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Cal Poly to Present Preview of 'Voices of the Pearl' on April 24

SAN LUIS OBISPO — The Cal Poly Music Department will present a preview performance of "Voices of the Pearl" at 11 a.m. Thursday, April 24, in the Davidson Music Center (Building 45), Room 218, on campus.

Guest artists Anne Harley, soprano; Jane Sheldon, soprano; and Gayle Blankenburg, piano; will perform newly composed songs on Sufi and Daoist texts. They will give the premiere performance April 26 at Scripps College in Claremont, Calif.

"The 'Voices of the Pearl' project commissions, performs and records musical works from composers across the globe, setting text by and about female esoterics from world traditions throughout history, reclaiming these lost voices and the tradition of female spirituality," Harley said.

The performance will include the song cycle "Divani Hayati" by Kati Agócs. This cycle sets verses of "ghazals" (roughly speaking, Persian equivalents of highly structured sonnets) of Bibi Hayati, an early 19th-century female Sufi poet and mystic from Bam, in the Kerman province of Iran. It will be sung in the original Farsi.

The performance will also include "The Secret Book on the Inner Elixir as Transmitted by the Immortal Sun Bu'er" by Yii Kah Hoe. This song cycle is scored for soprano, piano and percussion. It sets 14 poems from "The Secret Book on the Inner Elixir as Transmitted by the Immortal Sun Bu'er" by the 12th-century female Daoist practitioner Sun Bu'er. It will be sung in modern Mandarin.

The performance is free and open to the public and is sponsored by Cal Poly's Music Department. For more information, call the Music Department at 805-756-2406.

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