



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

FRIDAYS AT 12:30 SERIES TELLING OUR STORIES TOGETHER

Friday, October 13, 2023

12:30 p.m., von Kuster Hall and [via livestream](#)

Marion Newman - Nege'ga, *mezzo-soprano*

Scott St John, *violin*

Yanet Campbell Secades, *violin*

Sharon Wei, *viola*

Thomas Wiebe, *cello*

Angela Park, *piano*

Eliza Celis, *soprano*

Five Songs on Poems of Marilyn Dumont

1. Letter to Sir John A. MacDonald
2. The Red & White
3. Helen Betty Osborne
4. Half Human/Half Devil (Halfbreed) Muse
5. The Devil's Language

Ian Cusson
(b. 1981)

Nuit paisible

Duet from *Béatrice et Bénédict*

Hector Berlioz
(1803-1869)

Belle Nuit

Barcarolle from *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*

Jacques Offenbach
(1819-1880)

Cantaloube - Chants d'Auvergne

- 1) Quand z'eyero petitoune
- 2) Hé! Beyla-z-y dau fé!
- 3) Postouro, sé tu m'aymo
- 4) Té, l'co, té
- 5) Uno jionto postouro
- 6) Lou dizou bé

Joseph Canteloube
(1879-1957)

*This concert is supported by the Undergraduate Gift Fund
and the Ivey Business School Culture office.*

Critically acclaimed and award winning mezzo-soprano **Marion Newman - Nege'ga** is Kwagiulth and Stó:lō First Nations with English, Irish and Scottish heritage. Marion was born in Bella Coola and grew up in Sooke, BC, immersed in and embraced by her community and culture. She is one of Canada's most accomplished singers in repertoire ranging from Charpentier to Cusson and operatic roles including Carmen and Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*. Nominated for a Dora Award for her leading role in the world premiere of *Shanawdithit* (Nolan/Burry) with Toronto's Tapestry Opera, Ian Ritchie wrote "she invests her character with towering dignity and courage".

Marion portrayed Dr. Wilson in the premiere of *Missing* (Clements/Current) with Vancouver City Opera /Pacific Opera Victoria, which gives voice, in English and Gitksanimaax, to the story of Canada's missing and murdered Indigenous women. In March, 2023 Marion reprised her role for her debut with Anchorage Opera.

Highlights for the 2022/23 season included Cantaloube's *Chants d'Auvergne* and a new work by Jennifer Butler with Vancouver Island Symphony, Bruckner's *Te Deum* and the world premiere of Stephanie Martin's *Water*, with Grand Philharmonic Choir and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony and continued development of *Namwayut*, an Indigenous led - cooperative opera with the support of Calgary Opera.

Recent guest appearances include Mozart's *Requiem* - a digital co-production with Canadian Opera Company and *Against the Grain* Theatre, and *Five Songs on Poem's of Marilyn Dumont* (Cusson) with the New Orford String Quartet for Cecilia Concerts in Halifax.

Marion has performed several works written specifically for her, including a Canada-wide tour of *Ancestral Voices* (Tovey) with the Vancouver Symphony and *Nuyamt-it Kulhulmx - Singing the Earth* (Höstman/Robinson) with the Victoria and Vancouver Symphonies and Continuum Concerts in Toronto. Recent new works include the role of Mimi in *Indians on Vacation*, an operatic adaptation of the novel by Thomas King (Cusson/Vavrek) with *Against the Grain* Theatre.

Marion created the role of Dawn with the Welsh National Opera in the July 2022 world premiere of *Migrations* (Todd), with stories by six writers based on their personal experiences of migrations and working with refugees. Also with Welsh National Opera, Marion starred in the premiere of *The Shoemaker*, a fusion of Latin American, Persian and Western classical musical influences, and she performed in *Migrations* Autumn 2022 UK tour.

Through commitment to authenticity, both in storytelling across the operatic canon and her approach to every role she inhabits, Marion has emerged as one of the most important artists working in Canada today. A driving force for truth and reconciliation within the context of classical music, she is helping lead colleagues and audiences through long overdue discussions about the very nature of what it means to call something "Canadian music."

Confronting existing power structures at every turn, using every opportunity she can to elevate, empower, and promote new voices, particularly from Indigenous and other equity-seeking communities, Marion is sought as a leader, consultant and performer who demands accountability from herself and others at all times. As a co-founder of *Amplified Opera*, an organization committed to holding space within the opera community for artists from diverse backgrounds, and through her work serving on various boards and committees in the arts community, Marion is able to bring people together to strengthen their voices and help create new avenues for their talents.

In her role as host of CBC's *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera* Marion is bringing her talented and inspiring colleagues to the attention of listeners across Canada and beyond. In helping to bring about a better understanding of the immense and broad scope of talents this country holds, Marion hopes to build pride and lasting support for the arts. She firmly believes that this is vital work that breathes fresh air into and brings new audiences to opera while also creating a better understanding that our National identity must include the voices of those who have traditionally been undermined and unheard.

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TRANSLATIONS

1. Letter to Sir John A. MacDonald

Dear John: I'm still here and halfbreed,
after all these years
you're dead, funny thing,
that railway you wanted so badly,
there was talk a year ago
of shutting it down
and part of it was shut down,
(the dayliner at least,)
'from sea to shining sea,'
and you know, John,
after all that shuffling us around to suit the settlers,
we're still here and Métis.

We're still here after Meech Lake and
one no-good-for-nothin-Indian
holdin-up-the-train,
stalling the 'Cabin syllables /Nouns of settlement,
/...steel syntax [and] /The long sentence of its exploitation'
and John, that goddamned railroad never made this a great nation,
cause the railway shut down
and this country is still quarrelling over unity,
and Riel is dead
but he just keeps coming back
in all the Bill Wilsons yet to speak out of turn or favour
because you know as well as I
that we were railroaded
by some steel tracks that didn't last
and some settlers who wouldn't settle
and it's funny we're still here and calling ourselves halfbreed.

2. The Red & White

god only knows, Mary tried to say these things but
her lips cracked and
words fell out like
mad woman's change

god only knows she tried but
we all thought she was crazy
a little twisted, Mary was
in one of her spins again
who knows who she would twist into it,
like hair in a french braid

god knows Mary tried
to keep us clean and fed, respectable but
all the bleach and soup bones
in the Red & White couldn't keep our
halfbreed hides from showing through

3. Helen Betty Osborne

Betty, if I set out to write this poem about you
it might turn out instead
to be about me
or any one of
my female relatives

it might turn out to be
about this young native girl
growing up in rural Alberta
in a town with fewer Indians
than ideas about Indians,
in a town just south of the 'Aryan Nations'

it might turn out to be
about Anna Mae Aquash, Donald Marshall or Richard Cardinal,
it might even turn out to be
about our grandmothers,
beasts of burden in the fur trade
skinning, scraping, pounding, packing,
left behind for 'British Standards of Womanhood,'
left for white-melting-skinned women,
not bits-of-brown women
left here in this wilderness, this colony.

Betty, if I start to write a poem about you
it might turn out to be
about hunting season instead,
about 'open season' on native women
it might turn out to be
about your face young and hopeful
staring back at me hollow now
from a black and white page
it might be about the 'townsfolk' (gentle word)
townsfolk who 'believed native girls were easy'
and 'less likely to complain if a sexual proposition led to violence.'

Betty, if I write this poem.

4. Half Human / Half Devil (Halfbreed) Muse

shutting off
a dripping faucet so there is no
leak, no leak, not a drop
my eyes want to push out, out
through mind-skin, arms and legs are propelled
through numb air, words writhe, wrists flare escaping
numbness, no sound, no sound
no movement, stuck, a blank
wound in a rope ball, tight, hard
spun, a drill bit piercing
earth, whirl of steel exhaling rock
dust, drill bit biting, dog
gnawing bone, gripping ivory
hankering down on, grinding

giving up to giving over

lurch, lurching laconic
dance, drum rattle
gangly movement, offbeat, arm
bent over head, leg
straight out, head twisted and shift
of body to next feral contortion
animal skin taut, blood
paint, ochre skin, ash smell

pebbles encased trapped
in sound, pebbles rasp
against thin dry skin
a herd of rattles overtakes me

5. The Devil's Language

ii. is there a Received Pronunciation of Cree, is there
a Modern Cree Usage?
the Chief's Cree not the King's English

as if violating God the Father and standard English
is like talking back(wards)

as if speaking the devil's language is
talking back
back(words)

back to your mother's sound, your mother's tongue, your mother's language
back to that clearing in the bush
in the tall black spruce

iii. near the sound of horses and wind
where you sat on her knee in a canvas tent
and she fed you bannock and tea
and syllables
that echo in your mind now, now
that you can't make the sound
of that voice that rocks you and sings you to sleep
in the devil's language.

Barcarolle

Belle nuit, ô nuit d'amour
Souris à nos ivresses
Nuit plus douce que le jour
Ô, belle nuit d'amour!
Le temps fuit et sans retour
Emporte nos tendresses
Loin de cet heureux séjour
Le temps fuit sans retour
Zéphyr embrasés
Versez-nous vos caresses
Zéphyr embrasés
Donnez-nous vos baisers!
Vos baisers! Vos baisers!
Belle nuit, ô, nuit d'amour
Souris à nos ivresses
Nuit plus douce que le jour,
Ô, belle nuit d'amour!
Ah! souris à nos ivresses!
Nuit d'amour, ô, nuit d'amour!

Lovely night, oh, night of love
Smile upon our joys!
Night much sweeter than the day
Oh beautiful night of love!
Time flies by, and carries away
Our tender caresses for ever!
Time flies far from this happy oasis
And does not return
Burning zephyrs
Embrace us with your caresses!
Burning zephyrs
Give us your kisses!
Ah! Your kisses! Your kisses! Ah!
Lovely night, oh, night of love
Smile upon our joys!
Night much sweeter than the day
Oh, beautiful night of love!
Ah! Smile upon our joys!
Night of love, oh, night of love!

Chants d'Auvergne

Quand z'eyro petitoune
Quand z'eyrou petitoune
Ma miouna bourda do viouletta
Quand z'eyrou petitoune
M'appelavoun Nanetou...

Joseph Cantaloube

When I was little
When I was little,
My dear one surrounded by violets,
When I was little
They called me Nanon...

N'en gardava las oulhas,

I looked after the sheep,

Ma miouna bourda do viouletta,
N'en gardava las oulhas
A l'ombretto d'ion bouissou...

Le bouissou fay flouquetto,
Ma miouna bourda do viouletta,
Le bouissou fay flouquetto,
N'en dormiguèré dessous...

Très cavalhès passèroun,
Ma miouna bourda do viouletta,
Très cavalhès passèroun,
Diguèroun: 'Belle, bonjour!'...

'Passas, passas au lardji!
Ma miouna bourda do viouletta,
'Passas, passas au lardji!
Mes amours soun pas per vous!'

Hé! Beyla-z-y dau fé!

Hè !
beyla-z-y dau fé, an aquèl azé !
Hé !
beyla-z-y dau fé, mandjara bé !
Lou paubré, par travailha,
embé par viauré,
faut bé mandja !

La vedza pas véni, la miéna drolla,
La vedza pas véni, de vé Mouli.
Couradgé, paubré garçon!
Embé 'na drolla
nous danserons !

Fatcha peta lous pèys,
la montagnarda!
Fatcha peta lous pèys,
sur le pavey !
Pachenço, paubré garçon,
La jeuna drolla
Elli a razon !

Postouro, sé tu m'aymo

Postouro, sé tu m'aymo,
Souladjé lou mió mal!
Croumporès uno raubo,
Un poulit dobontal;
E lèys autrès postourélos
N'auron pas un oytal!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

Postouro, sé tu m'aymo,
Souladjé lou mió mal!
Toutoï ley flours noubélos,
T'en foray un romèl,
E leys autres postourélos
N'auron pas un ton bel!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

My dear one surrounded by violets,
I looked after the sheep
In the shade of a tree...

The tree was in bud,
My dear one surrounded by violets,
The tree was in bud,
I fell asleep under it...

Three horsemen passed by,
My dear one surrounded by violets,
Three horsemen passed by,
They said : 'My Beauty, good-day!'...

'Pass on, pass far on!
My dear one surrounded by violets,
'Pass on, pass far on!
My love is not for you!'

Hey! Give him some hay!

Hey!
Give him some hay, this old donkey!
Hey!
Give him some hay, he'll eat it up!
The poor thing, to work.
Just to stay alive,
he must eat well!

I don't see her coming, my girl,
I don't see her coming, to the Mill.
Courage, poor boy!
With a girl
We will dance!

She sets feet stamping,
the mountain girl!
She sets feet stamping,
on the pavement!
Patience, poor boy,
The young girl
is right!

Shepherdess, if you love me

Shepherdess, if you love me,
Soothe my pain!
You shall receive a dress,
A lustrous pinafore;
And the other shepherdesses
Will have nothing so austere!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

Shepherdess, if you love me,
Soothe my pain!
From all those new flowers,
I'll make you a bouquet
And the other shepherdesses
Will have nothing so beautiful!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

Lèys ogassos t'èn cridouin:
"Mio, rébilhoté!"
E! daysso leys ogassos,
Omay les ogassous!
E tenèn nostré proumesso:
Nous cal ayma tony dous!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

Tè, l'co, tè

Tè, l'co, tè!
Arresto lo baco!
Atsolo qué s'èn bo!
Dió! Dió!
Camino, camino,
Pe cayré!
Té! Biro lo roudzo,
Prr!
Es aquo!
Dayssolo!
Bèni, bèni, bèni tè!

Uno jionto postouro

Uno jionto pastouro
Un d'oquècé motis,
Ossitado su l'erbèto,
Plouro soun bel omi!

"Garo, sério bé ouro
Qué fougesso tournat!
Cáuco pastouro mayto
Soun cur auro dounat!

"Ah! pauro pastourèlo!
Délayssado soui yèn
Coumo lo tourtourèlo
Qu'o perdu soun poriou!"

Lou dizou bé

Lou diziou bé,
Pierrou, qu'aymay ley drolloy,
Lou diziou bé,
Pierrou, qu'aymay lou bi!
Yeu-z-aymé tout,
Lou bi-t-omay ley drolloy,
Mè per cauzi,
Preférorio lou bi!

E leys omours
Bostidos su ley cèndré,
Ley foundomèn
Soun pro subjèt ol bènt!
Sè lou bènt bé
Empourtoro ley cèndré,
May yèu to bé
Toutjour din ley trumèns!

Lou m'as ogut,

Hear those magpies chattering to you:
"My own, awake!"
Hey! forget the magpies,
Ignore the magpies!
And keep our promise:
We shall always love each other!
Ti ouli ouli ouli ouli ouli oula!

Here, dog, here!

Here, dog, here!
Stop the cow!
See she's straying!
Look! Look!
Run, Run,
Be quick!
Go! Head off the red one.
Prr!
That's it!
Now leave her alone!
Come, come, come here!

A pretty shepherdess

A pretty shepherdess
On a certain morning,
Sat on the grass,
Weeping for her dear friend!

"Oh dear, by this hour
He should have returned!
To another shepherdess
He must have given his heart!

"Ah! poor shepherdess!
I'm abandoned here
Like the turtledove
Who's lost her mate!"

They said

They said,
Pierre, that you loved the girls,
They said,
Pierre, that you loved wine!
I love all of it,
From wine to girls,
But if I had to choose,
I'd rather have wine!

If love
Is built on ashes,
Its foundations
Will blow away in the wind!
If the wind blows,
It will carry away the ashes,
But as for me,
Always, I'm in torment!

You've taken my heart,

Pierrou, lou cur engadjé,
Lou m'as ogut,
Né t'èro pas detsut!
Sé djomay pus
Oquo né t'orribabo,
Omb' lou coutel
T'escourgorio lo pell!

Pierre, stolen it away,
Taken it from me,
When it was not yours!
If you try that again,
Make such trouble,
I'll take my knife
And remove your skin!