



School of Music Faculty Recitals

Music

10-2-2008

Monica Griffin, Soprano & Ken Prewitt, Tenor & Yu-Lien The, Piano, 10/2

College of Fine Arts

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/music-faculty-recitals>



Part of the Music Performance Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation

College of Fine Arts, "Monica Griffin, Soprano & Ken Prewitt, Tenor & Yu-Lien The, Piano, 10/2" (2008).

School of Music Faculty Recitals. 14.

<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/music-faculty-recitals/14>

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Music at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Music Faculty Recitals by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.





Faculty Recital

2008–09 Season
40th Concert

Thursday 2 October 2008
Dalton Center Recital Hall
8:15 p.m.

MONICA GRIFFIN, Soprano
KEN PREWITT, Tenor
YU-LIEN THE, Piano

with special guest
Andrew Prewitt, Countertenor

Henry Purcell
c.1659–1695

Let Us Wander
“My dearest, my fairest” from *Pausanias the Betrayer*
Griffin, Prewitt, and The

Henri Duparc
1848–1933

Le Manoir de Rosemonde
Chanson triste
Griffin and The

Benjamin Britten
1913–1976

Canticle II: Abraham and Isaac Opus 51
Prewitt, Prewitt, and The

Giacomo Puccini
1858–1924

“Sola, perduta, abbandonata!” from *Manon Lescaut*
Griffin and The

David Diamond
1915–2005

David Mourns for Absalom
Prewitt and The

intermission

Michael Drompp
b. 1953

The Castle-Builder:
Six Songs on Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
The Castle Builder
The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls
Changed
Vox Popoli
Song
Snow-flakes
Prewitt and The

Antonín Dvořák
1841–1904

Cigánské melodie
Má píseň zas mi láskou zní,
Aj! Kterak trojhranec můj přerokozkošně zvoní
A les je tichý kolem kol
Když mne stará matka zpívá
Štruna naladěna, hochu, toč se v kole
Široké rukávy a široké gatě
Dejte klec jestřábu ze zlata ryzého
Griffin and The

Robert Schumann
1810–1856

In der Nacht
Die tausend Grüsse, die wir dir senden
Griffin, Prewitt, and The

If the fire alarm sounds, please exit the building immediately. All other emergencies will be indicated by spoken announcement within the seating area. The tornado safe area in Dalton Center is along the lockers in the brick hallway to your left as you exit to the lobby behind you. In any emergency, walk – do not run – to the nearest exit. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices during the performance. Because of legal issues, any video or audio recording of this performance is forbidden without prior consent from the School of Music. Thank you for your cooperation.

NOTES, TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Henri Duparc's entire output of music totals only sixteen melodies, which he wrote over the course of 17 years. He suffered from a mental illness in 1885 and never composed again, dying in 1933. He was a perfectionist, often destroying his works; however, his songs have remained gems of the vocal repertoire and have earned Duparc renown as a composer. His music consists of exquisite melodies often set over dense, orchestral-like textures with chromatic harmonic subtleties. Duparc preferred to set the Parnassian poets, a group of French poets who sought to emulate the ideals of the French poets of the 16th century in that they were concerned with perfection of form rather than emotion or feeling.

Le Manoir de Rosemonde contains syncopated dotted rhythms that support the character's sinister portrayal as well as the thoroughbred horse he rides on as he reflects on his failed journey in search of the 'Manor of Rosamund'. In *Chanson triste*, Duparc uses a rippling chordal figure to set Lahor's poem that speaks of the joys of love and its ability to heal past sorrows. Duparc's musical setting complements the text in such a perfect way that one is immediately aware of the hopeful nature of both the text and the music.

Le Manoir de Rosemonde (The manor of Rosamund)

With its sudden and voracious fang,
like a dog, love has bitten me.
By following the blood I have shed,
go! You will be able to follow my trail.

Take a thoroughbred horse,
set out, and follow my arduous way,
bog or hidden path,
if the ride does not exhaust you!

In passing where I have passed,
you will see that alone and wounded,
I have ranged this sad world,
and that thus I went to die

far away, far away, without discovering
the blue manor of Rosamund.

– R. de Bonnières

Chanson triste (Sorrowful Song)

In your heart moonlight sleeps
gentle summer moonlight
and to escape from the stress of life
I will drown myself in your radiance.

I will forget past sorrows,
my love, when you cradle
my sad heart and my thoughts
In the loving peacefulness of your arms.

You will take my aching head
Oh! Sometimes upon your knee,
and will relate a ballad
that seems to speak of ourselves.

And in your eyes full of sorrows
in your eyes then I will drink
so deeply of kisses of tenderness
that, perhaps, I shall be healed...

Canticle II: Abraham and Isaac

God Speaketh:

Abraham! My servant Abraham,
Take Isaac, thy son by name,
That thou lovest the best of all,
And in sacrifice offer him to me
Upon that hill there besides thee.

Abraham, I will that so it be,
For aught that may be fall.

Abraham riseth and saith:

My Lord, to Thee is mine intent
Ever to be obedient.
That son that Thou to me hast sent
Offer I will to Thee
Thy bidding done shall be.

Here Abraham, turning to his son Isaac, saith:

Make thee ready, my dear darling,
For we must do a little thing.

Here Isaac speaketh to his father, and taketh a bundle of sticks and beareth after his father.

Father, I am all ready.

A: This woodē do on thy back it bring,
We may no longer abide.

I: Father I am all ready.

A: A sword and fire that I will take,
For sacrifice behooves me to make;
God's bidding will I not forsake,
But ever obedient be.

I: Father I am all ready
To do your bidding most meekly,
And to bear this wood full bayn am I
As you commanded me.

A: Now, Isaac son,
go we our way
To yonder mount
if that we may.

I: My dear father
I will essay,
To follow,
follow you full fain.

Abraham being minded to slay his son, Isaac, lifts up his hands, and saith the following:

O! My heart will break in three,
To hear the words I have pitye;
As Thou wilt, Lord, so must it be,
To Thee I will eb bayn.

Lay down thy faggot, my own son dear.

I: Already father, lo, it is here.
But why make you such heavy cheer?
Are you anything adread?

A: Ah! Dear God! That me is woe!

I: Father, if it be your will,
Where is the beast that we shall kill?

A: Thereof, son, is none upon this hill

I: Father, I am full sore affeared
To see you bear that drawnē sword.

A: Isaac, son, peace, I pray thee,
Thou breakest my heart even in three.

I: I pray you, father, layn nothing from me,
But tell me what you think.

A: Ah! Isaac, Isaac
I must thee kill!

I: Alas! Father, is that your will,
Your ownē child for to spill
Upon the hillēs brink?
If I have trespassed in any degree,
With a yard you may beat me;
Put up your sword, if your will be,
For I am but a child.

A: O Isaac, son,
to thee I say
God hath
commanded me today
Sacrifice, this is no nay,
To make of thy bodye
This is no nay.

I: Would God my mother
were here with me!
She would kneel down
upon her knee,
Praying you, father,
if it may be,
For to save my life
To save my life.

I: Is it God's will
I shall be slain?

A: Yea, son, it is not for to layn.

Here Isaac asketh his father's blessing on his knees, and saith:

I: Father, seeing you mustē needs do so
Let it pass lightly and over go
Kneeling on my knees two,
Your blessing on me spread.

A: My blessing, dear son, give I thee
And thy mother's with heart free;
The blessing of the Trinity,
My dear son, on thee light.

Hence Isaac riseth and cometh to his father and he taketh him, and bindeth and layeth him on the altar to sacrifice him and saith:

Come hither, my child
Thou art so sweet,
Thou must be bound both hands and feet.

I: Father, do with me as you will,
I must obey and that is skill,
God's commandment to fulfill,
For needs so it must be.

A: Isaac, Isaac, blessed must thou be

I: Father, greet well my brethrenyng
And pray my mother of her blessing,
I come no more, no more under her wing,
Farewell forever and aye.

A: Farewell, my sweetē
son of grace!

I: Farewell, farewell,
forever and aye.

Here Abraham doth kiss his son Isaac, and binds a kerchief about his head.

I: I pray you, father, turn down my face
For I am sore adread.

A: Lord, full loth were I him to kill.
I: Ah, mercy, father, why tarry you so?

A: Jesu! On me have pity,
That I have most in mind.

I: Now, father,
I see that I shall die
Almighty God in majesty!
My soul I offer unto Thee!

A: To do this deed
I am sorryē.

Here let Abraham make a sign as though he would cut off his son Isaac's head with his sword; The God speaketh.

Abraham! My servant dear, Abraham!
Lay no the sword in no manner
On Isaac, thy dear darling
For thou dreadest me, well wot I,
That of thy son has no mercy,
To fulfill my bidding.

A: Lord of Heav'n and King of bliss,
Thy bidding shall be done iwiss!
A horned wether here I see,
Among the briars tied is he,
To thee offered shall I be
Anon right in this place.

Then let Abraham take the lamb and kill him.

Sacrifice here sent me is,
And all, Lord, through Thy grace.

A/I: Such obedience grant us, O Lord!
Ever to Thy most holy word.
That in the same we may accord
As this Abraham was bayn;
And then altogether shall we
That worthy King in Heaven see,
And dwell with Him in great glorye
For ever and ever, Amen.

Sola, perduta, abbandonata!
(Alone, lost, and abandoned!)

Alone, lost, and abandoned!
In a desolate land. Horrors!
The dark sky folds itself around me!
Alas, I am alone. And in the deep desert
I fall, cruel fate!
Oh! Alone, abandoned,
I am a deserted woman!
Oh! I don't want to die!
Then everything is finished!
This seems to be a land of peace...
Alas! my unfortunate beauty,
Causes fresh anguish...
My love taken from him; everything horrible
Revives and passes before me
To stare at me where I lie.
He is stained with blood...
Oh! Everything is finished...
Peaceful asylum, now I invoke the tomb...
No...I don't want to die...love...help!

– Praga, Olivia and Illica

The Castle-Builder

This cycle, written by Memphis composer, Michael Drompp, was written in 2003 as a gift to Ken Prewitt. The composer writes in a letter to Ken:

“The cycle does have a theme: the passage of time. That’s why I consider it a cycle rather than a set, although each song can stand on its own. But I did want to create a coherent work rather than a group of unrelated songs. That is also why the order of the songs is as it is, to create not only a “story” but also contrasts in mood and tempo that would be suitable for a cycle/story.

“*The Castle-Builder*: This poem of childhood is relatively straightforward. The piano (right hand) never ceases its upward striving – its “building” – while the left hand sustains a gentle rocking motion.

“*The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls*: Here the basic motif of musical construction is the arch, appearing again and again and reflecting the movement of the tide/waves as well as the inflection of the words as spoken.... You will note that I did not set the poem’s final three words, a repetition of “the tide falls.” I felt that it was implied by this point in the poem (since each verse ends with the same basic line) so it need not be stated again. More importantly, I felt that it didn’t work well for the song or the cycle (at this point) to end with a downward movement in the voice.

“*Changed*”: This may be my favorite. The piano should be like the slow tolling of bells. I thought it was a good contrast to the “busy” quality of the second song’s accompaniment, which so closely follows the voice. Here the voice is completely independent of the accompaniment.

“*Vox Populi*”: This amusing meditation on the nature of fame was the only song that came forth both quickly and without needing much revision. It’s not particularly substantial, but fits well here, I think. It also varies the mood, for otherwise the cycle would be overburdened with slow tempi at the end.

“*Song*”: This poem has, I believe, earned Longfellow the scorn of some critics who labeled him a folksy and “homey” (i.e. narrow, provincial, unsophisticated, etc.) poet because of it. I have tried to give it an edgier interpretation: not simply a paean to the joys of the family hearth, but rather a conflicted approach to the late stages of life when the outside world can seem a fearful place. In other words, it’s not so much about being happy at home as it is about being afraid to leave. The song, like the first, has a sort of “rocking” accompaniment, but here the rocking is a little less regular, and the constant shift from D major to f minor/F major creates tension even in the more tranquil episodes.

“*Snow-flakes*”: This is the only poem that focuses on nature rather than people. That fact, along with the poem’s wintry subject, suggests death at the end of the story. I like Longfellow’s image of snow as a symbol of comic sorrow. The accompaniment should be light and unobtrusive, like a gentle snowfall. To end the song properly, I repeated Longfellow’s first stanza, setting it as I did the first time, but with a few changes. I love the stanza’s final words (“Silent, and soft, and slow descends the snow”), and felt they had to end the song, rather than the poet’s own last stanza.”

Cigánské melodie

Antonín Dvořák composed symphonies, chamber music, 11 operas, and 70 songs. His song style is reminiscent of the German lied and his approach is often compared to Johannes Brahms who was both his friend and mentor. His most famous songs include three sets of Moravian Duets, Biblícké písne, and Cigánské melodie. Dvořák composed Cigánské melodie in 1880 to text by Adolph Heyduk. The music celebrates the music and culture of Eastern European gypsies. The free lifestyle lived by the gypsies was an inspiration for literature in the nineteenth century. Because the work was to be premiered in Vienna by German tenor, Gustav Walter, Dvořák asked

Heyduk to provide a German translation that remained true to the poetic meter of the text. As a result, Cigánské melodie was originally performed and published in German but was later published in Czech; it is therefore acceptable to perform this work in either German or Czech. Today, you will hear the Dvořák’s setting of Heyduk’s original text in Czech.

The overall theme of the *Cigánské melodie* is the unequivocal freedom of the Gypsy life. Throughout the songs, one sees many various emotional states from joy to melancholy. The first and last songs, “Má píseň zas mi láskou zní” and “Dejte klec jestřábu ze zlata ryzého,” are quite majestic in nature. The second, fifth and sixth songs, “Aj! Kterak trojhranec můj přerokozně zvoní,” “Struna naladěna, hochu, toč se v kole,” and “Široké rukávy a široké gatě,” are dances built on Czech and Hungarian dance rhythms. The third song, “A les je tichý kolem kol” contains melodic lines that are similar to those used by Brahms. The fourth song of the set, “Když mne stará matka,” is truly exquisite and is the most familiar song from the cycle. Dvořák creates a nostalgic atmosphere by using two different meters at the same time; the vocal line is set in 2/4 while the piano accompaniment is written in 6/8. This technique creates an effect of a momentary suspension of time.

Má píseň zas mi láskou zní,
My song again rings to me with love
when old day dies,
and when the poor moss
secretly gathers pearls into its guise.

My song so longingly rings into the country
when I wander through the world;
only through the vastness of my native puszta
does my voice flow freely from my bosom.

My song sounds loudly with love,
when the storm hurries through the flatland;
when I am glad
that my brother is dying free from poverty.

Aj! Kterak trojhranec můj přerokozně zvoní
Hey! How my triangle passionately rings out,
like a gypsy song, when-to death he draws near!
When he draws near to death,
the triangle rings to him,
End of song, dance, love, and lament.
End of song, dance, love, and lament

A les je tichý kolem kol
And the wood is silent all around,
only my heart disturbs that peace,
and black smoke, which hurries into the valley,
dries up my tears on my cheek, my tears.

However, it does not have to dry them up,
let it blow on another cheek.
Whoever in sorrow can sing,
that person did not die,
that person lives, that person lives!

Když mne stará matka zpívá
When my old mother taught me to sing,
to sing, it’s strange, that often, often she cried.
And now I also torment my swarthy face by weeping,
when I teach gypsy children to play and to sing!

Struna naladěna, hochu, toč se v kole
The strings are tuned, boy, spin in a circle,
today, maybe today very high,
tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow again down!
The day after tomorrow at the Nile
at the sacred table;
the strings already, the strings are tuned,
boy, spin, boy!

Široké rukávy a široké gatě
Wide sleeves and wide trousers
are more free to the gypsy than a gold dolman.
Dolman and that gold constricts an exuberant heart;
beneath him a free song violently dies.
and you who like it
whenever your song is in bloom,
wish that gold would be extinct
in the whole world!

Dejte klec jestřábu ze zlata ryzého
Give a hawk a cage made from pure gold;
he will not exchange it for his thorny nest.
To a wild horse which gallops through a puszta,
you seldom hitch a bridle and stirrup.
And so also to the gypsy,
nature gave something:
through an eternal bond with freedom,
with freedom, it bound him.