

University of Missouri – Columbia
School of Music

Capstone Recital

Anna Yannesssa, voice
Ross Dryer, piano

Hans Bridger Heruth, *piano*

Friday, April 9, 2021
8:30pm

University of Missouri School of Music

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Arts in Music degree.

Anna is a student of Steven Tharp.

Program

“Svegliatevi nel core” HWV 17, *Giulio Cesare*: Act 1
George Frederick Handel
(1685 – 1759)

Nocturne
César Franck
(1822 – 1890)

Fleur desséchée
Pauline Viardot
(1821 – 1910)

“Connais-tu le pays?”, *Mignon*: Act 1
Ambroise Thomas
(1811 – 1896)

Die Mainacht
Vergebliches Ständchen
Johannes Brahms
(1833 – 1897)

Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht

Intermission

Amor
At The Last Lousy Moments of Love
George
William Bolcom
(1938 – present)

Dear Danger
Hans Bridger Heruth
(1997 – present)

Omar Sharif
David Yazbek
(1961 – present)

So Far Away
Carole King
(1942 – present)

The Last Time
Taylor Swift
(1989 – present)

Anna Yannessa, Ross Dryer (voice)

Program Notes

“**Svegliatevi nel core**” appears in the fourth scene of the first act of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare*, in which Sesto, son of Pompeo, vows to avenge his father’s death. *Giulio Cesare* was written in the Baroque Era and is based on events of the Roman Civil War 49-45 BC. At the top of the opera, leader of the Roman army, Cesare, hears that his enemy Pompeo had been viciously executed by the Egyptian King, Tolomeo. It is at this point Sesto arrives with rage and fury at the knowledge of his father’s death. As a thirteen year old, Sesto is forced to navigate his anger and emotions alone, while his mother Cornelia grieves. In the A section of this aria, Sesto rapidly calls upon the furies in his heart to awaken and unleash vengeance upon the traitor. Like in popular format for the Baroque Era and opera seria, the first section is ‘da capo’, which means that this section is performed at the end with added musical ornaments. In contrast, the B section unveils a layer of sorrow and tenderness as Sesto feels his deceased father giving him power and inspiration to seek justice.

Nocturne by César Franck was written in 1884, just six years before Franck’s passing in 1890. This French art song was created in what is known as the peak of Franck’s career, and is still widely performed. Nocturne describes the night in four different characters: the chilly night, the beautiful night, the sacred night, and the great night. At the text’s core, it seems like it is begging, almost flirting with the nighttime to bring the sweet peace of sleep to the performer. At the beginning of the piece, the text illustrates the performer’s discontent and fear of their life by describing life as “black and all-devouring”. In the next verse, the narrator quickly shifts their perspective and approaches the night in a more romantic sense, describing its beauty and asking for its “smile to be placed in their thoughts”. At this point, I believe the narrator is developing a newfound sense of awe and appreciation for the night when they address the night as “sacred”. Although there is newfound appreciation for the night, the narrator still is yearning to be calmed by sleep and for silence to fill their heart. Lastly, the narrator reflects on the grandness of the nighttime and with one last plea asks for their whole being to be taken under nighttime’s wing and given rest.

Fleur desséchée by Pauline Viardot is part of the song cycle, “3 French Melodies”, and is set to poetry by Russian author Alexandre Pushkin, and translated to French by Louis Pompey. Viardot was born into a highly musical family, and was fluent in four languages by the time she was six years old. Outside of composition, Viardot was a gifted mezzo-soprano and played the role of Orpheus in Gluck’s *Orphée et Eurydice* in Paris in 1859. Specifically, this love poem describes a flower that has been pressed away in a book, having been discovered long after the beauty of the flower had dissipated. The opening tempo is labeled as *Andante mosso* (a brisk walking tempo), as the narrator gets familiar with the forgotten flower, and moves rapidly into *Animato* tempo, where the singer relays their emotions freely in an upward melody as the piano plays continuous chords. The melody at the start of the song comes back for the A1 section at the end of the piece, however the text has changed. In general, the singer expresses a certain curiosity, empathy and passion for this flower they have just discovered, and daydream about questions pertaining to the previous life of the flower.

“Connais-tu le pays?” appears in the first act of *Mignon* by Ambroise Thomas, sung by a mezzo-soprano playing the role of Mignon. *Mignon* was premiered on November 17th, 1866 at the Opera-Comique in Paris, France. The first act begins with Lothario, a minstrel, wandering into a small German tavern to watch the gypsies dance as he drinks. In another sector of the tavern, a gypsy named Jarno orders Mignon to dance. When she refuses his demands, Jarno threatens to beat her with a stick, but Lothario and Wilhelm Meister step in and save her. Wilhelm and Mignon become fast friends, and shortly thereafter, Mignon opens up and tells him that she was captured by gypsies as a little girl. At this point Mignon has started to fall in love with Wilhelm, so when Lothario invites her to travel with him, she passionately declines with **“Connais-tu le pays?”**. Truthfully, Mignon wants nothing more than to go to the land of “eternal springtime” but knows that she has been exiled from that place at this moment in time. She continues to dream of the land that will offer her love and freedom, but is fully aware of her reality that she simply cannot go because of her current condition (of love and of capture).

Die Mainacht was originally a poem by Ludwig Heinrich Christoph Holty written in the second half of the 18th century, and was set to music by Johannes Brahms in the second half of the 19th century. The poem is about a man who wanders between bushes at night, totally enveloped in his loneliness as he hears the joyful fluting of doves around him. After this painful reminder, the man chooses to turn away and cry alone in the shadows. The beginning of the piece gives the listener a true sense of wandering and restlessness with the repetition of this 3-eighth note motive. Also, Brahms saves all cadences for the ends of stanzas, challenging the singer to retain a sense of continuity and direction throughout. Brahms also uses harmonic mixture throughout the piece, which can inform the singer to explore new vocal colors as the listener experiences a few key changes. The change in keys and dynamic markings explain the rapid mood changes in the man wandering from bush to bush as he experiences fits of frustration, possibly a little resentment of the joyful pair of doves, sadness, and ultimately loneliness.

Vergebliches Ständchen was an amusing crowd favorite in Brahms’ time and continues to humor audiences to this day. This text is taken from the German collection known as *Deutsche Volkslieder*. *Vergebliches Standchen* (futile serenade) is a comical dialogue between a seemingly entitled man who tries to court a clever, mature woman who is truly several levels above him. The man argues that the only way to show his love to her is to be let in to her home on a cold, winter night. However, the woman has enough experience and dare I say, self-worth, to see past the man’s tomfoolery and turn him down.

Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht is a perfect representation of Brahms’ favor for topics of melancholy and sadness for low voices. This piece was published in 1884 and is set to a poem by Heinrich Heine. *Der Tod das ist die kuhle Nacht* is No.1 from 4 Lieder, Op.96. This poetry describes a man dreaming as nighttime draws near and he hears the faint love song of a nightingale. Some have argued that this song is the “best example of Brahms’ successful marriage of text and music”. Brahms uses some text painting and syncopated rhythms to illustrate the ‘cool night’ and give a soothing effect. This song is one of my favorites to sing because I am free to fully express my low register, and forge purposeful connections between my mid and high registers.

Amor by William Bolcom is part of his first volume of Cabaret Songs written with librettist and close colleague, Arnold Weinstein. Amor is the sixth song in this volume, and walks the listener through a detailed story of a woman disturbing town peace because everyone began falling in love with her. To me, Bolcom's piano accompaniment lays the ground that the singer walks on as they recount their story (in the most dramatic way possible). By this, I mean that Bolcom uses certain motives to emulate sudden mood changes with jolts, rhythmic and volume variations, and styles all within the same piece. One day, I would love to make an album of Bolcom cabaret songs- they are among my favorite English songs to perform.

At The Last Lousy Moments of Love is in the fourth volume of Bolcom's Cabarets Songs, again with text written by Arnold Weinstein. This story is told by a woman who recounts the "last lousy moments of love" with her significant other, and the way he finally tells her that he was no longer in love with her due to several factors and things that were wrong with her (in his opinion, of course). I do not want to give much more information about the story, because I don't want to ruin it before you hear it for yourself! However, the daunting and uneasy piano accompaniment will inform you that the story just keeps getting worse.

George has become my favorite Bolcom song to sing. The singer recounts the legacy of her friend George, a drag queen, who was "the best soprano in (her) part of town". In any good story, there is drama, and such comes in the form of the brutal murder of George in his own home with a knife that he had used to cut an apple pie that he had freshly baked! After briefly shifting moods to illustrate the tragedy of George's death, the singer boldly reclaims George's spirit as she imitates the way he used to perform. With that, his legacy will not be in vain: all shall toast "cheers" to his life.

Dear Danger From Abby Land : Adapting my poem, "Dear Danger", with the amazingly talented composer Hans Bridger Heruth was a truly wonderful artistic experience. I wrote the original poem years ago in an attempt to capture the duality and similarity that is present between danger and love. The idea that danger evolves as we do was an interesting concept to follow. When I first wrote the poem, I was mainly interested in exploring the arc of falling in love, being in love, and, eventually, being hurt by love. I was intrigued by the sudden change from viewing love as something beautiful and pure and wonderful to something that cuts and hurts and ruins that typically occurs when one's heart has been broken. However, during the adaptation process, the focus shifted. Instead of recognizing danger only when one's heart is broken, we decided to observe its ever-present nature when you love someone. That is where, I think, the true beauty of love is: when we choose to love in the face of danger.

The process of adapting this poem was a creative challenge that excited me from beginning to end. As a playwright, I must consider the cadence of dialogue in my pieces for them to feel natural. And I have always considered lyricity important when writing poetry. However, viewing the writing process from a musical perspective was new to me. Matching the musicality of my words with the beautiful music Hans was writing was a brilliant bout of collaborative creation that I hope to enjoy again soon.

From Hans Bridger Heruth: Writing "Dear Danger" was truly a treasured collaborative experience for me as a composer. After some mutual friends put me in touch with the stunningly brilliant poet Abby Land, I knew that I had to set her words to music. She has a special way of

writing that is both inherently lyrical and emotional. Abby sent me many of her poems, but “Dear Danger” leapt off of the page when I read it — and straight onto my staff paper! I instantly heard music in my head while I read her beautifully crafted poetry, and I began writing it down right away!

While it was a pleasure to set Abby’s poetry to music, it was equally as great a pleasure to write a piece for the fabulous Anna Yannessa! I’ve known Anna for quite some time now, and as such, I’ve become very well acquainted with her incredible voice. Anna’s singing is effortlessly stylish and eminently musical — a composer’s dream!

“Dear Danger” is truly a monodrama for voice and piano, which melds musical theatre idioms with the style of contemporary art song in an endeavor to capture the freshness of Abby’s poetry while complimenting the versatility of Anna’s voice. As a composer, this is one of the most rewarding collaborations I’ve had the joy of being a part of, and I hope to set more of Abby’s poetry — and experience more of Anna’s artistry — very, very soon! I thank you all for listening, and I hope you enjoy the premiere of this new piece.

Omar Sharif from *The Band’s Visit* is sung by charismatic Egyptian local, Dina to Tewfiq, a member of the Alexandria Ceremonial Police Orchestra. Tewfiq and his band expected to be greeted in Egypt by a member of a local Arab cultural organization, but no one arrives for them. At this point, the men decide to escort themselves to their destination, so they reluctantly buy their bus tickets to the city, Petah Tikvah. Unfortunately, Haled, the band member sent to buy the tickets, was misunderstood by the ticket clerk due to his strong Egyptian accent and gave him tickets to the wrong city. It is in this small, quiet city that Tewfiq and his band members are taken in by Dina and her sons for the night until they can get on a bus to the right city. That night, everyone makes plans to go out, so Dina offers to show Tewfiq around her town. Tewfiq is reluctant to accept the invitation, but Dina has a way of bringing him out of his shell. The two go to dinner, and they get to talking about the type of music the band plays. Tewfiq explains that they just play traditional Arab music, to which Dina answers with her memories of listening to music on Egyptian radio stations. She recounts listening to Umm Kulthum, and movies starring Omar Sharif. In this moment at dinner, Tewfiq and Dina find common ground over their shared memories, and creates a bond between the two that at first seemed impossible.

So Far Away by Carole King holds a special place in my heart. Growing up, my mom always played her James Taylor and Carole King CDs in the car, and so they unknowingly became a part of my musical upbringing. While driving, my mom would rave over Carole King’s musical genius, and the way her and James Taylor flawlessly collaborated. Songs like “You’ve Got a Friend”, “It’s Too Late”, “I Feel The Earth Move”, and “So Far Away” always connect me back to sunny days driving around as a child with my mom. Carole King writes simply, honestly, and authentically like I’ve never heard before. I chose to sing “So Far Away” because for one: it’s one of my favorites, but two: for four years I’ve gone to school 16 hours away from my family. For this, my family is so far away, and sometimes it gets to me.

The Last Time by Taylor Swift was a fairly last minute addition to the recital, but a necessary one. A few weeks ago, Ross texted me saying he was entering his Taylor Swift phase- he had

begun listening to Taylor Swift, and was specifically enthralled with her “Red” album. Instantly, he was in love with the heart-wrenching duet between Gary Lightbody and Swift titled, “The Last Time”. Over the years, we’ve collaborated on a multitude of pop songs for fun, and it only seemed fitting to collaborate one more time with this sing before both of us graduated and parted ways. It has been one of the greatest blessings of my college experience to know Ross Dryer, to work with him, and grow alongside him. I will forever be grateful for our four years together, and look forward to connecting in music as we both find our footing in our next chapters.

Translations

Handel: Svegliatevi nel core from *Giulio Cesare*

Svegliatevi nel core,
furie d'un'alma offesa,
a far d'un traditor
aspra vendetta.
L'ombra del genitore
accorre a mia difesa,
e dice: a te il rigor,
figlio si aspetta.

Nicola Francesco Haym

Brahms: Die Mainacht

Wann der silberne Mond durch die Gesträuche blinkt,
Und sein schlummerndes Licht über den Rasen streut,
Und die Nachtigall flötet,
Wandl' ich traurig von Busch zu Busch.

Überhüllet vom Laub, girret ein Taubenpaar
Sein Entzücken mir vor; aber ich wende mich,
Suche dunklere Schatten,
Und die einsame Träne rinnt.

Wann, o lächelndes Bild, welches wie Morgenrot
Durch die Seele mir strahlt, find' ich auf Erden dich?
Und die einsame Träne
Bebt mir heißer die Wang' herab.

Ludwig Hölty

Brahms: Vergeblisches Ständchen

Er: Guten Abend, mein Schatz,
Guten Abend, mein Kind!
Ich komm' aus Lieb' zu dir,
Ach, mach' mir auf die Tür,
Mach' mir auf die Tür!

Sie: Mein' Tür ist verschlossen,
Ich lass' dich nicht ein;
Mutter, die rät' mir klug,
Wär'st du herein mit Fug,
Wär's mit mir vorbei!

Er: So kalt ist die Nacht,
So eisig der Wind,
Dass mir das Herz erfriert,
Mein' Lieb' erlöschen wird;
Öffne mir, mein Kind!

Awaken ye in my heart

Furies, awaken ye in my heart,
advocates of an offended soul,
and unleash your vengeance
upon the traitor.
To my defense,
my father's soul hastens,
and he tells me, "My son,
now is the time for severity."

Translation by Andrew Schneider

May Night

When the silvery moon gleams through the bushes,
And sheds its slumbering light on the grass,
And the nightingale is fluting,
I wander sadly from bush to bush.

Covered by leaves, a pair of doves
Coo to me their ecstasy; but I turn away,
Seek darker shadows,
And the lonely tear flows down.

When, O smiling vision, that shines through my soul
Like the red of dawn, shall I find you here on earth?
And the lonely tear
Quivers more ardently down my cheek.

Translation by Richard Stokes

Useless Serenade

He: Good evening, my sweetheart,
good evening, my child!
I come because I love you;
ah! open up your door to me,
open up your door!

She: My door's locked,
I won't let you in;
mother gave me good advice—
if you were allowed in,
all would be over with me!

He: The night's so cold,
the wind's so icy,
my heart is freezing,
my love will go out;
open up, my child!

Sie: Löschet dein' Lieb';
Lass' sie löschen nur!
Löschet sie immerzu,
Geh' heim zu Bett, zur Ruh'!
Gute Nacht, mein Knab'!

Anonymous

Brahms: Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht

Der Tod das ist die kühle Nacht,
Das Leben ist der schwüle Tag.
Es dunkelt schon, mich schläfert,
Der Tag hat mich müd gemacht.

Über mein Bett erhebt sich ein Baum,
Drin singt die junge Nachtigall;
Sie singt von lauter Liebe,
Ich hör es sogar im Traum.

Heinrich Heine

Franck: Nocturne

O fraîche nuit, nuit transparente,
Mystère sans obscurité,
La vie est noire et dévorante
O fraîche nuit, nuit transparente,
Donne-moi ta placidité.

O belle nuit, nuit étoilée,
Vers moi tes regards sont baissés,
Éclaire mon âme troublée,
O belle nuit, nuit étoilée,
Mets ton sourire en mes pensers.

O sainte nuit, nuit taciturne,
Pleine de paix et de douceur,
Mon cœur bouillonne comme une urne,
O sainte nuit, nuit taciturne,
Fais le silence dans mon cœur.

O grande nuit, nuit solennelle,
En qui tout est délicieux,
Prends mon être entier sous ton aile,
O grande nuit, nuit solennelle,
Verse le sommeil en mes yeux.

Louis de Fourcaud

She: If your love goes out,
then let it go out!
If it keeps going out,
then go home to bed and go to sleep!
Goodnight, my lad!

Translation by Richard Stokes

Death is the Cool Night

Death is the cool night
Life is the sultry day.
Already it grows dark, I am weary,
The day has tired me.

Over my bed looms a tree,
Within it sings the young nightingale:
She sings only of love,
I hear her, even in my dreams.

Translation by Steven Tharp

Nocturne

O fresh night, transparent night,
mystery without darkness,
life is black and all-devouring
o fresh night, transparent night,
give to me your peace.

O beautiful night, starry night,
towards me your gazes are lowered,
throw light on my troubled soul
o beautiful night, starry night,
place your smile in my thoughts.

O sacred night, taciturn night,
full of peace and gentleness,
my heart is frothing like an cauldron,
o holy sacred, taciturn night,
make silence within my heart.

O great night, solemn night,
in which all is delicious,
take my whole being under your wing,
o great night, solemn night,
pour sleep into my eyes.

© translated by Christopher Goldsack

Viardot: Fleur desséchée

Dans ce vieux livre l'on t'oublie,
Fleur sans parfum et sans couleur,
Mais une étrange rêverie,
Quand je te vois, emplis mon cœur.

Quel jour, quel lieu te virent naître?
Quel fut ton sort? qui t'arracha?
Qui sait? Je les connus peut-être,
Ceux dont l'amour te conserva!

Rappelais-tu, rose flétrie,
La première heure ou les adieux?
Les entretiens dans la prairie
Ou dans le bois silencieux?

Vit-il encor? existe-t-elle?
À quels rameaux flottent leurs nids!
Ou comme toi, qui fus si belle,
Leurs fronts charmants sont-ils flétris?
Louis Pomey, after Pushkin

Thomas: Connais-tu le pays? from *Mignon*

Connais-tu le pays où fleurit l'oranger?
Le pays des fruits d'or et des roses vermeilles,
Où la brise est plus douce et l'oiseau plus léger,
Où dans toute saison butinent les abeilles,
Où rayonne et sourit, comme un bienfait de Dieu,
Un éternel printemps sous un ciel toujours bleu!
Hélas! Que ne puis-je te suivre
Vers ce rivage heureux d'où le sort m'exila!
C'est là ! c'est là que je voudrais vivre,
Aimer, aimer et mourir!

Connais-tu la maison où l'on m'attend là -bas?
La salle aux lambris d'or, où des hommes de marbre
M'appellent dans la nuit en me tendant les bras?
Et la cour où l'on danse à l'ombre d'un grand arbre?
Et le lac transparent où glissent sur les eaux
Mille bateaux légers parés à des oiseaux!
Hélas! Que ne puis-je te suivre
Vers ce pays lointain d'où le sort m'exila!
C'est là ! c'est là que je voudrais vivre,
Aimer, aimer et mourir!

Jules Barbier et Michel Carré, after Goethe

Withered Flower

A flower, dried up and withered,
I find, forgotten within a book,
And suddenly with curious thoughts
My mind begins to fill.

Where did it blossom? When? In which spring?
Did it flower for a long time, and who plucked it?
A strange or a familiar hand?
And why was it put here?

Was it a souvenir of a tender meeting,
Or of a cruel parting,
Or of solitary wandering
In the quiet fields, or the shadow of the forest?

And lives yet "he", or "she"?
And where is their abode now?
Or have they withered already
Like this mysterious flower?
Translation by Sergey Rybin

Do you know the land?

Do you know the land where the orange tree blooms?
The country of golden fruits and marvelous roses,
Where the breeze is softer and birds lighter,
Where bees gather pollen in every season,
And where shines and smiles, like a gift from God,
An eternal springtime under an ever-blue sky!
Alas! but I cannot follow you
To that happy shore from which fate has exiled me!
There! It is there that I should like to live,
To love, to love, and to die!

Do you know the house there where I am awaited?
The gold-panelled room where men made of marble
Call to me at night, reaching their arms out to me?
And the courtyard where people dance in the shadow
of a great tree?
And the lake upon whose limpid waters
A thousand light boats glide like birds?
Alas! but I cannot follow you
To that distant land from which fate has exiled me!
There! It is there that I should like to live,
To love, to love, and to die!

Translation by Laura Nagle