

Liberty University School of Music

presents

Student Recital Series

Junior Recital

Alivia Gillispie, *mezzo-soprano*

October 30, 2026

Macel Falwell Recital Hall

MUSIC 305

5:00 PM

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES: JUNIOR RECITAL

Alivia Gillispie, *mezzo-soprano*

Everett Godwin, *piano*

AJ Cantrell, *piano*

Program

Sebben, crudele

Antonio Caldara
(1670-1736)

Everett Godwin, *piano*

Vittoria, mio core!

Giacomo Carissimi
(1605-1674)

Everett Godwin, *piano*

This Little Rose

William Roy
(1928-2003)

Everett Godwin, *piano*

Ich liebe dich

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Everett Godwin, *piano*

Still wie die Nacht

Carl Bohm
(1844-1920)

Everett Godwin, *piano*

I Dreamed a Dream
from Les Misérables (c. 1980)

Claude-Michel Schönberg
(b. 1944)

AJ Cantrell, *piano*

You Keep Getting Better

Alivia Gillispie

AJ Cantrell, *piano*

Lift Your Head

Alivia Gillispie

AJ Cantrell, *piano*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Sebben, crudele

Sebben, crudele by Antonio Caldara is a Baroque song that expresses the pain of loving someone who has caused you hurt. The lyrics describe someone who feels betrayed but still chooses to remain faithful and continue loving. The line, “Although, cruel love, you make me languish,” captures the conflict between emotional pain and continued devotion. Caldara was an Italian Baroque composer known especially for his vocal music, including operas, cantatas, and oratorios. His experience writing for the voice is reflected in the expressive nature of this piece. The simple text and emotional melody work together to communicate heartbreak, loyalty, and love despite suffering.

Vittoria, mio core!

Vittoria, mio core by Giacomo Carissimi, written by Domenico Benigni (1596-1653), is an Italian Baroque song about finding freedom after a painful and deceptive love affair. The singer speaks to his heart, telling it to stop crying because the “slavery of love” is finally over. The woman who caused his suffering through false charm and deceit no longer has control over him, allowing his fear and heartache to disappear. Carissimi was an Italian composer who began his career as a singer and organist and became known for developing the chamber cantata and oratorio. His expressive writing helps communicate the song’s themes of heartbreak and freedom.

This Little Rose

This Little Rose by William Roy sets Emily Dickinson’s (1830-1886) poem about the quiet beauty and fragility of life. It describes a small rose that most people will never notice, but whose absence will still be felt by nature. The bee, butterfly, bird, and breeze each represent how even something small can have an impact on the world around it. The final lines bring attention to how easily the rose can die, creating a bittersweet feeling. William Roy was an American composer, pianist, and songwriter known for his cabaret music and musical “Maggie.” This piece shows his more traditional art song style through Dickinson’s simple but meaningful text.

Ich liebe dich

Ich liebe dich by Ludwig van Beethoven sets Karl Friedrich Herrosee’s (1754-1821) poem about faithful love and the comfort that comes from sharing life with another person. It describes a relationship where both people carry each other’s struggles, offering comfort during difficult moments and celebrating each other’s joys. The final verse becomes a prayer, asking God to bless, protect, and preserve their relationship. Beethoven was a German composer and pianist who played an important role in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras. The simple, sincere text and gentle musical style reflect the warmth, devotion, and lasting commitment expressed throughout the song.

- PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.) -

Still wie die Nacht

Still wie die Nacht by Carl Bohm is a romantic song about wanting a love that is deep, steady, and completely devoted. The lyrics compare love to the quietness of night, the depth of the sea, the heat of steel, and the strength of stone. It expresses a desire for a love that matches their own, promising to give themselves fully in return. Carl Bohm was a German composer and pianist known for his many popular piano pieces and accessible melodies. His music often emphasized beautiful, memorable tunes, and *Still wie die Nacht* reflects this through its expressive, lyrical melody.

I Dreamed a Dream

I Dreamed a Dream by Claude-Michel Schönberg comes from the musical *Les Misérables*, which he composed in collaboration with Alain Boublil. Schönberg began his career as a singer, songwriter, and producer before becoming known for his work in musical theatre. His music often combines strong melodies with dramatic storytelling, allowing the emotions of the characters to come through clearly. This piece is written as a solo for Fantine and serves as an important moment in her story. The music gradually builds in intensity, creating a dramatic and emotional performance. The song demonstrates Schönberg's ability to combine musical theatre with expressive, classical-influenced vocal writing.

You Keep Getting Better

This song is written from the perspective of someone who has just given their life to Jesus, inviting listeners to remember their own moment of surrender and what it felt like to step into faith. The repeated line "it keeps getting better" expresses awe while grounding the chorus through repetition. The sliding chord progression creates tension and hope, inviting the listener to lean in. Minor seventh chords, especially 3m7 and 2m7, avoid strong resolution and mirror growth rather than arrival. The second verse draws from John 4 and the woman at the well, while the bridge builds momentum through ascending chords. At its core, the song emphasizes simple, meaningful faith.

Lift Your Head

This song is one of hope, written in response to a prompt to write for someone struggling with depression. I reflected on simple lessons my mom taught me, like smiling at others and choosing kindness, and how small acts can make a bigger impact than we realize. The song moves through different seasons of life, with dramatic dynamics supporting the personal story. The first verse reflects introspection, while the second introduces Christianity and a new perspective. The bridge arrives at the reassurance that the Lord is in control, allowing us to release fear and worry into His hands. Musically, the shifting dynamics reinforce the song's movement from reflection and worry toward hope and reassurance.

I would like to thank my professor, Dr. Ready, for the tremendous effort you have invested in developing me and my craft. You have taught me so much about my voice and how I can use my gift in many ways to glorify God. I would also like to thank my family for supporting me through every song selection, outfit preparation, and stressful phone call along the way. From my heart to yours, thank you.



Alivia is a student of Dr. Nirva Ready.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music in Commercial Music: Songwriting Concentration degree.

**We would like to thank the
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their faithful support of the School of Music.**

Dr. Dondi Costin, President
Dr. Stephen Müller, Dean, School of Music
The School of Music Administration, Faculty, and Staff

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