



University of North Texas
College of Music

Senior Recital | Tuesday, March 17, 2026 | 6:30 p.m. | Paul Voertman Concert Hall

Rudy Polk, tenor
Timothy Sanchez, piano

from *Messiah*, HWV 56 (1741) George Frideric Händel
2. Comfort Ye my People (1685–1759)
3. Ev'ry valley shall be exalted Libretto by Charles Jennens

The Holy City (1892) Stephen Adams
(1841–1913)
Text by Frederic Weatherly

-PAUSE-

Ya no me quieres (c. 1934) Text and music by María Grever
(1885–1951)

Así (1934) Text and music by María Grever

Tipitin (1938) Text and music by María Grever

-PAUSE-

Despedida (1946) Text and music by María Grever

De miei' bollenti spiriti, from *La Traviata* (1853) Giuseppe Verdi
(1813–1901)
Libretto by Francesco Piave

Program three hundred sixty-four of the 2025–2026 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

-INTERMISSION-

Du bist die Ruh (1823/1826) Franz Schubert
(1797–1828)
Text by Friedrich Rückert

Es fällt ein stern herunter, from 4 Lieder, Op. 4 (1889) Hans Pfitzner
(1869–1949)
Text by Heinrich Heine

Dichterliebe Op. 48 (1840) Robert Schumann
8. Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen (1810–1856)
Text by Heinrich Heine

-PAUSE-

Voglio dire, from *L'elisir d'amore* (1832) Gaetano Donizetti
(1797–1848)
Text by Felice Romani
Christopher Gray, bass-baritone

Amor s'apprende (1918) Stefano Donaudy
(1879–1925)
Text by Alberto Donaudy
Tyler Warwas, tenor

Santa Lucia (1849) Music and text by Teodoro Cottrau
(1827–1870)
Benjamin Bassett, baritone

Drink, from *The Student Prince* (1924) Sigmund Romberg
(1887–1951)
Text by Dorothy Donnelly
Tyler Warwas, tenor
Benjamin Bassett, baritone
Christopher Gray, bass-baritone

Program Notes

George Frideric Händel (1685–1759) One of the most successful composers of the Baroque era, known today for many famous works including *Messiah*, *Water Music*, and *Music for the Royal Fireworks*. Händel was born in Germany, and in his early years, traveled throughout Europe studying composition of opera and chamber music. Händel settled in London in 1710 after being selected as the Kappellmeister to George I, King of England, and he spent the rest of his life composing for the Royal Court. Händel wrote hundreds of works throughout his career, and was a master of writing for the voice.

Stephen Adams (1841–1913) Famous, English composer and singer of his day in opera and popular religious songs. Adams' real name is Michael Maybrick, but he decided, for his music, to be published under the pseudonym Stephen Adams. Adams studied keyboard and composition in Leipzig and then at the Milan Conservatory. Adams traveled back to England where he met lyricist Frederick Weatherly, and they both became very influential for writing popular, religious music.

Maria Grever (1885–1951) Mexican composer, known for being the first female, Mexican composer to reach international success. Grever was born in Mexico, and then studied in Europe with Debussy and Lehár until she was thirteen. Grever moved back to Mexico in 1900; then to the United States in 1916 where she began composing film scores for Paramount, MGM, and Fox, alongside her beautiful Mexican songs. Grever's music is a fusion of European romanticism, Mexican song tradition, and the American musical theatre genre. Grever's works have been performed from a variety of musicians including Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, and Enrico Caruso. Grever's music is widely loved by performers and audiences around the world, and she has left a lasting impact on the success and popularity of Mexican song,

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) Italian composer of the 19th-century who is responsible for composing some of opera's most famous works including *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, and *Otello*. Verdi came from a modest background, but then rose into a cultural icon for Italy by the end of his life. In his career, Verdi's composition changed with the development of the art form, and his works span from bel canto to verismo opera. Verdi is regarded as one of the greatest operatic composers because of his ability to capture raw emotion and playful satire in his composing

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) Austrian composer who bridged the worlds of Classical and Romantic music, noted for the melody and harmony in his lieder and chamber music. Schubert showed uncommon gifts for music from an early age, and in 1808, he became a pupil at the Stadtkonvikt school. Schubert became a performing member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, which helped him gain recognition among people in Vienna. Appreciation of Schubert's music while he was alive was limited to a relatively small circle of admirers in Vienna, but interest in his work increased greatly in the decades following his death.

Hans Pfitzner (1869–1949) German composer, conductor and polemicist who was a self-described anti-modernist. It was not until he was nearly forty that he was offered a respected post: opera director and head of the Strasbourg Conservatory in Alsace-Lorraine. Pfitzner's music, spanning nearly every major genre except the symphonic poem, was admired by contemporaries such as Mahler and Strauss. Pfitzner's works combine Romantic elements with musical drama and intimate chamber ensembles.

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) Romantic, German composer renowned particularly for his piano music and lieder. Many of his best known piano pieces were written for his wife, Clara Schumann. In 1827, he began composing songs under the musical influence of Franz Schubert and German poet Jean Paul Richter. In Leipzig, Schumann devoted his time to song composition and improvisation at the piano. Schumann's most characteristic work is introspective and tends to record precise moments and moods. Schumann's music is filled with mysteries, musical references, subtle hidden meanings, and the simple lyrical expression and in creating concise, memorable musical ideas.

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) Prolific, Italian composer who contributed immensely to the bel canto opera tradition, and he is known for his expressive and lyrical vocal compositions. Donizetti composed nearly seventy operas during his career including *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* that continue to be performed today around the world. Donizetti is often regarded as a composer who "makes singers love to sing", and this is shown through his exceptional gift for showcasing voices through the melodies, emotions, and technical precisions his music requires.

Stefano Donaudy (1879–1925) Italian composer who wrote mostly vocal music, dividing his efforts between opera and song, though he also wrote chamber and orchestral music. After studying with the director of Palermo's Conservatory, Donaudy made a living as a voice teacher, coach, and accompanist. His fame rests on his collection *36 Arie di Stile Antico*, first published by Casa Ricordi in 1918. All these songs reveal a perfect mastery of vocal technique and a deeply sensuous and elegant melodic vein, reflecting the Art Nouveau spirit known in Italy as *Stile Liberty*.

Teodoro Cottrau (1827–1870) Italian composer, lyricist, politician, and publisher known for popularizing and composing Neapolitan folk song. Cottrau's father, Guillaume Cottrau, was a composer as well, and he exposed Teodoro to music from an early age. Cottrau inherited his family's music publishing company, and through this avenue, he was able to share with the world Neapolitan folk song. Cottrau's understanding of business and his enjoyable, catchy melodies, is the reason for his success.

Sigmund Romberg (1887–1951) Hungarian born composer who is known for his works of operettas and musical theatre in the early 20th-century. Romberg studied the Viennese style of operetta, in Vienna during the early 1900s. Romberg then emigrated to New York in 1909 to pursue his career, and he soon found success composing for major companies. Romberg's career lasted until his passing, and his music is still loved for its combination of romantic, European traditions and American musical theatre.

Biography

Rudy Polk is a tenor vocalist from Clinton, Mississippi with considerable achievements as a young musician. Rudy is currently a senior studying vocal performance at the University of North Texas with Professor William Joyner. Rudy is, also, the tenor section leader for the UNT A Capella Choir. As a sophomore, Rudy performed his first lead role at UNT Opera as Adult Martin in the concert world premiere of *(That Hellbound Train)*. In his junior year, he performed as Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) at UNT Opera, and he was the Tenor Soloist (*King David*) with the UNT Grand Chorus. Rudy was also a finalist winner in the Upper Division of the Schmidt Vocal Arts Undergraduate Competition. This past summer, Rudy performed as Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the Brevard Music Center, and this fall, he performed as Young Man (*Aleko*) and Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*) in UNT Opera's double-bill production. In the winter, Rudy returned to the Brevard Music Center as the Tenor Soloist (*Messiah*), and he joined The Vocal Immersion Program at Castleton. This spring, Rudy will reprise the role of Adult Martin in the staged world premiere of *(That Hellbound Train)* with UNT Opera, and he will begin the summer as a studio artist with Wolf Trap Opera. Rudy is a recipient of the UNT Winspear Opera Scholarship, and he was recently selected as a 2025-2026 Presser Undergraduate Scholar.