

CASUAL CLASSICS FOUR

# The Music Gene

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020 • 3:30 p.m. • PROPST CENTER, HUDSONALPHA INSTITUTE

**Richard Myers**, *narrator* • **Christie Weber**, *soprano*

**Huntsville Symphony Orchestra** • **GREGORY VAJDA**, *Music Director & Conductor*

"I was obliged to work hard from an early age," the great composer J. S. Bach told his sons, "and anyone who is equally industrious can expect to achieve similar success." But is this really true—could diligence and a solid work ethic be entirely responsible for the towering achievements of the father of modern Western music? Bach came from a highly musical family, after all; the name *Bach* was, in that place and time, fairly synonymous with *musician*.

In today's program, presented in partnership with the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, the musicians of the HSO and our distinguished guest artists explore the idea of the "music gene." Dr. Rick Myers, one of the world's foremost experts on the human genome, has worked with Music Director & Conductor Gregory Vajda to create a new piece of music on the subject, heard this afternoon for the very first time.

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**JANE E. HAYS**

**Maurice Ravel**

(1875–1937)

*Trois poèmes de Mallarmé*

- I. Soupir ("Sigh")
- II. Placet futile ("Futile Petition")
- III. Surgi de la croup et du bond  
("Rising Up from Bulge and Stem")

**Christie Weber**, *soprano*

**Gregory Vajda**

(b. 1973)

*The Music Gene* (world premiere)

**Dr. Richard Myers**, *narrator*

**Christie Weber**, *soprano*

# Guest Artists

**Dr. Richard Myers**, *narrator*

- President & Science Director, HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology (2008-)
- Director, Stanford Human Genome Center (1993-2008); Chairman, Stanford University Department of Genetics (2002-08)
- Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters, University of Alabama (2005); Fellow, The American Association for the Advancement of Science (2011)



**Christie Weber**, *soprano*

- Performances with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Huntsville Youth Orchestra, Nashville Community Chorus, Orchestra sul Ponticello
- Opera roles include Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni), Hanna (*The Merry Widow*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Mimi and Musetta (*La bohème*), Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*)
- Winner, NATS Competition Professional Division, 2008; recordings with Ben Folds, Michael W. Smith

