



Christian Gerhaher Baritone

Gerold Huber Piano



24/25 SEASON



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I am thrilled to welcome you to the PUC recital debut of baritone Christian Gerhaher and pianist Gerold Huber. Tonight's program of songs by Robert Schumann, including many rarely heard treasures, promises an unforgettable journey into the depths of human emotion, brought to life by two of the world's most extraordinary interpreters in the world today.

As writer Salman Rushdie so beautifully wrote, "Song shows us a world that is worthy of our yearning; it shows us our selves as they might be, if we were worthy of the world." There is no better way to begin a new year than with music that inspires us to dream and reflect on the beauty of our shared humanity.

Thank you for joining us. Enjoy the evening!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marna Seltzer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a long, trailing flourish at the end.

Marna Seltzer
Director of Princeton University Concerts

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please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices before the concert.
Photographs and audio/video recording are prohibited during the performance.*

Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 7:30PM • Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

CHRISTIAN GERHAHER Baritone
GERHOLD HUBER Piano

ROBERT SCHUMANN

(1810–1856)

Fünf Lieder, Op. 40

Märzveilchen
Muttertraum
Der Soldat
Der Spielmann
Verratene Liebe

Liederkreis, Op. 39

In der Fremde
Intermezzo
Waldesgespräch
Die Stille
Mondnacht
Schöne Fremde
Auf einer Burg
In der Fremde
Wehmut
Zwielicht
Im Walde
Frühlingsnacht

INTERMISSION

Drei Gesänge, Op. 83

Resignation

Die Blume der Ergebung

Der Einsiedler

Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 53

Blondels Lied

Loreley

Der arme Peter

I. Der Hans und die Grete

II. In meiner Brust da sitzt ein Weh

III. Der arme Peter wankt vorbei

Sechs Gedichte und Requiem, Op. 90

Lied eines Schmiedes

Meine Rose

Kommen und Scheiden

Die Sennin

Einsamkeit

Der schwere Abend

Requiem

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About the Program

By Lucy Caplan © 2025 • Program Annotator

Lucy Caplan is Assistant Professor of Music at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Her first book, 'Dreaming in Ensemble: How Black Artists Transformed American Opera,' was just published by Harvard University Press in 2025. She is a winner of the Rubin Prize for Music Criticism.

In February 1840, Robert Schumann reflected on the pleasures of songwriting in a letter to his fiancée, Clara Wieck. “It is music of an entirely different kind which doesn’t have to pass through the fingers,” he mused, “far more melodious and direct.” Having shown a childhood talent for both singing and playing the piano, Schumann focused his early compositional efforts on both lieder and solo piano pieces. In his twenties, he turned largely to piano music, exploring more virtuosic forms like sonatas and concertos, and tried his hand at orchestral music. But around 1840, there bloomed what he called “a rich harvest of songs”: settings of individual texts and poems by a wide range of authors, from Shakespeare to Hans Christian Andersen.

Schumann’s turn toward vocal composition enabled him to cultivate his myriad artistic interests. He embraced his long-established love of literature, electing to set poetry that he admired deeply. (He was an experienced amateur poet, who had at one point debated whether to pursue a career in literature or in music.) His fondness for beautiful lyrics led him to write many song cycles, since the form allowed for the development of larger-scale narratives created through the accumulation of several related texts. And as his comments to Clara suggest, he also celebrated the genre’s tendency toward lovely, linear melody and emotional candor. The many songs on this evening’s program—all composed between 1840 and 1850—showcase these qualities, offering a panoramic sense of Schumann’s expertise and love for the beauty of the piano and the human voice.

Robert Schumann, Fünf Lieder, Op. 40 (1840)

Hans Christian Andersen was still a young, up-and-coming author in 1840; his first book of fairy tales had been published just a few years prior, and he was better known for his short stories and novels. Schumann, recognizing the quality of his poetry, decided to set several of his poems to music in 1840. Working with a translation by Adelbert von Chamisso, Schumann selected a group of five poems. When he later sent a copy of the work to Andersen, he acknowledged that the settings “may seem strange to you”—but “so at first did your poems to me.”

That strangeness manifests as emotional topsy-turviness, with each song offering a very different affect. The appealing whimsy of the first song, “Märzveilchen,” gives way

to “Muttertraum,” which opens with stark arpeggios and a descending bass line in the piano. It becomes increasingly eerie, with both singer and pianist sinking to the bottom of their respective ranges. “Der Soldat” offers appropriately tormented music for a text which tells of a soldier who is part of a firing squad forced to execute a dear friend. “Der Spielmann” describes an unhappy wedding—an odd choice of subject matter, given Schumann’s own imminent nuptials. The set closes with “Verratene Liebe,” a charming piece which sets Chamisso’s translation of a text by the French writer Claude Charles Fariel.

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Liederkreis, Op. 39 (1840)

Clara Wieck Schumann chose most of the poems that comprise *Liederkreis*, a selection of texts by Joseph von Eichendorff focused on themes and images from the natural world. In a letter to Clara, Schumann described the music as his “most profoundly Romantic” composition thus far, also assuring her that “much of you is embedded” in the songs. Like the best Romantic music, the twelve songs of the cycle manage to convey both sublime grandeur and intimacy. “Im der Fremde,” for instance, juxtaposes an expansive, rippling accompaniment with a starkly simple vocal line. In “Waldesgespräch,” which portrays a conversation between a hunter and a seductive forest sprite, a heroic opening figure voiced in parallel thirds is soon disturbed by a modulation in key and a highly ornamented, chromatic melody. A sense of peace emanates from the piano’s gently pulsing sixteenth notes in “Mondnacht,” perfectly conveying the serenity of a romantic, moonlit night. The bright major tonality of “Wehmut” betrays the occasional flash of pathos when the

singer lingers on a non-diatonic note, but quickly returns to its mood of overall serenity. The final song, “Frühlingsnacht,” is also the most virtuosic. Bustling triplets in the piano evoke springtime’s buzzing energy, while the singer bounds from low to high registers. After such an outburst of energy, the cycle comes to a close with two reserved chords.

Drei Gesänge, Op. 83 (1850)

While scholars have documented many details of Schumann’s personal and musical life extensively, the origins of this set of songs remain somewhat opaque. Whereas many of his earlier works set several texts by the same poet or were organized around a clear theme, this set has a more scattered genesis. Schumann composed them rapidly, in the span of just a few days, yet they share few musical similarities. The first song, “Resignation,” may have been written by an art gallerist named Julius Buddeus, though its provenance is uncertain. It is both formally and harmonically adventurous: the piano interludes between verses are of irregular length, and there are frequent shifts of key. “Die Blume der Ergebung,” by contrast, is more traditional, with a pattern of consistent sixteenth notes in the piano. Throughout, there is a lovely sense of question-and-answer dialogue between voice and piano, with melodic lines that overlap in an intimate, almost playful style. The third song, “Der Ensiedler,” sounds completely unlike either of its predecessors. Its chordal accompaniment and rhythmically square vocal line instill it with a stern, even archaic sensibility; in both text and music, we move here from the realm of unrequited love to something more transcendent, even divine.

Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 53 (1840)

By the end of 1840, Schumann had composed close to 125 songs—an extraordinary outpouring of music which would lead him to deem this period his *Liederjahr*, or year of song. The final published collection of the year was Op. 53, a group of three songs united by shared themes of love and connection. The first, “Blondels Lied,” tells the tale of a medieval minstrel singing to a beloved king. A warmly melodic vocal line, often doubled by the piano, declaims the story by way of a simple, elegant setting. “Loreley” is among Schumann’s very shortest songs, lasting for barely a minute. Its brevity fits its content—a voice calling out to an unknown listener to “remember me,” a fleeting sentiment that threatens to be overtaken by the ocean’s waves. Subtle variations in tempo, especially the frequent *ritardandos*, evoke the narrator’s uncertainty.

The final song, “Der arme Peter,” is a tripartite work organized in distinct sections. It begins with a rustic, triple-meter tune in which the “speechless and still” Peter observes a seemingly happy wedding, wracked with despair over having lost the love of his life to

another man. Next, he details his extreme pain with quasi-operatic expressivity, an initial burst of rapid-fire anger devolving into low, elongated cries. Finally, the perspective switches to that of an onlooker who sees Peter staggering past to the sound of a solemn, funereal procession.

Sechs Gedichte und Requiem, Op. 90 (1850)

Schumann was an admirer of the Austrian poet Nickolaus Lenau, perhaps considering him a kindred spirit due to their shared Romantic aesthetics, penchant for melancholy artwork, and personal struggles with depression. In 1850, he composed five settings of texts by Lenau; then, under the impression that Lenau had died, he added a final “Requiem” to the set. Truth proved stranger than fiction: while Lenau was in fact still alive while Schumann wrote the piece, he died later that year—which Schumann learned on the day of the piece’s first performance.

The set begins with the vibrantly energetic “Lied eines Schmiedes,” which features heavy, accented rhythms that contrast sharply with the lilting elegance of “Meine Rose.” “Kommen und Scheiden” evokes Lenau’s classic melancholy, with many phrases in both piano and voice ending with a downward fall. The final lines are sung *pianissimo*, and the piano offers a hushed conclusion in response. “Die Sennin” begins with renewed energy, evoking a pastoral scene through its combination of a bass line low in the piano’s range and a cheery song above. “Einsamkeit,” which begins in the far-flung key of E-flat minor and returns again and again to moments of striking but momentary dissonance, has a distant, even abstract affect. In “Der schwere Abend,” Schumann conveys the poem’s feeling of oppressive darkness through rhythmic uncertainty, setting slow duple and triple meters against one another and pausing often for moments of total silence. The concluding “Requiem” is an unabashed expression of grief. It begins modestly, but soon intensifies in volume and register. The contrast between the deliberate pacing of the vocal line and the tumultuous writing for the piano becomes more and more striking—until both musicians unite for a peaceful, pious conclusion.

About *the* Artists



CHRISTIAN GERHAHER

Christian Gerhaher studied at the Munich University of Music under Paul Kuën and Raimund Grumbach, where he attended the opera school and studied song interpretation with Friedemann Berger. In addition to medical studies, he enhanced his vocal training through masterclasses with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, and Inge Borkh. Currently, he co-teaches a class in song interpretation at the Munich University of Music and Theater with Gerold Huber and also teaches occasionally at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Gerhaher and Huber have been collaborating as a duo for over 30 years, achieving significant recognition and awards for their song interpretation. They perform regularly at major international venues, including New York, Amsterdam, Cologne, Luxembourg, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Madrid, Milan, and often at London's Wigmore Hall. Their concert appearances extend to festivals in Munich, Aix, Heidelberg, Salzburg, Granada, Berlin, Lucerne, Edinburgh, Rheingau, and Schleswig-Holstein.

His work with esteemed conductors like Daniel Harding, Simon Rattle, and Herbert Blomstedt has taken him to renowned concert halls worldwide. He frequently collaborates with orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw,

and especially the Berlin Philharmonic, where he was the first singer to hold the title of Artist-in-Residence, as well as with the symphony orchestras of Swedish and Bavarian Radio.

Notable projects from the past season include performances with Kirill Petrenko and Simon Rattle with the Berlin Philharmonic, as well as his debut at the Metropolitan Opera. He also made his role debut as Golaud in a new production of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Munich Opera Festival, significantly expanding his operatic repertoire.

This season's song recitals focus on Robert Schumann. Following their comprehensive recording of Schumann's works released by Sony Classical, Gerhaher and Huber will present various programs across cities like Dublin, Cambridge, Dallas, Montreal, and Princeton, as well as an Asian tour in March 2025. The Wigmore Hall, Schubertiade Hohenems, Munich Opera Festival, and Salzburg Festival are partnering on this Schumann project. Together with violist Tabea Zimmermann, they will perform chamber music concerts in Turin, Siena, Luxembourg, and Munich, featuring works by Wolfgang Rihm, Schumann, and Brahms.

In concert performances, Gerhaher will appear in Stockholm as Tristan/Kurwenal with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and at the Tokyo Spring Festival as Amfortas in *Parsifal*. He will also perform with the Bamberg Symphony, in Carnegie Hall with Raphael Pichon, and with the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome under Daniel Harding, among others.

On the opera stage, Gerhaher is a highly sought-after performer, recognized with awards such as the Laurence Olivier Award and the Faust Theatre Prize. His roles include Posa in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, Amfortas in Wagner's *Parsifal*, Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and title roles in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, and Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg*. A highlight of his career was his portrayal of Wozzeck in a celebrated production at Zurich Opera in 2015. He continues to perform the key role of Wolfram in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at major opera houses in Berlin, Vienna, London, and Munich, as well as at the Salzburg Easter Festival.

As an exclusive partner, Gerhaher releases his recordings with Sony Music. Together with Huber, he has recorded cycles of Schubert, Schumann, and Mahler. In Fall 2021, they released a comprehensive box set of all of Schumann's songs, a collaboration with Bavarian Radio and the Heidelberg Spring Festival. Early 2022 saw the release of recordings of

Schoeck's *Elegie*, Holliger's *Lunea*, and Rihm's *Stabat Mater*. In 2023, they released Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with tenor Piotr Beczala. Christian Gerhaher and his wife live in Munich with their three children. This concert marks Christian Gerhaher's Princeton University Concerts debut.

GEROLD HUBER

As a Lied accompanist, Gerold Huber is a regular guest at festivals such as the Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, the Salzburg Festival, the Munich Opera Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival at the Schwetzingen SWR Festival, the Rheingau Music Festival, the Festival d'Aix en Provence as well as the Rheingau Music Festival or in concert halls such as the Kölner Philharmonie, the Alte Oper Frankfurt, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Vienna Musikverein, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, London's Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center, the Park Avenue Armory, Carnegie Hall in New York City, the Teatro della Zarzuela in Madrid, and the Salzburg Festspielhaus.

In addition to two solo CDs with works by Beethoven and Schumann, he has made numerous recordings with Christian Gerhaher, all of which have won several awards. The congenial and symbiotic partnership of the duo has been widely praised. Gerold Huber's extensive discography also includes recordings with bass Günther Groissböck, mezzo-soprano Bernarda Fink, soprano Ruth Ziesak, and tenor Maximilian Schmitt, among others.

In September, the complete edition of all Schumann songs *Alle Lieder* was released, on which he worked for many years with Christian Gerhaher—a co-production of Sony Classical, the Heidelberger Liedzentrum, and the Bayerischer Rundfunk. The Sony Classical recording of Gustav Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* in the piano version with Piotr Beczala and Christian Gerhaher was released in May 2023.

Gerold Huber is a sought-after teacher and gives selected master classes. Since 2013 Gerold Huber has been Professor of Lied Accompaniment at the Hochschule für Musik in Würzburg, and in March 2022 he took a position at the University of Music and Theater in Munich. This concert marks Gerold Huber's Princeton University Concerts debut.

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We are happy to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their support.

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The first concert in what is known today as Princeton University Concerts was presented on October 29, 1894, thus establishing one of the oldest continuous series of musical events in the country. From 1894 to 1914, the “Ladies Musical Committee” presented concerts by the Kneisel Quartet. After 1914, the programs diversified. In 1929, the Ladies Committee became the Princeton University Concerts Committee—a town and gown group of interested and knowledgeable music lovers—which has guided the University Concerts to date.

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Fri, January 10, 2025 | 12:30PM (Keynote Stephen Hough)
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Wed, February 5, 2025 | 12:30 PM
RAPHAËL FEUILLÂTRE *Guitar*

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Wed, February 5, 2025 | 6PM & 9PM
RAPHAËL FEUILLÂTRE* *Guitar*

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Wed, February 12, 2025 | 7:30PM
KAYHAN KALHOR* *Kamancheh*
DEBORAH AMOS *Moderator*
Finding Home in the Music of Iran

Live Music Meditation

Thu, February 13, 2025 | 12:30 PM
KAYHAN KALHOR *Kamancheh*

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MEET THE MUSIC Ages 6-12

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Pre-Concert: Do-Re-Meet Speed Dating | 1PM
THOMAS DUNFORD *Lute*

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Mon, March 24, 2025 | 1 PM
THOMAS DUNFORD *Lute*

Concert Classics Series

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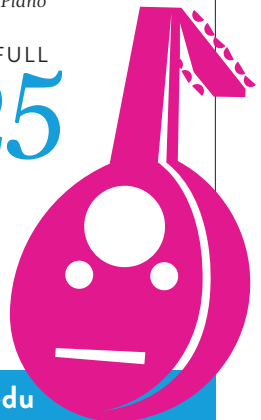
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THOMAS WEAVER *Piano*

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24/25

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