

## Soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon to make ChamberFest Cleveland debut

by Mike Telin



This week music for voice will take center stage when the dynamic soprano [Lucy Fitz Gibbon](#) makes her ChamberFest debut.

Fitz Gibbon has appeared as a soloist with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, and the Albany, Richmond, Tulsa, and Eureka Symphonies.

Just prior to our telephone conversation she had performed a recital for the Berkeley Early Music Festival and was a guest artist at SongFest at the San Francisco Conservatory. There she sang

contemporary works by American composers including a song-cycle by Sheila Silver and the West Coast premiere of a cycle by John Harbison.

*Mike Telin: We're looking forward to your ChamberFest performances, but this is not your first visit to Cleveland.*

Lucy Fitz Gibbon: That's right. I was there in 2018 for the Art Song Festival. I teamed with my husband, pianist Ryan McCullough. It was a marvelous experience and we had such a great time working with those great artists in that beautiful Mixon Hall. And going to the museums.

*MT: It's great to see Kate Soper's music on the program — when did you discover her?*

LFG: I first encountered Kate Soper's music at Tanglewood — I guess it would have been in 2014 — and I first performed *Only the Words Themselves Mean What They Say* in 2015.

I think she is a brilliant composer and digester of words. This piece is a setting of texts by Lydia Davis. It's in three movements and each one has a different musical structure.

One of the things I think is so nice about the piece is that it is a real tour-de-force. Kate wrote it for herself and the flutist Erin Lesser. In a sense it was devised as an exercise in how far you can push the expression of both instruments, but at the same time the piece is funny.

*MT: You're also performing some Berio.*

LFG: The *Folk Songs* are just fun. I've performed them a few times. And on Sunday we're doing some of Britten's *Folk Songs* along with some Fauré, Duparc, and Debussy. Sivan did all of the arrangements — I love his playing.

*MT: Changing topics — how did you spend your COVID time?*

LFG: It's been a challenging couple of years. But I was lucky because I'm married to someone who is not only a wonderful pianist, but who is also interested in audio recording, and during the pandemic became interested in video engineering.

So while many musicians lost the ability to collaborate, we never had to experience that. But even this season all of my concerts that were supposed to be in-person in January either went virtual or were rescheduled. And a month ago I had another concert rescheduled for September, So it isn't over yet.

*MT: What's on your calendar for the rest of the summer?*

LFG: I'm so excited because I have most of July off. Then I'll be back at Marlboro in early August performing a chamber opera by George Benjamin — *Into the Little Hill*. After that I'm giving a recital with my husband.

But I'm looking forward to being back in Cleveland and to working with these great musicians — some I haven't seen since COVID. So it's exciting to be able to reunite.

*Published on ClevelandClassical.com June 27, 2022.*

*Click here for a printable copy of this article*

[Return to the Front Page.](#)