

the sea. Which then brings up the question, if all of these things of earth have each other, then why not you and I?

Charles Gilbert Spross (1874-1961)
“Will o’ the Wisp” (Benjamin)

A widely celebrated composer of 20th century music, Charles Gilbert Spross has been recognized by the Steuben Society, as a German-American who recognized the positive role of good citizenship in the German-American community. He has his own unit, the Dr. Charles Gilbert Spross Unit, which received its charter in 1966 in Poughkeepsie, New York. The society named it after their famous local composer, musician, and organist, Dr. Spross. There are nearly 1,000 of his compositions listed in the Germania music library. Dr. Spross was known to often accompany singers who were performing his own songs, and actually played on a recording of Alma Gluck singing “Will o’ the Wisp”. This song was re-printed in the Dover publication of “Art Songs of the Turn of the Century”. “Will o’ the Wisp” is a lively ballad taken from the poem by Torrence Benjamin. The voice and piano take turns going back-and-forth in playful banter. When you hear the fast downward descending scales played by the piano accompaniment, it is almost as if the wisp of a fairy has just flown by!



School of Music

presents

JUNIOR RECITAL

Kristen Brent, soprano

Brenda Brent, piano

Thursday, September 10, 2009
5:00 pm
Music Building Recital Hall

Second Concert of the 2009-2010 season

Kennesaw State University
School of Music

JUNIOR RECTIAL

PROGRAM

I.

Mio caro bene!
(from *Rodelinda*)

George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Se tu m'ami, se sospiri (Rolli)

Giovanni Pergolesi
(1710-1736)

II.

Das Veilchen (Goethe)

Wolfgang A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Heidenröslein (Goethe)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Liebesbotschaft (Rellstab)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

III.

Le Secret (Silvestre)

Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Le Charme (Silvestre)

Ernest Chausson
(1855-1899)

IV.

O mio babbino caro (Forzano)
(from *Gianni Schicchi*)

Giacomo Puccini
(1858-1924)

Lee Hoiby (b. 1926)

“Where the Music Comes From”

Lee Hoiby is a very talented 20th century American composer and pianist who has written over 100 songs and is still active in composing today. Some of his latest works include the setting of the Martin Luther King Jr. text “Free at Last”, and “I Was There” from the Whitman poems, premiered in 1995 by baritone William Stone. Just recently in 2008, the world premiere of his opera *This is the Rill Speaking* was produced in New York with a Brooklyn-based company called American Opera Projects. Other known works by Hoiby are the operas *The Scarf*, *Summer and Smoke*, and *The Tempest*. In “Where the Music Comes From”, the flowing rhythmic structure of the piano accompaniment moves the vocal line along and adds to the meaningful text, which talks of music and how it can bring your soul to life. He refers to Samuel Barber as his “spiritual guide”, and his “mentor musically in a way, just by osmosis”.

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

“Sure On This Shining Night” (Agee)

Samuel Barber, one of the greatest American composers of the 20th century, had a style that echoed the late-Romantic European tradition. Composing songs as early as the age of 7, he began his lifelong involvement with music. Some of his most noted works would be the Adagio for Strings and his Piano Sonata, but he is also known for his orchestral, chamber, and operatic works. Barber set several poems to music by James Agee, from his 1934 book of poems, *Permit Me Voyage*. “Sure On This Shining Night” is in Agee’s book from the collection of poems entitled “Descriptions of Elysium”. Elysium was a section of the underworld where souls of the virtuous and heroic reached their final resting place. It is often described as an “immortality of bliss”, where there is no pain, sickness, or suffering. The words of this particular poem can be related to any form of a final resting place, no matter what your religion or moral beliefs may be. Barber’s setting of “Sure On This Shining Night” gives room for reflection on where you believe your own loved ones to be, and the thought of being reunited with them someday.

Roger Quilter (1877-1943)

“Love’s Philosophy” (Shelley)

Roger Quilter is a British composer who is known for his refined taste in the settings of his texts. He loved English poetry and wrote many of his songs using their poems, including “Love’s Philosophy”. This song is full of expression and beauty. The arpeggios in the piano accompaniment represent youthful excitement and longing to be connected to a significant other. The entire poem by Percy Shelley is about how all things of nature combine--the fountains with the river, the sunlight with the earth, and the moonbeams with

known for his *mélodie*, or French art song, as well as his piano and chamber music. He set this particular *mélodie*, “Le Secret”, to music from a poem by Paul-Armand Silvestre. The poem talks of a secret love- a name that can only be said in the daytime. As is characteristic of the French, this song only hints at an impassioned love affair, and leaves room for many interpretations. The smooth linear motion of the piano accompaniment gives a sense of quiet dreaminess that sets the mood of the piece. The fluidity and hushed tones of the melody line lend a veil-like cover, as if there truly is a secret hidden in the song that only the performer may know.

Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)
“Le Charme” (Silvestre)

Out of the fifty *mélodie* written during Chausson’s lifetime, “Le Charme” is one of his most touching. It is short and simple, yet elegant and noteworthy in its own right. Set to the text of the poem by Armand Silvestre, one of the most well known impressionist poets in France, this poem describes the sweetness of falling in love. It talks of how the one singing knew they were in love when they saw their object of affection cry for the first time. As with many songs in the impressionist style, there are no overly done displays of emotion. The song is personal and refined rather than showy or climactic, and is altogether, intimately charming.

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
“O mio babbino caro” (Forzano)

Giacomo Puccini is considerably the most important Italian opera composer of the late nineteenth century. He was born into a line of musicians tracing back to the 18th century, who all played organ at the church of San Martino in Lucco, Italy. He himself was a church organist and pianist until he saw a performance of Verdi’s *Aida*, which inspired his interest in opera. Puccini then began to write many wonderful operas during his lifetime including *La Boème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot*, although he died before *Turandot* was completely finished. In his later operas, he displayed music of lyric intensity and a flair for theatrical effect. He also wrote *Il trittico*, which included three one act operas: *Il tabarro*, *Suor Angelica*, and his one comedy, *Gianni Schicchi*. Of the three, *Gianni Schicchi* became the most popular and is often performed on its own. “O mio babbino caro”, an aria from *Gianni Schicchi*, has become a very well known song even in the popular culture of today. In this aria, Lauretta is singing to her father, begging him to let her marry the one she loves, Rinuccio.

V.

Where the Music Comes From

Lee Hoiby
(b. 1926)

Sure On This Shining Night (Agee)

Samuel Barber
(1910-1981)

Love’s Philosophy (Shelley)

Roger Quilter
(1877-1943)

Will o’ the Wisp (Benjamin)

Charles Gilbert Spross
(1874-1961)

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Bachelor of Music in Performance.
Ms. Brent is a voice student of Dr. Oral Moses.

Program Notes

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

“Mio caro bene!”

George Frideric Handel was a German born composer who became internationally renowned during his lifetime. His music embodied characteristics of German, Italian, and French styles, all of which reached maturity in England, where in 1728 he became an English citizen. He completed the opera *Rodelinda* in 1725, produced for the Royal Academy of Music. This opera underwent many transformations before flourishing into such a success. It first started as the play, *Pertharite, roi des Lombards*, written by Pierre Corneille. The story was later adapted by the librettist Antonio Salvi, and then again by the librettist Nicola Francesco Haym. It was Haym's libretto that Handel used as the basis for *Rodelinda*, and it has ever since been known as one of Handel's most famous operas. The aria “Mio caro bene!” is sung by Queen Rodelinda at the end of the third act. Queen Rodelinda and King Bertarido of Lombardy are reunited after a vengeful Garibaldo tries to kill the king in an attempt to steal his throne. This joyful melody, with the words “I no longer have suffering and pain”, summarizes the triumph of the royal family having saved their throne.

Giovanni Pergolesi (1710-1736)

“Se tu m'ami, se sospiri” (Rolli)

The text of this playful song was originally believed to have been set to music by Pergolesi, but because no early manuscripts of this song have been found, scholars now attribute the song to Alessandro Parisotti. Parisotti was an apt musician of his own right who enjoyed early music, but was sometimes known for publishing other editor's work as his own. Pergolesi was only 26 when he died, but helped contribute a significant importance to the development of the Italian opera. “Se tu m'ami”, originating as a poem by Paolo Rolli, is told from the view of a spirited woman who scolds men for floating from one rose (or woman) to another and then tossing them away the next day for the next beautiful flower that they come across. Her philosophy is much more efficient- she will just love more than one man at a time!

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

“Das Veilchen” (Goethe)

Mozart has been called the hero of the early Romantic generation. Composing over 600 compositions during his lifetime, he was known to see his music in his mind the entire way through before he ever wrote anything down! Traveling, composing, and performing as early as the age of six, Mozart was exposed to every kind of music that was written or played in

contemporary Western Europe. And while he is better known for his operas than his lieder (or song), he did write a collection of thirty art songs. Mozart did not always use the most popular poems in his songs, and while “Das Veilchen” was not a well known poem of Goethe's, it became well known because Mozart used it. This short song is a beautiful blend of music and drama, and a perfect example of text painting. With the skipping piano line of the little shepherdess, the long, wistful melodic lines of the poor little violet, ending with the trampling of the tiny flower in the rhythmic progressions of the piano, Mozart has literally painted us a picture of this little mini-drama. Even though he didn't consider his art songs to be of much importance, they are all wonderful examples of the fact that it was impossible for Mozart to write anything less than his transcendent genius allowed.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

“Heidenröslein” (Goethe)

“Liebesbotschaft” (Rellstab)

Franz Peter Schubert had a gift for creating beautiful melodies. In his short lifespan of 31 years, he was able to complete nine symphonies, 22 piano sonatas, 35 chamber compositions, six masses, 17 operatic works, and over 600 Lieder. Schubert had a long-lasting relationship with the poetry of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who was known as Europe's most celebrated writer and “father” of Romanticism. “Gretchen am Spinnrade” was the first poem of Goethe's that Schubert set to music, and it was such a great success that many other songs like it followed, such as simple folksongs like “Heidenröslein” and “Erlkönig”. “Heidenröslein” is a delicate, lively ballad that depicts the story of a mischievous little boy who picks a beautiful rose off the heather. The helpless rose, despite her moans of protest, lets herself be picked, but it still is able to prick the boy in the process. The percussive piano accompaniment and the playful melodic line paint the picture of a sneaky little boy full of curiosity, and a sassy little rose that won't be taken advantage of without a fight! Schubert was one of the first to introduce the idea of text painting into his pieces. In “Liebesbotschaft” the piano line is transfigured into a rushing little brook, and is just as important as the vocal line itself. Schubert generally wrote his music with two soloists in mind- not just the vocalist, but the pianist as well!

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

“Le Secret” (Silvestre)

Gabriel Fauré, a gifted pianist and organist born in France, composed only in his spare time. He became the professor of composition at the conservatoire de Paris in 1896 while holding various other positions as an organist. Eventually becoming the head of the conservatoire in 1905, he served as director for 15 years until he had to resign on account of deafness. Fauré is