

Voice Recital

Matthew Ahn, Baritone
Nobuko Oba, Piano

Saturday , December 5 , 2020 - 6:00 p.m
Choral Hall – Sinquefield Music Center

Is Not His Word Like A Fire
from *Elijah*

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809 – 1847)

Non più andrai
from *Le nozze di Figaro*
Come Paride Vezzoso
from *L'elisir d'amore*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756 – 1791)
Gaetano Donizetti
(1797 – 1848)

Abendempfindung
Der Vogelfänger Bin Ich Ja
from *Die Zauberflöte*
Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder
from *An die ferne Geliebte*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756 – 1791)
Ludwig Van Beethoven
(1770 – 1827)

Nuit d'Etoiles
Paysage sentimental
Romance

Claude Debussy
(1862 – 1918)

Now Sleeps The Crimson Petal

Roger Quilter
(1877 – 1953)

Some Enchanted Evening
from *South Pacific*
But Beautiful

Oscar Hammerstein
(1895 – 1960)
Jimmy Van Heusen
(1913 – 1990)
Matthew Ahn
(b. 1999)

Through Thick and Thin

*This recital is presented as a Capstone Project for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music (Voice).
Mr. Ahn is a student of Dr. Steven B. Jepson.*

Program Notes

Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* is one of the esteemed composer's most remarkable works. The oratorio tells the story of the prophet Elijah through the books of 1st Kings and 2nd Kings from the Old Testament. With Julius Schubring (1839 - 1914) providing the libretto, Mendelssohn brings the text of this story to life through his brilliant use of intense orchestral motions accompanying captivating vocal melodies.

Is Not His Word Like A Fire is an aria sung by Elijah, decreeing to the people of Israel that they have ignored the word of God. Elijah's words deliver a warning of consequences for ignoring the word of the lord in an effort to save the people of Israel. This piece holds immense passion and energy, both expressed vocally and emotionally. Because of this reasoning I wanted to start my recital with this piece.

Is Not His Word Like A Fire

Is not His word like a fire,
and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces?
For God is angry with the wicked every day;
and if the wicked turn not,
the Lord will whet His sword;
and He hath bent His bow,
and made it ready.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, one of the most legendary composers of music history, is responsible for bringing the world of fine art to new peaks of greatness throughout the classical era. In his thirty years of composing he wrote over 600 works including 41 symphonies, 22 operas, and 38 concertos. While many other composers wrote in the same genres as him, Mozart was a revolutionary, changing the world of Opera by taking the focus away from the distant divine subjects of previous operas, and towards portrayals of life and subject matter that people of his era would find more relatable.

Le nozze di Figaro is one of Mozart's most famous and highly regarded Operas. Mozart takes the text of librettist Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1838) and utilizes his harmonic and melodic genius to breathe life and immense passion into his story. **Non più andrai** is an aria sung by Figaro, a close friend of the page Cherubino. In Act 1, Cherubino has been caught by Count Almaviva for hiding in Susanna's quarters, a woman whom both are drawn to. As punishment Cherubino is sent away by the Count to serve in the military. Figaro, upon finding this information, teases his dear friend about the trouble he has now found himself in, telling of both the glory of being a soldier as well as the dread and terror that comes with the duty. When I first started taking vocal lessons in high school, my voice teacher gave me mostly Italian arias. Because of this, these arias hold a special place in my heart and I felt they were best suited towards the beginning of my recital, just as these arias were at the beginning of my vocal journey.

Non più andrai

Non più andrai, farfallone amoroso,
Notte e giorno d'intorno girando,
Delle belle turbando il riposo,

You Won't Go Any more

You won't go any more, amorous butterfly,
Fluttering around inside night and day
Disturbing the sleep of beauties,

Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor.

A little Narcissus and Adonis of love.

Non più avrai questi bei pennacchini,
Quel cappello leggiere e galante,
Quella chioma, quell'aria brillante,
Quel vermiglio donnesco color!

You won't have those fine feathers any more,
That light and jaunty hat,
That hair, that shining aspect,
That feminine red color (in your face),

Fra guerrieri, poffar Bacco!
Gran mustacchi, stretto sacco,
Schioppo in spalla, sciabla al fianco,
Collo dritto, muso franco,
Un gran casco, o un gran turbante,
Molto onor, poco contante.

Among soldiers, by Bacchus!
A huge moustache, a little knapsack,
Gun on your back, sword at your side,
Your neck straight, your nose exposed,
A big helmet, or a big turban,
A lot of honour, very little pay.

Ed in vece del fandango
Una marcia per il fango.

And in place of the dance
A march through the mud.

Per montagne, per valloni,
Con le nevi, e i solioni,
Al concerto di tromboni,
Di bombarde, di cannoni,
Che le palle in tutti i tuoni,
All'orecchio fan fischiar.

Over mountains, through valleys,
With snow, and heat-stroke,
To the music of trumpets,
Of bombards, and of cannons,
Which, at every boom,
Will make bullets whistle past your ear.

Cherubino, alla vittoria!
Alla gloria militar!

Cherubino, go to victory!
To military glory!

- Translation by Aaron Green

Gaetano Donizetti is an Italian composer who is best known for leading the creation of the Bel Canto Operatic style. Characteristics of Bel Canto include its emphasis of the voice matching register and tonal quality to the subject matter of text, heavy use of accent and emphasis, gestures

as a tool for enhancing vocal delivery, and *messa di voce*, a singing technique involving the sustaining of a pitch while increasing volume over time followed by softening the note, as the principle utilization for artistic expression. In his lifetime Donizetti was responsible for the composition of nearly 70 operas.

Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* is an opera made in collaboration with librettist Felice Romani (1788 - 1865) which tells the story of Nemorino, a peasant who is deeply in love with a gorgeous landowner named Adina, whom he is saddened by her indifference to him. **Come Paride Vezzoso** is an aria sung by Belcore, a selfish, cocky sergeant who is also interested in Adina. In this piece Belcore declares his adoration for Adina and asks her to take his hand, for he feels the only one who can match his excellence is someone of her beauty. I had the wonderful opportunity to perform this piece for last spring's Staged Arias program. Getting into the character of this piece was an astoundingly enjoyable experience and I desperately wanted to live the role once more in this recital.

Come Paride Vezzoso

Come Paride vezzoso

porse il pomo alla più bella,

mia diletta villanella,

io ti porgo questi fior.

Ma di lui più glorioso,

più di lui felice io sono,

As Charming Paris

As charming Paris

gave the apple to the most beautiful,

my darling rustic girl,

I give you this flower.

But more glorious than he,

I am happier than he,

poiché in premio del mio dono

because as a reward for my gift

ne riporto il tuo bel cor.

I carry off your lovely heart.

Veggio chiaro in quel visino

I see clearly in that little face

ch'io fo breccia nel tuo petto.

that I've reduced you to smithereens.

Non è cosa sorprendente;

It's not anything surprising,

son galante, son sergente;

I am gallant, I'm a sergeant;

non v'ha bella che resista

there is no beauty who can resist

alla vista d'un cimiero;

the sight of military uniform;

cede a Marte iddio guerriero,

to Mars, the god of war,

fin la madre dell'amor.

even the mother of love yielded.

-Translation by Ann Feeney

Abendempfindung is a quiescent composition by the great Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Set to the text of poet Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746 – 1818), this piece tells of a dying man who has made peace with his circumstance. With fear of his mortality now surpassed, the final concern is for the loved ones of this man, whom he wishes to be just as much at peace as he is. Mozart utilizes changes from the major and minor mode to symbolize the difficult emotions that come with one's end as well as the serenity that comes with accepting the inevitable and the rest that follows one's death. This was the first piece I had ever performed as a student of the school of music for the 2017 Fortepiano Recital. I found that nothing would make more sense than to reprise the first piece I have ever performed in the school of music in my final recital at the University of Missouri.

Abendempfindung

Abend ist's, die Sonne ist verschwunden,
Und der Mond strahlt Silberglanz;
So entflieh'n des Lebens schönste Stunden,
Flieh'n vorüber wie im Tanz!

Bald entflieht des Lebens bunte Szene,
Und der Vorhang rollt herab.
Aus ist unser Spiel! Des Freundes Träne
Fließet schon auf unser Grab.

Bald vielleicht mir weht, wie Westwind leise,
Eine stille Ahnung zu –
Schließ' ich dieses Lebens Pilgerreise,
Fliege in das Land der Ruh'.

Werdet ihr dann an meinem Grabe weinen,
Trauernd meine Asche seh'n,
Dann, o Freunde, will ich euch erscheinen
Und will Himmel auf euch weh'n.

Schenk' auch du ein Tränchen mir
Und pflücke mir ein Veilchen auf mein Grab;
Und mit deinem seelenvollen Blicke
Sieh' dann sanft auf mich herab.

Evening Thoughts

It is evening, the sun has vanished,
And the moon sheds its silver light;
So life's sweetest hours speed by,
Flit by as in a dance!

Soon life's bright pageant will be over,
And the curtain will fall.
Our play is ended! Tears wept by a friend
Flow already on our grave.

Soon perhaps, like a gentle zephyr,
A silent presentiment will reach me,
And I shall end this earthly pilgrimage,
Fly to the land of rest.

If you then weep by my grave
And gaze mourning on my ashes,
Then, dear friends, I shall appear to you
Bringing a breath of heaven.

May you too shed a tear for me
And pluck a violet for my grave;
And let your compassionate gaze
Look tenderly down on me.

Weih mir eine Träne, und ach!
Schäme dich nur nicht, sie mir zu weih'n,
Oh, sie wird in meinem Diademe
Dann die schönste Perle sein.

Consecrate a tear to me and ah!
Be not ashamed to do so;
In my diadem it shall become
The fairest pearl of all.

-Translation by Richard Stokes

Die Zauberflöte, or *The Magic Flute*, is considered an operatic masterpiece of Mozart's musical genius. Set to the text of Emanuel Schikaneder (1751 - 1812), the opera tells the tale of Prince Tamino, who has been convinced by the evil Queen of the Night to rescue her daughter Pamina from the high priest Sarastro. Upon learning of Sarastro's ideals, Tamino realizes that it is the Queen of the Night who is the enemy of all that is good, not Sarastro. Tamino, his companion Papageno, and Pamina then face adversity through trials of initiation in order to defeat the Queen and her subjects. **Der Vogelfänger Bin Ich Ja** is a comedic introductory piece of Papageno, who reveals himself to Tamino complaining that despite his prowess and skill in his occupation as a birdcatcher, he is left frustrated in his failed attempts to "catch" a girlfriend or wife. What I love about the piece is its light hearted comedic spirit. Compared to the other pieces of the program I felt that this piece provides great contrast from the tone of the others as well as adding some needed comedic material into an relatively somber section of the recital.

Der Vogelfänger Bin Ich Ja

Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja,
Stets lustig, heissa, hopsassa!
Ich Vogelfänger bin bekannt
Bei alt und jung im ganzen Land.

I Am The Birdcatcher

I am the birdcatcher,
Always bright and merry, tra la!
I the birdcatcher am well known
To young and old throughout the land.

Weiß mit dem Locken umzugehn
Und mich aufs Pfeifen zu verstehn.
Drum kann ich froh und lustig sein,
Denn alle Vögel sind ja mein.

Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja,
Stets lustig, heissa, hopsassa!
Ich Vogelfänger bin bekannt
Bei alt und jung im ganzen Land.
Ein Netz für Mädchen möchte ich,
Ich fing' sie dutzendweis für mich!
Dann sperrte ich sie bei mir ein,
Und alle Mädchen wären mein.

Wenn alle Mädchen wären mein,
So tauschte ich brav Zucker ein:
Die, welche mir am liebsten wär,
Der gäb' ich gleich den Zucker her.
Und küsste sie mich zärtlich dann,
Wär' sie mein Weib und ich ihr Mann.
Sie schlief' an meiner Seite ein,
Ich wiegte wie ein Kind sie ein.

I know how to set traps,
And know how to play my pipes.
That's why I can be happy and merry,
For all these birds belong to me.

I am the birdcatcher,
Always bright and merry, tra la!
I the birdcatcher am well known
To young and old throughout the land.
I'd like a net for catching girls,
I'd catch them by the dozen for me!
Then I'd lock them up in my house,
And all the girls would belong to me.

If all the girls belonged to me,
I'd barter them for sugar,
And give that sugar straightaway
To the one who pleased me most.
And if she were to give me a tender kiss,
She'd be my wife and I her husband.
She'd fall asleep by my side,
I'd cradle her like a child.

-Translation by Richard Stokes

Ludwig Van Beethoven has been immortalized as one of the biggest revolutionaries in the musical world. Through his unique approach to composition, he is the impelling animator of the inception of the Romantic Era. From his unusual choice of keys, his take on variation, as well as veering from the compositional common practice of the Classical Era with his emphasis of the endings of works, he paved the way for the musical evolution of the 19th century.

Beethoven's song cycle *An die derne Geliebte* is set to the text of poet Alois Jeitteles (1794 - 1858). This cycle deals with the death of a loved one and the struggle to cope with the disappearance of one's better half. The final piece of the cycle, **Nimm Sie Hin Denn, Diese Lieder**, gives an insight to the ending of the sufferers journey in finding closure of the death of his beloved, following all the tears and strife, finally there is acceptance and gratitude for the time they had shared. This is one of my favorite pieces out of my university repertoire, performing this piece has always been a pleasure.

Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder

Accept, Then, These Songs

Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder,

Accept, then, these songs

Die ich dir, Geliebte, sang,

I sang for you, beloved;

Singe sie dann abends wieder

Sing them again at evening

Zu der Laute süßem Klang!

To the lute's sweet sound!

Wenn das Dämmerungsrot dann ziehet

As the red light of evening draws

Nach dem stillen blauen See,

Towards the calm blue lake,

Und sein letzter Strahl verglühet

And its last rays fade

Hinter jener Bergeshöh;

Behind those mountain heights;

Und du singst, was ich gesungen,

And you sing what I sang

Was mir aus der vollen Brust

From a full heart

Ohne Kunstgepräng erklungen,

With no display of art,

Nur der Sehnsucht sich bewußt:
Dann vor diesen Liedern weicht
Was geschieden uns so weit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht!

Aware only of longing:
Then, at these songs,
The distance that parted us shall recede,
And a loving heart be reached
By what a loving heart has hallowed!

-Translation by Richard Stokes

Claude Debussy has cemented himself as the face of the musical impressionist movement. Influenced by the works of Frédéric Chopin and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Debussy takes complex harmony with rich extended chords and takes these principles to new dimensions with his unique approach to music theory. With the rise of the popularity of Debussy's music, he paved the way for future musicians to explore the potential of harmonic explorations left mostly untouched by musicians before him. What makes me so drawn to his works is that due to his unconventional harmony in his word painting, his pieces take the listener to ethereal, magical, and unfamiliar places other composers simply do not.

Nuit d'Etoiles, french for "Night of Stars", takes a familiar trope of Romantic Era music, the mourning of the death of a significant other, and brings a refreshing sound to the theme with Debussy's rich harmony as a means of painting a soundscape that takes the listener to far mystical places. Poet Théodore Faullin de Banville (1823 - 1891) describes a nocturnal fantasy world where our main character goes off in his dreams to see his lost love. Using arpeggiations in the upper register of the piano, Debussy paints the night sky for the listener as we follow the singer exploring this melancholic realm. When I began taking lessons with Dr. Jepson asked me to bring up any

pieces I wanted to do, Debussy, being one of my favorite composers, was an obvious choice. I was loaned a book of Debussy's works and so I instantly began to dive into his compositions.

Nuit d'Etoiles

Nuit d'étoiles,
Sous tes voiles,
Sous ta brise et tes parfums,
Triste lyre
Qui soupire,
Je rêve aux amours défunts.

La sereine mélancolie
Vient éclore au fond de mon cœur,
Et j'entends l'âme de ma mie
Tressaillir dans le bois rêveur.

Nuit d'étoiles ...

Je revois à notre fontaine
Tes regards bleus comme les cieux;
Cette rose, c'est ton haleine,
Et ces étoiles sont tes yeux.
Nuit d'étoiles ...

Night of stars

Night of stars,
Beneath your veils,
beneath your breeze and fragrance,
Sad lyre
That sighs,
I dream of bygone loves.

Serene melancholy
Now blooms deep in my heart,
And I hear the soul of my love
Quiver in the dreaming woods.

Night of stars...

Once more at our fountain I see
Your eyes as blue as the sky;
This rose is your breath
And these stars are your eyes.
Night of stars...

-Translation by Richard Stokes

Paysage sentimental is yet again another glimpse in the love of a man who has lost his significant other. I wanted to do this piece as a continuation of where **Nuit d’Etoiles** left off. The title of the piece translates to “Sentimental Landscape”, a title that certainly fits its subject matter. The poet Paul Bourget (1852 - 1935) delivers a lucid image of winter time, comparing life after the death of a loved one to the cold, quiet wintertime environment devoid of color or vibrancy. Debussy uses twinkling melodic lines and short durations of the higher keys of the piano to paint the picture of the snow falling from the sky as our narrator keeps walking throughout this landscape.

Paysage sentimental

Le ciel d'hiver, si doux, si triste, si dormant,
Où le soleil errait parmi des vapeurs blanches,
Était pareil au doux, au profond sentiment
Qui nous rendait heureux mélancoliquement
Par cette après-midi de rêves sous les branches.

Branches mortes qu'aucun souffle ne remuait,
Branches noires avec quelque feuille fanée,
-- Ah! que mon âme s'est à ton âme donnée
Plus tendrement encor dans ce grand bois muet,
Et dans cette langueur de la mort de l'année !

La mort de tout, sinon de toi que j'aime tant,
Et sinon du bonheur dont mon âme est comblée,
Bonheur qui dort au fond de cette âme isolée,
Mystérieux, paisible et frais comme l'étang

Sentimental Landscape

The winter sky, so sweet, so sad, so slumbrous,
where the sun wandered among pale mists,
was like the sweet, deep feeling
that made us happy in a melancholy way
on that afternoon of kisses under the branches,

dead branches not stirred by any breeze,
black branches with a few withered leaves.
Ah, how your lips were given to my lips
more tenderly still in this great, mute woods
and in this languor of the year's death,

the death of everything except that I love you,
and except for the happiness filling my soul,
happiness that rests deep in this isolated soul,
mysterious, peaceful and cool, like the pond

Qui pâissait au fond de la pâle vallée.

that grew pale at the bottom of the pale valley.

-Translation by Richard Stokes

The text of **Romance** is written by Paul Bourget (1852 - 1935), the same poet as **Paysage sentimentale**. The piece describes the remnants of the lost lover, collected as lilies from the divine garden of her thoughts. As time has passed the winds have blown these lilies away far and wide. I wanted this piece to represent the end of the story told by the previous two pieces which are also composed by Debussy. With what remains being blown away to fly across the earth, there is left a clear sign that peace and rest can finally come after such a long emotional journey. With what remains of the past gone away, there is nowhere to move but forward.

Romance

L'âme évaporée et souffrante,

L'âme douce, l'âme odorante

Des lis divins que j'ai cueillis

Dans le jardin de ta pensée,

Où donc les vents l'ont-ils chassée,

Cette âme adorable des lis?

N'est-il plus un parfum qui reste

De la suavité céleste

Des jours où tu m'enveloppais

D'une vapeur surnaturelle,

Faite d'espoir, d'amour fidèle,

De béatitude et de paix?

Romance

The spent and suffering soul,

The sweet soul, the soul steeped

In the divine lilies I gathered

In the garden of your thoughts,

Where have the winds dispersed it,

This adorable lilies' soul?

Does not a single scent remain

Of the heavenly softness

Of the days when you enclosed me

In a supernatural mist,

Made of hope, of faithful love,

Of bliss and of peace?

-Translated by Richard Stokes

Roger Quilter is an English composer known for his art songs. His songs, despite his German training, were indisputably English, according to his colleagues. As far as his inspirations, many of Quilter's inspirations were poets such as Shakespeare, Shelly, and Herrick.

Now Sleeps The Crimson Petal, set by Quilter to a poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson (1850 - 1892) describes a man with his significant other walking through an enchanted naturalistic landscape. The poem describes the night time with lilies receding back into the depths of the lakes in which they reside, the narrator romantically insists for his lover to recede into his caring comfort just as the lilies rest into the water. This piece means a lot to me as this was my audition piece for admission into the School of Music at the University of Missouri. I felt there could be nothing more fitting than to perform it one last time for my recital as I graduate from this University.

Now Sleeps The Crimson Petal

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font.
The firefly wakens; waken thou with me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake.
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II are one of the most famous duos in musical theater. With Rogers working as the composer and Hammerstein serving as lyricist-dramatist the two became an unstoppable creative force. Throughout the 1940's and 50's they created some of

the most iconic Broadway productions such as *Carousel*, *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *The Sound of Music*.

Some Enchanted Evening hails from their 1949 work *South Pacific*. This play is based on James Michener's 1947 book *Tales of The South Pacific* and tells the story of Emile de Becque, a middle aged French plantation owner residing on a South Pacific island during the second World War. Emile meets an American nurse stationed on the same island named Nellie Forbush, whom he falls in love with. While both are in love with each other, Nellie, due to her conservative Arkansas upbringing, has issues accepting that Emile has mixed race children. The story deals with love, racism, troubling times, and facing adversity in the name of what means the most to you. In the piece **Some Enchanted Evening**, Emile professes his love for Nellie, stating the presence of an unexplainable feeling that they are meant to be together. I am and always have been a sucker for love songs. Being such a big fan of this piece, frequently listening to performances of this from Frank Sinatra, I couldn't help but choose to do this song.

Some Enchanted Evening

Some enchanted evening, you may see a stranger,
You may see a stranger across a crowded room,
And somehow you know, you know even then,
That somehow you'll see here again and again.

Some enchanted evening, someone may be laughing,
You may hear her laughing across a crowded room,
And night after night, as strange as it seems,
The sound of her laughter will sing in your dreams.

Who can explain it, who can tell you why?

Fools give you reasons, wise men never try.

Some enchanted evening, when you find your true love,

When you hear her call you across a crowded room,

Then fly to her side and make her your own,

Or all through your life you may dream all alone.

Once you have found her, never let her go!

Jimmy Van Heusen is an award winning American composer who has written music for several films, television shows, as well as theater. Heusen, born in New York began composing at the young age of 16 and began to make a name for himself. Through his reputation he began working for a number of Tin Pan Alley publishers which led to a boom of success in his career. He would soon find himself becoming a sought after songwriter for films and television. In his career he earned himself an Emmy, as well as four Academy Awards for Best Original Song.

But Beautiful was composed by Heusen in 1947 with lyrics provided by Johnny Burke (1908 - 1964) a frequent collaborator of his. The song was written for the 1947 Paramount Pictures film *Road to Rio*. The song speaks poetically of the process of falling in love. With falling in love there is immense passion but fear, for you will either spend the rest of your life with someone who means the world to you, or your journey will end in heartbreak. **But Beautiful** is about accepting these risks, for with something as meaningful as love, there is no price too high for its pursuit. When I was in high school I found myself captivated by Bill Evans and Tony Bennett's rendition of this work. If I had to pick my favorite jazz pieces, **But Beautiful** is easily a stand out choice for me.

But Beautiful

Love is funny, or it's sad

Or it's quiet, or it's mad

It's a good thing or it's bad

But beautiful

Beautiful to take a chance

And if you fall you fall

And I'm thinking I wouldn't mind at all

Love is tearful, or it's gay

It's a problem or it's play

It's a heartache either way

But beautiful

And I'm thinking if you were mine

I'd never let you go

And that would be but beautiful I know

But beautiful

And I'm thinking if you were mine

I'd never let you go

And that would be but beautiful I know

To end my recital, I wanted it to reflect who I am as a musician. College has been such a meaningful experience to me and the memories I have made are priceless. I think about how fast the years have passed me by, and how I never thought I would make it this far. Early in my years at university, I was dealing with major mental health issues due to the drastic change in my life circumstances. Through this time I was constantly scared, worried, and worn down and it was the people in my life who gave me the love I needed to keep going. This song which I have titled

Through Thick and Thin is a tribute to all of those who have been in my life and have supported me, held me up, and believed in me even when I didn't myself. To everyone in this room, I love you and I am forever grateful that you were in my life.

Through Thick and Thin

Twenty-one years gone by

On the outside, I look fine

My friends all say hi

They all love me, I don't know why

Seems like they knew that I'd need it

They show such love and I can see it

So if there's something that your needing

I'll be right there just wait where your being

I'm so lucky to have you

For believing in me when I didn't

For loving me when I couldn't

For telling me that I shouldn't

give up on myself because you said you wouldn't

And though life just gets so hard

I thank my friends for getting me so far

Clouds and storms couldn't care about rain

When I got them and they got me the same

Twenty-one years gone by

On the inside I could cry

my family came by

They all love me, I don't know why

Dad works so hard and mom does too

Can't believe they put up with what I put them through
Brother please look after our sister
hope to god she knows that I miss her
I'm so lucky to have you
For believing in me when I didn't
For loving me when I couldn't
For telling me that I shouldn't
give up on myself because you said you wouldn't
Called my mom up on the phone
and for one quick second I didn't feel so alone
Talked to my dad up on the line
Hope he's doing good cause he's been for me every time
Brother, it's been a pleasure growing up with you
Sister, words can't express my care
They'd say I'd see
What they see in me
I swear I'll try
I'll try
Lost then, trapped in time
Til you came in my life
Moments collide
Never seen such warmth in this heart of mine
I will always have the utmost gratitude
Because of all of you