

A PRIORI was born out of a desire to explore the moving poetry within German Lieder, and has bloomed into a greater quest to uncover the cores of masterworks written for voice and piano. They believe that the intersection of text and music that has fascinated composers and audiences throughout the ages is even more relevant in today's musical world than it has ever been. Language adapts to communicate more clearly within society, and so too do musicians by breathing new life into texts. As singer and pianist, they feel a responsibility to imbue these texts and this music with the passions and pains of a new generation. The Latin phrase *a priori* translates to "from what comes before," emphasizing the importance of learning from the past in order to cultivate a more informed present in every facet of life.

David Thomas Mather, a Michigan native, and Bahar Soyoz, hailing from Turkey, met during their studies in Boston and fell in love with Schubert's *Winterreise* as an art piece and as an unfiltered, raw picture of the extremes of human emotion through suffering. Exploring the depth of the human condition through Schubert's haunting melodies found them collaborating and reacting at a micro-level to small, nuanced musical gestures. That work was so artistically filling, it inspired them to search for that level of intensity in other song cycles and in programming. Mather and Soyoz enjoy the challenge of truly embodying a piece's character through textual analysis and organic performance with authentic emotional responses to the music as it is created.