

SENIOR RECITAL

DESIRE

WORKS BY HANDEL, BARBER & OBRADORS

KIRA LIM

WITH
BEATRICE LIN
CAO HUI YING



MESSAGE

We all have our own desire. It can take many forms—ambition, love, longing, escape. For me, it has always been the desire to perform, to tell stories, and to embody voices that aren't my own. This recital is the realization of that desire—a chance to step fully into characters who have lived with me in my heart, and to share them with you.

Each piece in this program holds a piece of my heart. Handel's *La Lucretia* is a whirlwind of betrayal, heartbreak, and fiery resolve—a woman pushed to her breaking point, reclaiming her voice in the end. Barber's *Hermit Songs* are delicate and deeply human—glimpses into quiet lives filled with secret longing, humor, and devotion. Obradors' *Canciones clásicas españolas* are full of color, spirit, and flirtation. They remind me that desire can be light, playful, and full of life. Together, these works reflect the many shades of longing—and in many ways, they reflect me.

I have been blessed to be a part of the YST family for the past four years. It has been a journey of growth, challenge, and discovery—both on stage and off. To all the faculty at YST, thank you for teaching me, guiding me, and constantly pushing me to grow. Your passion and generosity have left a mark on me that I will carry for life. Thank you to my professors for all your unwavering guidance, for your honesty, and for always encouraging me to find my own voice. To Beatrice, thank you not only for your artistry but for your friendship. You've been with me through every note, every stumble, every triumph. I couldn't have done this without you. Thank you to all the faculty. To my friends, thank you for surviving the madness of conservatory life with me—for the laughter, the tears, and the late-night pep talks. You've made this journey unforgettable.

To my parents and family, thank you for loving me through every note, every fear, and every dream. Your faith in me has carried me farther than I ever thought I could go. No matter where life takes me, my home will always be with you.

And finally, to everyone here tonight—thank you for being a part of this moment. It is one of the greatest joys of my life to sing for you.

With love,
Kira Lim

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kira Lim".

PROGRAMME

La Lucretia, HWV 145

George Frideric Handel

Recit : O numi eterni!
Aria : Già superbo del mio affanno
Recit : Ma voi forse nel cielo
Aria : Il suol che preme
Recit : Ah! Che ancor nell'abisso
Arioso : Alla salma infedel
Recit : A voi, Padre, consorte
Arioso : Già nel seno

Canciones clásicas españolas

Fernando Obradors

La mi sola Laureola
Al amor
Corazón porqué pasáis
El majo celoso
Del cabello más sutil
Chiquitita la novia
Con amores, la mi madre

Hermit Songs, Op. 29

Samuel Barber

I. At Saint Patrick's Purgatory
II. Church Bell at Night
III. Saint Ita's Vision
IV. The Heavenly Banquet
V. The Crucifixion
VI. Sea-Snatch
VII. Promiscuity
VIII. The Monk and His Cat
IX. The Praises of God
X. The Desire for Hermitage

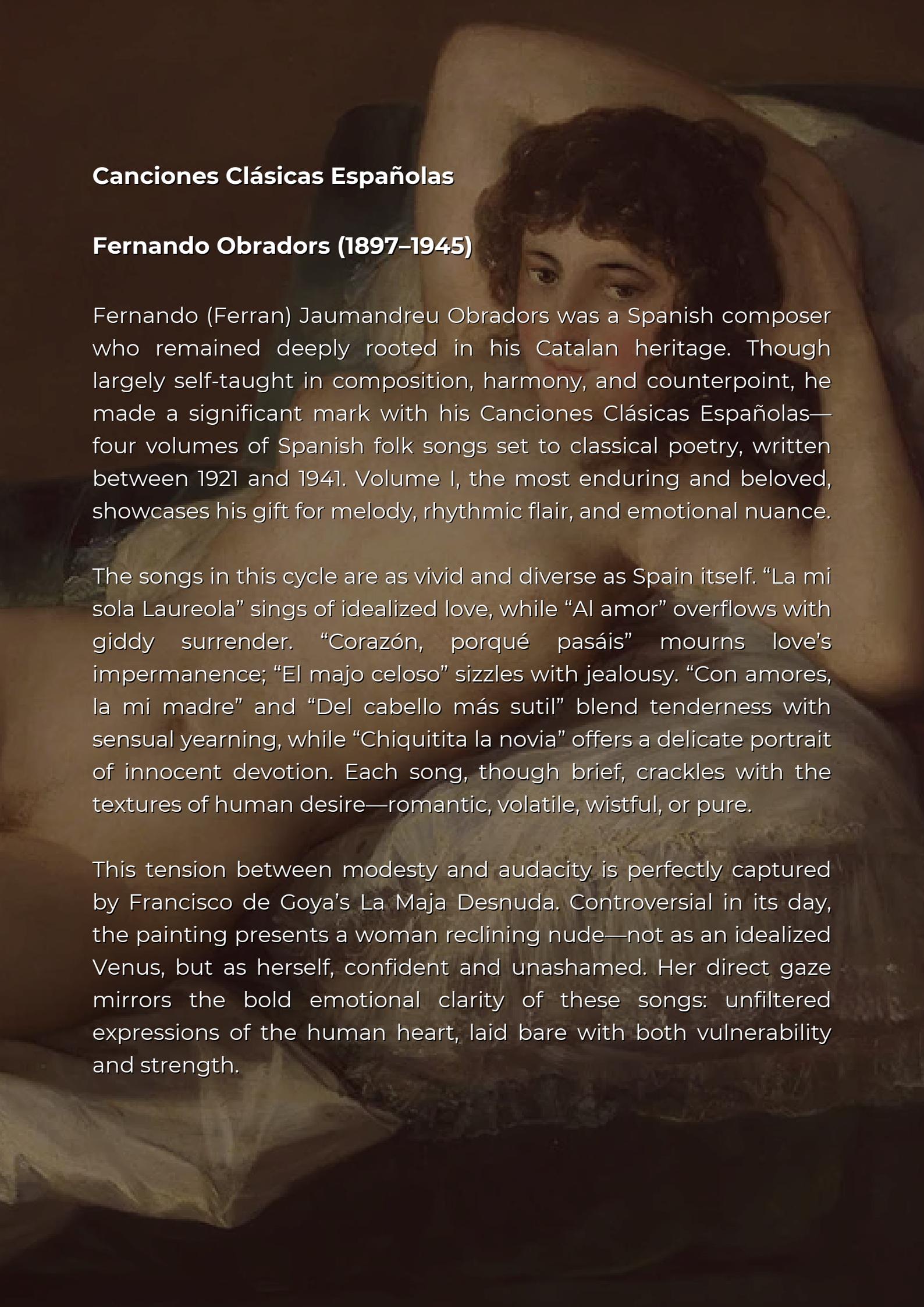
La Lucretia, HWV 145

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Handel's *La Lucretia* is a dramatic cantata that encapsulates the turmoil of the Roman noblewoman Lucretia, whose tragic story has been a source of artistic inspiration for centuries. The cantata follows her psychological descent after being assaulted by Tarquin, the son of the King of Rome. Through eleven emotionally charged arias and recitatives, Lucretia shifts between grief, rage, and despair, culminating in her tragic decision to take her own life to reclaim her honor.

At its core, this is a work fueled by desire—the desire for justice, for retribution, and ultimately, for control over one's own fate. Each movement intensifies her emotional and psychological torment, beginning with the desperate plea to the gods in “O numi eterni!” and culminating in the final devastating resignation, “Ma se qui non m'è dato.” Handel's expressive text painting and dramatic vocal writing underscore Lucretia's burning need to reclaim agency in a world that has taken it from her.

This note is accompanied by the painting *The Death of Lucretia* by Ludovico Mazzanti (Italy, Rome, 1686–1775), created circa 1735–1737. The image captures the precise, heart-wrenching moment when Lucretia takes her own life, a visual parallel to the emotional climax of Handel's cantata. Mazzanti's stark use of light and shadow, combined with the raw physicality of Lucretia's gesture, mirrors the intensity and desperation of the music. Her body is poised in both vulnerability and defiance, embodying the same urgent desire for agency and dignity that drives Handel's composition. The pairing of music and painting deepens our understanding of Lucretia's story—one that is not just tragic, but profoundly human.



Canciones Clásicas Españolas

Fernando Obradors (1897–1945)

Fernando (Ferran) Jaumandreu Obradors was a Spanish composer who remained deeply rooted in his Catalan heritage. Though largely self-taught in composition, harmony, and counterpoint, he made a significant mark with his *Canciones Clásicas Españolas*—four volumes of Spanish folk songs set to classical poetry, written between 1921 and 1941. Volume I, the most enduring and beloved, showcases his gift for melody, rhythmic flair, and emotional nuance.

The songs in this cycle are as vivid and diverse as Spain itself. “La mi sola Laureola” sings of idealized love, while “Al amor” overflows with giddy surrender. “Corazón, porqué pasáis” mourns love’s impermanence; “El majo celoso” sizzles with jealousy. “Con amores, la mi madre” and “Del cabello más sutil” blend tenderness with sensual yearning, while “Chiquitita la novia” offers a delicate portrait of innocent devotion. Each song, though brief, crackles with the textures of human desire—romantic, volatile, wistful, or pure.

This tension between modesty and audacity is perfectly captured by Francisco de Goya’s *La Maja Desnuda*. Controversial in its day, the painting presents a woman reclining nude—not as an idealized Venus, but as herself, confident and unashamed. Her direct gaze mirrors the bold emotional clarity of these songs: unfiltered expressions of the human heart, laid bare with both vulnerability and strength.

Hermit Songs, Op. 29

Samuel Barber (1910–1981)

Barber's *Hermit Songs* (1953) is a cycle of ten songs for voice and piano by Samuel Barber. Written in 1953 on a grant from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation, it takes as its basis a collection of anonymous poems written by Irish monks and scholars from the 8th to the 13th centuries, in translations by W. H. Auden, Chester Kallman, Howard Mumford Jones, Kenneth H. Jackson, and Seán Ó Faoláin. The *Hermit Songs* premiered at the Library of Congress with soprano Leontyne Price and Barber himself at the piano.

Barber described these songs as "small poems, thoughts or observations, some very short," that "speak in straightforward, witty, and often surprisingly modern terms of the simple life they led—close to nature, their animals, and God." Yet beneath their simplicity lies a profound and multifaceted longing. The poems reveal monks with desire—for solitude, for beauty, for divine intimacy, for understanding, and even for fleeting earthly pleasures. This is a sacred, interior form of desire—spiritual rather than sensual, but no less human or powerful. The songs bring us through moments of ecstatic revelation, humorous mischief, and yearning.

Visually, this inner emotional world finds a perfect echo in Caspar David Friedrich's *The Monk by the Sea*. The solitary figure dwarfed by sky and sea suggests isolation, but also awe and surrender—a confrontation with the vastness of desire itself. Just as Barber's music gives voice to hidden yearnings, Friedrich's painting offers an image of introspection made grand.



KIRA LIM

Kira Lim is a final year undergraduate in the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, majoring in Voice Performance studying with Professor Alan Bennett. In 2019, Kira graduated from Lasalle College of The Arts with a Diploma in Performance (Theatre). Kira won First Place for all categories in the American Protege Vocal Competition at Carnegie Hall under the tutelage of Ms Khor Ai Ming.

Kira has participated in some notable singing performances including: Hansel and Gretel (2016) as 'Gretel', Mass of The Children and New York Sounds of Summer, Carnegie Hall (Soloist, 2016), Los Angeles International Music Festival (2018), Carmina Burana (Soloist, 2019), Der Zwerg with The Opera People (2019) as 'First Maiden', Baby Shark Live! The Hidden Treasure musical (2021-2022) as 'Shimmer', In Our Manner of Speaking performing new locally-commissioned pieces with The Opera People (2022), Come, Ye Sons of Art, Away! with the Red Dot Baroque and YST Conservatory (Soloist, 2022), CabaRED with New Opera Singapore (2023), 'Zerlina' in Mozart's Don Giovanni with Vienna Opera Academy at the Musikverein (2023). The Opera People La Sonnambula (Ensemble, 2023). In 2024, as part of a performance workshop, she debuted the main role of 'Klara' in The Opera People's commissioned opera 'Beacon' composed by Dr Jonathan Shin. Kira wishes for the arts to be accessible and inclusive to all communities. She enjoys teaching music to people of all ages. In 2022, she and her working partner, Claire Teo, had their first installation at the National Gallery Singapore, working with the visually impaired community. She also acted in An Undefeated Mind - a fundraising theater show to raise awareness for dementia patients.

BEATRICE LIN



A graduate of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Haute école de Musique de Genève, her studies were generously supported by the National Arts Council and the Lee Foundation. She was also awarded the Adolphe Neuman Prize from the canton of Geneva upon graduation. Performances include live radio broadcasts on the Radio Suisse Romande Espace 2, keyboardist with L'Orchestre de Chambre de Genève and Ensemble Contrechamps, as well as répétiteur for the Concours de Genève. On home ground, she is collaborative pianist at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory and freelances with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra as well as the Singapore Chinese Orchestra. Her love for opera has also led to numerous projects with the Singapore Lyric Opera and The Opera People.

CAO HUIYING



Huiying, studies at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory under Prof. Li-Wei Qin on a full scholarship. The winner of multiple international competitions. She has performed across Asia and Europe as a soloist, chamber musician, and principle cellist in major productions, also a freelance cellist with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra of full range programs. Huiying has also participated in prestigious festivals like Kronberg Academy, Rutesheim, recently being awarded a Fellowship position for Aspen Festival. She has been admitted to the Master of Music program in Instrumental and Chamber Music Studies at The Tianjin Juilliard School, where she will study with Professors Yeonjin Kim and Sihao He on a full scholarship.