
George can only bake his...  
Louis it is.

## **Rainy Night House**

It was a rainy night,  
We took a taxi to your mother's home.  
She went to Florida and left you  
With your father's gun, alone.  
Upon her small white bed,  
I fell into a dream.  
You sat up all the night and watched me  
To see who in the world I might be.

I am from the Sunday school.  
I sing soprano in the upstairs choir.  
You are a holy man on the F.M. radio.  
I sat up all the night and watched thee  
To see, who in the world you might be

You called me beautiful.  
You called your mother, she was very tanned.  
So you packed your tent and you went  
To live out in the Arizona sand.  
You are a refugee  
From a wealthy family.  
You gave up all the golden factories  
To see, who in the world you might be.

## History of Wrong Guys

Women have been making bad choices  
since the beginning of time.  
Are you gonna be another one of mine?  
Oh whoah  
I used to think you were from outer space  
Who's that bright-eyed guy in your place?  
You're kind of cute when you're not so shy  
Oh whoah

But I've been here before,  
Have I come back for more?  
Another chapter in the history of wrong guys.  
You used to be so "Ehhhh"  
A limp lackluster bore,  
But now you're changing into something I just  
can't ignore.

Charlie, honestly,  
I've been hurt like this before.  
Is there really more to you  
Than what I always thought?  
How can you surprise me anymore?  
Oh. Oh. Oh.

Don't want to be another star-crossed lover.  
We all know how that ends.  
I'm better off without him,  
We're better off as friends.

But I've been here before  
Have I come back for more?  
Another chapter in the history of wrong guys.

Yesterday no spark  
No heart aching allure  
But today I'm feeling  
Something I just can't ignore.  
Charlie, honestly  
I've been hurt like this before  
Oh. Oh. Oh

The history of wrong guys:  
Chapter one - he's a bum.  
Two - he's not into you  
Three - he's a sleaze.  
Four - loves the girl next door.  
Five - loves the boy next door.  
Six - don't love you no more,  
makes you insecure,  
makes you so unsure,  
Is so immature,  
Loves his mother more, Or...  
... has a girlfriend named Nicola.

Charlie, honestly  
I've been hurt like this before  
I can see there's more to you  
Than what I always thought  
But I won't be burned anymore  
Oh, oh, oh

## *Program Notes*

### **Gretchen am Spinnrade**

“Gretchen am Spinnrade” Op. 2, D. 118 is a lied, or German art song, composed by Franz Schubert (1797-1828) with text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). This piece, composed in 1814, marked one of the initial successes in Schubert’s career at merely 17 years old. The text of “Gretchen am Spinnrade,” or “Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel” derives from Scene 15, Part I of Goethe’s *Faust*, in which Gretchen, a woman bewitched to love Faust, longs for peace from her feelings of desire. The monotony of her activity at the spinning wheel simultaneously grounds her and drives her to feelings of madness as she grows aware of her lunacy. Schubert’s writing for the piano mimics the fast, repetitive rotations of the spinning wheel in the right hand. The song is strophic, including three stanzas that repeat the same melodies but build in intensity as Gretchen spirals into a feverish and amorous craze despite her attempts at reclaiming composure.

### **L’ho perduta, me meschina**

from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, K. 492

*Le Nozze di Figaro*, K. 492, is an opera composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) with a libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1838). Premiering on May 1, 1786 in Vienna, *The Marriage of Figaro* marked the first collaboration between Mozart and da Ponte and Mozart’s eighteenth opera. Based on Pierre Beaumarchais’ play *La folle journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro*, the opera details the comical trials and mishaps of the household of Count Almaviva of Spain. The title character, Figaro, is betrothed to Susanna, a maid who has caught the eye of the hotheaded Count. In the throes of the Countess and Susanna’s scheme to teach the Count a lesson in fidelity, Barbarina, another maid, has been tasked with delivering a message and a pin between the Count and Susanna. In a moment of melodrama, Barbarina misplaces the pin and cries for heaven to help her locate the special pin.

“L’ho perduta, me meschina,” No. 23, opens the fourth act of the opera. Accompanied by the strings and piano, the aria conveys the feeling of anxiety and panic despite being quite slow in tempo. The short phrasing of the expressions and the rests in between each make it sound almost like panting, out of breath from a fanatic search for a small pin. The aria is in da capo form, repeating the opening section at the closing of the song in a more dramatic fashion as Barbarina resigns in failure.

## **I Only Have Eyes for You**

Featured in the 1934 film *Dames*, “I Only Have Eyes for You” was written by the American songwriting duo: composer Harry Warren (1893-1981) and lyricist Al Dubin (1891-1945). Upon its release, the song became a popular jazz standard with several recordings by notable artists such as the Flamingos, a doo-wop group, Art Garfunkel, and Frank Sinatra. “I Only Have Eyes for You” is also featured in some versions of *42nd Street*, a jukebox musical of Warren and Dubin’s works inspired by their 1933 movie of the same name. The musical tells the classic tale of a small town girl, Peggy, who moves to New York to perform, and, in a stroke of luck, gets to make her big break on Broadway replacing the lead diva, Dorothy Brock. When performed in *42nd Street*, “I Only Have Eyes for You” takes place in the latter half of Act I and is sung by Dorothy Brock in a moment of vulnerability. To fund the Broadway musical that will put her name back in lights, Dorothy dates an oil tycoon for whom she has no true affection. Torn between her lover, Pat Dennings, and her chance at renewed stardom, she sings about the all-consuming nature of their relationship.

The song highlights the romantic qualities of 1930s jazz style, with the melody and accompaniment working to express longing and tension. In its original form, the accompaniment combined brass instruments and strings to illustrate the lighthearted and emotional aspects of romance. The jazz harmony expresses moments of tension that resolve to mimic the discovery of emotional clarity.

## **Cinq mélodies populaires grecques**

The song cycle, *Cinq mélodies populaires grecques*, or *Five Popular Greek Songs*, was written by French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) with words by the Greek musicologist Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi (1877-1944). The songs were commissioned in 1904 by Pierre Aubry, a French musicologist, for a lecture on Greek folklore. Ravel and Calvocoressi arranged five short songs for soprano and piano based on the chansons and folksongs of various Greek and French artists. In 1905, Ravel replaced three of the songs from the cycle with newer, longer folk settings. The collection premiered in France in 1906, in Calvocoressi’s recital on Greek popular song, performed by soprano Marguerite Babiàian. Ravel used Greek and French folk melodies and put his own chromatic and modal twist on the underlying accompaniment to create a reimagining of well known songs.

“Là-bas, vers l’église,” or “Down by the church” is the second song in the cycle. The song gently discusses those buried in the church cemetery. Set in the phrygian mode, Ravel evokes the eeriness of reflecting on death and mortality. The piano plays a motif that mimics the sound of church bells to affirm the gloomy setting of the piece.

The third in the set, “Quel galant m'est comparable,” or “What gallant compares with me?” depicts a boastful man attempting to woo a woman by pointing out that he is simply the best suitor in town. To highlight the large proclamation that opens the song, the piano strikes a large chord and the voice sings unaccompanied through the first verse. The second verse repeats the melody of the first, but this time with dance-like rhythms in the piano. The singer expresses their love in a brief tender moment before returning to the dance.

“Tout gai!” ends the song cycle with a positive outburst, declaring the merriment of all. The song is entirely major, maintaining the joy of the text. The melody of the first stanza repeats, the second time sung on “Tra la la...” as the singer is overcome with giddiness.

## **He Wanted a Girl**

from *Giant*

*Giant* is a musical that premiered at the Signature Theatre in Virginia in 2009, with a book by Sybille Pearson and music and lyrics by Michael John LaChiusa. LaChiusa is a Tony nominated musical and opera composer who is famous for his works *Hello Again* (1994) and *The Wild Party* (2000). Based on Edna Ferber’s 1952 novel of the same name, *Giant* explores the impact of the 1920s oil boom in Texas from the perspective of the Benedict family. The show also examines the racism that was heavily present between the Mexican families that lived in Texas before white ranchers took over the land.

“He Wanted a Girl” is sung by Vashti, a former flame of Bick Benedict, in a flashback to when Bick ended their relationship to marry another woman from Virginia. Vashti relinquishes her claim over Bick as she comes to realize that she was always more of friend and follower than she was a leading lady in his eyes. The piece resembles a country-folk tune, prominently featuring the banjo, fiddle, and piccolo. Vashti employs the melody of the verse four times, as she directly compares herself to Bick’s new wife, who is everything she is not. The bridge breaks up this pattern, as she reminisces on the time they spent together, until she ultimately resigns herself to feeling inadequate, acknowledging that she has to let him go.

## **I’m Not Waiting**

“I’m Not Waiting,” written by Andrew Lippa (b. 1964) is a stand-alone, musical theatre style song written specially for Broadway alum, Julia Murney. The song premiered on her 2006 solo album, also titled “I’m Not Waiting.” Lippa is a British-American composer and performer famous for his musicals *The Addams Family* and *Big Fish*. Lippa met Murney in 1996 when she was auditioning for him, and they became close friends. He offered to write a song for her debut album, wanting to give her a piece that highlighted the elegant clarity of her voice and her knack for storytelling.

The song itself tells the story of a woman whose love for an acquaintance remains steadily unrequited. The playful opening piano motif returns each time she sings about her long lasting infatuation with this man, each time ending with the singer assuring herself that she's not waiting for him to notice her. She begins to question why she has not garnered his attention, and finally, after learning he is not who she thought, declares that she is leaving him in the past.

### **Liebst du um Schönheit**

“Liebst du um Schönheit” Op. 37 no.4 is a poem by German poet Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866) set to music by Clara Schumann (1819-1896), a famous German pianist, composer, and teacher. Schumann was a child prodigy who toured Europe as a pianist beginning at age 11. She married fellow composer Robert Schumann (1810-1856) at the age of 21, and they premiered collections of lieder together as spouses, setting romantic poems to music and dedicating them to one another. *Liebesfrühling* is a collection of their Rückert lieder that was published in 1840, the year of their marriage.

Clara Schumann composed this song for voice and piano as an intimate and genuine performance of the poetry. The strophic song repeats the simple melody over four stanzas, the piano underneath growing in volume and complexity with each strophe. The first three strophes advise the listener, or the lover of the singer, that they should not love them for reasons that are materialistic or superficial. The song reaches its climax in the fourth strophe, when the text expresses “If you love for love, Oh yes, love me!” The singer accepts the love of another and avows her faith in true and genuine love.

### **No One Else**

from *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*

*Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812* is a contemporary musical written by Dave Malloy (b. 1976) based on an excerpt of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869). The show's ensemble employs modern humor to narrate the story as the show's principals sing in an older dialect. Musically, this show blends a classical sound with Russian folk tunes and modern pop and rock style vocalisms to illuminate both the context of the work and today's musical storytelling vernacular. *Great Comet* is entirely sung through, using the classical operatic structure of recitative and aria.

“No One Else” takes place in Act I of the show, depicting Natasha, a young visitor to Moscow, as she expresses her love for her betrothed, Andrey, who is away fighting in the war. Unlike many other parts of this musical, “No One Else” hardly uses electronic musical sounds, illuminating Natasha's purity and naivete. The song prominently features the piano, strings, and chimes. The song adds instruments and grows stronger in volume as Natasha dissociates from

reality as her isolation sets in. The song ends in a very quiet place, as Natasha realizes that she may never see Andrey again, and she may never experience love again, but attempts to remain optimistic.

## **Fever**

“Fever” is an American jazz standard co-written by Otis Blackwell (1931–2002) and Eddie Cooley (1933-2020). Blackwell was a Brooklyn-born songwriter who wrote several well known songs, including “Don’t Be Cruel” and “All Shook Up,” made famous by Elvis Presley, and Jerry Lee Lewis’s “Great Balls of Fire.” Blackwell took great inspiration from Blues singers and country music. The song, “Fever,” was written for and recorded by Little Willie John (1937-1968), an American Rhythm and Blues singer, for his first album, *Fever* (1956). Peggy Lee’s version of the song in 1958 brought intense popularity to the song, standardizing her lyric rewrites. Lee herself wrote the “Romeo and Juliet” verse, which brought a clever comedy that the text did not have previously.

The 1956 version of “Fever” was a blues tune, arranged for alto and baritone saxophones, guitar, and Little Willie John’s snapping fingers. Peggy Lee’s rendition features only a bass and drum kit, mimicking the environment of a jazz club. The song modulates keys twice, both times up a half step, indicating a rising metaphorical temperature.

## **Everybody Loves Louis**

from *Sunday in the Park with George*

The musical *Sunday in the Park with George* tells the fictionalized story of how Georges Seurat's painting, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1886), came to be. With music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim (1930–2021) and a book by James Lapine (b. 1949), the show questions the meaning and inspiration of artistic expression in both the 1880s and contemporary times, following both George (Georges Seurat) and his grandson, a struggling artist also named George. Stephen Sondheim is one of the most notable composers of twentieth century musical theatre, creating a large impact on the structure of musicals and the exploration of tonality as a form of communication to an audience.

In Act I of *Sunday in the Park with George*, Dot, George’s estranged former lover, sings “Everybody Loves Louis” about her new life with Louis, the baker. The song revolves around two musical themes, the first a longing, slower theme as Dot longs for the attention of George. The orchestra plays held chords as Dot sings a repeated melody on top. This theme is meant to symbolize George, with whom her relationship was intellectually deep and emotion driven. The secondary theme is much quicker, with a much more active accompaniment. Dot sings about all of Louis attributes, positive and mediocre, as she tries to convince George that she is happy. The

harmony of Louis' theme is unsatisfying to the ear but not unpleasant, representing how Dot appreciates being well-respected in her new relationship, but lacks the passion of her torrent relationship with George. The song concludes as Dot decides to settle for Louis, a man who will make time for her.

### **Rainy Night House**

Joni Mitchell (b. 1943), a Canadian-American poet, songwriter, and singer, is one of the most prominent voices of the 1960s folk circuit due to her unique sound and astounding lyricism. Mitchell crafted an unconventional and non-linear style of storytelling and image painting that exposed an element of authenticity to the listeners, speaking about social reality to the outside world.

“Rainy Night House” was released on Mitchell’s 1970 album, *Ladies of the Canyon*. Written for voice and piano, the song employs a strophic form to create a simplicity and familiarity within its musical elements. The lyrics center around Mitchell's relationship with fellow singer, songwriter, Leonard Cohen, and a specific night they spent together in his childhood home. Mitchell tells three different stories, each combining to relay the complex emotions that accompany self discovery and human curiosity, commenting on the innate desire for human connection.

### **The History of Wrong Guys**

from *Kinky Boots*

*Kinky Boots* is a Broadway musical with a book by Harvey Fierstein and music and lyrics by Cyndi Lauper. As Lauper’s first endeavor to write for the stage, she combines the attention grabbing and catchy melodies of her eighties hits with elements of theatrical and comedic storytelling. The plot of *Kinky Boots* centers around Charlie, a man who inherited his father’s shoe factory, and Lola, a drag queen, who both learn to leave parental transgressions behind and live for themselves. The two team up to save Charlie’s family business by producing a line of heeled boots.

“The History of Wrong Guys” is sung by Lauren, an employee, as she realizes she is falling for her boss. Charlie, however, is not available, causing Lauren to lament always falling for the wrong person. The accompaniment utilizes synthesizers, electric guitars, and drums, creating a very 1980s pop sound.

**Kelli Griffin** (*soprano*) is a senior Vocal Performance major with a minor in Spanish at Wagner College. She performs in the Wagner College Choir under the direction of Thomas Juneau and,

in 2020, performed at Carnegie Hall with the Wagner Treble Choir. In 2022, she participated in the New England Symphonic Ensemble Carnegie Hall performance of Mark Hayes's *Te Deum* and *Serenade to Music* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. With Wagner College Opera Workshop, directed by Vincent Graña, she appeared as Marcellina in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and First Attendant/Spirit in *The Magic Flute*.

On campus, Kelli serves as Music Director for Student Run Musical Theatre and as Treasurer of the Theatre Advisory Board. She is also the percussionist for Spin Cycle, Wagner's Improv Troupe. In November 2022, she made her Main Stage debut as Miss Shingle in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*. She has also appeared in *Smokefall* (Footnote), *Little Women* (Mrs. Laurence, Swing), *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Smee), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), and *Harvey* (Betty/Miss Johnson).