

AN AFTERNOON  
OF AMERICAN SONG

# STRANDS

**FEATURING THE OPERA COLORADO  
ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE**

TYLER TUCKER, PIANIST  
CHERITY KOEPKE, DIRECTOR

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OPERA COLORADO OPERA CENTER



# AN AFTERNOON OF AMERICAN SONG STRANDS

*“Perhaps any life is such: different stories like  
different strands, each distinct in itself, each true, yet  
wound together to form one rope, one life.”*

- LEE SMITH

**AN AFTERNOON OF AMERICAN SONG IS SPONSORED BY  
PAMELA BEARDSLEY, PENELOPE LEWIS, AND CAROL WHITLEY**

**Featuring the 2019-20 Opera Colorado Artists in Residence**

Laura Soto-Bayomi *soprano*

Kira Dills-DeSurra *mezzo-soprano*

Thomas Cilluffo *tenor*

Isaiah Feken *baritone*

Eric McConnell *bass-baritone*

Tyler Tucker *pianist*

Cherity Koepke *director*

Jared Guest *assistant director*

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Director of Opera Colorado’s Artist in Residence Program*

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## SET I | FAMILY TIES

*“In every conceivable manner,  
the family is a link to our past, bridge to our future”*

– ALEX HALYEV

“Proud Of Your Boy”

Isaiah Feken

From the musical *Aladdin*

Music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman

Among the most iconic of American composers, Alan Menken is best known for his scores and songs for films produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios. He is also known for his work in musical theatre for Broadway, including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Sister Act*. With eight Academy Award wins, Menken is the second most prolific Oscar winner in the music categories. He has also won eleven Grammy Awards, a Tony Award and many other honors. In “Proud of Your Boy” Menken captures the innocent spirit of a young man hoping to do what so many of us hope for, to make our parents proud.

### TEXT

Proud of your boy  
I'll make you proud of your boy  
Believe me, bad as I've been, Ma  
You're in for a pleasant surprise

I've wasted time  
I've wasted me  
So say I'm slow for my age  
A late bloomer, Okay, I agree

That I've been one rotten kid  
Some son, some pride and some joy  
But I'll get over these lousin' up  
Messin' up, screwin' up times

You'll see, Ma, now comes the better part  
Someone's gonna make good  
Cross his stupid heart  
Make good and finally make you  
Proud of your boy

Tell me that I've been a louse and loafer  
You won't get a fight here, no ma'am  
Say I'm a goldbrick, a goof-off, no good  
But that couldn't be all that I am

Water flows under the bridge  
Let it pass, let it go  
There's no good reason that you should  
believe me  
Not yet, I know but

Someday and soon  
I'll make you proud of your boy  
Though I can't make myself taller  
Or smarter or handsome or wise

I'll do my best, what else can I do?  
Since I wasn't born perfect like Dad or you  
Mom, I will try to  
Try hard to make you  
Proud of your boy

## “Lovely Lies”

Kira Dills-DeSurra

Original Song from Feinstein’s 54 Below

Music by Jeff Blumenkrantz, lyrics by Beth Blatt

Jeff Blumenkrantz has a unique voice as an American composer. His music is honest and simple, often the perfect vehicle for his often complex stories. He can tug at the heartstrings of his audience or make their laughter fill the theatre. In 2003, Blumenkrantz was nominated for a Best Original Score Tony Award for his work on *Urban Cowboy*, a nomination he shared with Jason Robert Brown and others. Blumenkrantz is the recipient of the 2011 Fred Ebb Award for excellence in musical theatre songwriting. In demand with music’s biggest stars, he often writes songs for notable singers. “Lovely Lies” was written for soprano Rebecca Luker for her cabaret show at Feinstein’s 54 Below in New York City. The song is a conversation between a mother and daughter and realistically details the complicated relationship between a parent and an adult child.

### TEXT

Are you done, Mama?  
Have you said your piece?  
It’s the same old question,  
Regular as Daddy’s digestion:  
“When will you give me some grand-kids?”

Now don’t get all huffy, I know you care.  
And by the way, I like your hair.  
And breakfast was great.  
The dishes can wait.  
It’s time for us Southern belles to talk  
straight.

In the South you’re raised on a mountain  
of grits  
And a whole mess of pecan pie.  
No, I don’t want no pecan pie.

In the South you’re raised on heaps of  
hymns  
Hollered up to the sky  
Sing your way out of sin,  
Or at least your try.

Where Mothers keep pretending not to  
know  
Their respectable husbands are getting  
drunk  
In the cellar down below

Pursed lips and sideways glances  
And glazed over eyes  
And a lot of lovely lies  
In the church, you’re raised full of fear  
Of a Lord who sends sinners to burn in hell  
Wear a tube top, you to go hell.

In the church you’re taught that desire’s a  
word  
You don’t even dare to spell  
(Look at Eve, she gave into desire and  
paradise fell.)

A boy and girl, pray the Lord  
Will bless their date  
Then the next thing you know that boy is  
trying  
To bust through her personal pearly gate.

It’s a wrestling match, a hand job,  
Then a burger, Coke and fries  
What a load of lovely lies.

I had to get out of here.  
I couldn’t breathe,  
Couldn’t wait to be up North  
Where it’s okay to say hand job  
Okay to wear jeans and drink gin...  
And live in sin.

*(continued on next page)*

In the South, girls are taught  
We are put on this earth to be fruitful and  
multiply.  
It's our duty to multiply.

In my heart I know I'm not meant to have  
kids.  
Mama, I can't explain why.  
It's something I've known since I was yea-  
high.

I know what you're thinking,  
Once you feel that life growing  
'Til you've felt it inside you,  
There's no way of knowing

Well Mama I felt it,  
And Mama I knew what I had to do.

I want to know you and I want you to know  
me,  
'Cause I'm looking forward to many more  
years of your company.  
And long talk 'cross a mountain of grits  
And a whole mess of pecan pie,  
And one less lovely lie.

**"Aunt Betty"**  
**Original Song**  
**Music and lyrics by Jeff Blumenkrantz**

**Eric McConnell**

Jeff Blumenkrantz brings personal narrative into his songs, often using subject matter from his own life. This is the case with his original song, "Aunt Betty." Jeff wrote this piece as a way of dealing with his grief when his Aunt Betty passed away. When Jeff became an adult, their family relationship developed into treasured friendship. He said he's only now beginning to realize the ways that their friendship shaped him and writing "Aunt Betty" for her was the only way he knew to tell her that he'll always carry her with him. He also knew that it needed to be slightly comedic lest he incur her wrath, which was formidable.

**TEXT**

Aunt Betty smoked one-hundreds.  
Aunt Betty mostly ate Chinese.  
Aunt Betty had a bad boy Cuban husband  
named Paul.

Aunt Betty never liked children,  
And that included my brother and me.  
Aunt Betty did no exercise at all.

And oh my God, I loved her.  
She was so New York.

Uncle Paul disappeared one day.  
We think he had a second family.  
Aunt Betty bleached her hair  
And smoked a little more.

She fell in love with a gangster.  
He also had a family.  
Maybe that was her way  
Of evening up the score.

And oh my God, I loved her.  
She was so New York.

She once dealt blackjack in an under-  
ground casino.  
She had a voice and a mouth like Al  
Pacino.  
And in a fam'ly that is oh so square,  
She was rare  
And didn't care.

Of course, Betty got cancer,  
The kind that leaves you six months  
to live.  
If her throat hadn't been so sore,  
She'd-ve smoked right to the end.

And oh my God, I miss her  
She was so New York.

How I long for that New York.

Betty wasn't the regretful type.  
She laid right down without a fight.  
And more than an aunt,  
I lost a dear, dear friend.

## SET II | BONDED

*“Don't underestimate the power of friendship or lovers.  
These bonds are tight stitches that close up the holes you might  
otherwise fall through”*

– RICHELLE E. GOODRICH

“I'm Breaking Down”

Kira Dills-DeSurra

From the musical *Falsettos*

Music and lyrics by William Finn

William Finn's brilliant work, *Falsettos*, is actually two parts of a larger whole. It consists of *March of the Falsettos* and *Falsettoland*, the last two installments in a trio of one-act Off-Broadway musicals; the first was *In Trousers*. The story involves Marvin, his ex-wife Trina, his psychiatrist Mendel, his son Jason, his lover Whizzer, and his neighbors Cordelia and Dr. Charlotte. The musical premiered on Broadway in 1992 and was nominated for seven Tony Awards, of which it won Best Book of a Musical and Best Original Score. Finn takes a comedic, but unflinching look at love, relationships, most specifically marriage and, in “Breaking Down,” the emotional fallout that ensues.

### TEXT

I'd like to be a princess on a throne  
To have a country I could call my own  
And a king who's lusty and requires a fling  
With a female thing

Great!  
Men will be men  
Let me turn on the gas  
I caught them in the den  
With Marvin grabbing Whizzer's ass

Oh sure, I'm sure, he's sure he did his best  
I mean he meant to be what he was not  
The things he was are things which I forgot  
He's a queen, I'm a queen  
Where is my crown?  
I'm breaking down

(continued on next page)

I'm breaking down!  
My life's a pity and my kid seems like an  
idiot to me  
I mean that's sick  
I mean he's great  
It's me who is the matter  
Talking madder than the maddest hatter

If I repeat one more word, I swear I'll lose  
my brain  
What else should I explain?  
Oh, yes it's true  
I can cry on cue  
But, so can you  
I'm breaking down

I'm breaking down!  
Down, down  
You ask me is it fun to cry over nothing?  
It is!  
I'm breaking down

Now let's consider what I might do next  
I hate admitting I've become perplexed  
I'm bereaved  
I've cried, I've shook  
I've yelled! I've heaved  
I have been deceived

As enemies go, Whizzer is not so bad  
It's just he's so damn happy  
That it makes me so damn mad!

I wanna hate him, but I really can't  
It's like a nightmare how this all proceeds  
I hope that Whizzer don't fulfill his needs  
Don't is wrong, sing along!  
What was the noun?  
I'm breakin' down

I'm breaking down  
I'll soon redecorate these stalls  
I'd like some padding on the walls  
And also pills  
I wanna sleep  
Sure, things will probably worsen  
But it's not like I'm some healthy person

I've rethought my talks with Marv  
And one fact does emerge  
Oh, I think I like his shrink  
So that is why I might turn to drink  
I'm on the brink of breaking down

I'm breaking down!  
Down, down  
I only want to love a man who can love me  
Or like me, Or help me  
Help me!

Marvin was never mine  
He took his meetings in the boy's latrine  
I used to cry, he'd make a scene  
I'd rather die than dry clean  
Marvin's wedding gown  
I'm breaking down

I'm breaking down!  
It's so upsetting when I found that what's  
rectangular is round  
I mean, it stinks  
I mean, he's queer  
And me, I'm just a freak who needs it  
Maybe every other week

I've rethought the fun we've had  
And one fact does emerge  
I played a foolish clown  
The almost virgin who sings this dirge  
Is on the verge of breaking down

I'm breaking down!  
Down, down  
The only thing that's breaking up  
Is my family  
But me...  
I'm breaking down!

## “When It Comes To You”

Eric McConnell

### Original Song

Music and lyrics by Jeff Blumenkrantz

In 1996, his best friend, Tracy Katz, asked Jeff Blumenkrantz to write a song for her wedding. In Jeff's words, “Tracy and I met as teens at Stagedoor Manor, Performing Arts Training Center, a summer theatre camp where theatre geeks like me could thrive amongst fellow theatre-lovers all summer. We became each other's person. Then, after 17 years of best-friendship, Tracy was getting married and she wanted me to write her a song. I was her Man of Honor, and Men of Honor must often go above and beyond the call of duty. After multiple, failed attempts to come up with a funny song, I ultimately opted to write this song. My gift to her from my heart.”

### TEXT

Ev'ry time I tried to write this song  
I'd start to cry.  
Wonder why.

I cried on pads and pens and pianos,  
Hoping that a seed would grow,  
But the lyric wouldn't flow.  
So I told myself,  
“Have faith, and you will know  
When it comes to you.”

So I took some time to think about  
The things that we've been through.  
Haven't you?

I gathered all our years and times and tears  
And souvenirs to use,  
But I just couldn't bear to choose.  
And I agonized until I realized

That there are no words  
To describe that we have and what we are.  
No melodies beautiful enough to convey,  
My feelings on this day,  
Or any other day,  
When it comes to you.

Ev'ry time I thought about you  
Walking down the aisle,  
I would smile.

And I'd picture how I'd look behind you  
Carrying your train.

Will they think that we're insane?  
Well, just let them say  
What they're gonna say.

'Cause there are no words  
To describe what he has and what you are,  
No melodies tentative enough to convey  
My feelings on this day.  
Will he carry you away  
When he comes to you?

So now you've fin'ly taken vows  
As husband and as wife,  
And that's for life.

And I hope that in this man you've found  
A love that conquers all,  
A love to cushion ev'ry fall.  
I hope you see his eyes  
And realize

That there are no words  
To describe what you have  
And what you are,  
No melodies beautiful enough to convey  
Your feelings on your wedding day,  
You've got to celebrate the day  
When love comes to you.

And love has come to you.

## “I Am Aldolpho”

Eric McConnell

From the musical *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Music and lyrics by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison

Lambert and Morrison’s *The Drowsy Chaperone* is a parody of American musical comedy of the 1920s. The story concerns a middle-aged, asocial musical theatre fan. As he plays the record of his favorite musical, the fictional 1928 hit *The Drowsy Chaperone*, the show comes to life onstage, as he wryly comments on the music, story, and actors. The success of the comedy comes from its brilliantly written character archetypes: the conflicted bride, the nervous groom, the blackmailing gangster, etc. They are the friends and family that we all know and sometimes wish we didn’t. “I Am Adolpho” is a comedic portrayal of everyone’s favorite egomaniac trying to impress.

### TEXT

I’m sure that you have heard the name  
Aldolpho  
A ladies’ man who wins acclaim Aldolpho  
Well lovely miss I am the same Aldolpho  
I introduce myself  
I am Aldolpho

For some reason  
Maybe you are hard of hearing or some-  
thing—I don’t know  
I am Aldolpho

Aldolpho.

Not so fast . . .  
So just in case you didn’t hear Aldolpho  
I’ll try to make it very clear Aldolpho  
The lovely ladies always cheer Aldolpho  
When I repeat myself  
I am Aldolpho

I can sing it high – Aldolpho  
I can sing it low – Aldolpho  
I can sing it very fast – Aldolpho  
I can sing it very slow . . .ly  
I’d do it now, but it would take hours.  
Now let us see if you can  
Remember my name  
Now who’s the fellow that you see?

And how should you refer to me?

And who is it I’ll always be?

Now sing it proudly  
I am Aldolpho

Now let me spell it out for you  
For all you lovely ladies who didn’t hear

## SET III | INTERWOVEN

*“A human heart is a skein of such imperceptibly and subtly interwoven threads that even the owner of it is often himself at a loss how to unravel it”*

– GIOVANNI RUFFINI

“My Heart Was Set On You”

Isaiah Feken

From the album *Wish* by Sutton Foster

Music and lyrics by Jeff Blumenkrantz

A master of the story song, Jeff Blumenkrantz is often a composer that some of the world's most celebrated singers go to for original compositions. Jeff wrote “My Heart Was Set On You” in a collaboration with Sutton Foster for her album, *Wish*. It's a story that so many people can relate to: a relationship that your friends and family don't think is good for you, but you think differently. Then later, looking back on that love and the role it played in creating the person you've become. Like many of Jeff's pieces, it takes the audience on the journey without letting them know how it ends.

### TEXT

My mother told me to break up with you  
She didn't think that you were good enough  
To take this prize  
She didn't see any sparkle in your eyes  
She said you acted like a boy,  
And you wore too much corduroy

But my heart was set on you  
My heart was set on you  
Besides, her taste was lousy,...  
She's never had a clue  
And my heart was set on you

My roommate begged me not to be with you  
She couldn't stand the way you always left  
Some toothpaste in the sink  
She was amazed at your capacity  
Not to think  
She said your head was in a cloud,  
And you talked way too loud

But my heart was set on you  
My heart was set on you

I figured she was jealous that  
I'd found someone new  
And my heart was set on you

It's a gamble  
Falling in love is sort of like  
Russian Roulette  
Yet in spite of all their warnings  
I just knew you were a solid bet.

A psychic swore you weren't the one for me  
She couldn't find you in my 'aura' as  
I sat there in her room  
She said I shouldn't play  
The bride to your groom  
I got her message loud and clear...  
And shoved it out the other ear

'Cause my heart was set on you  
My heart was set on you  
Why would I believe a bunch of  
Tarot cards were true  
When my heart was set on you?

*(Continued on the next page)*

It was terrible to face them  
When it all fell apart,  
When I was the last to know  
But there they were to catch  
The pieces of my breaking heart  
With the grace not to say, 'I told you so.'

I'll always count myself among  
The lucky few  
To have love the way I loved  
When my heart was set on you.

And now to see you after all this time,  
I'm reminded of the clarity I had back then  
Will I ever trust that feeling again?  
I was so willing to fall...  
But it's nice to recall  
How my...

## "Not A Day Goes By"

Eric McConnell

From the musical *Merrily We Roll Along*  
Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Sondheim's musical *Merrily We Roll Along* premiered in 1981 and opened to mostly negative reviews due to a story that was difficult to follow, but was highly praised for its innovative score. The story revolves around Franklin Shepard who, having once been a talented composer of Broadway musicals, has now abandoned his friends and his songwriting career to become a producer of Hollywood movies. Like the play, the musical begins at the height of his Hollywood fame and moves backwards in time, showing snapshots of the most important moments in Frank's life that shaped the man that he is today. The now iconic piece, "Not A Day Goes By," is sung by the character of Beth. It gives voice to the constant struggle that she faces after Frank cheats on her. She confesses to still being in love with Frank but knows she will never be able to trust him again.

## TEXT

Not a day goes by  
Not a single day  
But you're somewhere a part of my life  
And it looks like you'll stay  
As the days go by  
I keep thinking when does it end  
Where's the day I'll have started forgetting  
But I just go on thinking and sweating  
And cursing and crying  
And turning and reaching  
And waking and dying  
And no, not a day goes by  
Not a blessed day  
But you're still somehow part of my life  
And you won't go away  
So there's hell to pay  
And until I die  
I'll die day after day after day  
Til the days go by

## “I Never Thought A Boy Would Love Me”

Laura Soto-Bayomi

From the opera *Mayo*

Music and libretto by Tom Cipullo

Hailed by the American Academy of Art & Letters for music that displays “inexhaustible imagination, wit, expressive range and originality,” composer Tom Cipullo’s works are performed regularly throughout the United States and with increasing frequency internationally. Tom’s operas are often inspired by true stories. His most well-known opera is *Glory Denied*, based on the true story of Colonel Jim Thompson, America’s longest-held prisoner of war. His one-act operas *Josephine* and *After Life* were featured in Opera Colorado’s 2018-19 Season. Tom’s newest opera, *Mayo*, is set against the background of the eugenics movement in early 20th-century America and based on the true story of Mayo Buckner and details his life at the Iowa Home for Feeble-Minded Children. In the aria, “I Never Thought A Boy Would Love Me,” the character of Valeria, a fellow inmate and Mayo’s love interest, sings about finding value and self-worth simply from being loved.

### TEXT

I never thought a boy would love me,  
Never dreamed, never hoped a boy would  
love me.

Who am I?

I’m not pretty,

I’m not funny.

And I’m certainly not smart.

I’m just a girl with no family,

No home but here.

A girl with hand me down clothes,

A girl with only one friend.

I’m not frightened of this.

I’m not frightened one bit.

Though people say I’m simple,

And call me dumb

I’m something now.

I’m someone who is loved.

Until he loved me,

Even my dreams were less.

I never dreamed a boy would love me,

But now I do,

And now, and now, he, he does.

## SET IV | UNRAVELING

*“It has never occurred to me that our lives, which had been so closely interwoven, could begin unraveling with such speed”*

– KAZUO ISHIGURO

“Later”

Thomas Cilluffo

From the operetta *A Little Night Music*  
Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

One of the most important figures in 20th-century American music, Stephen Sondheim is widely considered the father of modern American musical theatre. His compositions tackle unexpected themes that range far beyond traditional subjects. His music and lyrics are complex and sophisticated but retain a sense of humor even when chronicling the darker elements of humanity. He has received an Academy Award, eight Tony Awards (including a Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre), eight Grammy Awards, a Pulitzer Prize, a Laurence Olivier Award, and a 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom. *A Little Night Music* was inspired by the Ingmar Bergman film *Smiles of a Summer Night*, and revolves around the romantic lives of several couples. “Later” is sung by the character of Henrik, a seminary student who is in love with his father’s new, much younger wife, Anne. Struggling to find out where he belongs, he grows increasingly frustrated and disillusioned by the world around him.

### TEXT

Later...

When is later?

All you ever hear is

“Later, Henrik, Henrik, later.”

“Yes, we know, Henrik,

Oh, Henrik, Everyone agrees, Henrik,

Please, Henrik!”

You have a thought

You’re fairly bursting with,

A personal discovery or problem, and it’s:

“What’s your rush, Henrik?

Shush, Henrik!

Goodness, how you gush, Henrik!

Hush, Henrik!”

You murmur:

“I only— It’s just that—”

“For God’s sake, later, Henrik!”

“Henrik... Who is Henrik?

Oh, that lawyer’s son,

The one who mumbles.

Short and boring,

Yes, he’s hardly worth ignoring,

And who cares if he’s all dammed—”

I beg your pardon—

“Up inside?”

As I’ve often stated,

It’s intolerable being tolerated.

“Reassure Henrik, Poor Henrik.

Henrik, you’ll endure

Being pure, Henrik.”

Though I’ve been born, I’ve never been!

How can I wait around for later?

I’ll be ninety on my deathbed

And the late, or, rather, later,

Henrik Egerman.

Doesn’t anything begin?

## “Old Maid”

Kira Dills-DeSurra

From the musical *110 In The Shade*

Music by Harvey Schmidt, lyrics by Tom Jones

Following the success of *The Fantasticks*, *110 In The Shade* was Schmidt and Jones' first project directly bound for Broadway. Based on Odgen Nash's 1954 play *The Rainmaker*, it focuses on Lizzie Curry, a spinster living on a ranch in the American southwest, and her relationships with local sheriff File, a cautious divorcé who fears being hurt again, and charismatic conman Bill Starbuck, posing as a rainmaker who promises the locals he can bring relief to the drought-stricken area. The score is almost operatic in scope and many of the originally-composed numbers had to be trimmed to decreased the run-time of the show. In the piece, “Old Maid,” we see the character of Lizzie unraveling. After giving up her youth to care for her father and brothers, she faces her future, terrified of the prospect of being alone.

### TEXT

Always being one.

Never being two.

Re-arrange the furniture,

There's nothing else to do.

Keep an empty house.

Watch your brothers wed.

Dream an empty dream at night

Upon an empty bed.

Old maid! Old maid!

Growing old alone.

Lonelier with age.

Buy a tiny mockingbird

And lock him in a cage.

Visiting your kin

Yearly family tours

Mustn't love the kids too much.

They're never really yours.

Old maid! Old maid!

Be kind to your poor Aunt Lizzie,

Her nerves are none too good.

She brings you a present when she comes.

Kiss her like you should.

Be thoughtful and sweet and proper,

Until she goes away.

She's been here a week and a half today.

When will she ever go?

Go where? Go where?

My dress is too tight.

My skin is alive all over.

It's turning to night,

And yet not a sign of breeze.

I'm all tied up!

My clothes seem to be on fire!

They're tying me up

And burning me to the bone!

Why won't it rain? Please let it rain!

Oh, God,

Don't let me live and die alone.

From the musical *Women On The Verge Of A Nervous Breakdown*

Music and lyrics by David Yazbek

Tony Award-winning composer David Yazbek burst onto the American musical scene in early 2000 and his work continues to garner attention. His musicals include *The Full Monty* (2000), *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (2005), *The Band's Visit* (2017), and *Tootsie* (2019). *Women On The Verge Of A Nervous Breakdown* tells the tale of a group of women in late 20th-century Madrid whose relationships with men lead to a tumultuous 48-hours of love, confusion, and passion. In the chaotic piece, “Model Behavior,” fashion model and eternal romantic Candela has finally found the perfect man, except for one small hitch: he just may be an international terrorist. Yazbek expertly captures the moment by using a series of messages left on an answering machine.

**TEXT**

Pepa, Pepa

It's me are you there? Call me!

Hi, it's me... again. Candela.

Where are you? Just, call me when you get this ok? Ok

Pepa... Pepa!!!

Pepa,

It's me again why aren't you picking up the phone?

Its like my brain is gonna melt if I don't talk to you.

I've got a problem in the shower, and I've only got a minute,

Cause the problem in the shower is that guy that I've been dating named Malik.

He's, What's the word? Swarthy, like a desert sheik

And he's been here at my apartment for about a week.

I met him down at Café Sombra, and I know you think I'm overly romantic,

But you wouldn't believe the connection we had, like immediately,

I was ready for him to meet my mom.

Like I could feel my heart exploding like some kind of bomb.

Which is ironic because actually I think he literally has some kind of...

Anyway grandpa, happy birthday, say hello to grandma and be sure to take your...

That was him!

I may be jumping to conclusions, God I hope I am.

He thinks I'm thin and he's got shoulders like Jean Claude Van Dame.

Listen call me when you hear this I'll be here for half an hour,

Call me back!

Pepa,

Are you there? Are you there? Are you...?

Okay you're not there but we need to talk,

My stomach's aching like I swallowed some enormous rock.

I'm on the phone booth on the corner and I only got a minute

Cause I'm running out of change, cause I've been lending all my money to Malik.

God know with men I'm not exactly on a lucky streak  
But this one really is a mess. I think I'm gonna freak  
I know you say I'm an alarmist,  
But I'm not remember there's that time I thought I saw a spider,  
You said "nah, its a Raisin",  
But it suddenly started moving and it crawled over and bit me on my toe.  
So if you're gonna stand and judgement that's how much you know.  
Its a good thing I didn't eat it, but I never would have ate it,  
Cause I never did like raisins so why would there be a Raisin on the floor?  
So when you hear this call me back I'll wait a little more.  
I'll be at 773, damn they scratched out the number... and misspelled vagina.  
All right I'm hanging up, I'll call you back!

Pepa,  
Ok I'm trying you again, its afternoon!  
It's like my eyes are gonna pop if I get you soon.  
I'm at the studio, which sucks because I'm having trouble working  
Cause the only thing I think about's this crazy situation with Malik.  
I don't know what I'm gonna do If you and I don't speak.  
I know you think I'm just a drama queen, but actually I'm practical  
And damn it I'm a model so of course I feel things deeper than most people typically do.  
And anyway I think my life may be in danger too,  
You won't believe what he's got hidden in the...  
Oh, Fernando's working here he's lost a lot of weight,  
And he's got that thing removed he just looks...  
Now Pepa, Marcos, he says hello.  
And now he's telling me were shooting so I got to go.  
Its some big deal ad campaign I don't know what it's for.  
They got me posing with a melon and a matador... some kind of metaphor.  
Call me back!

Pepa, its 8, I don't know why you're treating me like this.  
Pepa, its almost 10 o'clock you really are a terrible friend.  
Pepa I'm sorry I never felt so frightened and alone.  
I'm like a helpless little kitten up a...  
Hey I'm on the freaking phone!  
Please call me back.  
Pepa it's midnight, are you screening?  
It's 3 am. You have to call me.  
I'd never do this to you what kind of a friend...  
What was the name of that cheese that I like?  
Pepa, Pepa sweetheart. Listen, I need to tell you... Tape is full. End of messages.

Pepa,  
OK now even your machine is ignoring me.  
Listen, Pepa, I know you think I'm needy but you've gotta see.  
I'm feeling kinda woozy. I'm here crying for an hour,  
And my boyfriend's got an Uzi and he doesn't clean the shower,  
And I don't know where you are.

*(Continued on the next page)*

I don't know where I am.  
I'm halfway up a tree and completely in a jam.  
I'm out here in the desert and nobody gives a damn.  
Pepa, Pepa, Pepa...  
Call me back!

## SET V | BROKEN CORDS

*“A cord, stronger or weaker, is snapped asunder  
in every parting, and time’s busy fingers are not  
practiced in re-splicing broken ties.”*

– EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON

“The Man That Got Away”  
From the film *A Star Is Born*  
Music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Ira Gershwin

Laura Soto-Bayomi

“The Man That Got Away” was one of several songs composed by Harold Arlen and Ira Gershwin for the 1954 film *A Star Is Born*, a vehicle for Judy Garland whom Arlen had already provided with the career-defining songs “Over the Rainbow” and “That Old Black Magic.” “The Man That Got Away” is arguably the most important single musical sequence in the entire film. As one of the first segments filmed for the movie, it was photographed in three different costumes on three different occasions, in over forty different partial or complete takes. Judy Garland recorded the song on September 3, 1953, and the number was first filmed on Wednesday, October 21, 1953. Centered on lost love, it is a stellar example of storytelling through song.

### TEXT

The night is bitter  
The stars have lost their glitter  
The winds grow colder  
Suddenly you're older  
And all because of the man that got away  
No more his eager call  
The writings on the wall  
The dreams you dreamed have all  
Gone astray

The man that won you  
Has run off and undone you  
That great beginning  
Has seen the final inning  
Don't know what happened  
It's all a crazy game  
No more that all-time thrill  
For you've been through the mill

And never a new love will be the same  
Good riddance, goodbye  
Every trick of his you're on to  
But, fools will be fools  
And where's he gone to?

The road gets rougher  
It's lonelier and tougher  
With hope you burn up  
Tomorrow he will turn up  
There's just no letup the live-long  
Night and day

Ever since this world began  
There is nothing sadder than  
A one-man woman looking for  
The man that got away

## “Lost in the Waves”

Thomas Cilluffo

From the album *Out Of Our Heads*

Music by Michael Kooman, lyrics by Christopher Dimond

Kooman and Dimond are a writing team for both stage and screen. Their most recent musical, *Romantics Anonymous*, debuted to rave reviews at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and will tour the United States in 2020. They also currently serve as songwriters for *Vampirina*, an animated musical TV series for which they have written more than 150 songs. The show airs on the Disney Channel and Disney Junior, reaching over 100 million viewers in 115 countries. In 2011 they released their first album entitled *Out Of Our Heads*. The album showcases their original songs, each inspired from Michael and Christopher's own experiences. “Lost In The Waves” was a personal project for Christopher. In his words, “It was the last night of an annual trip I take to Topsail Island in North Carolina. I wandered away from the group's late night poker game, stood in the surf, and got lost in my thoughts for a long time. I thought about things that I didn't really like thinking about. Thoughts and feelings I preferred to repress, which is a particular skill of mine. And I came to a decision. I was going to find a way to face them. I figured a song was as good a way to confront an issue as any. Maybe then, I would feel less broken.”

### TEXT

At the edge of the Atlantic,  
I can't bring myself to swim.  
I choked back the tears  
For twenty two years,  
Drowning in shadows of him.

The waves etch out a pattern  
Long after they're gone.  
The lines that they trace, they quickly erase,  
But something's still lingering on.

Lost in the waves.  
I am lost in the waves.  
No one but me and the silent black sea;  
I am lost in the waves.

A vision in the moonlight:  
A family on the beach.  
A boy on his own, by the undertow thrown  
Far beyond his father's reach.

He's caught in a riptide.  
A man has to choose.  
There's a race to be won  
For the life of his son,  
But someone has to lose.

Lost in the waves.  
He was lost in the waves.  
Salt water burns, the tide always turns,  
When you're lost in the waves.

Now I'm the one sinking.  
There's no solid ground.  
And I can't help thinking  
I'm the one who has drowned.

Now knee-deep in the water,  
I feel my father's touch.  
And though fully grown,  
I've still never known  
How to love someone that much.

Lost in the waves.  
I am lost in the waves.  
No one but me and the silent black sea;  
I am lost in the waves.

## “Losing Roberto”

Laura Soto-Bayomi

From the musical *Death Takes A Holiday*

Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston

Maury Yeston’s musical *Death Takes A Holiday* is adapted from the 1924 Italian play *La Morte in Vacanza* by Alberto Casella. That play was made into a 1934 film of the same name starring Fredric March, which was remade in 1998 as *Meet Joe Black*, starring Brad Pitt. The story is about the character Death, who temporarily leaves his eternal calling and takes the form of a handsome young man in an effort to understand human emotion. He falls in love with a young woman and, through his interactions with the people he meets, he learns about love and sacrifice. “Losing Roberto” is sung by the character of Stephanie, a mother grieving for her son. Yeston’s heartbreaking melody and honest text capture the emptiness that is left behind when the parent/child bond is severed.

### TEXT

Losing Roberto, shot by a gun,  
When you sever the bond ’twixt a mother  
And son...

Once, my Roberto stood in that door,  
How I kissed him and missed him and  
Sent him to war

These were his soldiers, that, his hat.  
Three winning chips from Baccarat.

Piled in that closet, toy upon toy  
Belonged to Roberto, my boy.

He sat at this window, stared at that moon,  
Wrote in his diary, played bassoon.

How he loved winter!  
Hiking he’d go, leaving his footprints  
Deep in the snow.

They melt, but they’re here with the rest.  
They melt, but not here in my breast.

No, my Roberto will not depart.  
You can’t undo a man,  
Cut him free from your heart.

Look! In that mirror, combing his hair,  
No Roberto where once  
A Roberto was there.

## SET VI | TWISTED

*“Disoriented and twisted have been these strings my whole life. It will take time for you to untangle and know the story till the end”*

– PRAFUL SINGH

“Aria Of The Worm”

Thomas Cilluffo

From the opera *The Ghosts of Versailles*

Music by John Corigliano, libretto by William M. Hoffman

Corigliano's opera is the third in the trilogy inspired by the plays of Pierre Beaumarchais, the first being *The Barber of Seville* and the second, *The Marriage of Figaro*. *The Ghosts of Versailles* takes place twenty years after the events of *The Marriage of Figaro*. The opera is set in an afterlife existence of the Versailles court of Louis XVI. In order to cheer up the ghost of Marie Antoinette, who is upset about having been beheaded, the ghost of the playwright Beaumarchais stages an opera using the characters and situations from his first two Figaro plays. Corigliano considers this work a grand opera buffa because it incorporates both elements of the grand opera style (large chorus numbers, special effects) and the silliness of the opera buffa style. Commentators have noted how the opera satirizes and parodies accepted operatic conventions. “The Aria Of The Worm” is sung by the character of Bégearss, a revolutionary spy who is aiding Count Almaviva in his various secret plots. The aria's musical setting and text are a perfect vehicle for the character's vile temperament.

### TEXT

Oh the lion may roar,  
And the eagle may soar,  
And man may sail the darkest sea,  
But the worm lives on eternally.  
Long live the worm.  
Cut him in two,  
Each part'll renew.  
Slice him to bits,  
The worm persists.

He stills crawls on,  
Scales walls on sheer will  
And burrows burning sand.  
Long live the worm.

He travels on by  
The poor man's sty.  
Groveling past  
The royal palace,

And enters the coffin  
Of the red-haired dauphin.

Long live the worm.

The wind whistles  
And the storm bristles,  
And mud covers the ground.

The worm wanders round and round  
Morning and night,  
Hidden from sight,  
Over mountain and shore.  
Wanting more and more.

Devouring city and plain,  
Enduring snow and rain.  
Long live the worm!

Oh, the lion dies,  
The eagle dies,  
And man... man dies,  
But the worm lives on eternally,  
Long live the worm.

## “Burning Man”

Isaiah Feken

From the song cycle *Month Upon A Time*

Music and lyrics by Jeff Blumenkrantz

In June of 2011, Jeff Blumenkrantz embarked on a project called *Month Upon A Time*. Over the course of a year, Jeff wrote a new song each month, each dealing in some way with the month of the year in which it was being written, starting June 2011 and ending in May 2012. The songs were inspired by ideas from Jeff’s Twitter followers. “Burning Man” was the song for the month of August and was inspired by Dan Adler. Burning Man is an event held annually in the western United States at Black Rock City, a temporary city erected in the Black Rock Desert of northwest Nevada, approximately 100 miles north-northeast of Reno. The late summer event is an experiment in community and art, influenced by ten main principles: radical inclusion, radical self-reliance, radical self-expression, communal effort, civic responsibility, gifting, decommodification, participation, immediacy, and leave no trace. Jeff’s song is sung by a character who has gotten tangled up with someone he has little to nothing in common with.

### TEXT

It’s August in New York.  
Of course, my shrink is on vacation.  
But I’ve got a pressing situation  
And no idea what to do...  
So, I’m gonna work it out with you.

I really like this guy,  
But he wants me to go with him to,  
Burning Man!

That whole survival thing is clearly not for me.  
The only tent I’ve ever seen was on T.V.  
I don’t go anywhere that doesn’t have AC.  
I’m gonna just say no.

But he’s a dreamy guy.  
A really really dreamy guy.  
And I’m pretty sure I’ll lose this guy  
Unless I go and get nude with him at  
Burning Man.

My body mustn’t be revealed by light of day.  
Too many icky parts to scare the guy away.  
These muffin tops could feed the whole U. S. of A.  
I prob’ly shouldn’t go...  
Oh...

Why build some half-baked city in the middle of nowhere, Nevada?  
Do you realize how bad a vacation that would be?  
For me?

Wouldn't you rather we wallowed a week in Spain?  
Or if it's desert you want, Bahrain?  
Or if you just had to make a city by hand, Legoland?  
But Burning Man?  
C'mon.  
I really want this guy.  
I mean, this is my fantasy guy.  
I'm on the verge of loving this guy,  
But he wants me to bang drums with him at  
Burning Man.

No cell phone service, I'd be way out of the loop.  
Stuck out in Bum-fuck with no way to fly the coop,  
Just Porta Potties so no way I'm gonna poop.  
That doesn't sound like fun... for anyone.

Yet he's looking forward to:  
Sweltering days and freezing nights.  
Rain storms and dust storms and spider bites.  
Dress up costumes and drinking games,  
Setting a crap load of art in flames.

Going a week without a shower.  
Growing smellier by the hour.  
Hanging with hippies and wiccans and freaks  
So many drugs that you're braindead for weeks,

If these things he loves are things I hate,  
Why am I convinced he's so damn great?

I gotta keep this guy.  
He's way more evolved than I.  
And though I may well die,  
Then I shall die with my dreamy guy at  
Burning Man.

I hereby cast off ev'ry frivolous concern.  
Just make a note of it that if I don't return,  
I'm thinking pewter should be perfect for my urn.

"Cause everyone can see...  
That the real burning man is me.

God help me.

## “To Keep My Love Alive”

Laura Soto-Bayomi

From the musical *A Connecticut Yankee*

Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart

Of all of the iconic writing teams in musical theatre history, among the most beloved are Rodgers and Hart. They worked together on 28 stage musicals and more than 500 songs from 1919 until Hart's death in 1943. Their shows elevated the storylines and music that had previously been written and they considered the integration of story and music a crucial factor in a successful show. *A Connecticut Yankee* is a musical based on the novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by American writer Mark Twain. Like most adaptations of the Twain novel, it focuses on the lighter aspects of the story. “To Keep My Love Alive” was written for the 1943 revival. Sung by the character of Queen Morgan Le Fey, it chronicles all of her past husbands and how she bumped them off in order to avoid being unfaithful.

### TEXT

I've been married, and married,  
And often I've sighed  
“I'm never a bridesmaid,  
I'm always the bride”

I never divorced them, I hadn't the heart  
Yet remember these sweet words,  
“ ‘till death do us part”

I married many men, a ton of them  
Because I was untrue to none of them  
Because I bumped off every one of them  
To keep my love alive

Sir Paul was frail, he looked a wreck to me  
At night he was a horse's neck to me  
So I performed an appendectomy  
To keep my love alive

Sir Thomas had insomnia,  
He couldn't sleep at night  
I bought a little arsenic,  
He's sleeping now all right

Sir Philip played the harp,  
I cussed the thing  
I crowned him with his harp  
To bust the thing  
And now he plays where harps  
Are just the thing  
To keep my love alive

I thought Sir George had possibilities  
But his flirtations made me ill at ease  
And when I'm ill at ease,  
I kill at ease to keep my love alive

Sir Charles came from a sanatorium  
And yelled for drinks in my emporium  
I mixed one drink, he's in memoriam  
To keep my love alive

Sir Francis was a singing bird,  
A nightingale, that's why  
I tossed him off my balcony, to see if he  
Could fly

Sir Atherton indulged in fratricide,  
He killed his dad and that was patricide  
One night I stabbed him by  
My mattress-side  
To keep my love alive

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