ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)

Antonio Vivaldi is recognized as one of the greatest composers of the Baroque era. He was a virtuoso violinist and is mainly known for his numerous instrumental concertos; though he also wrote sacred choral works and more than forty operas. His most famous set of violin concertos is known as The Four Seasons.

“Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris” from Gloria RV 589

Vivaldi wrote three settings of the hymn “Gloria in excelsis Deo”. The best known is his second setting, often referred to simply as the Vivaldi Gloria because of its popularity. “Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris” is the tenth movement of the piece and was originally written for contralto, though today it is typically performed by mezzo-sopranos with orchestral accompaniment.

Who sit at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Though he died at the early age of thirty-one, Austrian composer Franz Schubert was one of the most prolific composers of the late Classical/early Romantic era. He composed over six-hundred lieder for voice and piano, seven symphonies, operas, sacred music, as well as other works for piano and chamber ensemble. His most famous works for voice include “Gretchen am Spinnrade” and “Der Erlkönig” as well as the song cycles, Winterreise and Die schöne Müllerin. A stylistic trademark of Schubert’s lieder are the interaction of piano and voice. The piano is not used simply for accompaniment, but rather it plays a role in the music and reflects the text.

Nachstück

POET: JOHANN BAPTIST MAYRHOFER (1787-1836)

“Nachstück” Op. 36, No. 2, D672, was written in 1819. It is one of his lesser known Lieder, but encompasses Schubert’s style nonetheless. The poem recounts the emotions of an old man close to death who plays his harp and sings to the woods about his grief coming to an end. During the man’s song, the piano takes on the character of the harp as arpeggiated chords are played beneath a soaring, sustained melody.
When over the mountains mist is spread, and Luna battles against the clouds, then the old man takes his harp and strides toward the forest, singing in a subdued voice: "You holy night: soon it will be over, soon I shall sleep the long sleep that will free me from every torment."

The green trees then murmur: "Sleep sweetly, you good, old man..." The grasses whisper as they wave: "We will cover his place of rest..." And many a lovely bird calls: "O let him rest in his grassy tomb!"

The old man hears, the old man is silent; [for] Death has [now] leaned toward him.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Brahms was a German composer and pianist of the Romantic era. He spent much of his career in Vienna, Austria and composed for piano, chamber ensembles, orchestra, and chorus as well as voice. His compositions take root in the techniques and styles of the Baroque and Classical era, though his lush harmonies and bold rhythm make the music of Brahms distinctly romantic. Brahms was an extreme perfectionist who destroyed many of his early works and left others unfinished, though his surviving works are some of the most famous of the Romantic era. Along with his classical influences, Brahms was also influenced by earlier composers on the romantic era including Schumann and Schubert.

Muss es eine Trennung geben

POET: JOHANN LUDWIG TIECK (1773-1853)

"Muss es eine Trennung geben" comes from a collection of fifteen romances entitled Die schöne Magelone Op.33 for voice and piano. It is structured like a song cycle, but it is not nearly as narrative as the song cycles of composers like Schubert and Beethoven. The poetry comes from a novella by Johann Ludwig Tieck by the same name. The poems contain a common theme in Brahms choice of text in that they are romantic in theme, but contain the medieval ideal of chivalric love.

Must there be a parting That will cause true hearts to break? No, that I do not call living: Dying is not so bitter. When I hear a shepherd's flute, Inside I grieve; When I gaze at a sunset, I think passionately of you.
Is there then no true love? But so I must now lament:
Must there be pain and parting? Where is Hope, but in the grave?
If I'd remained unloved Far away must I bear my misery,
I would then have at least a glimmer of hope. In secrecy, my heart breaks.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)

Felix Mendelssohn is a German composer, pianist, organist, and conductor of the early Romantic period. His major works include symphonies, concerti, oratorios, and works for piano and chamber ensemble. His best known works include the Overture to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and his *Songs without Words* for solo piano. Mendelssohn wrote many songs for voice and piano, most of which appear in simple, strophic settings. Nine of his songs, including “Neue Liebe”, were transcribed for virtuoso solo piano by composer, Franz Liszt.

**Neue Liebe**

POET: HEINRICH HEINE (1797-1856)

This strophic song was written in 1834 and recounts fantasies of elves riding through the woods. A sense of mystery and mischief are created by the minor tonality and fast, staccato piano figures. The poetry comes from a collection of Heinrich Heine poems entitled *Neue Gedichte*.

In the moonlit forest swiftly, like white swans
I watched the elves riding, Traveling through the air.
I heard their horns sound
I heard their bells ring.
Their white horses, with golden antlers, flew on

Was it because of my new love? Or does it mean death?

GIOACHINO ROSSINI (1792-1868)

Gioachino Rossini was an Italian composer of the Romantic period. He is most famous for his operas of which he wrote thirty-nine. His best known operas include *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*) and *La Cenerentola* (*Cinderella*), as well as the French *Guillaume Tell* (*William Tell*). Rossini’s operas are written in the *bel canto* style, which means *beautiful singing*. In this style, melody and the virtuosity of the singer predominate while
the text takes a backseat. Catchy melodies, difficult coloratura lines, and a bubbly texture are characteristic of Rossini’s works.

“Una voce poco fa” from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

LIBRETTO: CESARE STERBINI (1784-1831)

“Una voce poco fa” comes from one of Rossini’s most famous operas, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (The Barber of Seville), premiered in 1816. The libretto comes from Pierre Beaumarchais’s French Comedy *Le Barbier de Sèville* (1775). The story is the prequel to Mozart’s famous *Le Nozze di Figaro (The marriage of Figaro)*. In this aria, the feisty Rosina sings of her love for Lindoro, who is really Count Almaviva in disguise, and her plans to defy her guardian, Dr. Bartolo, who plans to marry her. The role was originally written for coloratura mezzo-soprano, but today the aria is sometimes raised a half-step to be sung by coloratura sopranos. The style of the music is distinctly bel canto with virtuosic passages and playful rhythms.

A voice a while back

echoes here in my heart;

already my heart has been pierced

and Lindoro inflicted the wound.

Yes, Lindoro shall be mine;

I swear it, I will win.

My guardian will refuse me;

I shall sharpen all my wits.

In the end he will be calmed

and I shall rest content...

Yes, Lindoro shall be mine;

I swear it, I will win.

LESLEY ADAMS (B. 1932)

Leslie Adams is a living African-American composer and music educator. His compositions have won awards from the National Association of Negro Women and the Christian Arts Annual National Competition of Choral Music. He earned his PhD in music composition from Ohio State University in 1973. Adams has written works for solo voice and piano, chorus, orchestra, instrumental and chamber works, and an opera entitled *Blake* (1986).
For You there is no Song

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892-1950)

“For You there is no Song” comes from Adams’ song cycle Five Millay Songs, all of which contain the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay. She was an American lyrical poet and playwright known for her feminist activism and her many love affairs. She received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1923.

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

French composer Maurice Ravel is known especially for his mélodies and use of rich orchestration and interesting textures. Along with the music of Claude Debussy, his music is often associated with the Impressionist style, though he disliked the label. Ravel's musical style did not follow the modern trend of atonality, but rather he wrote using modes in his mélodies. Besides his mélodies for voice and piano compositions, Ravel is most famous for his orchestral work Bolero (1928), which he described as, “a piece for orchestra without music”.

Cinq mélodies populaires grecques

POET: MICHEL DIMITRI CALVOCORESSI (1877 - 1944)

This collection of five popular Greek folk songs are Ravel’s interpretation of the Greek folk style. They were composed in 1904 and originally performed in Greek, but were later translated to French. Each movement is set in a major or minor mode giving this set a unique sound and style.

I. Chanson de la mariée

Awake, awake, my darling partridge,
Open to the morning your wings.
Three beauty marks; my heart is on fire!
See the ribbon of gold that I bring

To tie round your hair.
If you want, my beauty, we shall marry!
In our two families, everyone is related by marriage!

III. Quel galant m’est comparable

What gallant compares with me,
Among those one sees passing by?
Tell me, lady Vassiliki!

See, hanging on my belt,
My pistols and my curved sword.
And it is you whom I love!
V. Tout gai

Everyone is joyous, joyous!

Beautiful legs, tireli, which dance,

Beautiful legs; even the dishes are dancing!

Tra la la, la la la!

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Richard Strauss was a leading German composer of the late Romantic and early modern eras. He is most famous for his lieder, tone poems including Also sprach Zarathustra and Death and Transfiguration, and his operas which include Salome and Der Rosenkavalier. The compositions of Strauss, along with Mahler, represent the post-Wagnerian growth of German Romanticism with adventurous harmonic style and orchestration.

“Wie du warst, wie du bist!” from Der Rosenkavalier

LIBRETTO: HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL (1874-1929)

Der Rosenkavalier (The Knight of the Rose) is a comic opera in three acts. It is among Strauss’s most famous operas. The German libretto is original with the story loosely based around the novel Les amours du chevalier de Faublas by Louvet de Couvrai and Molière’s comedy Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. The aria “Wie du warst, wis du bist” occurs in the opening of the opera and is sung by the young Count Octavian Rofrano after he has just made love to his older, married lover, Princess Marschallin. The role of Octavian is for lyric mezzo-soprano and is a trouser role, that is, a female playing the role of a male. In this aria, Octavian confesses his love and overflowing, confusing feelings for Marschallin. Strauss’s lush, complicated harmonies can be heard beneath a flowing, seamless melody in this aria.

How you have been! How you are!

This no one knows, this no one suspects!

(Marschallin responds)

Ange! No! Blessed am I

that am the only one

who knows how you are.

None suspects it! No one knows it!

You, you, you!

What means this "you?"

What "you and I?"

Do they have then a sense?

They are words, mere words, no?

You tell me!

But nevertheless: It is something in them;

a dizziness, a pull,

a craving and pressing,

a languishing and burning:

How now my hand to your hand comes,
MICHAEL FLANDERS (1922-1975) & DONALD SWANN (1923-1994)

Flanders and Swann were a British comedy duo who collaborated in writing and performing their comic songs. Actor/singer Michael Flanders and composer/pianist Donald Swann first worked together at a school revue in 1939 and wrote over a hundred songs in their career together.

**A Word on my Ear**

_A Word on my Ear_ was originally written by the comedy duo for soprano, Rose Hill. Today it can be found in the book entitled _Sarah’s Encores_, a collection of humorous songs performed by soprano Sarah Walker and pianist Roger Vignoles. This rare piece is performed by sopranos as well as high mezzo-sopranos.

To my recital committee, Dr. Kness, Gunta Laukmane, my incredible family, fiancé, friends, and all who have supported me in the pursuit of my dreams:

Thank you!