

NEW MOON

Evangelia Leontis, soprano

Megan Roth, mezzo-soprano

JJ Penna, piano



NEW MOON

Evangelia Leontis, soprano | Megan Roth, mezzo-soprano | JJ Penna, piano

The Dream of the Moon *(Evangelia Leontis & JJ Penna)*

Sarah Hutchings

1. The Giggle Fit.....	2:00
2. The Unfolding.....	4:17
3. Bitterness.....	2:06
4. Study Hour.....	1:50
5. The Dream of the Moon.....	4:01

Valentines from Amherst *(Megan Roth & JJ Penna)*

Jodi Goble

6. Come slowly, Eden.....	2:16
7. Wild nights! Wild nights!.....	2:28
8. Doubt me! My dim companion!.....	2:17
9. Within my reach!.....	3:27
10. Nobody knows this little rose.....	2:19
11. My river runs to thee.....	1:25

Four Poems, Op. 16 *(Evangelia Leontis & JJ Penna)*

Marion Bauer

12. Through the Upland Meadows.....	6:09
13. I Love the Night.....	3:02
14. Midsummer Dreams.....	3:52
15. In the Bosom of the Desert.....	5:46

Love after 1950 *(Megan Roth & JJ Penna)*

Libby Larsen

16. Boy's Lips (a blues).....	3:10
17. Blond Men (torch song).....	3:39
18. Big Sister Says, 1967 (a honky-tonk).....	2:49
19. The Empty Song (a tango).....	3:27
20. I Make My Magic (Isadora's dance).....	2:39

Irish Songs

21. The Parting Glass *(Evangelia Leontis & JJ Penna)*

Gilda Lyons

.....	3:47
-------	------





ABOUT CALLIOPE'S CALL

Calliophe's Call, the esteemed art song ensemble based in Boston, was founded in 2014 by mezzo-soprano Megan Roth. Driven by a love of storytelling and musical excellence, Calliophe's Call has enchanted audiences with its captivating performances, showcasing a diverse repertoire that spans centuries and continents. From the intimate melodies of Schubert and Debussy to the innovative compositions of living composers, the ensemble has breathed new life into the art song genre, captivating listeners with their emotive interpretations and exquisite musicianship.

Calliophe's Call believes that art song serves as a powerful medium for addressing current topical themes and social movements through its unique blend of music and poetry. Art song provides a platform for artists to express their perspectives, challenge societal norms, and inspire empathy and understanding among listeners. As a result, it continues to be a vital and relevant art form that resonates deeply with audiences and contributes to the broader discourse on social change and cultural transformation. Their programs explore themes ranging from the human experience to cherished places, current topical themes, and social movements facing our world today, such as climate change, under-represented voices, and war. Their debut album *New Moon* celebrates the work of female American composers who were and are especially active in the genre of art song. Seamlessly blending contemporary music with compositions from the twentieth century, *New Moon* explores the themes of love, sexuality, and gender through the lenses of raw emotions and the power of nature.

Named after Calliophe, the Greek muse of epic poetry and eloquence, the ensemble embodies the spirit of artistic expression and storytelling through music. In addition to their concert engagements, Calliophe's Call is deeply committed to nurturing the next generation of musicians and fostering a deeper appreciation for art song. Through their annual Young Artist Competition, Call for Scores Competition, masterclasses, and residencies, they share their passion for art song with audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

As they commemorate their first decade of music-making, Calliophe's Call remains dedicated to their mission of celebrating the beauty and emotional power of the art song. With their passion, talent, and visionary leadership, they continue to inspire audiences and enrich the cultural fabric of Boston and beyond.

PROGRAM NOTES

New Moon is an album of art songs honoring American women composers. Celebrating these unique voices in the art song repertoire feels like the perfect culmination to 10 years of intentional programming by Calliope's Call with an aim to uplift and promote underrepresented voices.

American composer Sarah Hutchings (b. 1984) writes for multiple genres and mediums representing the new generation of composers breaking into classical and commercial worlds. The text of her piece, *The Dream of the Moon*, is a reimagining of poetry by the Persian lyric poet Hafiz. Throughout the five songs we find themes of love, flirtation, passion, jealousy, and longing. Hutchings' music is full of long lyrical vocal lines that soar above intricate piano writing that includes motifs of undulating waves, unexpected harmonies, and alluring text painting. Hutchings creates a specific mood that is potently felt by the listener during each song, taking us on an enticing journey through the five-song cycle.

Valentines from Amherst, by American composer Jodi Goble (b. 1974), came to us through our inaugural Call for Scores competition in 2016. That first Call for Scores was eye-opening. We were an unknown organization blindly advertising a competition for composers and we received over 40 excellent submissions by female composers. When we heard *Valentines from Amherst*, we knew we were going to perform this set when it could have a special feature. Giving this set a place on our debut album felt like an appropriate way to honor this composer whose settings of New England's beloved Emily Dickinson will captivate you from the first chords of "Come slowly, Eden," to the melancholic "Nobody Knows This Little Rose," to the grand and sweeping pronouncements of "My River Runs to Thee."

Composed in 1924, *Four Poems* is a set of four songs composed by the supremely talented and influential 20th century American composer Marion Bauer, with texts by American poet John Gould Fletcher. Although relatively unknown to modern audiences, in 1947 Bauer became the second woman ever to have a work performed by the New York Philharmonic. In addition to being a composer, she was a music professor, author, music critic, and fierce champion of new music during her time. Fletcher is considered by many literary scholars to be one of the most innovative 20th century poets. His poetry drew from such varied sources as the Imagist movement, French Symbolism, East Asian influences and philosophy, and humanity's relation to nature. The poems in this set are filled with detailed descriptions of the natural world. Bauer sets this riveting poetry expertly, employing gorgeous melodic writing in the voice that is paired with virtuosic piano writing imbued with detailed text painting.

Libby Larsen is touted for being one of "America's most performed living composers." In addition to her prolific catalog of works, she is dedicated to supporting and guiding the next generation of composers. She also has the distinction of being the first female composer that Calliope's Call included on one of our earliest programs. These songs in *Love after 1950* expertly capture all the twinges, excitements, and heartaches of modern love told by some of the world's most distinguished female poets: Rita Dove, Julie Kane, Kathryn Daniels, Liz Lochhead, and Muriel Rukeyser.

Finally, we end with a beloved Irish ballad, "The Parting Glass," arranged for two unaccompanied voices by American composer, Gilda Lyons. This beautiful duet expresses sentiments of farewell, longing, and nostalgia for loved ones departing on a journey. As we conclude the first decade of Calliope's Call, we are reflecting on the incredible journey we've been on these past 10 years and are filled with immense gratitude for you, dear listeners.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Evangelia Leontis, soprano, has performed extensively on the opera, concert and recital stages. She has been seen on the operatic stage in roles including Woglinde in *Das Rheingold*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Lucy in *The Telephone*, and *Le Feu* in *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* with companies including Barn Opera, Tundi Productions, MassOpera, Opera del West, Longwood Opera, Riverside Theater Works, Odyssey Opera, and Opera Boston.

On the concert stage, Dr. Leontis has been the soprano soloist in works by Berlioz, Britten, Handel, Haydn, Fauré, Rossini, Bach, Bizet, Mozart, Grieg, Orff, and Vaughan Williams with ensembles including Albany Pro Musica, the Keene Chorale, Greensboro Opera, the Greensboro Oratorio Society, the Newburyport Choral Society, Newton Choral Society, Clear Lakes Chorale, and Polymnia Choral Society.

She holds the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts from UNC Greensboro, a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Boston University, and a Bachelors of Music degree in vocal performance from the Eastman School of Music. Dr. Leontis currently serves on the voice faculties of Keene State College and Vermont State University. Also an avid proponent of art song, she serves as Administrative Director of Calliope's Call. She lives in beautiful southern Vermont with her husband, twin toddler daughters, and dog. More information can be found at evangelialeontis.com.



Renowned for her compelling characterizations and dynamic vocal range, mezzo-soprano **Megan Roth** captivates audiences across a diverse spectrum of musical genres, from opera and oratorio to art song and chamber music. With a repertoire spanning centuries, Megan is equally at home in both early and contemporary works.

In her recent portrayal of Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* with Boston Midsummer Opera, Megan garnered praise for her captivating stage presence, described as "smoldering" and "bringing the angry coloratura across the footlights with comic menace," earning accolades for her nuanced performance. Her versatility was further showcased in her portrayal of Despina in excerpts of *Così fan tutte*, marking the company's triumphant return to live performances post-pandemic.

Megan's concert engagements have seen her as a soloist in a wide array of masterpieces, including works by Copland, Handel, Bach, Gretchaninov, de Falla, Mozart, Vivaldi, and Durufé. As a chamber musician, she collaborates with esteemed ensembles such as the GRAMMY® nominated Skylark Vocal Ensemble, Yale Choral Artists, and Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble, among others.

Beyond her vocal prowess, Megan is also a skilled violinist, highlighted by her featured solo on the 2021 GRAMMY® nominated album *It's a Long Way* with Skylark Vocal Ensemble. Additionally, she is the visionary founder and artistic director of *Calliope's Call*, a distinguished art song performance group based in New England, committed to presenting innovative programs showcasing both contemporary and traditional composers. For more information, visit www.meganroth.com.





Pianist **JJ Penna** has performed extensively with a variety of eminent singers, including Kathleen Battle, Harolyn Blackwell, Measha Brueggergosman, Denyce Graves, Ying Huang, Susan Narucki, Roberta Peters, Florence Quivar, and Andreas Scholl. He has held fellowships at the Tanglewood Music Center, Banff Center, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, and San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program.

He received his training under Martin Katz, Margo Garrett, and Diane Richardson. Devoted to the teaching of classical song literature, he has been on the faculties of The Juilliard School, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, the Bowdoin Festival, Westminster Choir College, the Renée Fleming Song Studio, and Vancouver International Song Institute.

He currently teaches at the Yale University School of Music, The New England Conservatory, and the Steans Institute of the Ravinia Festival.

TEXTS

The Dream of the Moon (Hafiz)

The Giggle Fit

I had a giggling fit yesterday.
While I lounged away under the glowing blue moon.
It always catches me unawares
Just kiss me.

The Unfolding

Let my whispers transcend your form with silken hands.
Quietly drifting your skin with their promise.
Climbing onto your fevered brow.
Unfolding like the dawn that chills
then warms with its pressing waves.
Unfolding trees to the sky.
The sun holds a verdant and wanton canvas.

Your salutation makes perfect the dawn.
I marvel at the shapes and sounds the glittering chimes of laughter.
Your gaze on the stars as their light dances there on hills.
Elegance sparkles to open, open, open your heart.
You laugh at the night sky gleam.
Your face a reflected universe
Demure yet beaming stars.
My whispers have become blissful tears.
If you do love me
Please, Please always love me
And I will cast a starry sky.

Bitterness

Bitterness will be your downfall.
Insecurity from believing that you know better than me.
Resentment is a special bond with a parasite.
The host is non-compliant.

Bitterness will be your downfall.
Insecurity from believing that you know better than me.
Insecurity will infect the corners of your mind
With discontent suspicion and with white hot malice
Envy leads to desire that will fuck you up.

Study Hour

We study our love tonight.
You should take notes.
We rehearse tomorrow.
And with the warming dawn,
We habituate ardor.
I know these lessons well.
Rehearse. Practice until I can Die!

The Dream of the Moon

Dreams exist to give breath to hope
Though you may feel lost in life.
You will let go now.
The road to happiness is littered with
shimmering diamonds that will break.
A jewel hides its face.

Love will never leave you wanting
Unless, suddenly fooled you sigh new intentions.
Even if your heart is now a dark stone
A dream will bring luminosity.
A trembling sigh that will come.

O fire that remains uncontained.
Dream of stars and memories sifting through light,
To all who are gathered a-song.
Your body, a moon rises each night
And divides your soul into one.

At last the beautiful glow, warming full.
From the arms of midnight deities.
You will let go now.
The jewel hides its face from the moon.

Valentines from Amherst (Emily Dickinson)

Come slowly, Eden!

Come slowly, Eden!
Lips unused to Thee
Bashful, sip they Jasmynes,
As the fainting Bee,
Reaching late his flower,
Round her chamber hums,
Counts his nectars,
Enters, and is lost in balms!

Wild nights! Wild nights!

Wild nights! Wild nights!
Were I with thee,
Wild nights would be
our luxury!

Futile the winds
to a Heart in port,
Down with the Compass,
Down with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden,
Ah, the Seal!
Might I but moor tonight,
In thee!

Doubt me! My Dim Companion!

Doubt me! My Dim Companion!
Why, God would be content
With but a fraction of the Life
Poured thee without a stint,
The whole of me, forever:
What more the Woman can,
Say quick, that I may dower thee
with last Delight I own!

It cannot be my Spirit,
For that was thine, before;
I ceded all of Dust I knew,
What Opulence the more
Had I, a humble Maiden,
Whose farthest of Degree,
Was that she might,
Some distant Heaven,
Dwell timidly with thee!

Within my reach!

Within my reach!
I might have touched!
I might have chanced that way!
Soft sauntered through the village,
Sauntered as soft away!
So unexpected Violets
Within the fields lie low,
Too late for striving fingers
That passed an hour ago.

Nobody knows this little Rose

Nobody knows this little Rose
It might a pilgrim be
Did I not take it from the ways
And lift it up to thee.
Only a Bee will miss it
Only a Butterfly,
Hastening from far journey
On its breast to lie
Only a Bird will wonder
Only a Breeze will sigh
Ah Little Rose - how easy
For such as thee to die!

My River runs to thee

My River runs to thee
Blue Sea! Wilt welcome me?
My River waits reply
Oh Sea, look graciously
I'll fetch thee Brooks
From Spotted nooks -
Say—Sea—Take Me!

Four Poems (John Gould Fletcher)

Through the Upland Meadows

Thro' the upland meadows I go alone,
For I dreamed of someone last night
who is waiting for me.

Flow'r and blossom, tell me,
do you know of her?

Have the rocks hidden her voice?
They are very blue and still.

Long upward road that is leading me,
light-hearted I quit you,
For the long loose ripples of the meadow-grass
Invite me to dance upon them.

Quivering grass,
Daintily poised
for her foot's tripping.

Oh, blown clouds, could I only race up like you,
Oh, the last slopes that are sun-drenched and steep!

Look! The sky!
Across black valleys
Rise blue-white aloft
Jagged un wrinkled mountains,
Ranges of death!

Solitude-silence.

I Love the Night

I love the night, that in long violet shroud
Slowly and lovingly wraps up the day,
Hiding its blurr'd imperfections
In endless tenderness.

I love the day's
high violet cone of light,
With thin haze on the horizon
Like a wavering summer sea.

But most of all
I love midsummer dawn,
When far-off planes of light
ascend and tremble together
Like distant purple waves,
the sound of whose dim breaking is lost
in the wild babel of awaking birds.

Midsummer Dreams

We are drifting slowly, You and I,
To where the clouds are lifting
High fretted towers in the sky:
Palaces of ivory,
Which we look at dreamily.

Over our sail,
Frail white clouds
Drift as slowly
Over the undulant pale blue silk of the water,
As we.

We are racing, swiftly, you and I,
The sun darts one firm track
Through the blue-black of the crinkled water.

Gold spirals splattering, flashing,
The water heaves and curls away at our bough,
A mad fish splashing.

We are rocked together, you and I,
To this undulant movement.
White cloud with blue water blent,
Cloud dipping down to wave its lazy head,
Wave curling under cloud its cloudy blue.

I and you, All alone,
Alone at last.
I hold you fast.

In the Bosom of the Desert

In the bosom of the desert
I will lie at the last.
Not the grey desert of sand,
But the golden desert of great wild grasses,
This shall receive my soul.

In the high plateaus,
The wind will be like a flute-note
calling me day after day.
Short bursts of surf,
The wind climbs up and stops in the grass;
And the golden petals
Brush drowsily over my face.

White butterfly that flutters across my sea of golden blossoms,
Tell me, what are you looking for,
lone white butterfly?
I am seeking for a strange, lonely, white flower;
Its petals are honey-less, and in the wind it is still.

White butterfly, come, fold your wings over my heart;
I am the white blossom, the white, dead blossom,
the white dead blossom for you.

In the golden bosom of the prairie
I am lying at the last,
Like a pool that is stilled.

But they that shared with me my life's adventure,
Who tossed their ducats like dandelions into the sunlight,
I know that somewhere they with songs are building
Golden towers more beautiful than my own.

Love After 1950

Boy's Lips (Rita Dove)

In water-heavy nights behind grandmother's porch
We knelt in the tickling grasses and whispered:
Linda's face hung before us, pale as a pecan,
And it grew wise as she said:

 "A boy's lips are soft,
 As soft as baby's skin."

The air closed over her words.
A firefly whirred near my ear, and in the distance
I could hear the streetlamps ping
Into miniature suns
Against a feathery sky.

Blond Men (Julie Kane)

I think I ought to warn you
that I hate blond men
before you break your heart.

I hate the greenish gold
of their eyebrows and lashes,
how they shatter the sun into rainbows.

And their eyes:
like a long drink of water.
that clear and that cold.

Worse than the eyes
is the blond hair
the shock of a bright blond head
slanting above me like a sunbeam
on the covers of my dark blue bed.

Big Sister Says, 1967 (Kathryn Daniels)

Beauty hurts, big sister says,
yanking a hank of my lanky hair
around black wire-mesh rollers
whose inside bristles prick my scalp
like so many pins. She says I'd better
sleep with them in.

She plucks, tweezes, glides razor
blades over tender armpit skin,
slathers downy legs with stinking
depilatory cream, presses straight lashes
bolt upright with a medieval-looking
padded metal clamp. *Looking good
hurts*, Beryl warns. *It's hard work
when you're not born beautiful.*

The Empty Song (Liz Lochhead)

Today saw the last of my Spanish shampoo.
Lasted an age now that sharing with you,
Such a thing of the past is.
Giant Size. The brand
was always a compromise.
My new one's tailored exactly to my needs.
Nonspill. Protein-rich.
Feeds Body, promises to solve my problem hair
Sweetheart, these days it's hard to care,
But oh oh insomniac moonlight
How unhoneeyed is my middle of the night.
I could see you
far enough. Beyond me
how we'll get back together.
Campsites in Spain, moonlight,
heavy weather.
Today saw the end of my Spanish shampoo,
The end of my third month without you.

I Make My Magic (Muriel Rukeyser)

I make my magic
of forgotten things;
night and nightmare and the midnight wings
of childhood butterflies--
and the darkness, the straining dark
underwater and under sleep --
night and a heartbreak try to keep
myself, until before my eyes
the morning sunlight pours
and I am clear of all the chains
and the magic now that rains
down around me is
a sunlight magic,
I come to a sunlight magic,
Yours.



The Parting Glass (Traditional Scottish Poem)

Oh all the money that e'er I had, I spent it in good company,
And all the harm that e'er I done, alas it was to none but me,
And all I've lost for want of wit to mem'ry now I can't recall;
So fill to me this parting glass, Good night and joy be with you all.

If I had money enough to spend, And leisure time to sit awhile,
There is a fair maid in this town, Who sorely has my heart beguiled,
Her rosy cheeks and ruby lips, I own, she has my heart in thrall,
So fill to me this parting glass, Good night, And joy be with you all.

Oh all the comrades e'er I had, They are sorry for my going away,
And all the sweethearts e'er I had, They'd wished me one more day to stay.
But since it falls unto my lot That I should rise and you should not,
I'll gently rise and I'll softly call, Good-night and joy be with you all.



NEW MOON

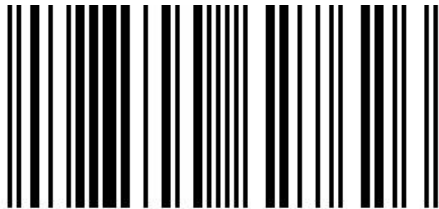
Recorded January 8-11, 2024

First Church in Belmont, MA

Brad Michel, producer and sound engineer

Photography by Joshua McLean

We'd like to extend special thanks to our Board of Directors (Andrea Mattisen-Haskins, Mary Brody Masterson, Ryan Suleiman, and Edward Vogel), our advisors, our volunteers and close friends who have supported Calliope's Call since its inception, and our devoted fans and supporters, all of whom have made this album possible.



198500627626

