



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

STUDENT RECITAL

April, 17 2025
16:00—17:30, VKH
Wenjie Liang, voice
Melanie Cancade, *piano*

Mia Speranza adorate!...Ah! non sai qual pena

W.A.Mozart
(1756-1791)

Les soirées musicales

G.Rossini
(1792-1810)

La Promessa

L'Invito

La Pastorella dell'Alpi

秋水长天

Tingjiang Hu
(1978-)

昭君

Yao Deng
(1975-)

-Intermission-

Zehn Lieder, Op. 10

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

Zueignung

Nichts

Die Nacht

Allerseelen

Fiancalles pour rire

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Dans l'herbe

Violon

Fleurs

Regnava nel silenzio

Gaetano Donizetti
(1797-1848)

from *Lucia di Lammermoor*

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Mia Speranza adorate!...Ah! non sai qual pena

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“Mia speranza adorata!” (K. 416) is a concert aria composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in 1783 for soprano and orchestra. The title means “My beloved hope!” in Italian. In this aria, the singer expresses deep sorrow and longing for a loved one who has left. The music features lyrical melodies and emotional intensity, showcasing both vocal beauty and dramatic expression. It is believed that Mozart wrote this piece for the soprano Aloysia Weber, highlighting her vocal skills in public concerts.

*My beloved hope!
Ah! Heaven's wrath is too cruel to us;
This is the last time
That I hold you in my arms. My soul,
I will see you no more.*

*(to Sarabes)
Ah, help her, comfort her for me.*

*Farewell, Zemira,
Remember me! Listen... what do I see?...
You are weeping, my treasure! Oh, how much
Those tears increase my torment.
Who could ever endure
A fate worse than mine?
Farewell forever, beloved wife, farewell!*

*Aria:
Ah, you don't know what pain it is
To have to leave you, oh God!
But your weeping, my soul,
Makes my suffering even greater.
Ah, let me go, oh cruel moment!
Dearest wife, ah, I feel
My heart failing from grief!
To what barbarous fate
Have you consigned me, cruel gods?
Tell me, are my misfortunes
Not worthy of pity?*

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Les soirées musicales

La Promessa

La promessa (“The Promise”) is a charming Italian art song composed by Gioachino Rossini in the 1830s. With lyrics by the poet Pietro Metastasio, the song expresses a lover’s sincere promise and unwavering affection. Known for its graceful melody and light, elegant character, “La promessa” remains a favorite in vocal recitals and a popular choice for developing singers.

That I could ever
Cease to love you—
No, do not believe it,
Dearest eyes;
Not even in jest
Would I deceive you.

You were and you are
My sparks of life,
And you will be,
Dearest eyes,
My beautiful fire
As long as I live.

L’Invito

“L’invito” (“The Invitation”) is a romantic Italian art song composed by Gioachino Rossini in the 1830s. The lyrics, written by Carlo Pepoli, invite the beloved to leave behind the noise of the world and join the speaker in a peaceful, idyllic setting filled with nature, love, and tranquility.

The melody is tender and flowing, full of lyricism and delicate phrasing. With its gentle, persuasive tone and poetic imagery

*To the quiet grove,
Where soft breezes blow
And flowers bloom.
There, far from the noise
Of the city and care,
Let us speak of love,
With only the stars to hear.*

*The moon will smile
Upon your face,
The roses will sigh
Their fragrant breath.
My heart will whisper
Its tender desire,
As you listen,
Your hand in mine.*

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*Come, my love,
Do not delay!
The night is gentle,
And the moment sweet.
Come and let love
Be our only guide,
In the peace
Of the dreaming night.*

La Pastorella dell'Alpi

“La pastorella dell’Alpi” Unlike some of the more romantic or dramatic pieces in the set, this song captures a bright, pastoral mood. The lyrics describe a cheerful young shepherdess who lives in the mountains, enjoying her simple, nature-filled life. The song features lively rhythms and sparkling melodies that mimic the freshness of mountain air and the carefree spirit of rural life. The piece reflects Rossini’s humor and his fondness for folk-like storytelling.

I am the little shepherdess
Who lives high in the Alps;
I have no palace or riches,
But I’m happy with my flock.

Each morning I greet the sun,
With a song on my lips;
Among the flowers and the breezes,
I dance with joy and bliss.

No sorrow clouds my brow,
No trouble comes my way;
My sheep, my flute, my mountains—
They’re all I need each day.

If love should ever find me,
In this quiet place I dwell,
Then I will share my laughter,
And love him just as well.

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秋水长天

Qiū Shuǐ Cháng Tiān is a Chinese art song composed by Hu Tingjiang. Inspired by classical poetry, the piece paints a serene yet majestic image of autumn's endless waters merging with the horizon, symbolizing the passage of time and life's contemplative beauty.

Blending traditional Chinese musical elements with Western bel canto techniques, the song features flowing melodies, expressive vocal flourishes, and piano accompaniment that mimics rippling waves. With its poetic depth and emotional resonance, *Autumn Waters, Vast Sky* embodies the elegance of contemporary Chinese art songs.

Who will pluck a string of my heart,
As I gaze at the moon, sleepless through the night?
Right and wrong, love and hate,
All dissolve into a wisp of drifting cloud.

A wanderer, a returning soul,
Dreams broken amid rivers and clouds of home.
The western wind blows on the ancient road,
Looking back—endless sky and autumn waters.

Smoke curls in the desert, yet love's threads remain uncut,
Though I try to sever the lingering ties.
My passion and valor are worth more than gold,
If only to exchange them for a bond of love.

Frost blankets the ground, stars fill the sky,
Dreams shatter between the rivers and clouds of home.
Even if mountains rise and roads stretch far,
Still I see that vast sky and autumn waters.

Frost blankets the ground, stars fill the sky,
Dreams shatter between the rivers and clouds of home.
Even if mountains rise and roads stretch far,
Still I see that vast sky and autumn waters.

Dreams shatter between the rivers and clouds of home,
On the western road, wind and time stretch into that vast sky.

Smoke curls in the desert, yet love's threads remain uncut,
Though I try to sever the lingering ties.
My passion and valor are worth more than gold,
If only to exchange them for a bond of love.

Smoke curls in the desert, yet love's threads remain uncut,
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My passion and valor are worth more than gold,
If only to exchange them for a bond of love.

Frost blankets the ground, stars fill the sky,
Dreams shatter between the rivers and clouds of home.
Even if mountains rise and roads stretch far,
Still I see—still I see—
That vast sky and autumn waters.

昭君

This song tells the story of Wang Zhaojun, a famous historical figure from the Western Han Dynasty of ancient China. It is based on the true story of a political marriage alliance. As a palace lady, Wang Zhaojun refused to bribe the court painter, which led to her portrait being intentionally made unattractive. When the imperial court sought to form a marriage alliance with the Xiongnu (a nomadic tribe), she volunteered to marry into the distant frontier.

It was only upon her departure that Emperor Yuan of Han realized her stunning beauty, but it was too late to stop her. In the lands of the Xiongnu, Zhaojun spread Central Plains culture and maintained peace between the Han and Xiongnu for decades. She became a legendary woman remembered in history as one who “turned weapons into silk and peace”, and her story has been widely passed down through generations.

In the Vast Desert Where Green Grass Grows
In the vast desert where green grass grows,
A beauty holds a hero in her heart.
She wishes only for true understanding—
That sorrow may turn to a gentle smile.
The war flames turn to rain,
As the pipa tells of longing and ancient love.

The river flows, the gates swing wide,
Jewels and ornaments softly chime.
Though she stunned the palace with her grace,
A painted portrait hid her from the emperor's eyes.
Her love for home and country stretches far,
Told in snow that drifts and flies.

A daughter crosses the frontier slowly,
Wandering alone beneath the moonlit sky.
In the vast desert where green grass grows,
A beauty holds a hero in her heart.
She wishes only for true understanding—
That sorrow may turn to a gentle smile.
The war flames turn to rain,
As the pipa tells of longing and ancient love.

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Zehn Lieder, Op. 10

Zueignung

This song is a powerful expression of gratitude and love. The speaker recalls a time of suffering and emotional turmoil, from which they were rescued by the presence and love of another. With fervent intensity, they dedicate their heart and soul to this beloved person. The song builds from gentle reflection to a climactic declaration of devotion.

*Yes, dear soul, you know
That I'm in torment far from you,
Love makes hearts sick –
Be thanked.*

*Once, revelling in freedom,
I held the amethyst cup aloft
And you blessed that draught –
Be thanked.*

*And you banished the evil spirits,
Till I, as never before,
Holy, sank holy upon your heart –
Be thanked.*

Nichts

"Nichts" is a charming and lighthearted Lied that describes the speaker's indifference to the beauty of the world—flowers, stars, and all the usual wonders bring no joy. Only when their beloved smiles does life regain its color and meaning. The song captures a moment of joyful revelation through love, conveyed with playfulness and warmth.

*You say I should name
My queen in the realm of song!
Fools that you are, I know
Her least of all of you.*

*Ask me the colour of her eyes,
Ask me about the sound of her voice,
Ask me about her walk, her dancing, her bearing,
Ah! what do I know of all that.*

*Is not the sun the source
Of all life, of all light,
And what do we know about it,
I and you and everyone?—nothing.*

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Die Nacht

A deeply introspective and melancholic song, "Die Nacht" reflects on the mysterious and all-consuming nature of night. As darkness slowly envelops the world, the speaker expresses anxiety that it may also take away their beloved. This poetic meditation on love and loss is filled with quiet tension and emotional vulnerability.

*Night steps from the woods,
Slips softly from the trees,
Gazes about her in a wide arc,
Now beware!*

*All the lights of this world,
All the flowers, all the colours
She extinguishes and steals the sheaves
From the field.*

*She takes all that is fair,
Takes the silver from the stream,
Takes from the cathedral's copper roof
The gold.*

*The bush stands plundered:
Draw closer, soul to soul,
Ah the night, I fear, will steal
You too from me.*

Allerseelen

Set on All Souls' Day—a day of remembrance for the dead—this song imagines a brief reunion with a lost lover. The speaker longs to revive a day of past love, asking to relive that joy "as once in May." The tone is gentle, nostalgic, and bittersweet, blending remembrance with the quiet hope of spiritual reunion.

*Set on the table the fragrant mignonettes,
Bring in the last red asters,
And let us talk of love again
As once in May.*

*Give me your hand to press in secret,
And if people see, I do not care,
Give me but one of your sweet glances
As once in May.*

*Each grave today has flowers and is fragrant,
One day each year is devoted to the dead;
Come to my heart and so be mine again,
As once in May.*

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Fiancailles pour rire

Dans l'herbe

Mysterious and introspective, this song evokes a dreamlike image of someone lying hidden in the grass, perhaps dead, perhaps dreaming, or perhaps a fading memory. The poem speaks to themes of nature, silence, and emotional ambiguity. Poulenc's music matches this uncertain mood with quiet dynamics, subtle dissonances, and a sense of suspended time. The stillness and restraint in the musical language evoke a haunting, almost sacred atmosphere, inviting deep emotional reflection.

I can say nothing more
Do nothing more for him.
He died for his fair one
He died a fair death
Outside
Beneath the tree of Justice
In utter silence
In open country
In the grass.

He died unnoticed
Crying out as he passed away
Calling, calling me
But since I was far from him
And since his voice no longer carried
He died alone in the woods
Beneath his childhood tree
And I can say nothing more
Do nothing more for him.

Violon

"Violon" conjures the image of an elegant woman at a ball, adorned with jewels and perfume, her gestures graceful like the sound of a violin. The poem juxtaposes outer beauty with an inner sense of longing or sadness, subtly revealed beneath the glamour. Poulenc captures this duality with a sensuous, dance-like rhythm in the piano and a vocal line that shifts between lightness and lyrical intensity. The overall effect is one of refined melancholy, where elegance masks emotional depth.

*Loving couple of misapprehended sounds
Violin and player please me.
Ah! I love these long wailings
Stretched on the string of disquiet,
To the sound of strung-up chords
At the hour when Justice is silent
The heart, shaped like a strawberry,
Gives itself to love like an unknown fruit.*

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Fleurs

This song is a tender, melancholic meditation on absence and lost love, using the image of flowers as a symbol of longing, beauty, and impermanence. The speaker addresses someone far away, expressing yearning and vulnerability through delicate natural imagery. Poulenc's setting is expressive and restrained, with long lyrical phrases and soft harmonies that create an atmosphere of emotional intimacy. The mood is introspective, filled with gentle sorrow and poetic grace.

Promised flowers, flowers held in your arms,
Flowers from a step's parentheses,
Who brought you these flowers in winter
Sprinkled with the sea's sand?
Sand of your kisses, flowers of faded loves
Your lovely eyes are ashes and, in the hearth,
A moan-beribboned heart
Burns with its sacred images.

Regnava nel silenzio From Lucia di Lammermoor

"Regnava nel silenzio" is one of the most iconic arias for lyric coloratura soprano from Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor. It appears in Act I and serves as Lucia Ashton's first major solo, offering a deep insight into her emotional world. In this scene, Lucia recounts a ghostly vision she experienced by a fountain—a spectral woman appeared to her, silent and pale, foreshadowing death and tragedy. Despite the ominous encounter, Lucia remains devoted to her secret lover, Edgardo.

The aria is divided into two contrasting sections. The first part, "Regnava nel silenzio", is dark, mysterious, and filled with tension, reflecting Lucia's fear and vulnerability. Donizetti uses haunting melodic lines and subtle harmonic shifts to evoke a supernatural atmosphere. The second part, the cabaletta "Quando rapita in estasi", bursts into lyrical passion, expressing Lucia's ecstatic love and emotional escape from the real world. Here, vocal agility, purity of tone, and expressive legato are essential, as the soprano must convey both romantic fervor and psychological fragility.

She reigned in the silence,
High was the night and dark...
A pale beam of gloomy moonlight
Struck the fountain.
When a soft moan
Was heard floating through the air,
And there—at the edge—
Ah! The ghost appeared to me. Ah!

As if it were speaking,
I saw its lips move,
And with a lifeless hand,
It seemed to beckon me.
It stood still for a moment,
Then suddenly vanished.

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And the water, once so clear,
Turned crimson with blood.

He is the light of my days,
He is the comfort in my suffering.

Quando rapita in estasi (Cabaletta)

When, raptured in ecstasy,
With the most burning passion,
He speaks the language of the heart
And swears eternal faith to me—

All my sorrows I forget,
My tears become joy,
And it seems that, at his side,
Heaven itself opens for me.

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