CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

GRADUATE RECITAL IN VOICE

An abstract submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Music in Performance

by

Marco Antonio Rodriguez Jr.

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California State University, Northridge
ABSTRACT

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Master of Music, Performance

The music for this recital gives a broad representation of styles present in art song from the 18th to the 20th century. The repertoire covers a wide array of passions including rage, love, quiet longing, nature, and playful fables. The composers chosen to represent this broad spectrum are as diverse the passions diversifying the theme of each piece. George Frideric Handel, Robert Schumann, Ernest Chausson, and Manuel de Falla represent diverse ideas, cultures, styles, that encompass the diversity of the music of the time. This recital was a small attempt at touring through vast landscape of music through time. Although this repertoire is only a tiny fraction of the grand scope of music of the time, the goal was to introduce just a preview of what can be seen.

The opening aria comes from the opera Tamerlano written by George Frideric Handel in 1719. Handel was a prolific Baroque composer who uses these two arias as a means of reflecting two extreme passions often connected with opera: rage and lust. In this aria Tamerlano, a powerful ruler has fallen in love Asteria, the daughter of Bajazet. Knowing his impending guilt and humiliation for his daughter, Bajazet decides to kill
himself by taking poison. He reveals this fact to Tamerlano who is unimpressed. Upon noticing that Asteria heard the news as well, Bajazet attempts to comfort her with soothing words in the lament “Figlia Mia” daughter of mine. The modal mixture working from a minor key to the major shows the struggle of Bajazet making an attempt of coming to terms with his decision as well as comforting his daughter. This is especially evident in the repeat of the B section where the modulation tonacizes B.

Going back a bit in the opera, before Bajazet takes the poison, he sings his rage aria “Empio per farti guerra” (Impious One To Make War On You) where he vows to come back as a ghost and take revenge on his oppressor. The fast running vocal lines reflect the fast moving heartbeat as well as increasingly uncontrollable rage felt within. The constant tonal shifting from major to minor while also including modal mixture gives evidence of Bajazet slowly losing control of himself before taking his poison.

In contrast to the fiery Italian passions, Ernest Chausson presents the French characteristics of a quiet longing with just a subtle hint of unrequited love. The pieces in this set come from 7 Melodies, Op. 2 written by Ernest Chausson in 1879-80 As a student of Jules Massenet, a French writer who was well versed in the style of the Melodie, which uses exotic tonal modalities and altered scale degrees to conjure of a dislocated elevated mood. “Hébé” is composed in the phrygian mode to evoke the elevated lyric melody present in that style. The images conjured up through the text emote an exoticism of royalty enjoying pleasures filled to the brim. “Les Papillon’ (The Butterflies) describes the beauty of freedom as represented in a butterfly in flight. The flapping of the wings through the fluttering of the piano part gives a good visual of the butterfly movement. The marrying of the voice and piano part end gracefully when the butterfly departs from
the poet up into the sky as represented in the ascending piano flutter. "Le Charm" the charm represents an extreme simplicity of an unrequited love. The story unfolds of someone who is not sure about their love. The love is confirmed when a tear is seen. The continuing motive of a downward moving melody conveys that of a moving tear till the tear falls to the ground on the last note.

Unlike the French Melodie, the German style of Robert Schumann embraces the present and stark realities so deeply he creates a number of similes relating the disturbance of quiet longing with the beauty of nature. Schumann composed so many song cycles in the year of 1840 that it became known as his liederkreis (Year of Lieder). Included among these cycles were Liederkreis and Myrthen. Liederkreis is a cycle of 12 songs from poetry by Joseph Eichendorff, while Myrthen consists of 25 songs. Schumann wrote most of these pieces in dedication to his long time sweet heart Clara Schumann. Being that Robert and Clara were so far apart in age, their relationship was forbidden. This is the primary reason it is perceived that these cycled had an overarching theme of longing. Myrtles, for example, were used as bridal wreaths at this time. These two cycles explore loneliness, devotion, love and longing. These songs use a great deal of imagery and simile especially with regards to the beauty of women and the beauty of nature. The imagery reflected in the piano part changes as the ideas develop within the same phrases. The marrying of the artistically simple vocal line mixed with the imagery of the piano creates a complex dance between the text and the music. Set by themselves neither the melodies, nor the accompaniments make sense, but together create a story like only Schumann can create.
The Spanish have a more playful manner of giving lessons through song as represented in Siete Canciones Populares Espanoles (Seven Popular Spanish Songs), written by Manuel de Falla. This is one of the most well-known Spanish cycles for classical singers today. He finished this cycle shortly after World War I had begun while he was living in France. It was during this time that he met great impressionist composers of the time such as Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy.

The text of “El pano moruno” (The Moorish Cloth), is in the style of Spanish poetry called Arte Menor or Quebrado. This style consists of two lines with eight syllables each. Most of the songs in this cycle are presented this way. “Seguidilla Murciana” is very fiery piece written in the style of improvised oral poetry. This style was traditionally performed by dueling poets who would improvise insults toward each other in a most poetic manner. The text reflects this kind of battle going on. “Asturiana” reflect the type of sorrow that has become more of a numbness. The steady quarter notes seem to reflect the slow dripping of water. The climax of each phrase in the vocal line lands on a dissonant note with the piano reflecting seeming to rise to a crescendo only to be misplaced by a dissonance. A “Jota” is a dance traditionally done by Arabs. The dance is usually in a fast 3/8 time. De Falla takes this opportunity to set up a dancelike atmosphere with the piano introduction. The “Nana” is a traditional Spanish lullaby that varies with each region. This Nana in particular was the one De Falla’s own mother would sing to him. The displacement of the beat seems to hint that this melody doesn’t really have a meter or time. It is more of a melody to be sung at any time and designed to continue forever, or until the child is asleep. “Cancion” (Song) seems to be one of the most whimsical of the pieces. It ends each phrase with a seemingly whiny “madre!”
("mother!") “Polo” (Pole) is the most spirited in style. It puts great use of the Andalusian melisma to emphasize the intensity of the words. Flamenco dance is traditionally accompanied to pieces like this that especially feature this rapid moving vocal line.
California State University, Northridge
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media and Communication
Department of Music

Presents

Marco Rodriguez
Tenor

In his Master of Music Recital
A student of Dr. Sannerud

Carol Roberts, Accompanist

Recital Hall CY 158
Saturday, December 7, 2013
7:30 P.M.

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in Vocal Arts Performance
Master Recital

Handel - Tamerlano (1685-1759)

1. Figlia Mia
2. Empio per farti Guerra

Schumann (1810-1856)

1. Der Nussbaum
2. Du Bist wie eine Blume
3. Mondnacht
4. Frühlingsnacht
5. Widmung

Chausson (1855-1899)

1. Hebe
2. Le Charme
3. Les Papillons

Please refrain from clapping until the end of each set. Thank you

Music is the movement of sound to reach the soul for the education of its virtue.
Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Siete canciones populares Españoles

1. El Pano Moruno
2. Seguidilla Murciana
3. Asturiana
4. Jota
5. Nana
6. Canción
7. Polo

Volunteers

Usher
Reyes Manuel Felix Jr.

The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.

William Shakespeare
Tamerlano - Handel

Figlia Mia - daughter mine

My Daughter, don’t weep, no.
Let your tears come forth
When, dead, I cannot see them.
My daughter, don’t weep, no.

Empio per farti guerra

Impious one, to make war on you
Form the kingdom of the Underworld
My shade will return
And perhaps the wrath of the gods will be awaken
By the sound of my disdain
Impious one, etc.
Schumann

Der Nussbaum - The Walnut Tree

Green before the house a walnut stands, spreading, fragrant, airy, its leafy branches.
Many lovely blossoms it bears; gentle winds visit them with loving embrace.
Paired together, they whisper, gracefully inclining delicate heads to kiss.
Whisper of a maiden who night and day pondered, ah, and knew not what.
Whisper – who can understand so soft a song? - of a husband-to-be, of next year.
Then maiden listens, the tree rustles; yearning, hoping, she sinks, smiling, into sleep and dreams.

Du Bist wie eine Blume

You are, to me, a flower
So lovely, pure and fair
I look at you
And melancholy my heart could tear.
I feel the need to lay my hands
In blessing, on your hair
Praying that God may keep you e’er,
So lovely, pure and fair,
Praying that God may keep you e’er,
So lovely, pure and fair.
Schumann - Continued

Mondnacht – Moonlit Night

It was as if the sky
Had silently kissed the earth
So that she, in the blossoms’ radiance,
Must now only dream of him

The breeze passed through the fields;
The grain swayed gently
The woods murmured quietly
The night was so starry clear

And My soul spread
Its wings out widely,
Flew through the silent lands
As if it flew toward home.

Fruhlingsnacht – Spring Night

Over the garden in the air
I heard migrating birds passing,
That means spring is in the air
Below, it has already started to bloom.

I’d like to rejoice, I’d like to weep,
And it seems it couldn’t be true!
Old wonders appear again
Out in the moonlight

And the moon, the stars say it,
And the grove murmurs it in drams,
And the nightingales sing it:
She is your, she is yours!
Schumann - Continued

Widmung
You my soul, you my heart,
You my bliss, o you my pain,
You the world in which I live;
You my heaven, in which I float,
O you my grave, into which
I eternally cast my grief.

You are the rest, you are the peace,
You are the heaven upon me bestowed.
That you love me makes me worthy of you;
your gaze transfigures me;
you raise me lovingly above myself,
my good spirit, my better self

I have the words and sheet music, here is
some, But I am hunting for an old 78 RPM
spoken recording by a male voice.
Anyone know where I might find such a recording?

"Thou Art My Soul, and Thou my heart,
Thou art my Joy
Thou art my world for life adoring,
My heav'n art thou wherein I'm Soaring,
O thou my grave . . . ."
Chausson

Hebe

When Hebe, with her eyes lowered, blushing
and artless

Walked towards their banqueting-table,
the gods, enchanted, would hold out their
empty cups
and the girl would fill them with nectar.

We also, all of us, when youth comes past,
jostle to hold our goblets out.
What wine does the goddess pour?
One we don't know, which exalts and
enraptures.

Immortally graceful, Hebe smiles
and walks away; there's no calling her back.
For a long time still, watching the eternal road,
we follow with tearful gaze the divine cup-
bearer.
Chausson - Continued

Le Charm

When your smile surprised me,
I felt all my being tremble
But what had subdued my spirit
At first I could not know

When your gaze fell upon me.
I felt my soul melt
But what this emotion might be,
At first I could not understand.
What vanquished me forever,
Was a much sadder charm.
And I did not know that I loved you
Until I saw your first tear.
Les Papillons – The Butterflies

The snow-white butterflies
fly in swarms over the sea.
Beautiful white butterflies, when can I
travel the blue path of the air?

Tell me, oh fairest of the fair,
my dancing-girl with the jet-black eyes -
if they were to lend me their wings,
do you know where I would fly?

Not taking one kiss from the roses,
I'd fly across valleys and forests
to alight on your half-closed lips (oh my soul's
chosen flower!) - and there I'd die.
El Paño Moruno - The moorish cloth

On the fine cloth in the store
a stain has fallen;
It sells at a lesser price,
because it has lost its value.
Alas!

Seguidilla Murciana –

Who has a roof
of glass
should not throw stones
to their neighbor's (roof).
Let us be muleteers;
It could be that on the road
we will meet!

For your great inconstancy
I compare you
to a [coin] that runs
from hand to hand;
which finally blurs,
and, believing it false,
no one accepts!
Asturiana - Asturian

To see whether it would console me,
I drew near a green pine,
To see whether it would console me.

Seeing me weep, it wept;
And the pine, being green,
seeing me weep, wept.

Jota -

They say we don't love each other
because they never see us talking
But they only have to ask
both your heart and mine.

Now I bid you farewell
your house and your window too
and even ... your mother
Farewell, my sweetheart
until tomorrow.
Manuel de Falla - Siete canciones populares Españoles - Continued

**Nana**
Go to sleep, Child, sleep,
Sleep, my soul,
Go to sleep, little star
Of the morning.
Lulla-lullaby,
Lulla-lullaby,
Sleep, little star
of the morning

**Canción - Song**

Because your eyes are traitors
I will bury them away;
You don't know what it costs me,
"of that look"
Little girl, to look at them.
"Mother, on the brink!"
"Mother!"

They say that you don't love me any more
But you've already loved me.
Go away, all that was gained,
"of that look"
In exchange for all that which is lost,
"Mother, on the brink!"

"Mother!"
Nana
Go to sleep, Child, sleep,
Sleep, my soul,
Go to sleep, little star
Of the morning.
Lulla-lullaby,
Lulla-lullaby,
Sleep, little star
of the morning

Canción - Song

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But you've already loved me.
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"of that look"
In exchange for all that which is lost,
"Mother, on the brink!"

"Mother!"
Manuel de Falla - Siete canciones populares
Españoles - Continued

**Polo – Pole**

Ay!

I keep an "Ay!"
I keep an "Ay!"
I keep a pain in my breast,
I keep a pain in my breast,
AY!
Which I will not tell anyone!
Cursed be love, cursed;
Cursed be love, cursed;
AY!
And the one that brought me to know it!
AY!
Thank you!!!

Where words fail, music speaks.
Hans Christian Andersen

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