



AGBU

ARTS

DREAM ~ ԵՐԱԶ

by World-Renowned Soprano,
Isabel Bayrakdarian

EXCLUSIVE ONE NIGHT ONLY

With

Emanuel Hovhannisyan
DUDUK

Jill Felber
FLUTE

Ellie Choate
HARP

Visual Art by
Kevork Mourad

Friday, March 3, 8pm

AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian
Performing Arts Center
2495 E Mountain St,
Pasadena, CA 91104

CONCERT PROGRAM

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Isabel Bayrakdarian, SOPRANO

Ellie Choate, HARP | Jill Felber, FLUTE | Emmanuel Hovhannisyan, DUDUK

Collection by Komitas Vartabed

(1869-1935)

1. Six Children's Songs
 2. Five Lullaby Fragments
 3. Sleep My Child - Lullaby / Թուն Եղիր Պալաս
 4. Dream / Երազ
 5. You Are Beautiful - Lullaby from Agn / Ակնայ Օրոր
 6. Children's Prayer / Մանուկներու Հայր Մեր
 7. Song of the Partridge / Կաքավի Երգը
 8. Little Wooden Horse / Փայտե Զիուկ
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Collection by Parsegh Ganatchian

(1885-1967)

1. Bjingo / Պճինկո
2. The Swallow / Ծիծեռնակ
3. Nocturne / Խաղաղ Գիշեր
4. Sleep My Child - Lullaby / Թուն Եղիր Պալաս

Traditional Songs

1. Come, My Nightingale - Popular Lullaby / Արի, Իմ Սոխակ
 2. Bouncing Song - from Ani / Երեխայ Թոցնելու Երգ
 3. Rocking Song - Lullaby from Ani / Օրորա՛
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Collection by Mihran Toumajan

(1890-1973)

1. Swinging Song - Lullaby from Bithynia-Bardizag / Օրիմ, Օրիմ
 2. Cradle Song - Lullaby from Bithynia-Bardizag / Սալնճախ Եմ Ձգեր
 3. Bouncing Song - from Gesaria / Պար-պար Կենեմ
 4. The Scarecrow - from Kharpert / Ալլապիտիկ
 5. Two Playsongs - from Agn / Օր Պար...Հէ՛յ, Պար Գևա
 6. Two Lullabies - from Agn / Աղուոր Ես...Օրոր
 7. I Sing To You - Lullaby from Dikranagerd / Նենևի Ըսիմ
 8. Collection of Alphabet Songs - from Medz Nor Kiugh-Bursa / Գագու...Բեն, Այբ, Բա
 9. Four Children's Songs - from Van
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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



ISABEL BAYRAKDARIAN, SOPRANO

Իզապէլ Պայրազտարեան

It's not every prima donna who can boast a degree in biomedical engineering, but then, Isabel Bayrakdarian isn't your average prima donna. As a highly sought-after soprano at opera houses and concert halls across the world, the Lebanese-born Canadian-Armenian-American soprano has become as celebrated for her beauty, presence, and style as for her strikingly multidimensional voice that is wholly in sync with the rest of her.

Isabel launched her professional career in Toronto with the Canadian Opera Company. From there, she went on to win numerous awards, including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the first prize at Plácido Domingo's Operalia competition in 2000. Debuts with the Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the San Francisco Opera, La Scala, the Royal Opera Covent Garden, the Salzburg Festival, among notable others, quickly followed. She scored a notable success in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's world premiere production of William Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge*.

Mozart became a specialty, from Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* to Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* to Pamina in *The Magic Flute*. Her roles at Toronto's Canadian Opera Company range from Gluck's Euridice to Debussy's *Mélisande* to Poulenc's Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites*; and away from Canada, her talent has shined bright as Monteverdi's *Poppea* in Barcelona, Handel's *Romilda (Serse)* in Dresden, and Janáček's *Vixen* in New York, Florence, and the Saito Kinen Festival in Matsumoto, Japan.

Isabel has toured the globe to appear with the premier orchestras, performing under the batons of renowned conductors like Seiji Ozawa, James Conlon, David Zinman, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Alan Gilbert to name a few. She was also the featured vocalist on the Grammy® Award-winning soundtrack from the blockbuster film *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, and on the soundtrack of Atom Egoyan's *Ararat*. She sang on the BBC-produced short film *Holocaust: A Music Memorial Film from Auschwitz*, as well as her own Gemini-nominated film *Long Journey Home*, documenting her first visit to her ancestral homeland, Armenia.

Isabel is the winner of four consecutive Juno Awards for Best Classical Album, and in 2018 her recording, *Mother of Light* was nominated for a Juno Award. Her recordings with orchestras include Henryk Górecki's *Symphony No.3* with John Axelrod conducting the Danish National

Symphony Orchestra, released on the Sony Classical label, Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No.2*, with Michael Tilson-Thomas conducting the San Francisco Symphony, and Respighi's *Il Tramonto* with Orchestre Symphonique de Laval.

One of her recordings, *Armenian Songs for Children*, was released in 2021 by AVIE Records to critical acclaim. In 2020 she collaborated with the Grammy-nominated Canadian rock band Glass Tiger singing on their first-ever Christmas album *Songs for a Winter's Night*. In 2022 she released a recording of gypsy and Romani-inspired music, *La Zingarella*.

Isabel is the recipient of many awards, including the Marilyn Horne Foundation Competition Award, Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee and the Diamond Jubilee Medals, the Arbor Award from the University of Toronto, the George London Foundation Award, Canada Council's Virginia Parker Prize, and the Republic of Armenia's Komitas Medal. Most recently, she was awarded the Movses Khorenatsi medal, the Republic of Armenia's highest cultural award.

She holds an Honorary Doctorate from Canada's Wilfrid Laurier University, and an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is currently Professor of Voice, Director of Opera Theatre, and Head of Voice Area in the Music Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB).

www.bayrakdarian.com

EMMANUEL HOVHANNISYAN was born in Yerevan. He graduated from Yerevan State Conservatory, where he currently teaches. The recipient of numerous international prizes, he is also the founder of "Sheram Ensemble", the "Emotion Band" as well as a Duduk school (Dudukman Studios). He has collaborated with various musicians, including the Gurdjieff Ensemble, with whom he has recorded for ECM Records, and the recording was awarded an Edison prize. He is also part of the "Naghsh" ensemble, under the direction of John Hodian.

Mr Hovhannisyanyan is also an active performer of contemporary Armenian composers' music, including Avet Terteryan, Tigran Mansuryan, Ruben Altunyan, Davit Halajyan, and Vache Sharafyan. As a composer, he has performed his own music with the Ural Academic Filharmonic Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra of Yakutsk, Ekaterinburg State Symphonic Orchestra, Armenian State Symphonic Orchestra, as well as in Vienna, Linz, and Moscow. He has collaborated with the Luzern String Quartet, the Kuss String Quartet and Khachaturyan quartet. Emmanuel has recorded over 25 CD recordings, with different musicians and in projects in all over the world.

JILL FELBER is an internationally acclaimed recording artist, dynamic flute recitalist, innovative chamber musician, legendary contemporary music specialist, and a distinguished flute professor who inspires and motivates students worldwide.

Jill Felber has been hailed for her “beautifully finished performances” by *The Detroit News* and has been praised by *Musical America* for her “handsome performance.” The British journal *PAN* writes, “Felber was stunning...not only refined but also full of fun.” “The incredible flutist...the dazzling flutist...the radiant flutist Jill Felber” (*The Independent*, Santa Barbara), is known to excite audiences everywhere in concerts and recitals “played with flair” (*The Los Angeles Times*). “The outstanding American flutist Jill Felber” (*Gazeta Rybnicka*, Poland) is acclaimed worldwide for her “consummate musicianship” (*Fanfare*).

Ms. Felber has performed solo recitals, chamber music, and concertos on five continents and has held residencies in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, Mexico, France, Switzerland, Great Britain, Italy, Canada, Brazil, and the United States. Also a tireless promoter of new music, Ms. Felber has inspired many composers to write solo and chamber works for her and for her flute duo ZAWA!, and is currently engaged in several commissioning projects. She has premiered over five hundred works for the flute and has released world premiere recordings for *Centaur Records*, *CRI*, *Neuma Records*, *BCM+D Records*, and *ZAWA!MUSIC*.

In demand as a guest clinician because of her extraordinary motivational teaching style, Ms. Felber is Professor of Flute at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she earned the Distinguished Teaching Award. Highly regarded by her peers around the world, Ms. Felber currently presents her popular EXTREME MAKEOVER: FLUTE EDITION and WHOLE FLUTES® seminars throughout the country and frequently tours with pianist Dianne Frazer, showcasing their arranged “Fusions” at conventions, flute societies and universities. Holding degrees from University of Michigan and Bowling Green State University, Ms. Felber has taught on the faculties of Ohio University, Capital University, and Wright State University. Her teachers include Keith Bryan, Judith Bentley, Samuel Baron, and James Galway.

In addition to Ms. Felber’s remarkable career performing and teaching with creativity and passion, she is also an effective leader in the field of arts administration. Having served as Chair of the Department of Music at UC Santa Barbara, she currently serves on the Board of Directors for Santa Barbara’s Community Arts Music Association and on the Board of Directors for Areon Flutes. Professor Felber has been active in the National Flute Association, as a member of its Board of Directors for two terms, as Program Chair for the 1993 National Flute Association’s conference in Boston, Massachusetts, and on several committees. As a founding member of the Flute and Clarinet Duo Consortium, she was a member of its initial Board of Directors with a mission to commission new works for flute and clarinet. Prior to moving to California, she served on the Board of Directors of the Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble.

ELLIE CHOATE is a versatile harpist based in Long Beach. She performs classical music in chamber, opera, and symphony groups such as Opera Santa Barbara, the Southern California Brass Consortium, CalArts New Century Players, and orchestras throughout Southern and Central California. She and her harpist colleague Jacquelyn Venter formed Duo Pangelica, performing classical harp repertoire.

Ellie’s career spans work in the commercial music industry, with performances on and off camera in major motion pictures, television, and sound recordings such as “Ratatouille”, “Mission Impossible”, Ray Charles’ “Genius Loves Company”, “Bold and the Beautiful”, “Days of Our Lives”, and Josh Groban’s PBS special. She also can be seen backing headline artists, such as Jennifer Hudson at the Ravinia festival.

Her interest in arranging and improvisation has resulted in five solo CDs of her stylings of pop and jazz tunes, Christmas and Inspirational music. Her lifelong love of teaching and community building has led her to work as an officer for The American Harp Society and American String Teachers Association. She has published arrangements for harp ensemble and is currently on the applied music faculty of CSU Long Beach and UC Irvine.

Joining soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian as a collaborative artist for concerts and recording is a particular joy, especially working on Isabel’s recent recording of Armenian children’s songs.

KEVORK MOURAD was born in Qamishli, Syria, lives and works in New York City. He received his Master of Fine Arts from the Yerevan Institute of Fine Arts in Armenia.

Mourad employs his technique of live drawing and animation in concert with musicians—developing a collaboration in which art and music harmonize with one another. Collaborators include Yo-Yo Ma, Kim Kashkashian, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Brooklyn Rider, The Knights, Perspectives Ensemble, Paola Prestini, and Kinan Azmeh. His art installations have appeared in many institutions, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Aga Khan Museum (Toronto), The Art Institute of Chicago, The American Museum of Natural History, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, The Bronx Museum of Art, Carnegie Hall, ElbPhilharmonie (Germany), Rhode Island School of Design, Nara Museum (Japan), Lincoln Center Atrium, and The Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Mourad has been a resident teaching artist at Brandeis University, Harvard University, and Holy Cross (Worcester). He is a member of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble and is featured in the film “Music of Strangers” (2016).

Recent commissions include *Israel in Egypt*, for the Los Angeles Master Chorale, *Sound of Stone* to accompany the exhibition “Armenia!” for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and *Well Wish Ya*, a dance performance piece with the OYO Dance Troupe in Namibia. His performance *Home Within*, co-produced with clarinetist Kinan Azmeh, has toured the world. The 2016 recipient of the Robert Bosch Stiftung Film Prize, he premiered his animated film, *4 Acts for Syria*, at the Stuttgart Animation Festival. In 2019 he had a solo exhibit at Tabari Artspace in Dubai. In September 2019, he exhibited at Latitude, in Yerevan, Armenia, alongside Imran Qureshi, Roberto Pugliese, and Walid Siti. That year he was also commissioned by the Aga Khan Foundation to create a site-specific 20-foot drawing-sculpture called *Seeing Through Babel*, at London’s Ismaili Center, addressing the importance of diversity in our contemporary times. The piece was exhibited starting in October 2020 at the Asia Society Triennial in New York. In October 2020 he also premiered the visuals for Beethoven’s *Fidelio* for the Korea National Opera. His works are in the permanent collection of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

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