



College of Music  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ARTIST-FACULTY AND GUEST RECITAL SERIES  
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# Harlan Jennings, Anne Nispel and Elden Little

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Letters from the Front: From Rome to Dachau

Harlan Jennings, baritone  
Anne Nispel, soprano  
Elden Little, piano

Sunday, September 28, 2025  
Fairchild Theatre, 3:00 p.m.

# PROGRAM

Als Luise die Briefe ihres ungetreuen Liebhabers verbrannte, K. 520 Abendempfindung, K. 523	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
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Air de Caron from <i>Alceste</i>	Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687)
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Chanson du départ de Don Quichotte Chanson de la mort de Don Quichotte	Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)
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Asie from <i>Shéhérazade</i>	Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
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## **\*\*World War II letters of Lt. Benjamin Nispel**

The Lads in Their Hundreds	George Butterworth (1885-1916)
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American Anthem	Gene Scheer (b. 1958)
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With Rue My Heart is Laden	Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
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Look Down, Fair Moon	Charles Naginski (1909-1940)
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Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier	Irish Folk Song
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When I am Laid in Earth from <i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
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When Johnny Comes Marching Home	Patrick Gilmore (1829-1892)
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*\*\*During this portion of the concert, please hold applause until the conclusion.*

## ARTIST-FACULTY BIOS

A member of the MSU voice faculty since 1973, baritone **Harlan Jennings** has appeared with the Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, St. Louis Municipal Opera, Starlight Theatre of Kansas City, Opera Grand Rapids, Toledo Opera, Lyric Opera of Northern Michigan, Opera Company of Mid-Michigan, Northern Indiana Opera Association, and Kalamazoo Symphony Opera.

His forty-odd roles in opera and musical theatre include Sharpless in *Madame Butterfly*, Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Belcore in *The Elixir of Love*, Mack-the-Knife in *Threepenny Opera*, and the title role in *Don Giovanni*. Jennings has sung with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, the Midland Symphony, the Kalamazoo Symphony, the Toledo Chamber Ensemble, and the Toledo Symphony. A versatile performer, he has appeared frequently in recital, oratorio, and on Public Television in the *Artistry of...* series. Dr. Jennings is also the author of over a dozen articles concerning opera in the American West. His writings have appeared in *The Opera Quarterly*, *The Missouri Historical Review*, *Kansas History*, *Nebraska History*, *Colorado Heritage*, *Proteus: A Journal of Ideas*, and *The American National Biography*.

Soprano **Anne Nispel** joined the MSU Voice Faculty in 2004. In a review of her New York recital debut, *The New York Times* stated: "Ms. Nispel has [...] a clear, attractive timbre, ample power and a good command of languages. She also has a fine sense of style. [...] She sang with [...] crisp articulation and careful shading." Nispel has performed more than thirty leading roles with opera companies throughout the United States, including Kentucky Opera, Virginia Opera, Mississippi Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Portland Opera, Kansas City Lyric Opera, Cleveland Opera, Opera Company of Mid-Michigan, Chattanooga Opera, Dayton Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Toledo Opera.

Equally at home on the concert stage, Nispel debuted at Carnegie Hall as the soprano soloist in the Fauré Requiem. She has appeared as guest soloist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Pennsylvania Festival Orchestra, Lansing Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Long Beach Symphony Orchestra, and the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.

## ARTIST-FACULTY BIOS (cont.)

In association with pianist James Wilhelmsen, Anne Nispel and Harlan Jennings have released two CDs under the World Class Records label: *Crosslights of American Song* and *Crosslights of British and French Song*.

**Elden Little** has worked as a pianist/coach in numerous operatic productions that range from baroque operas to contemporary works with Austin Opera, Opera Birmingham, Kentucky Opera, Opera Neo, San Antonio Opera, and Des Moines Metro Opera, where he has been a member of the music staff since 2006. He was a frequent festival artist and chamber music coach for the Austin Chamber Music Summer Festival and Workshop and toured with the acclaimed choral ensemble Conspirare, with which he can be heard as a featured soloist on their recording, "Through the Green Fuse," available on the Clarion label. A sought-after collaborator and vocal coach, his most recent collaboration on Lee Hoiby's opera *Bon Appétit* with Grammy winning mezzo-soprano Joyce Castle was broadcast on Iowa PBS and subsequently won the Upper Midwest Regional Emmy winner for outstanding arts program.

His educational training includes a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara in piano performance, and Master and Doctorate degrees in applied piano from the University of Texas at Austin. His collaborative piano studies were with noted collaborative pianists Eugene Bossart, David Garvey, and Gwendolyn Koldofsky.

# TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

## **Als Luise die Briefe ihres ungetreuen Liebhabers verbrannte (On Louise's Burning Her Faithless Lover's Letters)**

Created by ardent fantasy,  
Brought in a rapturous hour  
Into the world,  
Perish children of melancholy!  
Thanks to the flames you owe your existence,  
To the flames I now restore you.  
And all those rapturous songs,  
For ah, he sang not for me alone!  
Now you burn and soon, my dears,  
No trace of you will remain.  
But ah, the man who wrote you,  
May yet long still burn in me!

## **Abendempfindung (Evening Thoughts)**

Evening. The sun has vanished,  
And the moon gleams in silver splendor;  
So flees life's most beautiful hours,  
Flees as in a dance.  
Soon flees life's most colorful scene,  
And the curtain rolls downward.  
This is our play,  
And friends' tears already flow upon my grave.  
Soon perhaps (like the soft west wind)  
Wafts a quiet foreboding which concludes  
My Life's pilgrimage, and I fly to the land of rest.  
Would you then weep on my grave,  
And grieve upon my ashes?  
Then o friend, I will appear heavenward.  
Offer me a tear and pluck a violet for my grave.  
And with your soulful gaze look down upon me,  
Consecrate a tear to me, and be not ashamed to do so.  
Then in my diadem will be the fairest of pearls.  
English translations from The Fischer-Dieskau *Book of Lieder*.

### **Air of Caron (Song of Caron)**

*Scene: The River Acheron and its gloomy banks. Charon is rowing his ferry.*

Charon: You must cross sooner or later in my boat.

Whether young or old, whatever pleases Fate;

We take you whether you are shepherd or monarch.

You, who wish to cross, come, wandering souls, come advance, sorrowful shadows!

Pay the toll that I charge, or go back to wandering on the gloomy banks.

Pay up! Get in! Pay up! Get in! etc.

A Shadow tries to get on board without paying, using the excuse that "A shadow takes up so little space!"

Charon: You stay there! You have nothing! You must be driven away!

You may cry "Alas!" as much as you like. You have nothing for nothing!

Everywhere the law applies. Empty hands have no appeal.

It is not enough to pay during life.

You still have to pay after death.

It makes no difference to me if you shout: "Alas, Caron, alas."

You still have to pay after death.

### **Chanson du depart de Don Quichotte (Song of departure of Don Quichotte)**

This new chateau, this new style, all enriched with marble and porphyre,  
That love built as the castle of the empire where the heavens have put their charms.

It is a bulwark, a stronghold against vice,

Where the Queen of Virtue resides,

Which the eye regards and the soul admires,

Compelling hearts to render service.

This is a castle made in such a way that no knight may approach the gate

Unless he has fought to save the lineage of the great kings.

### **Chanson de la mort de Don Quichotte (Song of the death of Don Quichotte)**

Don't cry, Sancho, my good friend.

Your master is not dead; he is not far from you.

He lives on a happy island

Where all is pure and without falsehoods,

On an island where you, too, will come one day,

On an island much desired, my friend.

The books have been burned,

And have left a heap of ashes.

If all the books have caused my death,

Then one book is enough to ensure that I live,

A phantom in life and reality in death.

Such is the strange fate of poor Don Quixote!

## Asie (Asia)

Asia. Old marvelous country of fairy tales,

Where sleeps the fantasy like an empress in her forest complete with  
mystery.

Asia, I would like to go with the schooner which rocks this evening in the  
port,

Mysterious and solitary.

And which finally opens its violet sails like an immense bird of the night in  
the orange sky.

I would like to go towards the islands of flowers,

While listening to the song of the wayward sea with its old bewitching  
rhythm.

I would like to see Damascus and the villages of Persia with the graceful  
minarets in the sky.

I would like to see the beautiful silk turbans on bronze faces with bright  
teeth;

I would like to see eyes somber with love and pupils brilliant with joy on  
ivory-hued faces.

I would like to see velvet garments and robes with long fringe.

I would like to see calumets between lips fringed with white beards.

I would like to see grasping merchants with cynical eyes.

And cadis and viziers who with a single movement of their bending finger,  
Decree life or death just as they wish.

I would like to see Persia and India, and then China,

The portly mandarins beneath their sunshades,

Ane the princesses with their delicate hands,

And the scholars who dispute about poetry and beauty.

I would like to linger at the enchanted palace,

And like a foreign traveler lingeringly gaze at countrysides painted

On materials in pinewood frames with a figure in the midst of an orchard;

I would like to see assassins smiling, at the executioner

Who cuts off an innocent head with his great curved saber.

I would like to see beggars and queens;

I would like to see roses and blood;

I would like to see those who die for love or else for hate,

And then later I would return and relate my adventure to those interested  
in dreams,

While raising, like Sindbad, my old Arabian cup now and then to my lips

To interrupt the tale with artistry...

English Translation by Winifred Radford

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- **Lansing Chapter of the American Guild of Organists** (Organist Nicole Keller, Sept. 14; Organist Peter Sykes, Mar. 22)
- **Jill Canny and Robert Last** (MSU Federal Credit Union Jazz Artist in Residence, A. Cohen, April 18; Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

9/30 Tuesday  
Taylor Johnston Early Music Series  
**L'Invenzione**  
Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$\$

10/3 Friday  
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR  
**Solo Piano Soundscapes - Derek Polischuk, piano**  
Cook Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/5 Sunday  
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR  
**Pass a Good Time 2025**  
Fairchild Theatre, 3:00 p.m. \$

10/06 Monday  
Ken and Sandy Beall Cello Plus  
**Symphonic Dialogues**  
Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$\$

10/8 Wednesday  
Ken and Sandy Beall Cello Plus  
**Jazz Infusion**  
Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$\$

10/9 Thursday  
**Concert Orchestra: Symphonic Dances**  
Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/10, Friday  
Ken and Sandy Beall Cello Plus  
**Gems for Cellos**  
Cook Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$\$

## **TICKET PRICES**

**\$** \$14 Adults, \$12 Seniors (age 60 and older), Students with ID and anyone under age 18 are free but require a ticket for admission.  
**\$\$** \$19 Adults, \$17 Seniors, \$9 Students with ID and anyone under age 18.  
**\$\$\$** \$24 Adults, \$22 Seniors, \$14 Students and those under age 18.  
Please note: *All events scheduled in Murray Hall are general admission seating.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

10/12 Sunday

MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence

**Jazz Orchestras with Sean Jones, trumpet**

Fairchild Theatre, 3:00 p.m. \$\$

10/14 Tuesday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Americana - Kenneth Thompkins, trombone**

Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/15 Wednesday

MSUFCU Showcase Series

**Mostly Modern Ensemble**

Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$\$

10/22 Wednesday

**Concert Band-Campus Band**

Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/23 Thursday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

**Rakes, Rogues, and Romantics – Rick Fracker, tenor**

Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/24 Friday

**Symphony Band & Wind Symphony**

Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

10/26 Sunday

**Symphony Orchestra: Lift up Thine Ears**

Cobb Great Hall, 3:00 p.m. \$

10/27 Monday

**Musique 21**

Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$

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