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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

Conservatory of Music

presents a

Faculty Recital

Kristina Driskill, mezzo-soprano
and

Hye-Young Kim, piano

March 18, 2012 ▪ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

Program

From the Diary of Virginia Woolf
The Diary (April, 1919)
Anxiety (October, 1920)
Fancy (February, 1927)
Hardy's Funeral (January, 1928)
Rome (May, 1935)
War (June, 1940)
Parents (December, 1940)
Last Entry (March, 1941)

~Intermission~

Touch
What Lips My Lips Have Kissed
Love Is a Constant
Alley Cat Love Song

Diary of an Urban Maiden
Sunday Morning
Dating Song
Moving On
Mama Called

Dominick Argento
(b. 1927)

Alva Henderson
(b. 1940)

Gary Schocker
(b. 1959)

Program Notes

Compositions for voice comprise the majority of Dominick Argento's works. Many of his texts concern self-discovery and are chosen from prose rather than from poetry; this is true of his song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, from which Argento selected eight entries that signified significant events in Woolf's life. Composed in 1974, the work was published the following year and was subsequently awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music. Its original inception drew from a commission by the Schubert Club of St. Paul, Minnesota who chose Janet Baker to premiere the work. Upon hearing this, Argento changed his original thoughts about using prose from Woolf's books to entries from her diary.

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is considered one of the great British authors of the twentieth century. But burdened at a young age by sexual abuse from her stepbrothers and the deaths of her mother, her stepsister, her father, and then her brother, Woolf was plagued by bouts of insanity throughout her life. Feeling the onset of another episode from which she did not feel she would recover, she wrote a letter to her husband Leonard owing her happiness to him and then proceeded to commit suicide by drowning, four days after the final entry was written in her diary. Unintended as a public work when written, Leonard published Woolf's diary in its entirety after she passed.

The cycle displays dissonance, atonality, and twelve-tone aspects within an overall tonal context, with emphasis on the minor second and tritone throughout. Each piece has its own motivic material, all of which are briefly culminated in the last piece. Argento called the cycle "a sort of twentieth century *Frauenliebe und -leben*," choosing eight milestones from Woolf's life as she described them in her diary. Although the diary informally began in 1915, its true cohesiveness formed in 1919. The cycle's first and last texts come from one of Woolf's entries in that year and her last entry in 1941, respectively.

Like Argento, the voice was Alva Henderson's preferred instrument for his compositions. Enjoying a celebrated career for the past fifty years, Henderson has been a frequent choice for opera commissions, and his songs have been featured in recital throughout the United States. The vocal lines of his works are lyrical and vacillate between riding over and intertwining with the accompaniment. The melodic lines are quite natural, making them appealing to singers and audiences alike.

Many of his song texts are by the award-winning poet, essayist, and librettist Dana Gioia (b. 1950). "Touch" (1993) speaks of a dangerous attraction between two people. The form is that of a triolet (a short, eight-line poem with repeating lines) which, because of its brevity, must convey its meaning through implication. "Alley Cat Love Song" (1991) is a parody of Tennyson's poem,

Come Into the Garden, Maud, which begins

Come into the garden, Maud
For the black bat, night, has flown
Come into the garden, Maud
I am here at the gate alone

The satirical text is exquisitely depicted by Henderson’s romantic accompaniment, full of lush arpeggios and lyricism. In Gioia’s version, the female feline desperately seeks the attention the slightly-past-his-prime neighborhood tabby, Fred. The poetry is based on an actual cat named Fred, who indeed had a younger admirer, and the scene depicted is based upon the rural area in the South where Fred lived. Gioia says, “The poem is meant to be funny but also romantic. After all, most real love affairs are pretty comic.”

“What Lips My Lips Have Kissed” (1991) comes from Henderson’s cycle *Love Is Not All*, based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950). The accompaniment displays two alternating themes, which support the sonnet’s perspective on past and present, change and loss. Millay recounts her past lovers and her current state of solitude.

Henderson also collaborated frequently with novelist and poet Janet Lewis (1899-1998). She produced several libretti and song texts for him, including that for “Love Is a Constant,” composed in 1989. The continuously moving accompaniment and flowing melodic line convey the endlessness of love, regardless of its happy or tragic state. The text compares this constancy to that of a beam of light and likens love’s anguish to processes which take patience and effort to yield a desired result, including a tree bearing fruit; grapes made into wine; and an insect coming to maturity, opening its newly-formed wings, and flying.

The collaboration between composer and world-renowned flutist Gary Schocker and lyricist Barbara Campbell began in 1985, when the two met at a Lehman Engle-BMI Musical Theatre Workshop for composers and lyricists in New York. Campbell remarked about how much she liked Schocker’s cat, Rex, and he suggested she write a song about it – the result of which was “Mama Called.” It was published individually until years later, when Schocker suggested that they expand it into a set. Three other songs were created, and *Cantata for an Urban Maiden* (later changed to *Diary of an Urban Maiden*) was published in the 1990s.

The texts are based upon imaginings of a thirty-something trying to define her life in the City. Schocker states that “their jaunty, uneven character...in spurts, demanding quick metrical changes” was based upon the manner in which Campbell converses.

Artists

The Los Angeles Times calls Mezzo-soprano **Kristina Driskill** “resplendent” and featured a review of her performance of Hanns Eisler’s *Hollywooder Liederbuch*, describing her as capturing the music’s essence “with wonderfully angry, challenging, pouty, seductive, decadently dreamy expressivity.” She has been praised for her agile coloratura as well as for her unique vocal color, and of her performance as Siebel in *Faust*, the Houston Press claimed, "With her utter professionalism, plummy dark voice, and easy stage presence, Driskill outshines everyone else."

Ms. Driskill has also performed roles including the title role in *La Cenerentola*, Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Sesto (*Giulio Cesare*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Beppe (*L'amico Fritz*), Mercedes (*Carmen*), Flora (*La Traviata*), Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*), Meg (*Falstaff* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*), The Witch (*Into the Woods*), Hodel (*Fiddler on the Roof*) and Mère Marie (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*), as well as Carmela in Dallas Opera's production of *La Vida Breve*. For the National Opera Association’s 2008 national convention, she performed the leading role of the Dark Woman in the world staged premiere of Paul Salerni’s *Tony Caruso’s Final Broadcast*. In 2009 she sang the roles of the Forester's Wife, the Innkeeper's Wife, and the Owl with Long Beach Opera's production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*.

Ms. Driskill received her Bachelor of Music from Louisiana State University and her Masters degree from Rice University. She recently completed her Doctorate of Musical Arts degree from West Virginia University, where she was a recipient of the prestigious Swiger Fellowship. Ms. Driskill began teaching voice and diction for Chapman University in 2007 and serves on the faculty for OperaWorks’ Summer Intensive programs. She is also an accomplished abstract painter, with works featured in LightSong Films’ production *The Watermelon*, released in 2008.

Dr. Hye-Young Kim is an active collaborative pianist and coach in a wide variety of repertoire and ensembles. Her musical studies began at the age of 5 on the piano and she later received her Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance in Korea. She furthered her musical study at the University of Southern California in the studio of Dr. Alan Smith where she achieved her Master's degree and Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Keyboard Collaborative Arts. While completing her doctoral program, she minored in Sacred Music, Solo Piano Performance, and Music Education. She has worked as a collaborative pianist and as an instrumental and vocal coach for the USC Chamber Choir, USC Opera, UCLA Opera, American Institute of Musical Studies, Songfest, and Pacific Symphony. She has performed internationally in Austria, Italy, Cuba, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the U.S. Her performances have appeared on radio and television. Dr. Kim is currently an adjunct faculty member at Chapman University Conservatory of Music.

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