



# Sacred Music at Notre Dame

*Presents*

## ***Nnem Oma***

**A Masters Voice Recital**

**Blessing Agu, *soprano***

**Dror Baitel, *collaborative pianist***

from <i>Semele</i> , HWV 58 Endless love, endless pleasure	G.F. Händel (1685–1759)
from <i>Così fan tutte</i> , K. 588 In uomini, in soldati	W.A. Mozart (1756–1791)
Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118	Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
from <i>Roméo et Juliette</i> Ah! Je veux vivre	Charles Gounod (1818–1893)
Resignation My soul's been anchored in de Lord	Florence B. Price (1887–1953)

**-INTERMISSION-**

Nnem oma	Ferdinand Mougbo (b. 1990)
Kini m ba se lai si iya mi	Jude Nwankwo (b. 1982)
Munachimuso	Echezonachukwu Nduka (b. 1989)
Udala Isa	Michael Uzoma (b. 1990)

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LaBar Recital Hall, O'Neill Hall of Music & Sacred Music  
Friday, 24 March 2023, 6:00PM

This is a degree recital for the Master of Sacred Music.

Blessing Agu is a student of Ms. Kiera Duffy.

*Sacred Music at Notre Dame prohibits the unauthorized recording, publication, and streaming of live performances.*

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

### **Endless pleasure, endless love**

Endless pleasure, endless love,  
Semele enjoys above!  
On her bosom jove reclining,  
useless now his thunder lies;  
to her arms his bolts resigning,  
and his lightning to her eyes.

### **In uomini, in soldati**

In uomini, in soldati, sperare fedelta?  
Non vi fate sentir, per carita!  
Di pasta simile son tutti quanti,  
Le fronde mobili, l'aure incostanti  
Han piu degli uomini stabilita!  
Mentite lagrime, fallaci sguardi  
Voci ingannevoli, vezzi bugiardi  
Son le primarie lor qualita!  
In noi non amano che il lor diletto,  
Poi ci dispregiano, neganci affetto,  
Ne val da barbari chieder pieta!  
Paghiam o femmine, d'ugual moneta  
Questa malefica razza indiscreta.  
Amiam per comodo, per vanita!

In men, in soldiers, you hope for loyalty?  
Do not be heard, even for charity!  
Cut from the same cloth, every one of them,  
The leaves, furniture, and fickle breezes  
are more stable than men!  
False tears, deceptive looks,  
Misleading voices, charming lies  
Are their primary qualities!  
In that we dislike their pleasure,  
Then they despise us, and deny us affection,  
It is futile to ask the barbarians for pity!  
Let us females, pay them back with equal money  
This evil indiscreet race.  
Let's love for convenience, for vanity!

### **Gretchen am Spinnrade**

Meine Ruh ist hin, mein Herz ist schwer,  
Ich finde sie nimmer und nimmermehr.  
Wo ich ihn nicht hab, ist mir das Grab,  
Die ganze Welt ist mir vergällt.  
Mein armer Kopf ist mir verrückt,  
Mein armer Sinn ist mir zerstückt.  
Nach ihm nur schau ich zum Fenster hinaus,  
nach ihm nur geh ich aus dem Haus.  
Sein hoher Gang, sein' edle Gestalt,  
seines Mundes Lächeln,  
seiner Augen Gewalt,  
und seiner Rede zauberfluß,  
Sein Händedruck, und ach, sein Kuss!  
Mein Busen drängt sich nach ihm hin.  
Auch dürf ich fassen und halten ihn,  
und küssen ihn, so wie ich wollt,  
an seinen Küssen vergehen sollt!

My peace is gone, my heart is heavy,  
I will find it never and never more.  
Where I do not have him, that is the grave,  
The whole world is bitter to me.  
My poor head is crazy to me,  
my poor mind is torn apart.  
For him only, I look out the window  
only for him do I go out of the house.  
His tall walk, his noble figure,  
his mouth's smile,  
his eyes' power,  
and his mouth's magic flow,  
his handclasp, and ah, his kiss!  
My bosom urges itself toward him.  
Ah, might I grasp and hold him,  
and kiss him, as I would wish,  
at his kisses I should die!

### Ah! Je veux vivre

Ah! Je veux vivre  
sans ce rêve qui m'enivre;  
ce jour encore,  
douce flamme,  
Je te garde dans mon âme  
comme un trésor!  
Cette ivresse de jeunesse  
ne dure, hélas, qu'un jour!  
Puis vient l'heure  
où l'on pleure,  
le cœur cède à l'amour,  
et le bonheur fuit sans retour.  
Loin de l'hiver morose  
laisse-moi sommeiller  
avant de l'effeuiller.  
Ah! douce flamme,  
garde mon trésor  
longtemps encore!

Ah! I want to live  
in this dream that intoxicates me  
again this day!  
Sweet flame,  
I keep you in my soul  
like a treasure!  
This intoxication of youth  
alas, don't last just one day!  
Then the time comes  
when we cry  
the heart gives way to love  
and happiness flees without return.  
Away from the gloomy winter  
let me sleep  
before stripping it.  
Ah! sweet flame,  
stay in my soul like a sweet treasure  
for a long time, again!

### Resignation

My life is a pathway of sorrow; I've struggled and toiled in the sun  
with hope that the dawn of tomorrow would break on a work that is done.  
My Master has pointed the way, he taught me in prayer to say:  
"Lord, give us this day and our daily bread."  
I hunger, yet I shall be fed. My feet, they are wounded and dragging;  
my body is tortured with pain; my heart, it is shattered and flagging,  
what matter, if, heaven I gain. Of happiness once I have tasted;  
'twas only an instant it paused tho' brief was the hour that I wasted  
forever the woe that it caused; I'm tired and want to go home.  
My mother and sister are there; they're waiting for me to come  
where mansions are bright and fair.

### My soul's been anchored in de Lord

In de Lord, in de Lord;  
my soul's been anchored in de Lord.  
Befo' I'd stay in hell one day,  
I'd sing an' pray myself away.  
I'm goin' to pray an' never stop,  
until I've reached the mountain top.  
My soul's been anchored in de Lord.

### Nnem oma

Ogene akumala koko kom  
Ogene akumala makana  
Nne ri mma aiye  
Ekwe akumala kere kete  
Ekwe akumala kem kem Ekwe akumala makana  
Nne ri mma aiye O chineke chema nnemo  
Chineke chema nnemo  
Chineke ka biko chema nnemo  
Mbe meakwa nnem nonu ya e  
Mchoma nnri nnem nonu ya  
Doo olisam doo biko chema nnemo  
O nne, o nne, o nne, o nne Nne ri mma nwa  
nnem Nne ri mma nne nne  
Ama azurugi ude o nnem oma  
Ama enye gi ego nnem oma  
Ama ewuru gi uyo ri mma  
Nye gi chi bi ri na ihi na ibu nne mu oma e

I hear the sound of the gong  
I hear the beating of the drums  
Because mother is the best  
Aye  
O God, protect my mother  
O please protect.  
In moments of sorrow and anguish my mother is  
there.  
When I am hungry, my mother is there to feed  
me.  
O God, please protect my mother.  
I will buy you expensive clothes;  
I will give money ;  
I will build a beautiful house for you;  
honor you for you are best.  
My mother is the best.

### Kini m ba se laisi iya mi

Kini m ba se laisi iya mi?  
Iya t'obi mi s'aye,  
Iya t'o to mi d'agba,  
Kini m ba se laisi iya mi?  
O loyun mi fun oşu meşan,  
O tun pon mi fun odun meta,  
O wa to mi ti mo fi d'eniyan pataki l'aye o  
Oun lo to mi ti mo fi d'eniyan pataki l'aye o  
Iya mi modupe o,  
Iya mi O kare  
Kini m ba se laisi iya mi?  
Iya t'obi mi s'aye,  
Iya t'o to mi d'agba o,  
Kini m ba se laisi iya mi?  
Laisi iya mi kini m ba se?

What would I have done without my mother?  
Mother that gave birth to me,  
Mother that raised me,  
What would I have done without my mother?  
She carried me in her womb for nine months,  
She carried me on her back for three years,  
She raised me to be a good person,  
It is her that raised to become a good person,  
I am grateful mother,  
I am thankful mother.  
What would I have done without my mother?  
Mother that gave birth me,  
Mother that raised me,  
What would I have done without my mother?  
Without my mother what would I have done?

### Munachimuso

Munachimuso Chukwu gozirimo  
Chukwu chorom mma  
Munachimuso aiye le  
Etozugom'o aiye le  
Munachimuso aiyele  
Achapugom'o aiyele  
Wet'uri bia tee mu n'irum'  
O agam etekw'egwu n'ezi m'onwa puta  
Munachimuso aiyele etozugom'o aiye le  
Munachimuso aiyele le le le le le le.

I am on board with my maker  
God has blessed me, God has beautified me  
I am on board with my maker, I have come of  
age; I am on board with my maker  
I am glowing in splendor  
Bring in the palettes, come decorate my face  
I will dance in the field when the moon appears  
I am on board with my maker, I have come of  
age; I am on board with my maker.

## **Udala isa**

Ogini chazulu n'elu yege yege  
Udala isa-a yege yege  
Gini chazulu n'elu yege yege  
Udala isaa yege yege  
Otuisato yegeyege  
Udala isa-a yege yege  
Onye bata fulu  
Nw'enwe bata fulu aha  
Enwe bata fulu  
Onye kam gaenye  
Udala aso gbuenu mo  
Yege yege Iya yege yege  
Udala isa a yege yege  
Yege yege, yege yege yege.

What is it that illuminates in the sky?  
Yege yege,  
Seven African start apple fruits  
Yege yege  
A ripe African star apple fruit  
You are welcome to admire the ripe fruit  
Yege yege  
I am elated by the beauty of this ripe fruit  
Who would I give this fruit?  
I am elated by the beauty of the  
African star apple fruit.  
Truly, the African star apple fruit is the most  
beautiful.

### **A Note from the Singer**

Mothers are gifts to mankind; they bring life to the world and illuminate the universe with their love and kindness. "Nnem oma," which translates to "My mother" in English, is a recital featuring powerful female characters who portray womanhood's various facets with feminine energy and expression. It is specially dedicated to my mother and to women all over the world.

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

### **Nnem oma**

Nnem Oma, an art song in Igbo, is an encomium and prayer to one's maker to protect and bless all mothers. It is an affirmation and acknowledgment of all the sufferings and sacrifices made by mothers in the upbringing of their children. In Nigeria, mothers are valued not necessarily because they are part of the family but due to their warmth and accommodating spirit. An African Mother is a teacher, a disciplinarian, a comforter and above all a nurse. Nnem Oma is a composition for voice, piano and African percussive instruments.

Ferdinand-Mary Muogbo (Fernandez) is a Nigerian composer, Singer and a music producer currently living and working in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. He earned his first degree in Music at the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN), majoring in composition. While at the University, he served as an artistic director of the department of music African Chorus Ensemble under the tutelage of Professor Christian Onyeji. Professor Christian Onyeji alongside Dr. Adebowale O. Adeogun and Mr Jude Nwankwo exposed him to Nigerian art music. He graduated from his department in 2014 as one of the top students in his set. In 2020, He obtained a master's degree in composition from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Rivers State, Nigeria. While studying music composition under Professor Onyi Nwankpa at the institution, he pursued

### **Kini m ba se laisi iya mi**

Kini m ba se lai si Iya Mi is a Yoruba (Nigerian) art song by Jude Nwankwo for soprano solo and piano. It is a song that extols mothers and motherhood. It asks pertinent questions about what would have become of a person without the ever caring, protecting, and active roles of a mother. Aware of the obvious answers, the song praises, and thanks mothers for all they do in raising their children to become good and useful people in the society. Jude Nwankwo is a Nigerian composer and choral conductor. His compositions include choral and instrumental works in both sacred and secular genres. He is the inaugural recipient of the Sub-Saharan Africa Commissioning project award of the Morehouse College Department of Music,

Atlanta, Georgia. He has a Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in composition from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), and a Master of Sacred Music in choral conducting from the University of Notre Dame. He received the best graduating student award from the Department of Music, UNN in 2008, and the Academic Achievement award from the Department of Sacred Music at Notre Dame in 2021. He is the founder of the J Clef Chorale, a private chorale group dedicated to training choral music enthusiasts in the art of choral singing. He is presently doctoral student of choral conducting at University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

### **Munachimuso**

Munachimuso, an art song in Igbo, is an expression of joy and gratitude to one's maker in celebration of beauty, blessings, guidance, and coming of age. It is an open acknowledgement and affirmation of the divine, while basking in warmth.

There is a sense in which value is placed on the role of community or family as enhancers of that beauty. While it was composed primarily for voice and piano, the song can be performed with African percussive and melo-rhythmic instruments, in addition to the piano.

Year: 2013

Echezonachukwu Nduka is a Nigerian pianist, poet, author, recording artist, and ethnomusicologist specializing in the piano music of West African composers. He earned academic degrees in Music from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Kingston University London, UK. In Nigeria, he trained as a pianist under Professor Christian Onyeji and Dr. Adebowale O. Adeogun who introduced him to African Pianism. As a solo and collaborative pianist, his performance repertoire includes works in the Western classical cannon, in addition to modern compositions by Nigerian and Ghanaian composers. Mr. Nduka has given public lecture-recitals on African Pianism, recorded two EPs and one album, and performed with musicians in Nigeria, UK, and the US. His work has been featured on BBC Newsday, Radio Nacional Clasica de Argentina, Radio France International, Arise News, Classical Journey, and the Guardian.

Official Website: <https://www.artnduka.com/>

### **Udala isa**

Is an Igbo folk song that talks about the Udala fruit (African Star Apple). The song has been performed in a highlife titled *Yegeyege* in the album *Ezigbo Dim* by one of Nigeria's renowned singers, **Nelly Uzonna Edith Uchendu** in 1982. By way of translation, someone sighted the overripe *udala* fruit on the tree, calling all to see these fruits, and began asking "who will I give?". Ideologically, *Udala Isaa* is a literary expression of a beautiful damsel. The seven African fruits are emphasis on the beauty of the woman (What is it that illuminates in the sky?) calling all to come and witness its beauty. Then the emphasis on extraordinarily sweet of the *udala* (the beautiful damsel). This ideological approach is a marriage ceremony where a young man is calling on people to see his beautiful bride (among other maidens) and witness his profession of his love. *Yegeyege* is an onomatopoeic word which suggests an affirmation to the sweetness of the *Udala* fruit.

Chiedozie Michael Uzomah, a Graduate Assistant, Department of Music, University of Nigeria Nsukka, is currently undergoing a master's degree in arts (Music Theory and Composition) in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a Diploma in Music Education, all in the same prestigious University. He is a multi-talented and a gifted musician with special bias for instrumental music and performance. In the orchestra, Chiedozie is a cellist, and conductor. He has performed various repertoires of selected composers from baroque to modern era. In the Choir, he is a director. He has led various choirs within the country to success in competitions and concerts. Chiedozie is also a composer and arranger of both vocal and instrumental music genres. He has composed over a thousand songs ranging from sacred to secular songs like the Masses, Psalms, Motets, Symphonies, Chamber Music, Vocal and Instrumental solos, and other choral and instrument genres all from both Western and African styles and idioms. Since he joined the University of Nigeria in 2018 as an academic staff of Music, Chiedozie has taught basic keyboard

studies, Assisted his senior colleagues in teaching Music Theory and Composition, Orchestration as well as African music. In addition, he has impacted in students, the skill of playing the keyboard, cello, clarinet, and other string instruments. He also belongs to numerous groups which he has serve and still up till date. Chiedozie is a Nigerian who hail from the Eastern part.



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