

CSUSB  
Opera Theatre Presents

# Winterreise

## December Songs

by Franz Schubert and Maury Yeston

Featuring the CSUSB Opera Theatre Ensemble

Stacey Fraser, Director

Alastair Edmonstone, Music Director

Cat Erickson, Wardrobe

Eddie Loredó & Dustin Pham, Sound Design

Angeles Medina Morales, Lobby Display Coordinator

## CSUSB Opera Theatre Ensemble

Abigail Metzger soprano

Gabriel Drozco, tenor

Bailey Solis, tenor

Mikey Sosa, tenor

Luis Bautista, baritone and electric guitar

Nicholas Flores, baritone

Cesar Garcia, electric guitar

11/6/2025

7:00 PM/PA 102

 CSUSB

# Director's Note



The CSUSB Opera Theatre, now in its 19th season, is proud to present excerpts from Franz Schubert's *Winterreise* paired with Maury Yeston's *December Songs*, a modern retelling of Schubert's iconic song cycle.

The story of *Winterreise* centers around a single character, a man who has been forsaken by his beloved and wanders the wintry landscape of the Vienna woods, consumed by disappointment and bitterness. The poems, written by Wilhelm Müller, were discovered by Schubert in 1826. Schubert, in his own embittered existence, either due to professional ups and downs or his failing health, was enamored by Müller's poetry and set the first twelve songs of the collection in 1827. This is not to say the cycle is autobiographical, but the themes of longing, spirituality, and nature, ever present in 19th-century German Lieder, certainly seemed to speak volumes to Schubert at this particular time in his life.

Joseph von Spaun, a close friend of Schubert, recounted the experience of hearing the initial twelve songs for the first time. These pieces were performed by Schubert himself prior to their debut by the baritone Johann Michael Vogl, who regularly collaborated with the composer.

"... Schubert's mood became more gloomy, and he seemed upset. When I asked him what the matter was, he merely said, 'You will soon hear and understand. Come to Schober's and I will sing a cycle of awe-inspiring songs. I am anxious for your opinion of them, for they have affected me more than any of my earlier songs.' So, in a voice wrought with emotion, he sang the whole of *Winterreise* to us, accompanying himself on the piano. We were quite dumbfounded by the black mood of the songs, and Schober said he liked only one, 'Der Lindenbaum.' To which Schubert said, 'Wait. You will learn to appreciate them.' He was right. Soon we were enthusiastic over the profound effect of these melancholy songs, which Vogl performed in a masterly way."

He later completed the entire cycle of 24 songs just a year before his death in 1828. Tonight, we present eight of the songs from the original collection of 12, told through the seven different voices (two of which are represented on electric guitar) of our CSUSB Opera Theatre ensemble.

We have paired these excerpts with Maury Yeston's updated take on the Schubert original. Yeston, known as one of Broadway's great composers, whose works include the Tony award-winning shows *Nine* and *Grand Hotel*, tells Müller's story through the eyes of a woman, who, like the male wanderer of the Schubert cycle, has been disappointed in love and wanders the landscape of a cold and snowy Central Park in New York City. In contrast to Schubert's cycle, she seems to find peace in the end, as can be heard in both the uplifting motives and tempi. This is a stark contrast to the Schubert original, which is also demonstrated through Yeston's choice of using major keys, thus giving us hope that the "Wanderer" might be reborn.

We hope you enjoy our concert version of this story of this Gothic tale told through the music of two composers, centuries apart, but whose themes continue to resonate throughout time.

Stacey Fraser, Director

# Program

**Winterreise** . . . . . **Franz Schubert (1797-1828)**  
**Wilhelm Müller (1784-1897)**

**Gute Nacht**

**Die Wetterfahne (in English)**

**Gefrönte Tränen**

**Erstarrung**

**Auf dem Flusse (in English)**

**Rückblick**

**Einsamkeit**

**December Songs** . . . . . **Maury Yeston (b. 1945)**

**December Snow**

**Where are you now?**

**Bookseller in the Rain**

**I had a dream about you**

**By the River**

**What a Relief**

# CSUSB Opera Theatre



**THE CSUSB OPERA THEATRE** is an auditioned ensemble that stages a major opera production on campus every year. The innovative, modern, and zany adaptations of both standard operatic repertoire and new operatic works that have been produced by the CSUSB Opera Theatre have led to sold-out performances, as well as rave reviews across the Inland Empire community. Past productions include Offenbach's *Monsieur Choufleuri*, Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*, Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, Mozart's *Impresario* and *Così fan Tutte*, Maria de Buenos Aires by Astor Piazzolla, *Monkey See Monkey Do*, *Tango*, Concert Suite from *Frida*, *La Curandera* by Robert Xavier Rodríguez and their acclaimed Quentin Tarantino-inspired production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. CSUSB Opera Theatre produced the first abridged university production of Philip Glass' *Einstein on the Beach* featuring an all-Hispanic cast. Recent productions include a film adaptation of Missy Mazzoli's *Song from the Uproar*, an original staging of John Adams' *I was looking at the ceiling and then I saw the sky* and *Book of Longing* by Leonard Cohen and Philip Glass. This past April 2025, the CSUSB Opera Theatre presented a world premiere staging of the *AIDS Quilt Songbook*.

Collaborators of the CSUSB Opera Theatre have included dancer/choreographer Faith Jensen-Ismay of the critically acclaimed San Diego-based dance company Mojalet Dance Collective, Brightwork newmusic, GRAMMY-winning pianist Nadia Shpachenko, the lotusflower new music project, Southern California-based conductors John Mario, Anthony Parnter and Kosta Popovich, Emmy-winning designer Jacqueline Saint-Anne as well as several CSUSB faculty and alumni. The CSUSB Opera Theatre is a proud seven-time recipient of the City of San Bernardino Fine Arts Commission grant and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## Acknowledgements

Dr. Martim Galvão  
CSUSB Department of Music  
CSUSB Department of Theatre Arts

For song texts and additional notes, please scan the QR code.

