

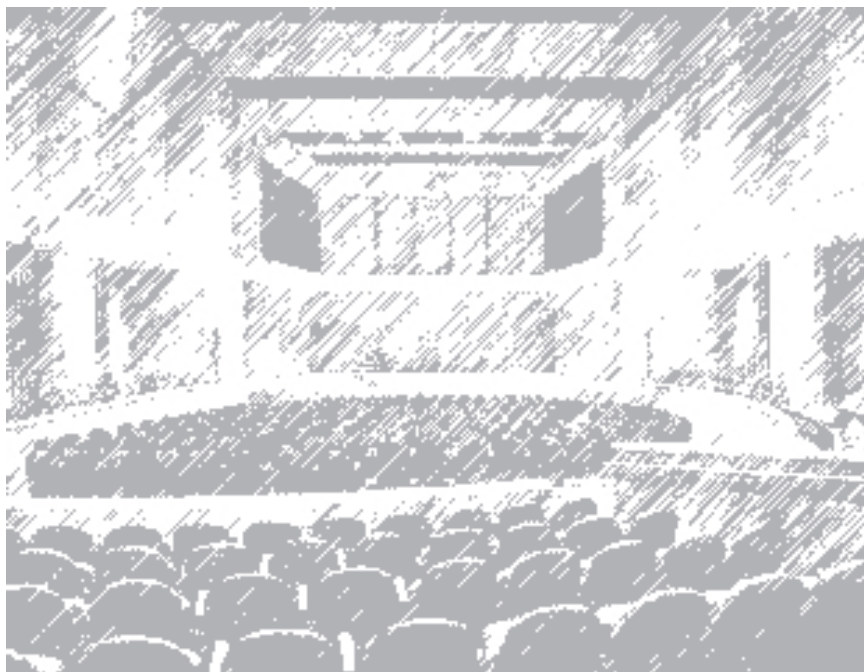
Kennesaw State University
School of Music



Senior Recital

Shannan O'Dowd, soprano

Judy Cole, piano



Saturday, December 12, 2015

8:00 p.m.

Music Building Recital Hall

Sixty-sixth Concert of the 2015-16 Concert Season

program

I.

G. F. HANDEL (1685-1759)

V'adorno, pupille

from *Giulio Cesare*

II.

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

An die Musik

Am See

HUGO WOLF (1860-1903)

Die Spröde

Die Bekehrte

III.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Nuit d'Etoiles

Mandoline

Beau Soir

IV.

ROGER QUILTER (1877-1953)

Fair house of joy

Now sleeps the crimson petal

V.

GIAN CARLO MENOTTI (1911-2007)

Steal me, sweet thief

from *The Old Maid and the Thief*

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Bachelor of Music in Music Education.
Ms. O'Dowd studies voice with Jana Young.

program notes

V'adorno, pupille (I adore you, eyes) | G. F. Handel

from *Giulio Cesare*

libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym

Set in Act II, scene I, sung by Cleopatra in disguise, who is seeking to seduce Cesare (Caesar) in the Palace of the Goddess of Virtue. This Italian Baroque aria, marked largo, contains strong rhythms and challenging vocal intervals, emphasizing Cleopatra's strength and passion.

Written in 1677 in Venice, the music boldly presents Handel's Italian compositional style. Though Handel was a German-born composer and lived most of his life in England, his musical style was more Italian, which he acquired in his early adulthood.

Handel contributed to every musical genre in his time, including opera, oratorio, chamber and church music. He was most well known for his oratorios and orchestral works. Early in his career, Handel composed mainly operas, moving on to larger vocal works and oratorio later in life. Although Handel was a young man when he composed his operas, they were some of the finest of their time. Handel's compositional process is clearly shown in preserved scores dated back to 1707. He started by quickly writing everything down in an order that flowed, and then went back to fill in recitatives and orchestration.

An die Musik (To Music) | Franz Schubert

Am See (By the Lake)

Franz Schubert is best known for his over 600 secular works, mostly songs of Lieder, and is one of the most performed composers of all time. Although Schubert was admired during his lifetime, his true fame began after his death and his legacy continues today. In the following Schubert songs, the piano plays a very active part in supporting the vocal line, displaying the true beauty of music in *An die Musik* and imitating nature in *Am See*.

An die Musik, poem by Franz von Schober, is in essence, a hymn to the art of music, with a strong bass line and repeated triads in the piano. The vocal line in this piece is meant to take you away with its subtle beauty.

Am See is another piece written with the intention of painting beautiful sounds. The poem, by Franz von Bruchmann, depicts stars shimmering and their glow falling upon the lake. Schubert brilliantly text paints throughout the piece, making the voice and piano sound as if they are playing on the words.

Die Spröde (The Coy Shepherdess) | Hugo Wolf

Die Bekehrte (The Repentant Shepherdess)

Hugo Wolf referred to his songs as “poems for voice and piano,” which shows his estimation of the importance of the marriage of the text and music. Wolf was a self-taught musician and composer who impressively composed approximately 250 songs in a time span of 5 years.

Two of these songs, *Die Spröde* and *Die Bekehrte* are often paired together for performance. *Die Spröde* tells the story of a carefree young shepherdess walking through the fields singing “so la la!” Three suitors offer her items from lambskins to ribbons, and even their heart. She scorns them all and continues on her way.

Die Bekehrte is quite the opposite, describing a young shepherdess being seduced by a young man, Damon, playing the flute. The shepherdess becomes so entranced by Damon’s playing that her piece of mind has vanished and the sound of “so la la” is all she can fathom.

Beau Soir (Beautiful Night) | Claude Debussy

Mandoline (Mandolin)

Nuit d’Etoiles (Night of Stars)

Debussy was a well-rounded musician and composer who was also a music critic active in literary and artistic groups during his time. Debussy was a master of blending accompaniment and text (voice) into an elegant sound.

The following are three of his most well-known songs, *Beau Soir*, *Mandoline*, and *Nuit d’Etoiles*. *Beau Soir* and *Mandoline* are somewhat more obvious in structure; *Beau Soir* sounds like a calm and beautiful night, while *Mandoline* is intended to sound as if the music is imitating a mandolin. *Nuit d’Etoiles*, however, is the most curious of the three. In this song, Debussy’s use of text and piano uniting is impeccably displayed, as the voice “dreams of past loves” while the piano plays whimsical chords and melodies, changing character as the story progresses.

Now sleeps the crimson petal | Roger Quilter

Fair house of joy

Roger Quilter was a very well known and accomplished British composer of the 20th century. Born into a wealthy family in the United Kingdom, he was in social circles with poets, painters, and philanthropists. Quilter’s songs are known for their ease and beauty of melody. He focused on text and melody, so

much so that he took his time perfecting every note in each of his compositions to assure himself that they fit the poetry seamlessly. *Now sleeps the crimson petal* is one of Quilter's best-known songs.

The piano begins playing a charming melody and continues embellishing the vocal line for much of the piece. *Fair house of joy*, another popular piece, is from the *Seven Elizabethan Lyrics*, a very successful song collection of Quilter's. This romantic melody exemplifies Quilter's sensitivity to text. The entire piece builds up to the last phrase "And fall before thee" for a dramatic and effective ending.

Steal me, sweet thief | Gian Carlo Menotti

from *The Old Maid and the Thief*

The Old Maid and the Thief is a one-act opera about an old maid, Miss Todd, taking in a beggar, Bob, because she is so desperate for male attention. In this scene, Miss Todd's maid, Laetitia, is daydreaming about Bob while doing her daily chores. "What a curse for a woman is a timid man." Laetitia begins by displaying emotions of irritability, disappointment, and misery. As she continues her chores and daydreaming, she sings, *Steal me, sweet thief*. From this point on, Laetitia is completely overcome with the desire for Bob to take her away before it is too late and she loses her youth.

This was Menotti's first opera using an English libretto. Menotti wrote two full operas by the time he was 13 years old. Menotti's success brought his works to the Metropolitan Opera and also led to a commission from NBC for a radio opera.

biography

Shannan O'Dowd is originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and moved to Georgia in 2001. She is currently a senior at Kennesaw State University, majoring in Choral Music Education, where she studies voice with Jana Young. She has served as a staff singer at Roswell Presbyterian Church and worked in the music department at 12 Stone Church in Buford, Georgia. Shannan's professional affiliations include NAfME and ACDA. Most recently, Shannan has been a member of Coro Vocati, a professional choir in Atlanta, for 3 seasons.

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Stephen W. Plate, DMA
Director, School of Music
Kennesaw State University

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