

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL *of* MUSIC & DANCE

A Farewell to Arms

Dr. Matthew Cook, Tenor

accompanied by

Yaroslav Gnezdilov, Piano

Eduardo Gutierrez Becerril, Flute

Alexander Music Building Recital Hall

Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan

April 6, 2022 at 7:30 pm

PROGRAM ORDER

This concert is dedicated to the people of Ukraine.

If with all your hearts
Then shall the righteous shine forth
From *Elijah*, Op. 70

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

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Gute Nacht
Die Wetterfahne
Gefror'ne Thränen
From *Winterreise*, D. 911

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

--

Vainement, ma bien-aimée
From *Le Roi d'Ys*

Édouard Lalo
(1823-1892)

--

Brief Intermission

--

Il mio tesoro
From *Don Giovanni*, K. 527
Un'aura amorosa
From *Così fan tutte*, K. 588

W. A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

--

Benedictus
From *Mass in B Minor*, BWV 232

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

--

In Flanders

Ivor Gurney
(1890-1937)

Farewell to Arms

Gerald Finzi
(1901-1956)

Please hold applause until breaks between sets.

Dr. Cook wishes to thank Dr. MeeAe Nam for her constant inspiration in the pursuit of artistry. He also thanks Yaroslav and Eduardo for their musical excellence in the preparation of this recital.

A NOTE ON THE RECITAL THEME

This recital—titled “A Farewell to Arms”—centers thematically on contrasting music of *struggle* and *peace* across universal realms of religion, love, and global war/peace. I have long wanted to perform Finzi’s *Farewell to Arms*, originally written for tenor and small orchestra or strings. Realizing the difficulty of pulling such forces together, I decided to press ahead, programming it with piano instead. It became apparent to me in December 2021 that the title of this work would also be a most fitting thematic framework for the entire recital.

Then, early in the Winter semester, the geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe began to ratchet up intensity in ways previously thought to be impossible in the post-Cold War Era.

Then Russia illegally invaded Ukraine, leading to a war (still on-going, as of this writing) with tragic loss of life and widespread destruction of Ukrainian cities.

War is, of course, nothing new: historical research tells us that in the last 3,400 years of known human history, human kind has been completely at peace (with no active wars) for *only about 8 percent of that time*. And yet, the current conflict feels far more threatening, as we stand on the precipice of a tragedy with the potential to escalate into something even more violent with global implications.

This conflict also hits close to home. My dear friend and collaborative pianist Yaroslav is from Ukraine, still having family and friends in the country. One of my cousins is an adopted Ukrainian, and some of my extended family have been missionaries in Kyiv and Lviv.

What, then, should we do? We do what we can. We give to worthy causes to aid those in desperate need. We call attention to violent atrocities—these events must not be denied, forgotten, or swept under the rug.

And we continue to make music.

For our shared humanity. For our souls. For peace.

PERFORMER BIOS

Matthew Cook, Ph.D. is a Second Bachelor's student in EMU's Bachelor of Arts in Music degree program and Associate Professor in Historic Preservation and Cultural Geography. Cook sings professionally with a variety of ensembles in the region including the EMU Choir, Baroque on Beaver Festival Chorus, Mariners' Church of Detroit, and the Detroit Concert Choir. He is a student of Dr. MeeAe Nam.

Ukrainian native **Yaroslav Gnezdilov, M.M.** is a concert pianist and winner of international competitions in the USA and Europe. He is an alumnus of Eastern Michigan University, a member of Tuesday Musicale of Detroit and Ann Arbor Comic Opera Guild. Yaroslav currently gives solo and collaborative concerts with professional musicians across the USA.

Eduardo Gutierrez Becerril is a junior Music Performance–Flute Primary student in the EMU School of Music and Dance. He is a student of Dr. Julie Stone.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

If with all your hearts

Text from Joel 2: 2-13

Ye people, rend your hearts
rend your hearts, and not your
garments,

for your transgressions
even as Elijah hath sealed the
heavens
through the word of God.

I therefore say to you,
forsake your idols,
return to God;
for He is slow to anger,

and merciful, and kind, and
gracious,
and repenteth Him of the evil.

—

"If with all your hearts ye truly
seek me,
ye shall ever find me,"
Thus saith our God.

Oh! that I knew where I might
find Him,
That I might even come before
His presence.

Then shall the righteous shine forth

Text from Matthew 13:43

Then, then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in their heav'nly
Father's realm.

Joy on their head shall be for everlasting, and all sorrow and
mourning shall flee away for ever.

I. Gute Nacht

II. Die Wetterfahne

III. Gefror'ne Thränen

Poet: Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827)

Gute Nacht

Fremd bin ich eingezogen,
Fremd zieh' ich wieder aus.
Der Mai war mir gewogen
Mit manchem Blumenstrauss.
Das Mädchen sprach von Liebe,
Die Mutter gar von Eh'—
Nun ist die Welt so trübe,
Der Weg gehüllt in Schnee.

Ich kann zu meiner Reisen
Nicht wählen mit der Zeit:
Muss selbst den Weg mir weisen
In dieser Dunkelheit.
Es zieht ein Mondenschatten
Als mein Gefährte mit,
Und auf den weissen Matten
Such' ich des Wildes Tritt.

Was soll ich länger weilen,
Dass man mich trieb' hinaus?
Lass irre Hunde heulen
Vor ihres Herren Haus!
Die Liebe liebt das Wandern,
Gott hat sie so gemacht—
Von einem zu dem andern—
Fein Liebchen, gute Nacht.

Will dich im Traum nicht stören,
Wär' Schad' um deine Ruh',
Sollst meinen Tritt nicht hören—
Sacht, sacht die Türe zu!
Schreib' im Vorübergehen
An's Tor dir gute Nacht,
Damit du mögest sehen,
An dich hab' ich gedacht.

Good Night

I arrived here a stranger,
a stranger I depart.
May was good to me,
with many a bunch of flowers.
The girl spoke of love,
her mother even of marriage.
Now the world is dismal,
the path veiled in snow.

For my journey,
I cannot choose my own time;
I must choose the path myself
through this darkness.
My moon-cast shadow follows
as my only companion,
and on the white meadow,
I search for the tracks of deer.

Why should I stay longer—
until someone drives me away?
Let stray dogs howl
outside the master's house.
Love loves to wander—
God has made it so—
from one to another.
Sweetheart, goodnight!

I will not disturb your dreams:
That would disturb your rest.
You shall not hear my footsteps—
Softly, softly shut the door!
As I leave, I will write
"Goodnight" upon your gate,
so that you might see
that I thought of you.

Die Wetterfahne

Der Wind spielt mit der
Wetterfahne
Auf meines schönen Liebchens Haus.
Da dacht' ich schon in meinem Wahne,
Sie piff' den armen Flüchtling
aus.

Er hätt' es eher bemerken sollen,
Des Hauses aufgestecktes Schild,
So hätt' er nimmer suchen wollen
Im Haus ein treues Frauenbild.

Der Wind spielt drinnen mit den Herzen,
Wie auf dem Dach, nur nicht so laut.
Was fragen sie nach meinen
Schmerzen?
Ihr Kind ist eine reiche Braut.

Gefror'ne Thränen

Gefrorne Tropfen fallen
Von meinen Wangen ab:
Ob es mir denn entgangen,
Dass ich geweinet hab'?

Ei Tränen, meine Tränen,
Und seid ihr gar so lau,
Dass ihr erstarrt zu Eise,
Wie kühler Morgentau?

Und dringt doch aus der Quelle
Der Brust so glühend heiss,
Als wolltet ihr zerschmelzen
Des ganzen Winters Eis.

The Weathervane

The wind is playing with the
weathervane
On my lovely sweetheart's house.
There I thought, in my delusion,
It was whistling to mock the poor
fugitive.

He should have noticed it sooner,
On this house was fixed a sign,
Then he would never have sought
A faithful woman within this house.

Inside, the wind plays with hearts,
As on the roof, only not as loudly.
Why should they care about my
grief?
Their child is a rich bride.

Frozen Tears

Frozen drops fall
From my cheeks;
Could it be, then, I did not notice
That I have been weeping?

Ah tears—my tears,
And are you so tepid,
That you turn to ice,
Like the cold morning dew?

And yet you spring up from the source
Within my breast, so scorching hot
As if you would melt
All of Winter's ice.

Text Translations by Dr. Cook

Vainement, ma bien-aimée

Librettist: Édouard Blau (1836-1906)

Puisqu'on ne peut fléchir
ces jalouses gardiennes,
Ah! laissez-moi conter
mes peines et mon émoi!

Since one cannot sway
those jealous protectresses,
ah, let me tell
my sorrows and my feeling!

Vainement, ma bien-aimée,
on croit me désespérer;
près de ta porte fermée
je veux encor demeurer!
Les soleils pourront s'éteindre,
Les nuits remplacer les jours,
Sans t'accuser et sans me plaindre,
Là je resterai, toujours!

In vain, my beloved,
they think they're making me desperate;
near your closed door
I still wish to dwell!
The suns will die out,
the nights replace the days,
before I reproach you and before I complain.
There I will remain, forever!

Je le sais, ton âme est douce,
et l'heure bientôt viendra
où la main qui me repousse
vers la mienne se tendra!
Ne sois pas trop tardive
à te laisser attendrir!
Si Rozenn bientôt n'arrive,
je vais, hélas, mourir!

I know your soul is sweet,
and the hour will soon come
when the hand that spurns me
will reach out toward mine!
Do not be too late
in letting your heart soften!
If Rozenn doesn't come soon,
alas, I'm going to die!

Text Translations by Martha Gerhart (Larsen 1991: 17)

Il mio tesoro

Librettist: Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838)

Il mio tesoro intanto
andate a consolar,
e del bel ciglio il pianto
cercate di asciugar.

Go, meanwhile, to console
my beloved;
and try to dry the tears
from her beautiful eyes.

Ditele che i suoi torti
a vendicar io vado:
che sol di stragi e morti
nunzio vogl'io tornar, sì!

Tell her I am going off
to avenge her wrongs...
that I will come back
messenger only of ravages
and death—yes!

Text Translations by Martha Gerhart (Larsen 1991: 7)

Un'aura amorosa

Librettist: Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838)

Un'aura amorosa del nostro tesoro	A loving breath from our beloved
un dolce ristoro al cor porgerà	will grant sweet solace to the heart,
al cor che nudrito da speme d'amore	to the heart which, fed by hope of love,
d'un esca migliore bisogno non ha.	has no need for better nourishment.

Text Translations by Martha Gerhart (Larsen 1991: 8)

Benedictus

From the Latin Liturgical Mass

Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

In Flanders

Poet: Frederick William Harvey (1888-1957)

I'm homesick for my hills again -
My hills again!
To see above the Severn plain,
Unscabbarded against the sky,
The blue high blade of Cotswold lie;
The giant clouds go royally
By jagged Malvern with a train
Of shadows. Where the land is low
Like a huge imprisoning O
I hear a heart that's sound and high,
I hear the heart within me cry:
'I'm homesick for my hills again -
My hills again!
Cotswold or Malvern, sun or rain!
My hills again!

Geographical notes:

The Severn Valley is a rural part of the West Midlands, England. The Cotswolds and the Malvern Hills are both rural areas of rolling hills (the tallest peak is only about 1,300 feet) in south-central England that surround the Severn Valley.

Farewell to Arms

Poets: *Introduction* Ralph Knevet (1600-1671),

Aria George Peele (c.1558-c.1597)

Introduction

The helmet now an hive for bees becomes,
And hilts of swords may serve for spiders' looms;
 Sharp pikes may make
 Teeth for a rake;
And the keen blade, th'arch enemy of life,
Shall be degraded to a pruning knife.
 The rustic spade
 Which first was made
For honest agriculture, shall retake
Its primitive employment, and forsake
 The rampires steep
 And trenches deep.
Tame conies in our brazen guns shall breed,
Or gentle doves their young ones there shall feed.
 In musket barrels
 Mice shall raise quarrels
For their quarters. The ventriloquious drum,
Like lawyers in vacations, shall be dumb.
 Now all recruits,
 But those of fruits,
Shall be forgot; and th'unarmed soldier
Shall only boast of what he did whilere,
 In chimneys' ends
 Among his friends.

Aria

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;
 O time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing.
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
 But spurned in vain; youth waneth by increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
 And lovers' sonnets turn to holy psalms:
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
 And feed on prayers, which are age's alms:
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

COMPOSER BIOS AND SONG NOTES

Among the most versatile musicians in German Romantic canon, **Felix Mendelssohn** (1809-1847) was the grandson of pre-eminent Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, who argued for social tolerance and assimilation of Jews in Germany in the late 1700s. Felix and his older sister Fanny began musical training at an early age under their mother, Lea, which continued in Paris when Felix was 7. So great was Felix's talent that his father paid for him to study piano and violin with professional musicians in Berlin. While their father limited Fanny's musical ambitions (as pursuing a career was largely impossible for women in German high society of the early 1800s), Felix was encouraged to compose, writing in a range of musical genres including for keyboard, chamber instruments, and sacred choral works from his pre-teen years onward. He achieved particularly noteworthy success with his oratorios after becoming "thoroughly infected with a fever for the genre" following his rediscovery of J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* (Keller 2010: 8). In 1821, Mendelssohn received a manuscript copy of the *Passion* from his grandmother. This gift later enabled Mendelssohn to conduct a performance of the work in 1829, widely considered to have sparked the rebirth of interest in the music of Bach and the beginnings of the field of musicology. While his own compositional output was not as adventurous as his contemporaries and he died of poor health at a relatively early age, Mendelssohn's compositions are among the most popular in Western classical music.

If with all your hearts and its preceding recitative **Ye people, rend your hearts**, are the third and fourth movements of Part I of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*. In these combined works, Mendelssohn draws upon texts from the Old Testament to give to Obadiah to speak to the people of Israel to repent from their idolatry. Obadiah speaks to Elijah's power as a prophet of Yahweh, ascribing to Elijah the power to have "sealed the heavens," in other words: causing the drought that Israel faced. Not one to pass the judgment, however, Obadiah immediately provides the remedy: forsake all idols and return to God.

Then shall the righteous shine forth, also from *Elijah*, is the 39th movement, coming in Part II of the oratorio. As the final solo aria, it occurs at the end of Elijah's life when he is taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot driven by fiery horses. The aria and the final two choruses of the oratorio anticipate the coming of the Messiah.

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) is among the best known and most frequently performed composers of the early 19th century. Spanning the Late Classical and Early Romantic eras of Western classical music, Schubert’s compositional output in so short a lifetime (dying at age 31 of what most scholars believe was syphilis) is overwhelmingly phenomenal: he composed seven complete symphonies, a large body of piano and chamber music, incidental music and operas, and over 600 *Lieder*, for which he is perhaps best known (Siepmann 2002). Schubert—identified early on for his aptitude at the violin, viola, and piano—grew up during a period of Viennese history that saw two French occupations in 1805 and 1809, which led to substantial monetary crises and food shortages. After Napoleon’s defeat in 1814, however, Vienna became a primary center of European culture and commercial activity. It was against this backdrop that a substantial shift in the political economy of the day (away from nobility and landed gentry toward a form of capitalism that favored bankers and businessmen) led to the decline of the musical patronage system and instead left composers to their own devices to find income through sales of their musical works, as teachers, and as performers. Schubert, it has been said, was terrible at this system (Siepmann 2002: 11 argues that Schubert had an “extraordinary lack of business acumen”) and lived much of his life with a meager existence, first as a school teacher (to avoid conscription into the army), and later in a largely Bohemian lifestyle supported both in terms of lodging and financially by his friends. The combination of his situation—hovering just above poverty, dependency on his friends, and his inability to marry his love interest on multiple occasions (thanks to draconian marriage-consent laws in Austria)—is greatly reflected through Schubert’s compositional style and his music’s themes of depression, despair, sorrow, and wandering.

Gute Nacht, translating to “goodnight”, is normally a phrase one would think of as an ending: said at the end of a day, meeting, or journey to a friend or loved one, perhaps. However, Schubert begins *Winterreise* with this song, establishing from the outset that this is no normal story. Wilhelm Müller’s poetic cycle begins with some hints as to how the story will end: intentionally vague and fragmented (details are scarce, as was common in European storytelling of this age) but containing elements of exile, alienation, loss, and possible forthcoming insanity. Although the narrator/singer’s position or situation is not made clear (Who is he? Who is she—the love interest? Why is he in the house but now leaving?), Bostridge (2015) provides

evidence that one possible backstory (should the audience need it) is that the narrator may have been an in-house tutor for a wealthy family who fell in love with the daughter he was charged with teaching—a completely plausible situation in 19th century Central Europe.

As the second movement in the cycle, **Die Wetterfahne** picks up immediately where *Gute Nacht* ends. The nameless singer (perhaps intended to be Schubert himself?) begins making his departure from the house where he fell in love and presumably worked as a live-in tutor. Similarly, in the third movement **Gefror'ne Thränen** the singer notices after some time that he has been weeping, commenting on the contrasting nature of his tears (cold like the morning dew, yet so hot that they could melt all the ice of winter.) Although not the composer's intent, both movements are capable of standing on their own comfortably as German *Lied* outside of the cycle, as they deal with the very common German *Lieder* themes "Herz und Schmerz."

Édouard Lalo (1823–1892) was a French composer who, like many of the composers on this recital, began musical studies early with string instruments, but was later discouraged from serious musical study by his father (Macdonald 2001). This prompted Lalo to leave home at age 16 to further pursue a musical education in Paris. Lalo is primarily known for orchestral compositions, writing only three operas that were not major successes during his lifetime and are rarely performed today. The aria from Lalo's second opera *Le Roi d'Ys* (The King of Ys), **Vainement, ma bien-aimée**, is one of the most commonly recorded and performed of his vocal music, a tenor aria in which the character Mylio is singing to his betrothed, Rozenn, the daughter of the king. As was custom in Breton, France, Rozenn's door is being guarded by attendants to prevent the groom from entering. Mylio sings this aria just before the wedding processional (Larsen 1991).

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) was arguably the most influential composer of the Classical era whose musical style stands as an archetype of the period. Prodigious from his early childhood, Mozart was the youngest of seven children (only he and his sister Maria Anna, nicknamed "Nannerl," survived to adulthood) born to a musical family, with his father Leopold Mozart a composer and later *Kapellmeister* in Salzburg. Mozart spent much of his childhood at the clavier and wrote his earliest music at ages four or five. Mozart travelled extensively with his family despite the perils of long-distance travel at the time, performing as a child prodigy along with his sister.

From 1769 to 1771, he and his father travelled in Italy, a period in which he famously heard Allegri's *Miserere*—the Vatican's closely guarded musical masterpiece—performed only twice before transcribing it verbatim. Following the successful tour, he traveled in Italy for extended periods in Milan, where he began composing Italian operas. Mozart was employed at court in Salzburg from 1773 to 1777. He eventually grew tired of the "constricting" city of his birth and moved to Vienna in 1781, where his fame continued to rise but the financial ability of the aristocracy to support musicians professionally declined. Despite some financial successes as a keyboardist and with opera compositions during his lifetime, Mozart died in 1791 in a period of financial instability, which frequently plagued his family. However, Mozart's fame took off substantially after his death, as biographers and music publishers rushed to gather information about his life and thrust his compositions into the public sphere (Eisen & Sadie 2001).

Don Giovanni is considered to be among Mozart's greatest achievements and one of the best operas ever written. Although Mozart labeled the opera as an *opera buffa*, the work combines comedy, dramatic tragedy, and supernatural elements. **Il mio tesoro** comes in Act II as Don Ottavio is finally convinced that the seducer Don Giovanni was the person responsible for murdering Donna Anna's father (Larsen 1991). Ottavio exclaims that he will avenge the wrong committed against his beloved Donna Anna, while also promising to comfort her.

Un'aura amorosa comes from Act I of another great Mozartian *opera buffa*, *Così fan tutte* (All women are like that). In the opera, two Neapolitan officers Ferrando and Guglielmo are certain that their fiancées will always be faithful, but are put up to a bet by Don Alfonso that he can prove all women are fickle by disguising the officers as Albanians and having them try to seduce the other's lover (Larsen 1991). In *Un'aura*, Ferrando sings about the power of love and praises his own love after the first attempt at deceiving the two fiancées.

—

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was the most important composer and musician of the late Baroque, known particularly for his extensive orchestral and keyboard compositions, sacred musical output including major choral works such as the Passions and oratorios, and hundreds of cantatas (both sacred and secular). Bach wrote the *Mass in B Minor* one year before his death in 1749, drawing

heavily upon and revising earlier compositions into an extended setting of the Latin Mass Ordinary. The B Minor Mass is one of the pinnacles of choral music excellence, requiring expansive forces in the orchestra and a double chorus, with a typical performance time over two hours. The **Benedictus**, coming in the fourth and final section of the mass, is written as an aria for tenor and obligato instrument, though *which* instrument is, interestingly, not specified! It is commonly performed by flute or violin with continuo accompaniment.

The 20th century English composer and poet **Ivor Gurney** (1890-1937) served as a soldier in World War I, where he began to take seriously his poetic writings while in the misery of trench warfare and life at the Western Front (Boden 2007). Gurney suffered throughout his life from episodes of manic depression and eventually was institutionalized in a mental hospital for the last fifteen years of his life. While at the front, Gurney read the poem **In Flanders** written by Will Harvey in the *Glosters Gazette* (Boden 2007). (Note, this is a different poem than the more commonly-known *In Flanders Fields* by Canadian poet John McCrae.) Harvey had begun his WWI career in part of Belgium, and his lines do not directly address the horrors of war but rather a deep homesickness for the hills of England. Harvey did not survive the war, never returning from a reconnaissance mission.

Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) was an English composer of Italian Jewish descent known primarily for his choral compositions and concertos. Although he was too young to fight in World War I, the horrors of the war affected him directly: he lost three brothers and his music teacher to the war (Tsai 2018), leading him to become a pacifist throughout his life and establishing an often bleak tone to his compositions. Finzi initially studied organ with Edward Bairstow for a time before moving to London in 1925 and eventually meeting Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, also teaching at the Royal Academy of Music.

Finzi began what would eventually become the aria portion of **Farewell to Arms** in the 1920s, using the text from 16th century poet George Peele, "describing an aging warrior whose 'helmet shall make a hive for bees' and who has turned from battle to prayer" (Tsai 2018: 4). The work premiered much later, in 1936. Finzi returned to the work again when, as an avid reader of English poetry, he discovered a second poem around the time of World War II that uses a near-identical line about a helmet becoming a hive for bees, by the 17th century poet Ralph Knevet. This setting became the Introduction, to

Farewell to Arms, which Finzi reworked near the end of the war or shortly thereafter (Tsai 2018).

The full composition is stylistically similar to a Baroque-era recitative and aria, with the Knevet text serving as the recitative, and Peele's older poem as the aria. The aria, written during what has been described as Finzi's "Bach period" is essentially in a Baroque *ritornello* form that bears close resemblance to Bach's cantata *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (Klink n.d.). This cantata, BWV 140, is one of my all-time favorites, so although I did not initially observe the connections between Bach and Finzi's compositions, it now makes great sense why I was so drawn to *Farewell to Arms* from the very first time I heard it.

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Upcoming EMU Voice Area Events

April 7: Lerner/Davis Junior Recital, 7 pm, Honors College

April 10: Opera Workshop Performance, 4 pm, ARH

April 19: A Night at the Opera, 7:30 pm, Pease Auditorium

April 21: Salma Bawardi Senior Recital, 7:30 pm, ARH

April 22: Austin Hadwick MM Conducting Recital, 1 pm,
Honors College

April 22: Myranda Nichter Senior Recital, 6:30 pm,
Honors College

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