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Spring 3-6-2019

## Faculty Recital: Michelle Vought, Soprano Nancy Pounds, Piano

Michelle Vought Soprano  
*Illinois State University*

Nancy Pounds Piano  
*Illinois State University*

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Illinois State University  
College of Fine Arts  
School of Music

Charles W. Bolen Faculty Recital Series

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Michelle Vought, *Soprano*  
Nancy Pounds, *Piano*

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Kemp Recital Hall  
March 6, 2019  
Wednesday Evening  
8:00 p.m.

This is the one hundred and third program of the 2018-2019 season.

## Program

Please silence all electronic devices for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

### Cleopatra and the Plastic Surgeon (2018)

Danielle Fisher  
(born 1986)

lyrics by Nancy Steele Brokaw

Judith Dicker, *oboe*  
Julie Gray, *trombone*

### Kavanaugh (2019)

World Premiere

Martha Horst  
(born 1967)

### The Girl in 14G (2001)

Jeanine Tesori  
(born 1961)

## Program Notes

### Cleopatra & The Plastic Surgeon Text by Nancy Steele Brokaw

Oh, Isis.  
How many reincarnations led me to this park by the Chicago River,  
outside the plastic surgeon's office?

Well, Dr. Shiny of the road "*Michigan Avenue*".  
I commanded you--  
"Bow before me!"-- and you did not.  
Bow, for I am... Cleopatra!  
Queen of Egypt. Ruler of the Nile. Paramour of Antony.  
History's first celebrity.

My beauty is past the ages, Dr. Shiny.  
And yet you hand me this brochure,  
shiny as a beetle in the sun.  
Filled with paintings of the like-faced,  
wheat-haired women of a certain age.

Age. Age! Age?  
"Age cannot wither nor custom stale her infinite variety."  
That's what William Shakespeare said of me, Dr. Shiny,  
You, with your apothecary walls, cluttered by non-parchment  
paper proclamations, sealed with tiny ribbons-- but no wax?

In Egypt, they built pyramids at my command, defying gravity.  
Yet gravity defies me now.  
My chin tumbles-- my neck wanders--  
The lines on my face grow deep as tributaries to the Delta.

Oh Isis! Who draws the hieroglyphics in this strange land?  
*Graffiti*, they say!  
I had a lady-in-waiting with that name. *Graffiti*.  
Will graffiti depict me as a stick figure?  
Or will I go forth, spray-can painted to look round and sagging  
on freight cars that circle this orb?  
You say you could rebuild me with your gleaming scalpel,  
Dr. Shiny.

Undergird my breasts.  
Tuck point my chin.  
Re-almond-ize my eyes?

I, who sat on a burnished throne with purple sails and silver oars.  
You could make a monument to myself-- with stiff unbending face.  
No infinite variety there to etch.  
What matters of alchemy allows you to plump elixirs  
into my withering?  
Yet think yourself not so clever, Dr. Shiny.  
We were masters, too, at mummifying, at age defying.  
But we waited for death.

Oh Antony, my love!  
You could not hold your visible shape.  
Yet here I am on the Chicago River,  
my shape growing more visible by the moment.

What matter, I am all forgotten.  
The bright day is doone,  
and we are for dark.

Come, friend, come, poisonous asp,  
bear me away from this Chicago River.  
Where the sirens are not muses, but real sounds!  
And the black and white cars make lines along the roads.

See, asp? A crowd gathers, with their shiny rectangular talking  
devices, sending my image over the bending world.

Gather round.  
Well, clearly, you are gathered round.  
The death of a Queen is something remarkable  
beneath the visiting moon  
that now rises above the Chicago River.  
Mark you-- with your clicks and swipes!  
Be it known that we, the greatest, are mirthought.

*(The asp bites her cheek.)*  
That was as a lover's pinch.  
Bite again!  
*(The asp does not.)*  
What? Are you out? Empty?

Perhaps I should have used you less on Dr. Shiny.  
The nature of bad news infects the teller.  
I've always said that.  
How he gasped before he died, and his ladies-in-waiting,  
all waiting the death knell of this land,  
"Dial 911."

Oh asp, you disappoint. And yet. And yet...  
See how my skin plumps around your bite.  
How it swells and blooms like a desert flower after rain.  
Oh beautiful Queen Cleopatra, the years erase on thy cheek.  
Dear asp, 't were enough! I am fire and air.  
My other elements, I give to baser life.

As sweet as balm. As soft as air. I go.  
Look after my snake.

This time. Farewell.



## About the Artists. . . .

**Nancy Steele Brokaw** is playwright/journalist/writer. Brokaw has had eight innovative children's operas produced by Prairie Fire Theatre/Illinois Wesleyan University. Among them are *The Sky Is Falling And I'm Not Even Kidding!* and *Baobab*. They have toured to tens of thousands of Illinois school children over the last eight years and *How to Be a Super Hero* is set to be performed around 50 times this May. For the last seven years, the University of California-Merced has presented her operas to thousands of grade school students and will again in 2019.

Brokaw is again writing Theatre for Young Audience and green shows for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival for the 2019 season. In 2018 those include *Double, Double*, a story of Shakespeare and Abraham Lincoln, *Henry 1-2-3-4-5*, and *Will in the Bachelorette*. In May 2014, Fort Worth Opera Frontiers showcased *Fertile Ground*, an original opera for which she wrote the libretto, a collaboration with composer David Vayo. Opera Plus called it "thorough and complex" and said it "immediately portrayed a gripping story." Brokaw is a longtime contributor to *The Pantagraph* and *Illinois Wesleyan Magazine*, as well as the author of the award-winning middle-grade novel *Leaving Emma*, (Clarion/Houghton Mifflin).

The McLean County Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission hired Brokaw to co-author *Lincoln's in Town!* For 17 years, Brokaw has been resident playwright for Holiday Spectacular, Inc., writing three or more shows a year.

She wrote grade school adaptations of Mozart's *Magic Flute* and *Marriage of Figaro*, and Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* for Illinois Wesleyan University productions. She serves on the Board of Directors for IWU's Associates Board, the Promise Council (removing barriers to learning in local schools), the Stevenson Lecture Series and is a member of Normal Rotary Club. She was recently a drummer for an older adult rock band. Brokaw lives in Bloomington, Illinois.

**Danielle Fisher** grew up in Normal, IL where she received dual degrees in Music Education and Composition/Theory from Illinois State University. She recently graduated with an M.M. in Music Education at the University of North Texas where she performed with the Wind Symphony, Graduate Woodwind Quintet, and served as principal horn in the Concert Orchestra.

Before beginning her band directing career in Alvarado, Texas, Fisher managed a large studio of trumpet and horn students in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex. As a conductor, she has served as a guest clinician throughout the country working specifically on brass pedagogy and has spent much of her time conducting and composing for young musicians. Fisher is the staff arranger and one of the founding members of the Maryland Wind Festival, a non-profit educational and

performance outreach program. This organization brings together an international ensemble of performers who perform as the Maryland Chamber Winds for an annual concert series in Frederick and Hagerstown, Maryland. In her spare time, she enjoys an active freelancing career as well as gardening with her two cats.

**Ms. Horst** is a composer who has devoted herself to the performance, creation, and instruction of classical music. Her music has also been performed by musicians and groups such as the Fromm Players, CUBE, Earplay, Alea III, Empyrean Ensemble, Chicago Composers Orchestra, Susan Narucki, Left Coast Ensemble, and Dal Niente. Ms. Horst has won the Copland Award, the Symphony Number One Commissioning Prize, the Alea III International Composition Competition, and the Rebecca Clarke International Composition Competition for her work *Cloister Songs*, based on 18th century utopian poetry. She has held fellowships at the MacDowell Colony, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Wellesley Composers Conference, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and Dartington International School in the UK. Her works have been recorded by the Avanti Trio, Durward Ensemble, Symphony Number One Wind Ensemble, and pianist Lara Downes. While living in San Francisco, Ms. Horst served as a professional member of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. She served as a soloist in the PBS presentation of *weeney Todd* starring Neil Patrick Harris and Patti LuPone. Dr. Horst currently teaches composition and theory at Illinois State University and has also taught at the University of California, Davis, East Carolina University, and San Francisco State University. She has studied with Ross Bauer, David Rakowski, Mario Davidovsky, Milton Babbitt, and Donald Martino and has degrees in composition from the University of California, Davis and Stanford University.

Charismatic soprano **Michelle Vought** has earned an excellent reputation worldwide and brings a fresh sincerity and captivating vitality to every performance from opera house to concert hall to cabaret. Most recently, Dr. Vought performed the world premiere of a mini opera written for her entitled *Cleopatra and the Plastic Surgeon* by composer and ISU alumna Danielle Fisher in Denton, Texas.

Known for her innovative programming, Dr. Vought returned to Provincetown, Massachusetts for the renowned Women's Week Festival for her 12th year to do multiple performances of her unique one woman show "Madame Monsieur." Over the summer of 2018, she played the role of Barbara Bartlett in No Man's Land Production Company's (Los Angeles) film *Christmas Crashers*.

The soprano has travelled globally to give master classes and perform recitals and concerts. In the Czech Republic, she sang the role of Ophelia in the world premiere opera recording of *Hamlet* with the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra.



She was one of three American singers in the recording studio for this work by Austrian composer Nancy Van de Vate which was released on the Vienna Modern Masters label. In the spring of 2014, Vought performed in Vienna, Austria and in Brno, Czech Republic where she was featured as guest artist at Masaryk University presenting a recital and a master class in tandem with renowned composer Nancy Van de Vate. A specialist in contemporary music, Dr. Vought has travelled as a lecturer, recording artist and recitalist in the repertoire at the national and international levels performing abroad in Brazil, Ireland, Italy, Newfoundland and Toronto, Canada, Slovakia, Austria, and the Czech Republic.

The soprano has done ten recordings for Vienna Modern Masters, an international recording company which exclusively features contemporary music. In 2005, Vought produced and performed in ISU's world premiere of the one act opera entitled *Where the Cross Is Made* by Austrian composer Nancy Van de Vate, the recording which was released in 2006 on the Vienna Modern Masters label.

A two-time cancer survivor, the soprano has raised over \$10,500 for the American Cancer Society, as well as for individual cancer patients through her benefit concerts in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, New York, and Massachusetts. She is Full Professor of Voice at Illinois State University and continues to maintain a very active performing career.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### TUESDAY, MARCH 19

Charles W Bolen Faculty Recital Series: Elizabeth Thompson, *soprano* and Tuyen Tonnu, *piano*

7:30 pm

Kemp

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

Faculty Jazz

8:00 pm

Kemp

### FRIDAY, MARCH 22

Graduate Recital: Hayley Koch, *soprano*

7:30 pm

Kemp

Symphonic Winds Concert

8:00 pm

CPA

### SATURDAY, MARCH 23

Senior Recital: Dominic Regner, *baritone*

7:30 pm

Kemp

Junior Recital: Emanuel Guzman, *trombone*

5:00 pm

Kemp

Senior Recital: AJ Nemsick, *bass trombone*

6:00 pm

Kemp

Graduate Recital: Andrew Maya, *piano*

8:30 pm

Kemp

### TUESDAY, MARCH 26

Performance Convocation Hour

11:00 am

CPA

Student performance

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

Wind Symphony Concert

8:00 pm

CPA