A GRADUATE RECITAL IN

VOICE

By

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

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page ................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ........................................................... iii
Abstract ........................................................................... v
Program ........................................................................... 1
Translations ....................................................................... 3
ABSTRACT

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Master of Music, Performance

Georg Philipp Telemann was born in the German region of Magdeburg in 1681 to a family of devout Lutherans who disapproved of music. Although coming from an unmusical background, Telemann became one of the most popular and prolific composers of his time. In addition to being a virtuosic violinist, flautist, and keyboard player, Telemann wrote music in almost every major genre of the Baroque from church music to opera.

Telemann’s Cantata “Jauchzet dem Herrn” is a six movement solo cantata written probably around the first decade of the eighteenth century while Telemann was Music Director at St. Katharinen in Frankfurt. The composer had great facility in composition during this time (he wrote over 1100 cantatas) and the ease and grace of his style is obvious in “Jauchzet dem Herrn” which is a setting of Psalm 100. Tremendous virtuosity is required of the bass soloist and the trumpeter, who must maneuver through elaborate and expressive melodic lines that are typical Telemann.

Franz Schubert was a highly prolific composer who wrote seven symphonies including the famous “Unfinished Symphony.” Schubert also wrote liturgical music, operas, a large body of chamber and solo piano music, and some 600 Lieder. Schubert was born in 1797 in Vienna, Austria. Schubert was one of fifteen children of which only four lived past infancy. His father was a schoolmaster and was responsible for Schubert’s early musical training. Schubert was later educated as a chorister of the imperial court chapel and later qualified as a schoolteacher, joining his father in the classroom. Although he tolerated this arrangement, he was glad when he was able to receive private lessons in composition from Salieri, who did more for Schubert’s training than any of his other teachers. He spent most of his life largely in Vienna, enjoying the company of friends. While Schubert had a close circle of friends and associates who admired his work, wider appreciation of his music during his lifetime was limited at best. He was never able to secure adequate permanent employment, and for most of his career he relied on the support of friends and family to get by. His final years were clouded by illness, and he died of a syphilitic infection in 1828, leaving much of his work unfinished.

“Schwanengesang” is a set of fourteen songs that was put together by Schubert’s brother a year after the composer’s death. These songs represent some of the last music
that Schubert composed. Although there is no real unifying theme that connects the pieces together into a cycle, the overall mood of the songs are more mature and grittier than that of his earlier works. In this set of poems, many of which are by Heinrich Heine, it is clear that Schubert is truly able to find a vessel to express his deepest fears of growing old and dying. The figure Atlas carries the burden of the world on his shoulders in "Der Atlas." It is possible that Schubert, debilitated by illness, felt the weight of all the work that would be unfinished. In "Der Doppelgänger", the music expresses the loneliness and paranoia that he likely felt on his deathbed. Schubert never lived to see these works performed or make a profit from them. As is often the case with great artists, interest in Schubert's work increased dramatically following his death.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco is probably best known as a composer of guitar music due in part to his long-time collaboration with world-renowned guitarist Andrés Segovia. However, he wrote for a wide range of instruments including voice. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born in Florence, Italy in 1895 to Jewish Parents. Even at an early age he showed musical prowess. By the age of ten he was already a published composer and continued piano and composition studies with some of the finest teachers of the time. In 1938, because of rising anti-Semitism brought on by the Mussolini regime, Castelnuovo-Tedesco found his works banned from public performances and radio. The following year he fled with his family to the United States. They soon settled in Los Angeles where Castelnuovo-Tedesco with the help of Jascha Heifetz landed a contract with MGM as a film composer. It was during his fifteen years with MGM that he became a composition teacher to such notables as André Previn, John Williams, and Henry Mancini, among others.

Published in 1959, “Three Sephardic Songs” is one of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s more obscure works. Although the piece is rarely performed, it shows the deep pride the composer had in his Jewish heritage. Being the decedent of Sephardic Jews himself, Castelnuovo-Tedesco had a strong instinct for the nuances of the Jewish/Spanish sound. Although, at times it seems that a Jewish cantor would be at home with the quick grace notes and eastern melodic phrases, the piece is inherently three love songs. In “Montañas Altas” the lover is lamenting over what he believes is unrequited love. In “Ven y verás” the lover tries to win over his beloved. In “Una Noche” the lover seductively prepares to consummate this love.

Francis Poulenc was born in Paris in 1899. His first lessons were by his mother, who was an amateur pianist. As an outstanding pianist, many of Poulenc’s early compositions are dominated by keyboard writing. Throughout his career, he borrowed from his own compositions as well as those of Mozart and Saint-Saëns. Poulenc composed music in all the major genres of his time, including art song, chamber music, oratorio, opera, ballet music and orchestral music. Poulenc was a member of Les Six, a famous group of young French composers, and he embraced the Dada movement's techniques, creating melodies that would have been appropriate for Parisian music halls. Poulenc was a very close friend of the singer Pierre Bernac for whom he wrote many songs including “Banalités.” Later in his life, the loss of some close friends, coupled with a pilgrimage to the Black Madonna of Rocamadour, led Poulenc to devote himself to the Catholic faith, which was to inspire him for the rest of his life.
Poulenc wrote “Banalités” in October and November of 1940 in Paris and Noizay on poems by Guillaume Apollinaire. It was first performed in December 1940 by Bernac and the composer in Salle Gaveau. “Banalités” is a series of five melodies that do not make up a cycle in the true sense of the word, for they do not relate to one another poetically or musically and vary greatly in character. In “Chanson d’Orkenise” the mood is straightforward and in the style of a popular song of the time. “Hôtel” is as Bernac called it “the laziest song ever written.” The mood is smooth and the harmonies are lush. In “Fagnes de Wollonie” the mood is fast and frantic. In “Voyage à Paris,” the mood takes on a waltz rhythm, conveying a Parisian mood both popular and spiritual. In “Sanglot,” which Bernac called one of Poulenc’s “best lyrical melodies,” the mood is filled with emotion. The melody is thrown to and fro by the accompaniment’s offbeat rhythms. The emotion grows in intensity throughout the piece until the listener is left with nothing but a whisper.

Charles Ives was born in Danbury, Connecticut in 1874. His father George Ives was a U.S. Army bandleader. Some of the earliest musical influences that Ives had include memories of sitting in the Danbury town square and listening to his father's marching band and other bands on other sides of the square playing different music simultaneously. From an early age Ives' father took an open-minded approach to musical theory. As an exercise in bi-tonal and polytonal harmonizations, Ives would be made to sing a song in one key, while his father accompanied in another key. It was from his father that Charles Ives also learned the music of Stephen Foster. By the age of thirteen, Ives was already an accomplished church organist and wrote various hymns and songs for church services. After graduating from Yale, he accepted a position as an actuarial clerk at a life insurance company in New York and later, with his friend, formed his own insurance agency, where he remained until he retired. In his spare time, Ives composed music and worked as an organist. After years of health problems, including heart attacks most likely brought on by stress, he stopped composing altogether. In 1927 he came downstairs with tears in his eyes and said to his wife “nothing sounds right.” Although he would continue to revise some of his earliest compositions, Ives would never again write an original work.

While Charles Ives’s music encompasses many genres, it is in his song repertoire one finds a true sense of his character. The composer’s style can be introspective and reverent as in “Serenity” and “Autumn” and at the same time childlike and playful as in “The “Circus Band” and “Charlie Rutledge.” It is clear that Ives truly valued his early memories because of the reoccurring theme of childhood throughout his music. One can hear the influence that the composer’s father had on him in the bi-tonal passages of “A Circus Band” and the subtleties of Stephen Foster in “Songs my mother taught me.” Ives was one of the first American classical composers of international significance, however his music was largely ignored during his life, and many of his works went unperformed until after his death in 1959.
California State University, Northridge
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication
Department of Music presents

Vincent Matthew Robles
Baritone

In

A Graduate Recital

with
Carol Roberts, pianist

And special guest
Bill Owens, trumpet

Saturday, April 21, 2007
5:00 p.m.
Cypress Recital Hall

In partial fulfillment of the California State University, Northridge requirements
for the degree, Master of Music, Vocal Performance
Program

Cantata: Jauchzet dem Herrn alle Welt

1. Aria: Jauchzet dem Herrn alle Welt
2. Arioso: Dienet dem Herrn mit Freuden
3. Recitativo: Erkennet, dass der Herr Gott ist
4. Aria: Gehet zu seinen Toren ein
5. Aria: Denn der Herr ist Freundlich
6. Aria: Alleluia

Georg Philipp Telemann
(1681-1767)

Selections from Schwanengesang

Der Atlas
Der Doppelgänger
Am Meer

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Three Sephardic Songs

Montañas altas
Ven y verás
Una noche

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco
(1895-1968)

Intermission

Banalités

1. Chanson d'Orkenise
2. Hôtel
3. Fagnes de Wallonie
4. Voyage à Paris
5. Sanglot

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

A Selection of Songs

The Circus Band
Songs my Mother taught me
The Greatest Man
Autumn
Serenity
Charlie Rutlage

Charles Ives
(1874-1954)

Vincent Matthew Robles is a student of Dr. David Sannerud.
Cantata: Jauchzet dem Herrn alle Welt
Text: Psalm 100

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;  
Serve the Lord with Gladness  
and come before his presence with a song.  

Know this: The Lord himself is God;  
He himself has made us, and we are his;  
We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;  
Go into his courts with praise;  
Give thanks to him and call upon his Name.  
For the Lord is good;  
His mercy is everlasting;  
And his faithfulness endures from age to age.  

Alleluia

Three Sephardic Songs  
Poetry: Unknown

1. Montañas altas (High Mountains)
High mountains near the seas  
Carry me to where my love is  
Carry me to where my desired one is  
For with her I have love Oh  
Love me like I love you  
See that I am going to die  
Time comes and goes,  
See that for you I am going to die Oh  
In the street I have already passed by here  
You don't see my shadow  
Crying and suffering  
From where the pain comes Oh

2. Ven y verás (Come and See)
Come and you will see, we'll see  
The love that we two have we will enjoy  
Trees cry for rain and mountains for air  
So my eyes cry for you, dear beloved  
Rain fell and made the street and courtyard wet,  
It ripples out and tells my love that it is from my eyes.  

3. Una noche (One Night)
One night I prepare myself to see your bedroom  
Leave the door open and the candle extinguished  
You love me, I love you;  
Your mother doesn't love us  
Tonight I beg God she'll stay in bed and sleep  
Neither white nor brown am I  
Neither have I anything of value  
For you to boast of me  
And yet into my soul you have entered.
1. Chanson d’Orkenise (Song of Orkenise)
Through the gates of Orkenise
a carter wants to enter.
Through the gates of Orkenise
a tramp wants to leave.
And the sentries of the town,
rush up to the tramp and ask:
“What are you taking out of the town?”
“I’m leaving my whole heart behind.”
And the sentries of the town,
rush up to the carter and ask:
“What are you bringing into the town?”
“My heart: I’m getting married.”
What a lot of hearts in Orkenise!
The sentries laughed and laughed.
Oh tramp, the road is dreary;
Oh carter, love is heady.
The handsome sentries of the town
knitted superbly;
Then the gates of the town
slowly swung shut.

2. Hôtel (Hotel)
My room has the form of a cage.
The sun reaches its arm in through the window.
But I want to smoke and make shapes in the air,
and so I light my cigarette on the sun's fire.
I don't want to work, I want to smoke.

3. Fagnes de Wallonie (Walloon Moorlands)
So much deep sadness
seized my heart on the desolate moors
when I sat down weary among the firs,
unloading
the weight of the kilometres
while the west wind growled.
I had left the pretty woods.
The squirrels stayed there.
My pipe tried to make clouds of smoke in the sky
which stubbornly stayed blue.
I murmured no secret except an enigmatic song
which I confided to the peat bog.
Smelling of honey, the heather
was attracting the bees,
and my aching feet
trod bilberries and whortleberries.
Tenderly she is married

North!
North!
There life twists
in trees that are strong and gnarled.
There life bites bitter death
with greedy teeth,
when the wind howls.

4. Voyage à Paris (Trip to Paris)
Ah, how delightful it is
to leave a dismal place
and head for Paris!
Beautiful Paris,
which one day Love had to create!

5. Sanglots (Sobs)
Human love is ruled by the calm stars.
We know that within us many people breathe
who came from afar and are united behind our brows.
This is the song of that dreamer
who had torn out his heart
and was carrying it in his right hand...
Remember, oh dear pride, all those memories:
the sailors who sang like conquerors,
the chasms of Thule, the tender skies of Ophir,
the accursed sick, the ones who flee their own shadows,
and the joyful return of the happy emigrants.
Blood was flowing from that heart;
and the dreamer went on thinking
of his wound which was delicate ...
You will not break the chain of those causes...
and painful; and he kept saying to us:
which are the effects of other causes.
“My poor heart, my heart which is broken
like the hearts of all men”
Look, here are our hands which life enslaved.
has died of love or so it seems,
has died of love and here it is.
That is the way of all things.
“So tear your hearts out too!”
And nothing will be free until the end of time.
Let us leave everything to the dead,
and let us hide our sobbing.