



Photograph: Elliot Mandel • Cover: Kandice Dickinson

4 TAY RECORDS IS PROUD TO PRESENT

# WERE I WITH THEE

THE NEW ALBUM FROM MICHELLE AREYZAGA & DANA BROWN

Release: 15 October 2021  
 Producer: Aaron Gottl (Atlas Arts)  
 Label: 4Tay Records  
 Catalogue No: CD4066

*"Michelle is my favorite singer in the world, and now that I've heard Dana play, he's right up there too in the same top category of excellence."*

– **Gwyneth Walker**, featured composer

1. **Edouard Lippé**: "How Do I Love Thee"

2. **Wayland Rogers**: "To My Dear and Loving Husband"  
 (from *I-Thou*)

3 - 5 **Richard Pearson Thomas**:  
 3 selections from  
*At Last, To Be Identified!*

6 - 8 **Wayland Rogers**:  
 Tres Poemas de Gabriela Mistral

9. **Gwyneth Walker**: "La Luz"  
 (from *Tenderness (La Ternura)*)

10 - 14. **Lee Hoiby**: *The Shining Place*

15. **Lee Hoiby**: "The Waltz" (from *Three Women*)

16. **Duke**: "What Lips My Lips Have Kissed"

17 - 18. **Patrice Michaels**:  
 2 selections from *The Long View*:  
*A Portrait of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

19: **Leonard Bernstein**:  
 "A Julia de Burgos" (from *Songfest*)

20 - 26. **Gwyneth Walker**: *Emily!* (from *New England*)

This project presents a unique American vision of **women's words set to song**, as interpreted by **Michelle Areyzaga's** crystalline soprano voice, and **Dana Brown's** empathic piano accompaniment. The songs are all based on texts written by women authors from a **variety of English and Spanish speaking countries**, including the **United States, England, Chile, and Puerto Rico**. Highlighted writers include **Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Gabriela Mistral**, and in special dedication, **Emily Dickinson**.

"Were I With Thee" itself is a line from the her poem "Wild Nights - Wild Nights," and this album contains three settings. Moreover, the album's cover was designed by Emily's living relative, cousin Kandice Dickinson.

**World premiere recordings** are Walker's **Emily** (complete cycle); Rogers' **Tres Poemas de Gabriela Mistral** (two of which were **composed for Areyzaga**); Walker's **La Luz** (from *La Ternura*, **also composed for Michelle**); and Duke's standalone art song "**What Lips My Lips Have Kissed**".

**The performers write**: "*This album will serve to introduce these works to young artists with the hope that they will be programmed on future recitals or albums. This is a female- uplifting project in all possible ways.*"

### Recommended tracks for airplay:

- **Track 1**: How Do I Love Thee (Edouard Lippé/Elizabeth Barrett Browning) **3:33**      languid/beautiful/sparkling
- **Track 8**: Apegado a mí (Wayland Rogers / Gabriela Mistral) **4:34**      dramatic/evocative/Spanish language
- **Track 18**: Epilogue - The Long View, Questions Answered (Patrice Michaels/Ruth Bader Ginsburg) **3:52**      dynamic/contrasting
- **Track 22**: The Frog in the Bog (Gwyneth Walker/Emily Dickinson) **1:41**      short/comedic/theatrical

**Album Runtime: 73:44**

For media inquiries, please contact Jeffrey James Arts Consulting at [jamesarts@att.net](mailto:jamesarts@att.net) or 516-586-3433.



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**MICHELLE AREYZAGA** is an American soprano who has performed with the New York City Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México, among many others. She has become well-known for her interpretation of the music of Leonard Bernstein, extensively touring the show *Bernstein on Broadway* together with Bernstein's daughter and various orchestras. As a soloist, she has appeared with orchestras across the US and has appeared in various capacities across Europe.

Known as a foremost interpreter of vocal art song and chamber music, Areyzaga has been a repeat guest of the New York Festival of Song and The Chicago Ensemble, among many others. She has collaborated with the Avalon String Quartet, the Cavatina Duo and the Lincoln Trio, and has been selected to perform world premieres of many new works by American composers. As a recorded artist, she has performed song cycles by Gwyneth Walker on *The Sun is Love* (Proteus). Other recordings include Richmond Symphony's first commercial recording, on the Reference Recordings label of Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*; as well as *Songs from Spoon River* (Cedille) by Lita Grier, and *The Small Hours*, with songs by William Ferris. She has sung numerous times in both live and programmed broadcasts on Chicago's classical music radio station WFMT.

Areyzaga, once dubbed "Artist of the Year" by *Pioneer Press*, received her B.A. in Vocal Performance from Roosevelt University with honors, and was a member of Ravinia's Steans Institute for Young Artists. In addition, she has been a member of the OperaWorks Summer intensive Program in L.A. and a member of Chicago Opera Theater's Debut Artist Series. ([michelleareyzaga.com](http://michelleareyzaga.com))

**DANA BROWN** is an American musician highly regarded for both his solo and collaborative performances. As a pianist, he has been heard many times on 98.7 WFMT Radio as a collaborator and soloist, in addition to performances at the Ravinia Festival, the Tanglewood Festival, Light Opera Works, the Chicago Cultural Center and the Chicago Humanities Festival. His concerto appearances have been in the works of Beethoven, Brahms, Gershwin, Grieg and Mendelssohn, including a performance of the "Emperor" Concerto with the Beethoven Society Pops Orchestra of Washington, DC. In November 2018, he appeared as soloist with Orchestra Seattle in the Ravel Left Hand Concerto.

A nationally prominent vocal coach, he has coached at the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, where he also played lessons and masterclasses of Marilyn Horne, Renata Scottò, Renée Fleming and Sir Andrew Davis. He has also coached at Northwestern University, the Intermezzo Young Artists Program, the Opera and Music Festival of Lucca, Italy, and the Taos Opera Institute. He was the coach for the 2008-2011 seasons of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, Wisconsin District *Support Our Singers* Program. Brown supports young singers through his work at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, where is former Chair of the Music Faculty and Associate Professor of Opera and Vocal Coaching. He has musically directed over fifty operas at Roosevelt University, most recently *King Arthur* (Henry Purcell), *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters* (Ned Rorem), and *Riders to the Sea* (Ralph Vaughan Williams). For seven summers, he was the Co-Artistic Director of a mind-body-voice program for emerging young talent, the UpNorth Vocal Institute (UNVI) in Boyne, Michigan. He was also the Head of Collaborative Piano in the new Vocal Art Program at the Master Players Festival held at the University of Delaware in summer, 2018.

He is the Collaborative Piano liaison to the Central Regional Board of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and played the Renée Fleming masterclass at the recent national NATS Convention held in Chicago. He is also a member of the Collaborative Piano Committee of the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy. A graduate of the University of Michigan, he studied with renowned pianist Martin Katz. He currently studies with Mary Sauer, the former principal pianist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. ([danabrownmusic.com](http://danabrownmusic.com))

For more information about the album, please visit [wereiwiththee.com](http://wereiwiththee.com)  
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