

FRIENDS UNIVERSITY OPERA PRESENTS

The Tender Land

Reduced Orchestration by Murray Sidlin | Libretto by Horace Everett | By arrangement with Boosey and Hawkes, Inc

by Aaron Copland

Alumni Auditorium

Saturday, November 18 ◦ Sunday, November 19
7:30 p.m. 2 p.m.



125
CELEBRATING YEARS

FRIENDS
UNIVERSITY

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

*"The plains so green.
The tender land where we begin to understand.
We'll take the dreams,
We've dreamed apart,
And we will plant them in each other's heart.
The fields of love,
The tender grain,
We'll gather in from autumn rain.
We'll reap the tears we've wept apart,
And gather in each other's heart."*

These words sung by Laurie and Martin in Act 2, as they pledge their commitment to each other, is a summation of the hopes and dreams at the heart of each character in this opera, though each imagined and realized quite differently. It is all painted so vividly in the rich, quintessential American harmonies of Copland's music as the story of a young girl coming to maturity unfolds in this second opera of Copland's. Composed between 1952 and 1953, the themes of gain and loss, leaving and staying would have resonated deeply with Americans emerging from the Great Depression and a world war. And we, too, can relate to those same themes of uncontrolled change and loss with what we have experienced the past four years because of covid and other unexpected events.

Written for young singers, *The Tender Land* contains some of the best music from Copland's mature years. Listeners may recognize the familiar chorus from Act 2, "*Stomp your foot*", or the closing chorus of Act 1, "*The promise of living*" with its quotation of the American folk hymn "*Zion's Walls*".

Copland recalled, "*The conviction grew inside me that the two things that seemed always to have been separate in America – music and the life about me – must be made to touch,*" and over his career this exploration of American musical identity took him beyond his native Brooklyn, to New York City, then to Paris and Mexico, and eventually all over the world. Gleaning from these experiences and exposures he incorporated jazz, folk, and Latin American elements into a "*style that came to epitomize some kind of 'essential' American-ness, not only for his contemporaries but for 21st century listeners as well.*" No surprise that it was the iconic American songwriting team of Rodgers and Hammerstein II that commissioned Copland to write a piece to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the League of Composers, which championed the work of American composers. That piece became Copland's second opera, *The Tender Land*.

This opera is not an easy work, musically or in concept. It has stretched us musically, just as the characters in the opera are stretched emotionally and mentally. But, just as they grow and evolve, we too have grown through our preparation and exploration of this piece. We hope you find in our performance those moments of mirth, new discoveries, loss, and hope to contemplate and reflect, and join us on our journey through "*the tender land where we begin to understand.*" And as Ma so beautifully states in the last line of the opera, "*And in that time where we don't know the coming and the going, where even you and I are living...this love and care we put into each thought, each plan, each making, is just beginning.*"

Thank you for coming!

L. Rolaine Hetherington
Music Director and Conductor

PROGRAM

Scene: The action takes place on a lower-middle-class farm in the mid-west. The time is in the early thirties, June, the time of spring graduation and spring harvest.

ACT 1 The day before graduation – late afternoon

- INTERMISSION - TEN MINUTES -

ACT 2 That evening

- COSTUME CHANGE - FIVE MINUTES - PLEASE REMAIN SEATED -

ACT 3 Later that night; then graduation day – dawn

PRODUCTION

Stage Director.....	Dr. Charles Parker
Music Director & Conductor.....	Rolaine Hetherington
Rehearsal Pianist.....	Cindy Blasdel
Choreography.....	Joice Henry
Set Design & Construction.....	Karen Smith
Costume Design & Construction.....	Rhonda Loucks
Lighting Design.....	Dan Harmon
Sound Design.....	Bob Hett
Stage Manager.....	Rebecca Grosselin
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Andrea Powers
Light Board Operator.....	Naomi Terrell
Set Construction.....	Cast Members
Poster & Artwork/Program Design & Publicity.....	Leigh Barton-Green

THANKS

Dr. Amy Carey
Dr. Nathanael May
Robyn Mabe
Leigh Barton-Green
Ron and Renae Ryan
Patricia Parker
Nathan Loucks
Sunrise Christian Academy
Physical Plant and Security

CAST LIST

Laurie Moss	Naomi Cavanaugh
Ma Moss.....	Emily Kreis
Beth Moss.....	Abigail Kreis
Grandpa Moss.....	Ryan Smith
Martin.....	Davis Green
Top	Joshua Kelley
Mr. Splinters.....	Zachary Garraway
Mrs. Splinters.....	Isabelle Loucks
Mr. Jenks.....	Jarod Daniel
Mrs. Jenks.....	Lucy Enns

PARTY GUESTS

Dillon Boldt, Amy Cole, Alayna Duffield, Olivia Hill, Adelyn Hobbs, Michael Jabara,
Dimante McLeod, Alexander Miller, Rachel Mullen, Niomi Ndirangu, Erick Perales, Elias Pino,
Abigail Powers, Lillian Smith, Gemma Watts.

ORCHESTRA

Violin 1.....	Daniel Colwell
Violin 2.....	Kathleen House
Viola.....	Hailey Treas
Cello.....	Amanda Wen
Bass.....	Dennis Danders
Flute.....	Courtney Dunagan
Clarinet.....	Charisee Tierney
Bassoon.....	Kimme Whitemore
Piano.....	Cindy Blasdel

BIOGRAPHIES



Naomi Cavanaugh is a soprano based in Wichita, Kansas and is working to complete her BM in Voice Performance at Friends University. Naomi has performed many roles and opera scenes throughout the Missouri and Kansas area. While at Friends University, Naomi has performed Vitellia in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, Laetitia in *The Old Maid and the Thief* and last fall as Casilda in the *Gondoliers*, and last summer participated in the season of Friends' Opera Seme young artist program in Arezzo, Italy where Naomi made her role debut as Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare*. Naomi recently was awarded first place in the Graduate Women's Classical Division and Singer of the year at the NATS West Central Region Auditions and represented Friends in the 2023 finals of the National Opera Association Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition and took 2nd place.



Emily Kreis is a student at Friends University in Wichita, KS pursuing her degree in Vocal Performance. She has been honored to perform the role of Tessa in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Gondolier*. Looking towards graduation, she plans to build her voice studio in the Wichita area. Emily studies with Rolaine Hetherington.



Abigail Kreis, a sophomore at Friends University, has thoroughly enjoyed preparing her role as Beth Moss. Beth is an imaginative, spirited and perceptive child, whose character often reminded Abigail of her 3 younger sisters back at home. As always, Abigail is thankful for her family and friends, and to her God for the gift of music.



Performing for the first time on the Friends University stage, Ryan Smith is no stranger to the stage. This is his ninth role and is enjoying playing the Grandpa in *The Tender Land*. You may have seen him perform in the CYT productions as Tevye in *Fiddler On The Roof*, Horton in *Seussical*, Crutchie in *Newsies*, and Rosco Dexter in *Singing In The Rain*. His latest role was at Butler Community College where he earned the prestigious Spelvin Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role of Vernon Hines in the musical *The Pajama Game*. Ryan loves getting to know each character that he plays and more importantly telling their story. Ryan's goal for each show he's in, is to share the love of God and the good news of Jesus Christ through the characters he plays.



Davis Green is in his third year as a Music Education and Vocal Performance (Opera) student. He has performed in several productions with Friends U such as *The Gondoliers* (Marco) and *Catch Me If You Can* (Frank Abagnale Sr.). Davis enjoys being a member of the Singing Quakers and hopes to direct his own high school or Collegiate choir in the future. Davis's other hobbies include Ham Radio, listening to and collecting vinyl records, and playing the Organ. All glory be to God.

BIOGRAPHIES



Zachary Garraway is currently a Junior pursuing a major in Music Theatre and is excited to return to the Friends University stage. You last saw him as Frank Abagnale Jr. during Friends University's production of *Catch Me If You Can*, and you may have even heard him in Music Theatre Wichita's *Cats* as part of the Vocal Ensemble. Zach would like to thank his family for always believing in him and supporting him through his dreams.



Isabelle Loucks is a Sophomore Music Education major at Friends. She was a part of many productions such as Anya in *Anastasia* at Halstead High School and *Gondoliers* at Friends. "I feel incredibly blessed to be surrounded by so many incredible, and dedicated peers and mentors that help me grow and experience sharing my gifts in so many forms."



Jarod Daniel is a returning Friends student. He has spent most of his professional career as a performer and puppeteer. These skills have taken him as far as performing in New Jersey and New York. He is grateful for any chance he gets to perform, and hopes you enjoy *The Tender Land*!



Lucy Enns is a Senior Mezzo-Soprano Voice Performance major born and raised in Wichita, Kansas. You may have seen Lucy previously in Friends University's production of *Fables* by Ned Rorem, and as "Inez" in *The Gondoliers* by Gilbert and Sullivan. Lucy most recently performed the role of "La Badessa" in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* at the Teatro Petrarca in Arezzo, Italy, and was a chorus member of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* in Arezzo, Italy, during the summer of 2023. Lucy is excited to share everything she has learned as "Mrs. Jenks" and wants to thank her family and friends who have always supported her in all of her endeavors.

THANKS
FOR COMING!

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NOVEMBER

Orchestra & Band Concert | Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m. | Allison Traditional Magnet
Middle School*

DECEMBER

Christmas Candlelight | Dec. 1-3 | First Presbyterian Church*

Visual Art Showcase | Dec. 11, 5-7 p.m. | Olive White Garvey Business and
Technology Building

* location off campus

TICKETS AND FULL CALENDAR AT
friends.edu/fineartstickets

RINEY FINE ARTS CENTER CONSTRUCTION

As a result of the exciting renovations taking place at the Riney Fine Arts Center, the date and location for performances may be subject to change. Please check online and our social media pages for updates and ticket information.



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friends.edu/theweeklyhappenings



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