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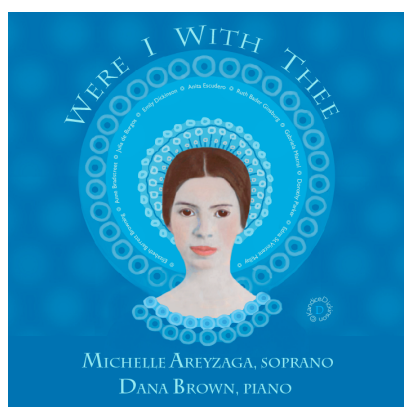
OCTOBER 15, 2021:

SOPRANO **MICHELLE AREYZAGA** AND PIANIST **DANA BROWN**

RELEASE THEIR NEW ALBUM ON 4TAY RECORDS

WERE I WITH THEE

Featuring words penned by women and set by American composers



Chicago Soprano Michelle Areyzaga and **pianist Dana Brown** are thrilled to present their new **4Tay Records** release, ***Were I With Thee***, showcasing a crystalline voice, masterful piano, and words penned by women and set by American composers.

"Were I With Thee" is a line from the **Emily Dickinson** poem "Wild Nights – Wild Nights," and this album contains three settings of that poem. The album continues to celebrate Dickinson, featuring cover art by Emily's living relative **Kandice Dickinson**.

Produced by Atlas Arts' **Aaron Gottl**, this album comes together as an intelligently curated and performed body of work; a gorgeous piano and voice record that presents a unique vision, fusing

women's words from around the world to American song.

Areyzaga and Brown add, *"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."*

Composers include **Gwyneth Walker, Patrice Michaels, Richard Pearson Thomas, Lee Hoiby, Wayland Rogers, John Duke, Edouard Lippé, and Leonard Bernstein**.

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"**.

These songs are all **based on texts** written by **women authors** from a variety of **English and Spanish speaking countries**, including:

- USA: **Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Emily Dickinson, Dorothy Parker, Edna St. Vincent Millay**
- England: **Anne Bradstreet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning**
- Chile: **Gabriela Mistral**
- Puerto Rico: **Julia de Burgos**

Visit wereiwiththee.com for more information or to order CDs which are \$20 (standard) or \$30 (autographed) — both feature a free digital download link. (Buying directly from the artists ensures that 100% of the fees will go to the artists.)

*This project is partially funded by Roosevelt University Professional Development Fund
and by the Musicians Club of Women.*



American soprano **MICHELLE AREYZAGA** (michelleareyzaga.com) 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.



American pianist **DANA BROWN** (danabrownmusic.com) is 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 Scotto, 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.