

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY



presents the Junior Half Recital of

Catie Moore, *mezzo-soprano*

Elizabeth Ritchie, *piano*

Sunday, March 21, 2021
4 pm
Anthony-Seeger Auditorium



Program

“Connais-tu le pays” from *Mignon*

Ambroise Thomas
(1811-1896)

Mörike-Lieder

Hugo Wolf
(1860-1903)

“Elfenlied” No. 16

“In der fruhe” No. 24

“To This We’ve Come / Papers, Papers” from *The Consul*

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911-2007)

Не пой, красавица Op. 4 No. 4

Sergei Rachmaninov
(1873-1943)

“If I Were a Bell” from *Guys and Dolls*

Frank Loesser
(1910-1969)

*This recital is given in partial fulfillment of degree requirements
for a Bachelor of Music.*

Catie Moore is from the studio of Dr. Carrie Stevens.

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personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

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of this production is strictly prohibited
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Program Notes

“Connais-tu le pays”

Poets: Jules Barbier (1825-1901) and Michel Carré (1821-1872)

Translation

Do you know the land where the
orange tree blossoms?

The country of golden fruits and
marvelous roses,

Where the breeze is softer and
birds lighter,

Where bees gather pollen in every
season,

And where shines and smiles, like a
gift from God,

An eternal springtime under an
ever-blue sky!

Alas! but I cannot follow you

To that happy shore from which
fate has exiled me!

There! It is there that I should like
to live,

To love, to love, and to die!

It is there that I should like to live,
it is there,

yes, there!

Do you know the house there
where I am awaited?

The gold-panelled room where
men made of marble

Call to me at night, reaching their
arms out to me?

And the courtyard where people
dance in the shadow of a great
tree?

And the lake upon whose limpid
waters

A thousand light boats glide like
birds?

Alas! but I cannot follow you

To that distant land from which
fate has exiled me!

There! It is there that I should like
to live,

To love, to love, and to die!

It is there that I should like to live,
it is there,

yes, there!

Mignon is a three-act opera comique based on von Goethe's work, "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre", and was first performed in Paris on November 17th, 1866. The opera begins in a little German town, as the wandering bard Lothario sings and gypsies dance. One young woman, Mignon, refuses to dance and is threatened until Lothario and Wilhelm Meister rescue her. She divides her bouquet of wildflowers between them in thanksgiving and explains to Wilhelm that she was captured by gypsies as a child. Moved by pity, Wilhelm purchases her freedom, and she travels with him to the baron's castle.

At the castle, Mignon formally meets Philine, a young actress living in luxury, who, like Mignon, is in love with Wilhelm. After a near fight with Frederic, a young man in love with Philine, Wilhelm decides that he and Mignon cannot be together, and leaves with Philine. Heartbroken and in a jealous frenzy, Mignon shouts that she wishes the building would catch fire, during Philine's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Lothario overhears and, unbeknownst to all, sets a fire in the conservatory to fulfill her wish. Wilhelm greets Mignon warmly, which causes a jealous Philine to send Mignon on a menial task, to fetch flowers from the conservatory. Wilhelm rushes into the fire to save his love, emerging holding her unconscious body, with the singed flowers still clasped in her grasp.

In Act Three, Wilhelm buys a castle in Italy for the recovering Mignon and Lothario. A tale is told of the castle, and how its owner had succumbed to madness after the death of his wife and loss of his daughter. When Mignon wakes, she tells Wilhelm that it seems so familiar to her. Wilhelm finds that he loves her, and chooses her over Philine. It is discovered that the previous owner of the castle was Lothario, and that he has regained his sanity through his return to his home. Mignon reads a prayer book and realizes that she is his long-lost daughter.

Although this composition bears little resemblance to the original von Goethe work, it carries the same unique combination of sweetness and subtlety within the grandiose elements of its plot. That charming subtlety is evident in this aria, "Connais-tu le pays",

in which Mignon describes the dreamy homeland of her youth, not realizing that she would soon be delivered to its “happy shore”. The aria is lovely and sweet through its simple phrases and joyous orchestral themes, yet it holds an underlying sorrow that is evident in the text and in its soaring, heartfelt chorus.

Mörike Lieder

Poet: Eduard Friedrich Mörike (1804–1875)

Translations:

“Elfenlied”

The village watchman cried out at
night:

“Eleven!”

A little elf was asleep in the wood
–

Just at eleven –

And thinks the nightingale was
calling

Him by name from the valley,

Or Silpelit had sent for him.

The elf rubs his eyes,

Steps from his snail-shell home,

Looking like a drunken man,

Not having slept his fill,

And hobbles down, tippety tap,

Through the hazels to the valley,

Slips right up against the wall,

Where the glow-worm sits,
shining bright.

“What bright windows are these?”

There must be a wedding inside:

The little folk are sitting at the
feast

And skipping round the ballroom;

I’ll take a little peek inside!”

Ouch! he hits his head on hard
stone!

Elf, don’t you think you’ve had
enough?

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

“In der Frühe”

Still no sleep cools my eyes,	Creating night phantoms.
The day's already dawning there	– Frighten, torment
At my bedroom window.	Yourself no more, my soul!
My troubled mind still races on,	Rejoice! Already here and there
Torn by doubts, to and fro,	Morning bells have woken.

Mörike-Lieder is a song cycle of 53 songs composed by Hugo Wolf in 1888 based on the poetry of Eduard Mörike. “Elfenlied” is a charming little piece depicting a silly elf who attempts who thinks that the village watchman, shouting the hour, is calling his name. The music follows the character of the elf in its lilting, tripping composition. The piano almost seems to echo his footsteps as he stumbles “like a drunken man”, and echoes the “cuckoo-clock” motif at the end of the piece.

“In der Frühe” is a highly emotional piece. Perhaps fueled by his own mental collapse due to syphilis, Wolf is able to portray the frenzied despair of the poetry through the lack of a centralized key center between the piano and the vocalist, as well as a lack of clear cadences and a slow, almost plodding rhythm to represent a soul trying his best to continue accomplishing his basic tasks, while dealing with severe melancholy. However, the piece takes an uplifting turn near to the end, as the poet exclaims “Torment your self no longer, my soul!”, as the gloom of darkness and despair cedes to a glorious morning.

“To This We’ve Come... Papers, Papers” The Consul

The Consul is a modern opera, first performed in Philadelphia in 1950. It is set in an unidentified European totalitarian country and follows Magda, the wife of the political dissident John Sorrel, as she attempts to untangle the web of bureaucracy in order to obtain a visa for herself, her child, and her mother-in-law in order to join John where he is in hiding at the border. Throughout the many months of waiting for approval on their visas, the secret police continuously

interrogate Magda, trying to capture and execute her husband. Her child and John's mother slowly grow sick, and Magda, having no money for medicine and no way to save them, has to watch them slowly die.

This aria occurs at the end of Act Two, when Magda, driven to a fit of madness, erupts in a passionate plea to the secretary of the Consul, begging for help. She is simply given more papers and forms to fill, and pours forth her story and her pain in this highly emotional aria. She collapses after her speech and the secretary finally says that she can see the Consul, as soon as he is finished speaking to an important visitor and close friend. The friend of the Consul is revealed to be the same chief of police who has been terrorizing Magda in his attempts to find and kill her husband. When Magda sees him emerging from the office, she realizes that all of her effort has been in vain and flees.

In Act Three, Magda feels as if all hope is lost. She leaves the consulate with her mind bent toward suicide, thinking that it will protect her husband. John arrives at the consulate, desperately trying to find Magda and escape with her, but is surrounded by the police and captured. The secretary attempts to call Magda. Her mind clouded by visions and despair, Magda turns on the gas in the oven to commit suicide. The telephone rings, the secretary calling her, just a moment too late.

Menotti's opera is angry and despondent, with few moments of happiness or joy, but it tells an important story - that of an ordinary woman, pushed into a terrifying situation, who does not know where to go or to whom to turn. The music is radical and grand, combining classical traditions with atonal and through-composed feelings and motifs. Magda, and, indeed, all of the characters, present themselves with an "Everyman" quality. Magda even states, in this emotional aria, "My name... is woman". John Sorel is every man who stands up for what he thinks is right, regardless of the consequences. Magda is every woman who has had to support the ones she loves, giving everything that she has in order to protect and support her family. The Secretary (who, although bearing a sizable role, was never given a name) is every worker under a terrible regime or company, who comes into work everyday and tries their best to do their job and not

raise attention to themselves. Although the events of the opera are not relatable to the majority of us, the characters certainly are. What would we have done in a situation like this? If we were John Sorel, having an opportunity to flee the country, would we run and hope that our family could find us eventually, or would we wait like he did (at the risk of his own life), and attempt to rescue them? If we were the Secretary, would we have rolled our eyes at a ranting “Karen” and not given her a thought after she left, or would we have picked up the phone and tried to help her after we realized she could be in danger? It is through the study of such situations, grand, crazy, and explosive, that we can realize our behavior in our little situations, and how we can work to better ourselves.

“Не пой, красавица, при мне”

Poet : Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837)

Translation:

Do not sing to me, my beauty,
Songs of melancholy Georgia...

They remind me

Of another life and distant shores.

Alas, your cruel songs

Bring back to my mind

The steppe, the night, and a
moonlit face

Of a poor, distant maiden!

I forget this dear and ominous
apparition

When I see you... But when you
sing!

I see it before me again.

Do not sing to me, my beauty,

Songs of melancholy Georgia...

They remind me

Of another life and distant shores.

Anna Olenina was a young singer who was taught by the original composer of this piece, Mikhail Glinka. A friend of her household, after a diplomatic mission, brought Anna a Georgian melody that she performed at a soiree. Pushkin saw this performance and wrote the poem, as her melancholy song reminded him of his own travels.

The “beauty” singing mentioned in his poem is none other than Anna Olenina, and the “misfortunate maiden” mentioned in the work is likely Maria Rayevsky, the wife of Count Sergey Volkonsky, one of the leaders of the Decembrist movement.

Rachmaninoff reflects the spirit of melancholy reminiscing evident in the poem through soaring phrases and extensive use of chromaticism. He chose to repeat the first stanza of the poem with the same melody at the end of the piece, but instead of the mezzo-forte of the beginning, it is higher and in a softer pianissimo. He utilizes it almost as an echo, a soft remembrance of what once was, and what could have been.

“If I Were a Bell” from Guys and Doll

Guys and Dolls is a light-hearted musical that made its debut on the Broadway stage in 1950. It was adapted from Damon Runyon’s short stories, and is a humorous tale involving gagsters, gamblers, a city “Mission”, and love. The show centers around two couples: the mobster Nathan Detroit, who struggles to find money to run his illegal floating craps game, his girlfriend Adelaide, who drives herself to illness waiting for an engagement ring, and Sky Masterson, a gambler who bets \$1000 that he can get the pious Sarah Brown from the “Save-a-Soul Mission” to fall in love with him.

In this song, Sarah has travelled to Havana with Sky, and has drunk a “Cuban milkshake”, which she does not realize contains a great deal of rum. At the conclusion of the piece, Sky realizes that he has genuine feelings for Sarah. This piece is fun and light, filled with a multitude of metaphors to describe how joyous and in love the character is.

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Scholarship contributions help young musicians blossom into mature musical artists. With your support, we will be able to offer our talented students more financial help in pursuing their goals. If you are interested in supporting our students' passion and dedication, please consider contributing to the [Music Scholarship Fund](#) at James Madison University.