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The Blooming Voice: Opera Recital

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The Blooming Voice

OPERA RECITAL

featuring

Ms. Rachel Koons, soprano

Ms. Milena Kitic, mezzo-soprano

Dr. Cheryl Lin Fielding, piano

6:30 PM • January 24, 2014
Salmon Recital Hall
Chapman University

RECITAL PROGRAM

Plaisir d'amour	I.	Jean-Paul-Égide Martini (1741-1816)
Sommi Dei from <i>Radamisto</i>		George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
Sul fil d'un soffio etesio from <i>Falstaff</i>	II.	Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)
Spanish Song Ms. Kitic	III.	Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)
Saper vorreste Volta la terrea from <i>Un ballo in maschera</i>	IV.	Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)
-Intermission-		
Hébé	V.	Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)
Ganymed		Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
O mio babbino caro from <i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	VI.	Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
Ach, ich fühl's from <i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	VII.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Habañera from <i>Carmen</i> Ms. Kitic	VIII.	Georges Bizet (1838-1875)
Ombre légère from <i>Dinorah</i>	IX.	Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864)

Plaisir d'amour

music by Johann-Paul Martini (1741-1816)

poem by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755-1794)

This *romance* was composed in 1784 in Nancy, and published the following year as a supplement to the novella *Célestine*. Martini was a German composer who moved to France in 1760 and spent most of his career there. He eventually became well known for writing opera. He is cited as the first composer in France to compose songs with piano accompaniment rather than continuo. He is most remembered for "Plaisir d'amour," a classic *romance* that remains a famous prototype of the style. The *romance* evolved from earlier French poetic-vocal forms, notably those of the troubadours. Eighteenth-century *romances* were strophic in form, with simple melodic lines that were sung without affectation. Accompaniments were subordinate to the vocal line and there was little or no musical interaction between voice and piano. "Plaisir d'amour" is notable for its rondo form and more involved accompaniment, which features a prelude, interlude, and postlude.

Plaisir d'amour

Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment,
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.
J'ai tout quitté pour l'ingrate Sylvie,
Elle me quitte et prend un autre amant.
Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment,
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.

Tant que cette eau coulera doucement
Vers ce ruisseau qui borde la prairie,
Je t'aimerai, me répétait Sylvie.
L'eau coule encor, elle a changé pourtant.
Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment,
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.

The pleasures of love

*The pleasures of love last but a moment,
The sorrows of love last all life through.
I have given up everything for the ungrateful Sylvia
She left me and took another lover.
The pleasures of love last but a moment,
The sorrows of love last all life through.*

*As long as this water runs gently
Towards the brook that borders the meadow,
I shall love you, Sylvia told me.
The stream still flows, but she has changed.
The pleasures of love last but a moment,
The sorrows of love last all life through.*

RADAMISTO

1720

music by George Frideric Handel

libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym

Sommi Dei

setting: Armenia, 53 A.D.

character: Polissena

The happily married Radamisto and Zenobia are besieged by Tiridate, ruler of a neighboring country. Despite his marriage to the faithful Polissena, Tiridate has fallen passionately in love with Zenobia, and his attempts to secure and seduce her are the forces that drive the story. The "tyrannical love" which consumes Tiridate eventually gives way and he is reunited with Polissena, while Radamisto and Zenobia celebrate the "sweet refuge" they find in each other's arms.

Sommi Dei,
Che scorgete i mali miei,
Protegete un mesto cor !

*Supreme Gods,
Who perceive my pain,
Protect my sad heart!*

FALSTAFF

1893

music by Giuseppe Verdi

libretto by Arrigo Boito

Sul fil d'un soffio etesio

from Act III, scene 2

setting: Windsor, the reign of Henry IV; the park at Herne's Oak; a moonlit night

character: Nannetta

Thinking he has heard the voice of a fairy, the corpulent old knight, Falstaff, has been wailing that it would be death to anyone who chances to look on such a being. Disguised as Titania, Nannetta appears and calls her fairy band, impersonated by a group of children. And all the while Falstaff trembles in mortal fear.

Sul fil d'un soffio etesio
Scorrete, agili larve,
Fra i rami un baglior cesio
D'alba lunare apparve.
Danzate! E il passo blando
Misuri un blando suon,
Le magiche accoppiando carole alla canzon.

Erriam sotto la luna
Scegliendo fior da fiore;
Ogni corolla in core
porta la sua fortuna.
Coi gigli e le viole
Scriviam de' nomi arcani;
Dalle fatate mani germogliano parole.
Parole alluminate di puro argento e d'or...
Carmi e malie.
Le fate hanno, per cifre, i fior.

On the thread of an Ethesian breeze
Dash agile ghosts,
Among the branches a silvery glow
Of the rising moon has appeared.
Dance! And your gentle footsteps
Tap out a gentle sound,
Combining the magical dances with the song.*

*Let us wander beneath the moon
Selecting flower by flower;
Each petal in the heart
bears its own good luck.
With lilies and violets,
Let us write some mysterious names;
Let there blossom words from our enchanted hands.
Words illuminated with pure silver and gold...
Incantations and spells.
The fairies have, for alphabet letters, flowers.*

*Ethesian breezes are winds that occasionally blow from the eastern Mediterranean.

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA (A Masked Ball)

1859

music by Giuseppe Verdi

libretto by Antonio Somma

Saper vorreste

from Act II, scene 2

setting: Stockholm, 1792; a state ballroom

character: Oscar

Oscar is the faithful page of Riccardo, King of Sweden. The page is asked by Renato, secretary to Riccardo and secretly intent on the ruler's assassination, the nature of Riccardo's disguise at the masked ball they are attending. Oscar playfully refuses to divulge the information.

Saper vorreste di che si veste,
Quando l'è cosa ch'ei vuol nascosa.
Oscar lo sa, ma nol dirà.
Tra la la...

Pieno d'amor mi balza il cor,
Ma pur discreto serba il segreto.
Nol rapirà grado o beltà.
Tra la la...

*You would like to know how he is dressed,
When that is the thing he would like kept secret.
Oscar knows it, but will not tell.
Tra la la...*

*My heart beats full of love,
But yet discreetly it keeps the secret.
Neither rank nor beauty can rob it from me.
Tra la la...*

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA (A Masked Ball)

1859

music by Giuseppe Verdi

libretto by Antonio Somma

Volta la terrea

from Act I

setting: the court at Stockholm, 1792

character: Oscar

In his audience chamber, a judge tells the King about a foreign woman whose lair is a haven for outlaws and criminals of sorts. The judge is anxious to have her exiled, but Oscar, a page and great favorite of the King's, defends her, insisting that she is a great and wise soothsayer.

Volta la terrea fronte alle stelle,
Come sfavilla la sua pupilla,
Quando alle belle il fin predice
Mesto o felice dei loro amor!
Ah, sì, è con Lucifero d'accordo ognor.

Chi la profetica sua gonna afferra,
O passi'l mare, voli alla guerra,
Le sue vicende soavi, amare
Da questa apprende nel dubbio cor.
Ah, sì, è con Lucifero d'accordo ognor.

*She turns her earth-colored brow to the stars,
How her eyes sparkle,
When she predicts, to the beauties, the end,
Sad or happy, of their loves!
Ah, yes, she is with Lucifer in agreement always!*

*Whoever grasps the soothsayer's skirt,
Whether a sailor or soldier,
No matter if his fortune is sweet or bitter,
From her he will learn what is truly in his heart.
Ah, yes, she is with Lucifer in agreement always!*

Hébé

music by Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)
poem by Louise Ackermann (1813-1890)

Chausson subtitles this *mélodie* "Greek song in the Phrygian mode." The poem is derived from Greek mythology. Hébé is the cupbearer for the gods, and the symbol of eternal youth. The graceful young girl passes among the gods offering a golden draught of life-preserving liquid. A sobering thought underlies this scene: once Hébé has passed by with her cup of youth, we cannot recall her.

Chausson creates a transparent musical texture in which the piano and voice share melodic phrases that overlap one another. He uses modal harmonies to reinforce the simple mood. The overall musical effect is one of innocence. Man's vain attempt to recapture youth once it has passed is mirrored in the last vocal phrase, which ends without a feeling of complete closure, leaving the piano to conclude with a wistful and melancholy melody.

Hébé

Les yeux baissés, rougissant et candide,
Vers leur banquet, quand Hébé s'avavançait,
Les Dieux charmés tendaient leur coupe vide,
Et de nectar l'enfant la remplissait.

Nous tous aussi, quand passe la jeunesse,
Nous lui tendons notre coupe à l'envi.
Quel est le vin qu'y verse la Déesse ?
Nous l'ignorons ; il enivre et ravit.

Ayant souri dans sa grâce immortelle,
Hébé s'éloigne ; on la rappelle en vain.
Longtemps encor, sur la route éternelle,
Notre œil en pleurs suit l'échanson divin.

Hebe

*With eyes lowered, blushing and innocent,
Toward their banquet Hebe advanced.
The enchanted gods held their empty cups,
And the child replenished them with nectar.*

*We also, when youth passes,
We hold to her our cup at every opportunity.
What is the wine that the goddess pours?
We are ignorant of it; it intoxicates and delights.*

*Having smiled with her immortal grace,
Hebe passes on, one calls to her in vain.
For a long time still on the eternal road,
Our eyes, with tears, follow the divine cupbearer.*

Ganymed

music by Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

In Greek legend, Zeus, in the guise of an eagle, takes the beautiful Trojan youth Ganymede from Mount Ida to become the cupbearer to the gods. Goethe's poem, steeped in symbolism, uses this legend to illustrate man's emotional bond with nature, one of the primary themes of nineteenth-century German Romantic music. "Spring enfolds me in his loving arms. I lie in his bosom while the morning breeze fans me and the nightingale calls from the glade. God descends, and he will take me up with him through the clouds." The song begins with an invocation to spring and ends with Ganymede's ascension through the clouds to the bosom of the "Alliebender Vater" (All-loving Father). Ganymede's innocence is also tinged with eroticism; the music is full of passion.

Ganymed

Wie im Morgenglanze
Du rings mich anglühst,
Frühling Geliebter!
Mit tausendfacher Liebeswonne
Sich an mein Herze drängt
Deine ewigen Wärme
Heilig Gefühl,
Unendliche Schöne!

Dass ich dich fassen möcht' in diesen Arm!
Ach, an deinem Busen lieg' ich und schmachte,
Und deine Blumen,
Dein Gras drängen sich an mein Herz.
Du kühlst den brennenden Durst meines Busens,
Lieblicher Morgenwind!

Ruft drein die Nachtigall
Liebend nach mir aus dem Nebeltal.

Ich komm', ich komme!
Ach, wohin? Wohin?
Hinauf! Strebt's, hinauf!

Es schweben die Wolken abwärts,
Die Wolken neigen sich der sehnenenden Liebe.

Mir! Mir!
In eurem Schoße
Aufwärts!
Umfangend umfassen!
Aufwärts an deinen Busen,
Alliebender Vater!

Ganymede

*How in the morning light
You glow all around me,
Beloved spring!
With a thousandfold rapture of love
My heart is penetrated by
Your eternal warmth,
Sacred feeling,
Endless beauty!*

*That I might clasp you in these arms!
Ah, on your bosom I lie and languish,
And your flowers,
Your grass penetrate themselves to my heart.
You cool the burning thirst of my breast,
Lovely morning wind!*

*The nightingale calls
Lovingly to me from the misty vale.*

*I come, I am coming!
Ah, where? Where?
Upwards! Strives it, upwards!*

*The clouds float downwards,
The clouds bow themselves before the yearning love.*

*To me! To me!
In your lap
Upwards!
Embracing and embraced!
Upwards to your bosom,
All-loving Father!*

Source: Kimball, Carol.

GIANNI SCHICCHI

1918

part three of *Il Trittico (The Trilogy)*

music by Giacomo Puccini

libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

O mio babbino caro

in one act

setting: Florence, 1299; the house of the recently deceased Buoso Donati

character: Lauretta

The relatives of Buoso Donati have been left out of the old man's will. Rinuccio, his nephew, has a girlfriend, Lauretta, whose father, Gianni Schicchi, is a very clever rogue. Rinuccio begs Schicchi to help the family, but he refuses because of their condescension toward him and his daughter. Lauretta pleads convincingly with her father on Rinuccio's behalf.

O mio babbino caro,
mi piace è bello;
vo' andare in Porta Rossa
a comperar l'anello!
Sì, sì, ci voglio andare!
E se l'amassi indarno,
andrei sul Ponte Vecchio,
ma per buttarmi in Arno!
Mi struggo e mi tormento!
O Dio, vorrei morir!
Babbo, pietà, pietà!

*Oh my daddy dearest,
He pleases me and he is handsome!
I want to go to Porta Rossa*
to buy the ring!
Yes, yes, I want to go there!
And if I love him in vain,
I would go to the Ponte Vecchio,**
but to throw myself into the Arno!***
I suffer and I am tormented!
Oh God, I want to die!
Daddy, have pity, have pity!*

*Porta Rossa ("Red Gate") refers to a marketplace in Florence.

**Il Ponte Vecchio (the "Old Bridge") in Florence was the only bridge over the Arno until 1218.

***The Arno, one of the largest rivers in Italy, bisects Florence where the river is narrowest.

DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE (The Magic Flute)

1791

music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

libretto by Emmanuel Schikaneder

Ach, ich fühl's

from Act II, scene 4

setting: Legendary; the inner shrine of the sacred brotherhood

character: Pamina

Pamina is despondent because her beloved, the Prince Tamino, no longer speaks to her and seems to shun her presence. She does not know that he has sworn a vow of silence as part of the ceremony of initiation to Sarastro's brotherhood.

Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden,
ewig hin der Liebe Glück!
Nimmer kommt ihr, Wonnestunde,
 meinem Herzen mehr zurück.
Sieh', Tamino, diese Tränen fließen,
Trauter, dir allein.
Fühlst du nicht der Liebe Sehnen,
so wird Ruh' im Tode sein.

*Ah, I feel it, it has vanished—
forever gone, the happiness of love!
Never will you, hours of bliss,
 come back again to my heart.
See, Tamino, these tears flow,
beloved one, for you alone.
If you do not feel the longing of love,
then peace will only come to death.*

DINORAH (Dinorah)
ou Le Pardon de Ploërmel (or The Pardon of Ploërmel)

1859

music by Giacomo Meyerbeer

libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré

Ombre légère (Shadow Song)

from Act II

setting: Brittany, the 19th century; the village of Ploërmel and the countryside around it

character: Dinorah

On the day Dinorah was to be married to the goatherd Hoël, her father's house was destroyed by a storm. Her fiancé vowed to rebuild it and raced off to seek a treasure of which he had heard. Dinorah, believing to be deserted, wanders through the countryside seeking her lost beloved. In the beginning of Act II she enters the stage in moonlight and, seeing her shadow, imagines it to be a friend and dances for and with it.

Ombre légère, qui suis mes pas,
ne t'en va pas, non, non, non !
Fée ou chimère, qui m'est si chère,
Ne t'en va pas, non, non, non !
Courons ensemble, j'ai peur, je tremble
quand tu t'en vas loin de moi !
Ah ! ne t'en vas pas !

À chaque aurore je te revois !
Ah ! reste encore,
Danse à ma voix !
Pour te séduire je viens sourire ;
je veux chanter !

Approche toi !
Viens, réponds moi !
Chante avec moi !

Ah ! réponds !
Ah ! c'est bien !

Ombre légère...

La, la, la...
Ah ! reste avec moi !

*Shadow nimble, which follows my steps,
do not leave me, no, no no!
Fairy or fantasy, who to me is so dear,
do not leave me, no, no no!
We run together, I fear, I tremble
if you would go far from me!
Ah! do not leave me!*

*At each dawn I see you again!
Ah! remain still,
Dance to my voice!
For to win you over I will smile;
I want to sing!*

*Approach me!
Come, answer me!
Sing with me!*

*Ah! answer!
Ah! that's good!*

Shadow nimble...

*La, la, la...
Ah! stay with me!*

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