

# HOUGHTON COLLEGE

GREATBATCH SCHOOL OF MUSIC

*presents*

*Jennifer Trost, Soprano  
&  
Svetlana Rodionova, Piano*

*in recital and masterclass*

Recital Hall  
Center for the Arts  
Monday, October 30, 2017  
6 p.m., 7:15 p.m.

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## *Program*

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***On the Seashore of Endless Worlds***

John Alden Carpenter  
(1876-1951)

Kaleigh Kenney, *Mezzo-Soprano*  
Alyssa Pyne, *Piano*

***Must the Winter Come So Soon? from Vanessa***

Samuel Barber  
(1910-1981)

Jiayao Lu, *Soprano*  
Alyssa Pyne, *Piano*

***Widmung***

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

Daniel Bussey, *Baritone*  
Alyssa Pyne, *Piano*

- *brief intermission* -

***Beethoven's Slippers***

Judith Cloud  
(b. 1954)

Jennifer Trost, *Soprano*  
Svetlana Rodionova, *Piano*

As a courtesy to the performers and your fellow audience members, please be certain that all cell phones, watch alarms, and pagers are either turned off or set for silent operation. Flash photography can be very disconcerting to performers and is not permitted during the performance. Thank you for your cooperation.

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## *Program Notes*

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Soprano Jennifer Trost is presently on tour with *Beethoven's Slippers*, a 30-minute work she commissioned from composer/mezzo-soprano Judith Cloud. The premiere was staged as a one-act opera at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, where Dr. Cloud is Vocal Studies Coordinator; the accompaniment consisted of piano and string trio. The text is from Douglas Atwill's story of the same name, which appears in a collection of his short stories entitled *Husband Memory Pickles and Eleven Other Stories*. Atwill's subtitle for the story states that this is "A monodrama libretto for a full-bodied woman's voice, speaking and singing with an accompanying string quartet." At the premiere, Douglas Atwill provided backdrops for the monodrama, which he designed, since he is both an author and artist.

The current tour consists of the piano/vocal version of this work. The work is sprinkled with quotes from Beethoven, Satie, Liszt, Brahms, Hindemith, and Schoenberg. The quotes serve to create contrast and variety in the music while underlining the emotional aspects of the story.

### Synopsis

The setting is the living room of an adobe house in Santa Fe, on December 16th—Beethoven's birthday—in the mid 1980s. The Woman, a wealthy Southerner who lives alone, is entertaining some friends in the late afternoon with martinis. (The friends are never seen, or they may be the on-stage trio and pianist.) The Woman is reminiscing about Charles, the great love of her life, and their time together in Paris, then in Santa Fe. As she had given Charles their "two-seater" as a parting gift, the only memento she has are the slippers that once belonged to Beethoven. An amateur pianist, she plays Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 15 in D major, Op. 28 with everyone seated around her; she receives "a small rain of applause" when she has finished. Someone takes a snapshot of the soirée, "the fresh-faced crowd" surrounding the Woman "with raised glasses of white burgundy, forefingers pointing down to the slippers." Some months later, she says to imaginary friends who had gathered in her home that she "sent Charles and his farmland heiress a snapshot of the soirée." The Woman remembers her friends had said the evening celebrating Beethoven's birthday "was magic, but Charles never wrote back."

Librettist Douglas Atwill writes: "There is throughout the story a sense of sadness that she never let go of the memory of an unsatisfactory lover or went on to another. She holds onto a gentle rancor right to the end, deeper than her words would suggest."



*Production photo from the world premiere at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ on November 3, 2016*

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## *Biographies*

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**Jennifer Trost** is active as an opera singer, recitalist, voice teacher, and masterclass technician. The majority of her career has been spent as a soprano – first as a lyric soprano and finally as a young-dramatic soprano. She is now singing both soprano and mezzo-soprano repertoire.

Her first professional engagements were as a resident artist at the Los Angeles Music Center Opera (now the Los Angeles Opera) and as an apprentice artist at the Santa Fe Opera. Following those experiences, her career was based in Germany where she spent four years as a leading soprano with the Wuppertal Opera and nine years as a soprano soloist at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. Favorite roles were the Countess in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Elettra in Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Tatiana in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Mařenka in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, and Ortlinde in Wagner's *Die Walküre*. She was privileged to work regularly with well-known conductors such as Lorin Maazel, Wolfgang Sawallisch, James Levine, and especially Zubin Mehta, general music director of the Bavarian State Opera. Trost sang as a guest artist at the Komische Oper in Berlin, the National Theater in Mannheim, the Salzburg Music Festival, the Opéra de Paris Garnier, the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, Italy, the British Broadcasting Corporation (Proms) in London, the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Hollywood Bowl, the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, the Munich Radio Orchestra, and the Munich Philharmonic. She sang the role of Magdalena (a role specifically composed for her) in the world premiere of Aribert Reimann's *Bernarda Albas Haus*.

As a recitalist, Trost has frequently collaborated with Arlene Shrut, performing works by Wagner, Berg, Debussy, Schumann, and Ben Moore, among others. A highlight of their collaboration was the premiere of *Four Songs of the Heart*, a cycle written specifically for them by Judith Cloud, based on poems by Kathleen Raine. Judith Cloud recently wrote another piece for Trost, a monodrama called *Beethoven's Slippers* (for voice, piano and string trio) based on a text by Douglas Atwill. The world premiere took place at Northern Arizona University in November 2016. After additional performances in Los Angeles, Trost is touring the work in the piano/voice version in Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, and New Jersey.

Trost earned her bachelor's degree in music education at Albion College in Albion, Michigan; a Master of Music degree in applied voice at Michigan State University, and took advanced courses at the doctoral level at the University of Southern California. She taught three years at the Richard Strauss Conservatory in Munich, Germany followed by a year spent as a visiting associate professor of

voice and acting head of the voice area at the University of California-Santa Barbara. She is currently an associate professor at The Pennsylvania State University, where she teaches voice, as well as the song literature and opera literature courses.

Trost is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and the National Opera Association. For several summers, she was a member of the Artist Faculty at the Brevard Music Center in Brevard, North Carolina.

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Pianist **Svetlana Rodionova** has captivated European and American audiences with her unique blend of artistry and skill. Svetlana began her performing career in her native city of St. Petersburg, Russia, where she earned her doctorate from the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory. She performed numerous solo recitals and chamber concerts, both in St. Petersburg and on officially sponsored tours of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. During this period, Svetlana was considered among the most promising young musicians of her city. Among the many honors she received in St. Petersburg was the distinction of being the last student of the prominent teacher Moisei Halfin.

In 1992, despite the offer of a professorship at the Conservatory, Svetlana chose to emigrate to the West, settling first in Barcelona, Spain. There she assumed a professorship at the Escola de Música Virtèlia. Eventually moving to America, Svetlana has performed solo recitals, concerti and chamber music throughout the country. Her playing can be heard on the album *American Tango* on the CALA Record label. Since coming to State College, Svetlana has appeared as soloist with the Nittany Valley Symphony, with whom she most recently performed the *Piano Concerto* of Edvard Grieg, the Penn's Woods Festival Orchestra, and the Pennsylvania Centre Orchestra. When not featured as a soloist, Svetlana can often be seen on stage as keyboardist with the Nittany Valley Symphony. Svetlana and her husband, Matt Patton, divide their time between State College and Barcelona.

### **Judith Cloud, composer**

Composer Judith Cloud's gift for vocal writing was born out of her own rich experiences as an accomplished mezzo-soprano soloist. Born in 1954 in Reidsville, NC, Cloud sang with her musical family in church services, where her first mentor, Dr. Ruth Graham, introduced her to music ranging from Bach to Britten. Later, Cloud entered the North Carolina School of the Arts, where she studied voice, conducting and composition. Her composition studies were with Robert Ward and Roy Johnson. Vocal instruction was with Janice Harsanyi, a champion of 20th-century American composers and an amateur composer, herself.

Cloud's music, built on romantic principals, is at once lyrical, rhythmically challenging and harmonically intriguing. Her catalog includes numerous vocal, choral and instrumental works. Most notable is her cantata "Feet of Jesus" set to poems by Langston Hughes. In 2009 she was awarded first place for the Sorel Medallion in Choral Composition with her piece for chorus and guitar, "Anacreontics." Cloud has created a niche for herself in the pantheon of American composers of art song.

Dr. Cloud is Coordinator of Voice at Northern Arizona University, in Flagstaff, Arizona, where she has taught since 1989.

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### **Douglas Atwill, librettist**

Artist and writer Douglas Atwill received his Prima Diploma from the Università Italiana per Stranieri in Perugia, Italy in 1958. He then received his BA from the University of Texas at Austin and then pursued graduate studies there. Douglas Atwill lives in Santa Fe, where he paints landscapes of New Mexico. He has also written several books for the Sunstone Press including *Why I Won't Be Going to Lunch Anymore*, *The Galisteo Escarpment*, *Imperial Yellow*, *Creep Around the Corner* and *The Oyster Shell Driveway*. Atwill's story, *Beethoven's Slippers*, appears in his book *Husband Memory Pickles and Eleven Other Stories*, which was printed by Sunstone Press in 2014.



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