

Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, Kansas

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Senior Recital

Michael Brandel, tenor

Susan Marchant, harpsichord
Susan Laushman, piano

Sunday, April 24, 1994
McCray Recital Hall
3:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

- from La Statira A. Scarlatti
 Questò è il premio che si deve (1660-1725)
 Lasciami che alla morte
 Ti lusinghi e spero invano
- Die Forelle (Schubart) F. Schubert (1797-1828)
Einsamkeit (Lenau) R. Schumann (1810-1856)
Sommerabend (Heine) J. Brahms (1833-1897)
Fussreise (Möricke) H. Wolf (1860-1903)

INTERMISSION

- Nanny (de Lisle) C. Chausson
Le charme (Silvestre) (1855-1899)
Sérénade italienne (Bourget)
Le Colibri (de Lisle)
- Let me enjoy the earth (Hardy) G. Finzi
O mistress mine (Shakespeare) (1901-1956)
Since we loved (Bridges)
Aria from (*Farewell to arms*) (Peele)

This recital partially fulfills performance requirements for both the Bachelor of Music Performance and Bachelor of Music Education degree programs for Mr. Brandel.

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Program Notes and Translations
Michael Brandel

In the years following the Baroque era, the music of Alessandro Scarlatti has been, to a large degree, overshadowed by the music of such composers as Bach and Handel. Scarlatti was, on a large scale, an opera composer. Although Scarlatti himself claimed to have written 144 operas, it is not known exactly how many ever existed. Today, there are about 85 remaining and more than half of those exist in fragments only. Scarlatti was a predecessor of the "Neopolitan" school of the 18th century but he is perhaps more deservedly considered one of the last great masters of 17th century opera. Scarlatti was innovative in the composition of opera and developed certain styles in Italian opera which would serve as the model for many composers to come. Handel was greatly influenced by Scarlatti's style. His operas are aria-centered with light orchestration and use of chorus. The arias are generally short but are often impressive rhythmically and filled with opportunities for delightfully technical vocal display. The music is the principle dramatic element, whereas the physical drama is minimal.

Some time in 1690, Cardinal Pietruccio Ottoboni, grandnephew to Pope Alexander VIII, commissioned music to be composed to his libretto of La Statira. Typical for Scarlatti, the opera is aria-centered with secco recitative and instrumental ritornelli. The libretto is based on a combination of two distinct episodes in the life of Alexander the Great. This is one of Scarlatti's more serious operas, as there are no specifically comic scenes. The three arias on the program this afternoon are sung by the character Apelle, the court painter to King Alexander. Before the first aria (from Act II), King Alexander (Alessandro) has offered Campaspe, once his favorite love, to Apelle, who is deeply in love with Campaspe. Angered that Alessandro has left her, she orders Apelle to leave immediately. Apelle, heartbroken, sings the aria "Questo è il premio che si deve," bemoaning his misfortune.

Questo è il premio che si deve

You flatter yourself and hope in vain to triumph over my constancy, O tyrant god of love. I have armed myself with an iron sword and the appearance of death does not cast a shadow of horror over me.

In Act III, when, after Apelle rescues Campaspe from the jaws of a hungry lion, Campaspe realizes how much Apelle really loves her and asks his pardon. Campaspe offers herself to Apelle, but Apelle does not trust her. Although his earlier attempt at suicide was foiled, he still feels that heaven has condemned him to die, and declines this life of fortune now offered to him.

Lasciami che alla morte

Leave me, leave me to die, for heaven is my destiny. I no longer wish to yield to the whims of fortune.

Back in Act II, Apelle, alone and still mourning his rejection from Campaspe, decides suicide is the only choice. He sings "Ti lusinghi e speri in vanto," scorning the whims of love and professing his steadfast intent to never fall in love again.

Ti lusinghi e speri invano

This is the reward given to my love, to my faith. Yes, tyrant, I shall die and I shall give my soul as booty to the gentle breezes so that it might float around you.

Franz Schubert was incredibly advanced as a musician and, at a very young age composed a great amount of music, his works ranging from symphonies to stage music. As a Lieder composer he was unequalled, writing 140 songs in the year 1815 alone. He was a true master of Romantic Lieder who composed in a wide variety of deeply felt emotions. Ironically, it was nearly a half century after Schubert's death before his genius was truly recognized.

"Die Forelle" is one of the most popular of all Schubert's songs; so popular that he made numerous copies for his friends and was frequently asked to write variations on the theme (e.g. the Piano Quintet in A major). The accompaniment is a graphic example of eddying water and illustrates Schubert's lust for drama in his music. In the middle section, where the trout is craftily landed by the fisherman, Schubert employs a mock-serious passage before returning to the original material.

Die Forelle (The trout)

In a clear brooklet, in lively haste, the wayward trout
flashed by like an arrow.

Standing on the bank, contentedly I watched the jolly little fish
swimming the clear brook.

A fisherman with his rod, stood on the bank
cold-bloodedly noting the fish's twists and turns.
As long as the water remains so clear, I thought,
he'll never take the trout with his rod.

But at last the thief could wait no more.
Artfully he muddied the brooklet and ere I could guess it,
a flick of the rod, and there writhed the fish;
and I, with blood boiling, looked at the deceived one.

Robert Schumann, whether moved by joy or great sorrow, composed in a manner that expressed his every emotion. Schumann suffered from severe mental illness, and his diaries from his youth suggest that he feared madness. Ultimately, he spent the remaining years of his life in a sanatorium. Of all his compositions, his songs are among his most notable works, and they encompass both his inner emotions and his natural, beautifully flowing compositional style.

"Einsamkeit" was written late in his career, as his grip on reality loosened, and perhaps explains why he would set such a mournful text so intensely. Here, Schumann offers no hope for the healing spirit of love, only that which is melancholy and painful. The initial hopelessness depicted by chromaticism, persists to the end, although, the tonality does move into major to depict the consolation found soft moss and sweet water. This song is a fine example of Schumann's use of *motif*, the motif in this piece having a grief-stricken character which is enhanced by the eerie context of E-flat major.

Einsamkeit (Loneliness)

Wild grown dark spruces; the ceaseless lament of the fountain,
the heart, that is the right place for your painful renunciation!
Gray bird in the branches, alone sings your sorrow
and when your question is asked, no answer comes from the silent woods.

Though the silence of the woods remains unbroken, cease not your lament;
the spirit of love listens and understands.

Heart, your secret weeping is not lost in vain among the moss.
God understands your love, your deep, hopeless love.

Johannes Brahms was revered by both audiences and composers alike during his lifetime, although certain American critics scorned him. He was a master of variation form, adhering to modern classicism instead of conforming to the compositional tactics of his fellow composers of the day. He is considered to be one of the major composers of Lieder, although he did not devote himself exclusively to the Lied. Brahms always thought it more fitting to indulge himself in the musical phrase, which took precedence over correct verbal accentuation. Many believe that his genius is more apparent in his smaller-scale lyrical works, specifically his songs and piano pieces.

"Sommerabend" is the first of six songs for piano and voice, Opus 85. The use of a secondary dominant chord to begin the piece has a curious effect in that the listener is led to believe that he or she is hearing a continuation rather than a beginning. In the final phrase of the first and last verses it is difficult to understand whether the harmonic structure will be major or minor due to Brahms' use of a thickly colored chord progression.

Sommerabend (Summer evening)

Dusky lies the summer evening
over forest and green meadow.
Golden moon in the blue heavens
shines down fragrant, refreshing.

By the brook the cricket chirps,
there is a stirring in the water,
and the wanderer hears a splashing
and breathing in the stillness.

There, by the brook alone,
the fair elf bathes.
His arms and neck, white and lovely,
glitter in the moonlight.

Hugo Wolf was expelled from the Vienna Conservatory during the Fall term of 1876 for declaring that his composition teacher was actually thwarting his progress. Whether this assertion was true or not, he went on to become a prolific composer, most notably for his songs. Although his early compositions were very similar to those of Schumann, his own original style eventually blossomed, and he composed about 300 songs, mastering the art of combining words with music.

On March 21, 1888, in a letter to a good friend, Wolf wrote this about "Fussreise:"

I retract the opinion that "Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens" is my best thing, for what I wrote this morning, "Fussreise" is a million times better. When you have heard this song you can have only one wish -
- to die.

The melody is rather simple, and uses both triadic and scalar writing, but when coupled with the strolling accompaniment, the image of just such a morning journey is easily captured in one's mind. Mörike's poem is quite lengthy and Wolf successfully captures its essence, allowing the pensive attitude to be simply, yet briskly, brought about.

Fussreise (Walking journey)

When with my newly cut walking stick,
early in the morning
I walk in the woods
up and down the hills.
Then like the small bird in the trees
singing and stirring,
or the golden grape
sensing spirits of delight
in the first morning sun;
so too the old dear Adam in me
feels autumn and spring fever, too.
God-hearted,
never foolishly wasted,
first delight of paradise.

So you are not so bad, old Adam,
as the stern teachers would have it.
But keep on loving and lauding,
singing and extolling,
as if each were a new day of creation,
your dear creator and keeper.

May He then grant me
that my whole life
were the gentle sweetness
of just such a morning journey.

Ernest Chausson decided on music as a career relatively late in life. He was always greatly attracted to music, but was no less drawn to literature and drawing. He ultimately received his doctorate in law, although he never went into practice for himself. He studied with both Franck and Massenet and also travelled frequently to Germany for several premiers of Wagner operas. From the onset, Chausson composed in a mature manner and harnessed delicacy and refinement in his works. Many scholars believe that the essence of his musical character is to be found in his songs, all of which were written in the last 16 years of his life. Being a perfectionist, he worked slowly; therefore, his output was somewhat modest. His untimely death, at the age of 44, caused by a bicycle accident, tragically cut short a life of great promise.

The seven songs of Opus 2 are Chausson's earliest published works, dating from 1882. The music, set to texts by a potpourri of popular French poets, doesn't imply Chausson's own personality, but rather the mood and imagery suggested by the poetry. "Nanny" illustrates one of Chausson's favorite techniques, the use of an unvarying pattern in the piano accompaniment. The descending chromatic melody is a steady lament, while the poem (by Leconte de Lisle) calls upon nature to share a man's pain. "Le charme" is indeed as the title suggests, a charm. This simple, yet touching, melody contains an almost childlike clarity of expression, which greatly enhances the heartfelt passion of the poem. Here, there is no real sorrow, only a placid depiction of deep, devoted love. As the piano wistfully illustrates the rocking waters of "Sérénades italienne," a graceful sense of pleasantness ensues. The poetry details an evening voyage upon the ocean made by two lovers, as they are transported by an old fisherman and his two sons. An interesting effect takes place mid-way through the piece in that as the accompaniment rushes along, a more lethargic wave folds over (1 to the bar) while the voice searches for calmness. "Le colibri" is perhaps one of the most passionate verses Chausson has set. Here a hummingbird and his sprightly antics are used to parallel the reactions a young lover has to a kiss from his beloved. The piece builds to several climaxes, then tapers off as the little bird dies from drinking too much love.

Nanny

Woods dear to the wood-doves, weep, sweet foliage
and you, lively spring, and you, fresh footpaths,
weep, oh savage heather,
woods of holly and of briars,
spring, flowered king of the green year,
oh young god, weep!
Ripening summer, cut your crowned tresses,
and weep, reddening autumn,
the anguish of loving breaks a faithful heart,
earth and sky, weep!
Oh, how I loved her!
Dear country, speak of her no more
Nanny will never come again!

Le charme (The charm)

When your smile surprised me,
I felt my entire being quiver
but what tamed my spirit,
I could not at first know.

When your glance fell upon me,
I felt my soul melt,
But what this emotion would be
I could not at first answer.

That which conquered me forever
was a more painful charm;
and I did not know that I loved you
until I saw your first tear.

Sérénade italienne (Italian serenade)

Let us set out in a boat on the sea,
to spend the night under the stars.
You see, there is just enough air blowing
to fill the cloth of the sails.
The old Italian fisherman,
and his two sons, who lead us,
listen but hear nothing
of the words which our lips tell each other,
on the sea, calm and somber.
You see, we can exchange our souls,
and no one will understand our voices,
but the night, the sky, and the waves.

Le colibri (The hummingbird)

The green hummingbird, king of the hills,
seeing the dew and the bright sunlight
shine in his nest, woven of exquisite grasses,
like a fresh beam escapes into the air,
he hurries and flies to nearby springs,
where the bamboo reeds make the sounds of the sea,
where the red hibiscus, with its divine scent,
opens and brings a humid flash to the heart.
Toward the gilded flower he descends, poses,
and drinks so much love from the red cup
that he dies, not knowing if he could have drained it.
On your pure lips, oh my beloved,
so my soul wanted to die
of the first kiss, which has perfumed it.

Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) was a simple man who led a simple life, keeping hidden the true genius that he was, yet his mild-mannered lyrical expressiveness was certainly not simple where his music was concerned. Instead, Finzi, who was influenced chiefly by Bach, Elgar, and Vaughan Williams, molded his own language. This language was spoken with a tongue of both might and patience. An avid reader, Finzi quickly became familiar with an abundance of music and literature. As a composer, his works are difficult to place chronologically because of his intense and exacting work habits. This is distinctly evident in his song collections, many of which contain pieces written as much as twenty years apart. His work habits, however, also resulted in a very naturally flowing musical style, the harmonies and melodies of which are innocent yet provocative. His slow work pace did not matter, for his inventions pleased him and they exemplified his greater purpose, one of bright hope and newness.

The poetry of Thomas Hardy has never been considered easy to set to music. Finzi often set his texts, however, and took great care in doing so. "Let me enjoy the earth" comes from Finzi's opus entitled *Till Earth Outwears*. The light walking mood of the accompaniment gently surrounds the melody which, no matter where it travels, always resolves to the 3rd of the chord, in this case the B-flat of G-flat major. The accompaniment often plays a game of syncopation with the melody, with the text's importance always being uppermost. Here, a man marvels that he will reap the greater benefits of the world even though they were not necessarily created for him. This is a rare optimistic view for Hardy, which Finzi undoubtedly could not resist.

The true interest which lies within "O Mistress mine" is how Finzi, in setting Shakespeare's text from Twelfth Night, manages in this piece to achieve a combination of Renaissance style through the lute-like accompaniment, and his own style in the lyrical nature of the vocal writing. The accompaniment is rather playful, as is the text. Because the piece employs the half note as the measure of beat, the melody becomes more than playful; it is now boundless, light, and somehow freer. The arrogance of the text is thus emphasized in a greater way and it is much easier to identify with the "pick up artist." This song comes from Finzi's all-Shakespeare set *Let us garlands bring*.

"Since we loved" is truly a love song. It is fitting that this should happen to be Finzi's last song, completed one month before he died. It only fills two pages; the poem itself is barely 10 lines in length. What is it, then, that makes this song so moving? Perhaps it is the deceptive simplicity of the music, mirroring the simple manner in which Finzi led his life. The text, also, seemingly expresses what one might think Finzi's thoughts about his life may have been near its end. But perhaps most of all, it is Finzi's simple, and yet beautiful and passionate, homage to his wife, Joyce.

"Few composers of our century could write, unself-consciously, a song of some 60 bars without one accidental in it. But 'His golden locks time hath to silver turned' is as intense, spontaneous, and characteristic as anything Finzi composed" (Diana McVeagh, 1980). Such a simple melody is perfectly coupled with the words of George Peele (this text has also been attributed to Henry Lea) in the Aria (1920's) of Finzi's *Farewell to arms*. The text was first sung by Robert Hales as part of Henry Lea's presentation to Queen Elizabeth I in 1590 when he retired as Queen's Champion. The Queen was so touched by the presentation that she ordered that he do it again for her the following year. Finzi has set only two of the three verses. The music moves gracefully but is briefly interrupted at the last two lines of the second verse by a section in 6/8. The reason seems obvious, as the upbeat movement of the music and the hopefulness of the few remaining words dance momentarily and then suddenly stop. The return of the first verse is undoubtedly a profound meditation. Finzi has created an atmosphere of reflection upon the nature of life; for just as the soldier grows old, so do we all, and though we cling to our past glories and cannot do much more, there are those who know our worth and plant their faith therein.

Let me enjoy the earth

Let me enjoy the earth no less
Because the all-enacting Might
That fashioned forth its loveliness
Had other aims than my delight.

About my path there flits a Fair,
Who throws me not a word or sign;
I'll charm me with her ignoring air,
And laud the lips not meant for mine.

From manuscripts of moving song
Inspired by scenes and dreams unknown
I'll pour out raptures that belong
To others, as they were my own.

And some day hence, towards Paradise
And all its blest -- if such should be --
I will lift glad, afar-off eyes,
Though it contain no place for me.

O Mistress mine

O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear, your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty,
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Since we loved

Since we loved, --
(the earth that shook as we kissed, fresh beauty took) --
Love hath been as poets paint,
Life as heaven is to a saint;
All my joys my hope excel,
All my work hath prosper'd well,
All my songs have happy been,
O my love, my life, my queen.

Aria

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;
O time too swift,
O swiftness never ceasing.
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain;
Youth waneth by increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers' sonnets turn to holy psalms:
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are age's alms:
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;
O time too swift,
O swiftness never ceasing.