IAN BOSTRIDGE

MUSICAL IDENTITIES

The University of Chicago Division of the Humanities returns with the Seventh Annual Berlin Family Lecture series. This year, the event is a fully digital celebration of the power of music to explore musical identities.

REGISTRATION FOR THESE VIRTUAL LECTURES IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT BERLINFAMILYLECTURES.UCHICAGO.EDU
Acclaimed tenor Ian Bostridge looks at how classical music can express the inexpressible: the nature of existence; the fluidity of identity; the inevitability of death. Through three Berlin Family Lectures focused on “Musical Identities,” Bostridge sets out to explore and evaluate some of the works at the very center of the classical vocal repertoire, asking how they construct identities—historically, poetically, and musically.

LECTURE 1: IDENTITY IN PERFORMANCE
APRIL 11, 2021

Classical music offers a fluid and complex perspective on identity. This lecture will focus on three vocal works from disparate eras, which explore and use identity in different ways:

- Monteverdi’s Renaissance work for narrator and instrumental ensemble, Il Combattimento di Tancred e Clorinda (the battle between Tancred and Clorinda);
- Robert Schumann’s 1840 song cycle for voice and piano, Frauenliebe und Leben (A woman’s life and love); and
- Benjamin Britten’s 20th century “church opera” Curlew River, inspired by Japanese Noh theatre, in which a female protagonist is played by a male singer.

Introductory remarks by:
Anne Walters Robertson, Dean, Division of the Humanities, and the Claire Dux Swift Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Music at the University of Chicago
Berthold Hoeckner, Professor and Chair, Department of Music at the University of Chicago

LECTURE 2: HIDDEN HISTORIES
APRIL 17, 2021

The hidden history of colonialism in the classical music repertoire is rarely acknowledged in the concert hall. This lecture will explore it by taking as a case study Maurice Ravel’s Chansons Madécasses (Songs of Madagascar), a staple of the vocal repertoire, originally composed in the 1920s.

Introductory remarks by:
Anne Walters Robertson, Dean, Division of the Humanities, and the Claire Dux Swift Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Music at the University of Chicago

LECTURE 3: MEDITATIONS ON DEATH
APRIL 24, 2021

The final lecture will look at identity’s ultimate dissolution—death—and explore some of the ways in which classical composers have confronted it, in private and public mode. The lecture focuses on three works by Benjamin Britten:

- The song cycle, The Holy Sonnets of John Donne (1945), written shortly after Britten’s return from Bergen-Belsen;
- The War Requiem (1962); and
- Britten’s last opera based on the novella by Thomas Mann, Death in Venice (1973).

Introductory remarks by:
Martha Feldman, the Edwin A. and Betty L. Bergman Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Music at the University of Chicago

UCHICAGO PRESENTS:
IAN BOSTRIDGE AND IMOGEN COOPER
BEETHOVEN RECITAL

To see Ian Bostridge in performance, UChicago Presents is streaming a Beethoven recital recorded in London’s historic Wigmore Hall from Friday, April 16, to Sunday, April 18, 2021.

Fifteen-time Grammy-nominated tenor Bostridge and poetic pianist Imogen Cooper share Beethoven through some of his most sentimental songs. The pair also show the concentrated surge of creativity unleashed by Robert Schumann when he was at last permitted to marry his love, Clara Wieck.

TO REGISTER FOR THIS SPECIAL CONCERT, CLICK ON:
https://chicagopresents.uchicago.edu/concerts-and-events/concert-stream-ian-bostridge-tenor
Ticket prices: $15, free for UChicago students
ABOUT IAN BOSTRIDGE

Ian Bostridge is an acclaimed tenor, well known for his performance as an opera singer and as a song recitalist. During the past three decades, his international recital career has taken him to the foremost concert halls of Europe, Japan, and North America. His many recordings have won multiple international record prizes and three Grammy awards.

He was awarded a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2004 New Year’s Honours. In 2016, he received the Pol Roger Duff Cooper Prize for nonfiction writing for his latest book, *Schubert’s Winter Journey: Anatomy of an Obsession (2015)*.

Bostridge has always combined his masterful singing with his scholarship. Before he became a full-time professional singer at age 30, Bostridge had earned a DPhil from the University of Oxford and served as post-doctoral fellow at Corpus Christi College in Oxford. His monograph, *Witchcraft and its Transformations 1650–1750*, was published in 1997.

DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Humanities Day 2021**, Saturday, October 16, 2021: Renowned art historian Wu Hung is the Keynote Speaker.
- **Berlin Family Lectures 2022**, Spring 2022: poet and professor Claudia Rankine

ABOUT THE BERLIN FAMILY:

Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin are Chicago philanthropists and longtime supporters of the University of Chicago. Randy Lamm Berlin, AM ’77, is a former lecturer at the University of Chicago Law School and a member and past chairperson of the Division of the Humanities Council. Melvin R. Berlin (March 23, 1929–July 26, 2019) was Chairman Emeritus and founder of Berlin Packaging, LLC. The Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Family Lectures are named in honor of their gift to the Division of the Humanities.

ABOUT THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The Division of the Humanities is one of the University’s five graduate divisions. With 200+ faculty members, 100+ staff members, and about 800 graduate students housed within 20+ departments, centers, institutes, and programs, the Division of the Humanities supports innovative humanistic research through vigorous inquiry. Learn more about our faculty, staff, students, and graduate programs at humanities.uchicago.edu.