Oral Moses, bass-baritone
Rosalyn Floyd, piano
in a
Faculty Artist Recital

“Come to Schober’s house today, and I will sing you a cycle of eerie songs. I am eager to know what you think of them.”

Sunday, February 3, 2002
3:00 p.m.
Music Building Recital Hall

Nearly all that there is of the plot of this story occurs before the cycle begins: the young hero and his beloved have shared a wonderful and happy relationship but now another handsome suitor has won the hero’s beloved. The cycle opens as the rejected lover departs from his beloved’s home on a cold snowy winter night; he bids her an unheard farewell, then slowly takes his leave of the places where he has known and loved her. Leaving town, he wanders in the cold icy landscape of winter, avoiding all humans and plunging ever deeper into his own tormented and demented soul.

1. Gute Nacht (Good night)  
2. Die Wetterfahne (The weather-vane)  
3. Gefrorene Tränen (Frozen tears)  
4. Erstarrung (Numbness)  
5. Der Lindenbaum (The lime tree)  
6. Wasserflut (Flood)  
7. Auf Dem Flusse (On the river)  
8. Rückblick (Looking back)  
9. Irrlicht (Will-o’-the-wisp)  
10. Rast (Rest)  
11. Frühlingstraum (Dream of Spring)  
12. Einsamkeit (Loneliness)  
13. Die Post (The Post)  
14. Der Greise Kopf (The white head)  
15. Die Krähe (The Crow)  
16. Letzte Hoffnung (Last hope)  
17. Im Dorfe (In the village)  
18. Der Stürmische Morgen (Stormy morning)  
19. Täuschung (Delusion)  
20. Der Wegweiser (The Signpost)  
21. Das Wirthaus (The Inn)  
22. Mut (Courage)  
23. Die Nebensonnen (Phantom suns)  
24. Der Leiermann (The Organ-grinder)
1. Good Night
A stranger I came,
and a stranger I depart;
May for me
was prodigal with flowers.
The girl spoke of love,
her mother even of marriage –
now the world is so gloomy,
my path covered with snow.
I cannot choose
the time for my journey;
I must find my own way
through this darkness.
A shadow in the moonlight
is my companion
and over the snowy meadows
I follow the tracks of animals.

Why should I wait
until they drive me out?
Let prowling dogs howl
before their masters' house!
Love likes to rove –
God ordered it so –
from one to another,
Dear love, good-night!

I will not disturb your dream,
it would be a shame to break your rest.
You must not hear my footsteps –
softly, softly close the door!
I only write as I leave –
"good-night" – at your gate,
so that you may see
I thought of you.

2. The Weather Vane
The wind plays with the weathervane
upon my fine sweetheart's house.
So thought I in my madness
it flouted the poor fugitive.
He should have noticed sooner
the emblem of the house;
then he never would have sought
a constant woman there.

The wind plays inside with hearts
just as on the roof, only not so loudly.
What do they care for my sorrow?
Their child is a rich bride.

3. Frozen Tears
Frozen drops fall
from my cheeks,
and does it only now come to me
that I have been weeping?

Ah tears, my tears,
and are you then so lukewarm
that you turn to ice
like cool morning dew?
And yet you gush from the well
of my glowing hot breast
as though you would melt
all the ice of winter.

4. Numbness
I look in vain in the snow
for a trace of her footprints,
here where we two used to stroll
across the meadow.

I want to kiss the ground,
to penetrate the ice and snow
with my hot tears
until I see the earth.

Where will I find a blossom
where will I find green grass?
The flowers are withered,
The sod looks so faded.

Shall I then take with me
no souvenir from here?
If my sorrows are silent,
who will speak to me of her?

My hears is as if frozen,
hers cold image fixed within it;
if my heart should ever thaw,
hers image also would melt.
5. The Lime Tree
By the well in front of the gate
there stands a linden tree;
I dreamed in its shade
many a sweet dream.

I carved in its bark
many a fond word;
in joy and in sorrow
I always felt drawn to it.

I had to pass it again just now
in the deep night,
and even in the dark
I closed my eyes.

And its branches rustled,
as if they were calling me,
"Come here, friend,
here you will find rest!"

The cold winds blew
right into my face/
my hat flew off my head,
yet I did not turn back.

Now I am many hours
distant from that spot,
yet I always hear it rustling:
"You would find rest there!"

6. Flood
Many tears from my eyes have
fallen in the snow;
its cold flakes
thirstily drink up my hot misery.

When grass is ready to grow
a gentle wind blows from thence,
and the ice breaks into chunks
and the soft snow melts.

Snow, you know of my longing;
tell me, where does your course lead?
Only follow my tears,
and the stream will carry you away.

It will carry you through the town,
in and out of the happy streets;
if you feel my tears burning,
that will be at my sweetheart’s house.

7. On the River
You that used to ripple so happily,
clear, noisy stream,
how quiet you have become!
You give me no parting greeting.

With a hard, still crust
You have covered yourself.
You lie cold and motionless,
stretched out in the sand.

In your shell I carve,
with a sharp stone,
the name of my sweetheart
with the day and hour.

The day of our first greeting,
the day of my departure –
around the name and the figure
is wound a broken ring.

8. Looking Back
The soles of my feet are burning,
although I walk on ice and snow.
I don’t want to draw another breath
until I can no longer see the town towers.

I stumbled over every stone,
so hurriedly did I leave the town;
The crows threw down snow and hailstones
on my head from every roof.

How differently you welcomed me,
fickle town!
At your shining windows
the lark and the nightingale
tried to outshine each other

The rounded linden trees were blooming;
the clear brooks rippled brightly,
and ah, two girlish eyes glowed!
–
then it was all over with you, my boy!

If I were to think of that day,
I would want to go back again.
I would want to go back
and stand silent before her house.
9. Will-o'-the-wisp
Into the deepest rocky chasms
a will-o'-the-wisp has lured me.
How I shall find a way out
does not greatly concern me.

I am used to going astray;
every road leads to its destination:
our joys, our sorrows,
all are a will-o'-the-wisp’s game.

Through the dry bed of a mountain brook
I take my way quietly down –
every stream will reach the sea,
every sorrow will find a grave.

10. Rest
Now I notice for the first time how tired I am,
as I lie down to rest;
merely walking sustained me along the dreary path.

My feet did not seem tired,
it was too cold to stop;
my back felt no burden,
the storm helped me along.

In a collier’s little hut
I have found shelter,
but now my limbs will not rest
because they ache so.

And you, my heart, in struggle and storm
so fierce and so bold,
only now, in the silence, feel the worm
bestir itself with burning pangs!

11. Dream of Spring
I dreamed of colorful flowers
such as bloom in May;
I dreamed of green fields
and the happy cries of birds.

And when the cocks crew
I opened my eyes;
it was cold and gloomy,
and the ravens screamed from the roof.

But on the window panes
who painted the leaves?
Are you laughing at the dreamer
who saw flowers in winter?

I dreamed of happy love,
of a beautiful girl,
of fondling and of kissing,
of joy and bliss.

And when the cocks crew
my heart awoke;
now I sit here alone
and think back over the dream.

I close my eyes again,
my heart still beats ardently.
When will the leaves turn green at the window?
When will I hold you, sweetheart, in my arms?

12. Loneliness
Like a murky cloud
passing across the bright sky,
when in the tops of the fir-trees
a light breeze is stirring:

So I go on my way
onward with dragging feet,
amid the brightness and happiness of life,
lonely and friendless.

If only the air were not so calm!
If only the world were not so bright!
While the storms were still raging
I was not so miserable.

13. The Post
Along the street a post-horn sounds.
what is it that makes you so excited,
my heart?
The mail coach brings no letter for you:
why, then, are you so strangely vexed,
my heart?

Oh, perhaps the coach comes from
the town
where I had a sweetheart,
my heart!

Would you like to have a look over there
and ask how things are going,
my heart?
14. The White Head
The hoar-frost had given a white luster to my hair.
I thought I was already an old man, and it made me very happy.

but soon it thawed away —
I again have black hair.
What a horror I have of my youth —
how far it still is to the grave!

Between sunset and sunrise
many a head has turned gray.
Who would believe it? And mine has not changed
during this whole journey!

15. The Crow
A crow followed me out of the town;
until now, ceaselessly, he has been flying about my head.

Crow, curious creature,
won’t you leave me alone?
Do you mean, as prey, soon
to seize upon my body?

Well, I cannot go much farther
on my staff.
Crow, let me show at last
faithfulness unto the grave!

16. Last Hope
Here and there upon the trees
there is still a colored leaf to be seen.
And by the trees
I often stand musing.

I look at the one leaf
and hang my hope upon it;
if the wind plays with my leaf,
I tremble all over.

Ah, and if the leaf falls to the ground,
with it falls my hope.
I myself sink with it to the earth
and weep upon the grave of my hope.

17. In the Village
The dogs bark; their chains rattle;
people are snoring in their beds.
Dreaming of many things they do not have,

they refresh themselves both with the pleasant
and the unpleasant.
And in the morning it is all gone.
Ah well, they have enjoyed their portion,
and hope to find what is still left over
another time on their pillows.

Bark me on my way, watchdogs!
Don’t let me rest during the hours of sleep!
I have come to the end of all dreaming —
why should I tarry among the sleepers?

18. The Stormy Morning
How the storm has rent
the gray mantle of heaven!
Tatters of cloud drift about in weary strife.

And red streaks of lightning flash among them.
This I call a morning after my own heart!

My heart sees in the heavens, painted, its own image —
it is nothing but the winter,
the winter cold and rude!

19. Delusion
A light dances cheerily before me;
I follow it this way and that.
I follow it gladly, knowing all the while
that it leads the wanderer astray.
Ah, anyone as miserable as I
gives himself willingly
to the colorful deception
that points beyond the ice,
the night and its horror,
to bring warm house
and a loving soul within –
only delusion is left for me!
20. The Signpost
Why do I avoid the highways
that other wanderers travel
and seek out hidden paths
through snowbound rocky heights?

I have done nothing
to make me avoid people –
what mad longing is it
that drives me into the wilderness?

Guideposts stand along the road
pointing to the towns,
but I trudge ceaselessly on
without rest, and seek rest.

One guidepost I see
ever fixed before my eyes:
I must travel a road
by which no one has ever returned.

21. The Inn
Into a graveyard
my way has led me.
Here will I stop,
I thought to myself.

The green memorial wreaths
might well be the signs
that invite weary travelers
into the cool inn.

Are then in this house
all the rooms taken?
I am so weary I can hardly stand,
and mortally wounded.

O pitiless inn,
do you refuse to take me?
then on, ever on,
my trusty staff!

22. Courage!
If snow flies in my face,
I brush it off.
If my hart speaks within me,
I sing brightly and cheerfully.

I do not hear what it is saying to me;
I have no ears.
I do not feel the cause of its complaint –
complaining is for fools.

Gaily forth into the world,
in spite of wind and weather!
If there be no god on earth,
then we ourselves are gods.

23. Phantom Suns
I saw three suns in the sky,
and long and steadfastly I gazed at
them.
They stood there so fixedly,
as if they could never leave me.

Ah! you are not my suns!
You are shining into others’ faces!
Recently I too had three,
but now the best two have set.
I only wish the third would go down
too!
It would be better for me in darkness.

24. The Organ-grinder
Over beyond the village
stands a hurdy-gurdy man,
and with his numb fingers
he grinds as best he can.

Barefoot on the ice,
he moves to and fro,
and his little tray
is always empty.

Nobody cares to hear him,
nobody looks at him,
and the dogs snarl
around the old man.

And he lets everything go
as it will;
he grinds, and his hurdy-gurdy
is never silent.

Queer old man,
shall I go with you?
Will you grind out my songs
on your hurdy-gurdy?
Upcoming Events at KSU

in
Music

Sunday, February 10
Brooke Morris
Senior Recital
3 pm   Music Building Recital Hall

Sunday, February 17
Faculty Chamber Recital
3 pm   Music Building Recital Hall

Saturday, February 23
Sarah Graham
Senior Recital
7 pm   Mars Hill Presbyterian Church

Saturday, February 23
Cobb Symphony Orchestra
8 pm   Cobb County Civic Center

Wednesday, February 27
KSU Jazz Ensemble
8 pm   Stillwell Theater

Thursday, February 28
KSU Wind Ensemble
8 pm   Stillwell Theater

Tuesday, March 5
The Georgia Young Singers
7 pm   Stillwell Theater