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2023-24 Season



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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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Doctoral Recital

Matthew Sebald, collaborative piano

With:

Adam Wells, baritone

Alice del Simone, soprano

Gabrielle Razafinjatovo, mezzo soprano

Ben Boskoff, tenor

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023

S102 Chamber Hall

Program

Vier Gesänge Op. 8

Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871-1942)

- I. Turmwächterlied
- II. Und hat der Tag all seine Qual
- III. Mit Trommeln und Pfeifen
- IV. Tod in Aehren

Adam Wells, baritone

Trois fables de la Fontaine

André Caplet (1878-1925)

- I. Le Corbeau et le Renard
- II. La Cigale et la Fourmi
- III. Le Loup et l'Agneau

Alice del Simone, soprano

—Intermission—

Vier Lieder des Abschieds Op. 14

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957)

- I. Sterbelied
- II. Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen
- III. Mond, so gehst du wieder auf
- IV. Gefasster Abschied

Gabrielle Razafinjatovo, mezzo soprano

Five Songs

Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)

- I. The Eternal Prisoner
- II. The Idle Gift
- III. The Longest Wait
- IV. My Ghost
- V. The Swing

Ben Boskoff, tenor

Program notes

Alexander Zemlinsky is probably most well known as the teacher of Erich von Korngold, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, as well as his relationship with Alma Mahler. But his own compositions display a unique sense of harmony and dissonance. *Vier Gesänge Op. 8* is an early composition that follows a soldier throughout his life, up until the end when the emotion verges on hopelessness. Zemlinsky utilizes the rich warmth of the baritone voice to portray this man wearied by his struggles.

André Caplet was a contemporary of Debussy, Ravel, and a young Poulenc. Known for orchestrating many of Debussy's works, Caplet's songs emphasize the multiple colors attainable at the piano much like those of a large ensemble. *Trois fables de la Fontaine* is a set of animal songs; each song contains a moral that is presented through the animal kingdom. The singer is challenged to portray

each animal through Caplet's detailed instructions, while the pianist helps to exaggerate the emotions and eccentricities of each character.

Erich von Korngold is best remembered for his film music, easily suited for the sweep of a full orchestra. But his art songs often imitate this style of writing. *Vier Lieder des Abschieds* Op. 14 is an excellent example of Korngold's post-Romantic writing, with a creative blend of sweeping melody lines and chromatic harmonies. Each song takes the listener on a journey of love and pain.

Gian Carlo Menotti is often recognized for his contributions to the world of opera. However, his art songs bring to light the seemingly simple way his music portrays the complexities of life. His *Five Songs* for voice and piano demonstrate this well, each speaking to a different matter or question in an abstract manner. Each musical and textual idea is presented by both singer and pianist with little depth of emotion. Yet it is this nearly apathetic approach that makes the songs charming.

Vier Gesänge Op. 8

Alexander Zemlinsky

Poet: Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847-1885)

“Turmwächterlied”

Nacht ist es jetzt,
Und das Gestirn, das Gott gesetzt
Als Grenze (eh die Zeit noch war)
Zwischen des Lichtes klarem See
Und der Finsternisse Meer,
Die Sonne wich von ihrem Ort -
Doch bald erstrahlt sie wieder,
So hoffen wir in Demut.

Ihr Leut' in Burg und Feste,
Ihr, die ihr auf den Straßen ziehet,
Und ihr auf salzigem Meer,
Ihr alle solltet beten,
Eh des Tages Ringen
Oberhand gewinnt.
Und wendet die Gedanken
Ab von Haus und Heim
Und laßt sie aus den Herzen
Ziehen himmelwärts.
Denn der Herr ist gut und barmherzig
Jetzt und ewiglich.

Herr, nun kommen sie alle,
Gut und Böse,
Sieche und Heile,
Mit Ruf und Rede,
Seufzend im heiligen
Zeichen des Kreuzes.
Höre sie alle in deiner Gnade,
Gewähre ihnen nach deinem Willen.

Laß sie christlich beten.

Four Songs Op. 8

Translations © Emily Ezust

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“The Tower Watchman’s Song”

It is night now,
And there is the star that God has set
As a boundary (before time yet existed)
Between the clear sea of light
And the ocean of darkness;
The sun has moved away from its place –
But soon it will shine again,
So we humbly hope.

You people in castles and strongholds,
You who move about the streets,
And you on the salty ocean –
You should all pray
Before the struggle of the day
Wins the upper hand.
And turn your thoughts
From house and home
And let them from your hearts
Fly heavenwards.
For the Lord is good and merciful
Now and forevermore.

Lord, now they are all coming -
The good and the bad,
The ill and the healthy,
With calls and speech,
Sighing at the sacred
Sign of the cross.
Listen to them all in your grace,
Grant them their wishes according to your
will.
Grant them Christian prayer.

“Und hat der Tag all seine Qual”

Und hat der Tag all seine Qual
Tautränend ausgeweint,
Dann öffnet Nacht den Himmelssaal
In ewigen Trübsinns stiller Qual.
Und eins und eins
Und zwei und zwei
Zieht fremder Welten Genienchor
Aus dunklem Himmelsgrund hervor,
Und über irdischen Lüsten und Schmerzen,
In Händen hoch die Sternenkerzen,
Schreiten sie langsam über den Himmel hin.
Tieftraurig gehen sie,
Getreu dem Gebot . . .
Verwunderlich wehen,
Von des Weltraums kalten Winden bedroht,
Der Sternenkerzen flackernde Flammen.

“Mit Trommeln und Pfeifen”

Mit Trommeln und Pfeifen
bin ich oft marschiert,
Neben Trommeln und Pfeifen
hab' ich oft präsentiert,
Vor Trommeln und Pfeifen
bin ich oft avanciert
In den Feind, hurra!

Die Trommeln und Pfeifen,
die hör' ich nicht mehr,
Und Trommeln und Pfeifen,
rückten sie her,
Hinter Trommeln und Pfeifen
hinkte zu schwer
Mein Stelzfuß, o weh!

Wenn Trommeln und Pfeifen
mir kämen in Sicht,
Gegen Trommeln und Pfeifen
mein Ohr hielt' ich dicht,
Die Trommeln und Pfeifen ertrüg' ich nicht,
Mir bräche das Herz.

Und Trommeln und Pfeifen,
das war mein Klang,

And Once All the Miseries of the Day

And once all the miseries of the day
Have been wept away in dewy tears,
Then Night opens the hall of Heaven
In the eternal gloom's quiet misery.
And one by one
And two by two
Spirit-choirs of distant worlds
Rise up from the dark floor of the sky,
And over earthly joys and sorrows,
Holding star-candles high in their hands,
They slowly stride across the sky.
Deep in sorrow do they go,
True to their orders;
And with astonishment,
Threatened by the cold winds of the world,
The flickering flames of the star-candles sigh.

“With Drums and Fifes”

With drums and fifes
have often marched,
Beside drums and fifes
I have often presented arms.
Before drums and fifes
I have often advanced
Toward the enemy - hurrah!

The drums and fifes
I hear them no longer,
And if the drums and fifes
Moved closer,
Behind the drums and fifes
Would hobble too heavily
My wooden leg, o woe!

If drums and fifes
Came into my sight,
Against those drums and fifes,
I would stop my ears
For drums and fifes I cannot endure
They would break my heart.

Drums and fifes,
They were my sound

Und Trommeln und Pfeifen, Soldatengesang,
Ihr Trommeln und Pfeifen, mein Leben lang
Hoch Kaiser und Heer!

“Tod in Ähren”

Im Weizenfeld, in Korn und Mohn,
Liegt ein Soldat, unaufgefunden,
Zwei Tage schon, zwei Nächte schon,
Mit schweren Wunden, unverbunden.

Durstüberquält und fieberwild,
Im Todeskampf [den Kopf erhoben.
Ein letzter Traum, ein letztes Bild,
Sein brechend Auge schlägt nach oben.

Die Sense rauscht im Ährenfeld,
Er sieht sein Dorf im Arbeitsfrieden,
Ade, ade, du Heimatwelt -
Und beugt das Haupt und ist verschieden.

Trois fable de la Fontaine

André Caplet

Poet: Jean de la Fontaine (1621-1695)

“Le corbeau et le renard”

Maître Corbeau, sur un arbre perché,
Tenait en son bec un fromage.
Maître Renard, par l'odeur alléché,
Lui tint à peu près ce langage:
Hé! Bonjour, Monsieur du Corbeau.
Que vous êtes joli! Que vous me semblez beau!
Sans mentir, si votre ramage
Se rapporte à votre plumage,
Vous êtes le phénix des hôtes de ces bois.
A ces mots le corbeau ne se sent pas de joie;
Et, pour montrer sa belle voix,
Il ouvre un large bec, laisse tomber sa proie.
Le renard s'en saisit, et dit: Mon bon monsieur,
Apprenez que tout flatteur
Vit aux dépens de celui qui l'écoute:

Drums and fifes, a soldier's song,
You drums and fifes, my whole life long,
Cheer for Emperor and Army!

“Death among the Corn”

In the wheatfield, among corn and poppies,
Lies a soldier, undiscovered
Now for two days already, and two nights;
With heavy wounds, unbound.

Tormented by thirst and wild with fever,
In the throes of death, he lifts his head.
A last dream, a last image,
He rolls his breaking eyes upwards.

The scythe whispers in the cornfield,
He sees his village in peaceful toil,
Adieu, adieu, you world of home -
And bows his head and departs.

Three Fables by Fontaine

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of
A French Song Companion (Oxford
University Press), provided via Oxford
International Song Festival
(www.oxfordsong.org).

“The crow and the fox”

Master Crow, perched on an oak,
Was holding a cheese in his beak.
Master Fox, lured by the scent,
Spoke more or less like this:
'Good day, my dear Sir Crow,
How smart you are! How debonair you are!
In truth, if your song
Be as fine as your plumage,
You are the phoenix of these woods.'
At this, the crow grew wild with glee;
And to display his minstrelsy,
He opens a big beak and drops his booty.
The fox snaps it up, saying: 'My dear sir,
Learn that every flatterer
Depends on an audience to live at ease.

Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute.
Le corbeau, honteux et confus,
Jura, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus.

“La Cigale et la Fourmi”

La cigale, ayant chanté
Tout l’été,
Se trouva fort dépourvue
Quand la bise fut venue.
Pas un seul petit morceau
De mouche ou de vermisseau.
Elle alla crier famine
Chez la fourmi sa voisine,
La priant de lui prêter
Quelque grain pour subsister
Jusqu’à la saison nouvelle.
Je vous paierai, lui dit-elle,
Avant l’août, foi d’animal,
Intérêt et principal.
La fourmi n’est pas prêteuse;
C’est là son moindre défaut.
Que faisiez-vous au temps chaud?
Dit-elle à cette emprunteuse.
Nuit et jour à tout venant
Je chantais, ne vous déplaie.
Vous chantiez? j’en suis fort aise.
Eh bien! dansez maintenant.

“Le loup et l'agneau”

Un agneau se désaltérait
Dans le courant d'une onde pure.
Un loup survint à jeun, qui cherchait aventure,
Et que la faim en ces lieux attirait.
Qui te rend si hardi de troubler mon breuvage?
Dit cet animal plein de rage:
Tu seras châtié de ta témérité.
Sire, répond l'agneau, que Votre Majesté
Ne se mette pas en colère;
Mais plutôt qu'elle considère
Que je me vas désaltérant
Dans le courant,
Plus de vingt pas au-dessous d'elle;
Et que, par conséquent, en aucune façon
Je ne puis troubler sa boisson.

This lesson is doubtless cheap at a cheese.’
The crow, shamefaced and in troubled state,
Vowed to be tricked no more – a little late.

“The Cicada and the Ant”

The cicadas, having sung
All summer long,
Found herself most destitute,
When the North Wind came.
Not a morsel to her name
Of either fly or worm.
She blurted out her tale of want
To her neighbour Mistress Ant,
And begged her for a loan
Of grain to last her
Till the coming spring.
‘I shall pay you’, were her words,
‘On insect oath, before the fall,
Interest and principal.’
Mistress Ant is not a lender—
That’s the last thing to reproach her with!
‘Tell me how you spent the summer?’
Was what she asked this borrower.
‘Night and day, to every comer,
I sang, so please you ma’am.’
‘You sang? I’m overjoyed.
Now off you go and dance!’

“The Wolf and the Lamb”

The mightiest are always right,
Which we shall now set out to prove.
A lamb was slaking its thirst
In the waters of a limpid stream
A famished wolf arrived to try his luck,
Drawn by hunger to this place.
‘Who made you so bold to foul my drink?’
Said this animal full of rage:
‘You shall be punished for such cheek.’
‘Sir,’ said the lamb, ‘so please your Grace,
Do not fly into a rage;
Consider, rather, first,
The stream where I assuage my thirst
Is twenty yards downstream,
Below your place,

Tu la troubles ! reprit cette bête cruelle;
Et je sais que de moi tu médis l'an passé.
Comment l'aurais-je fait, si je n'étais pas né?

Reprit l'agneau : je tette encore ma mère. --
Si ce n'est toi, c'est donc ton frère. --
Je n'en ai point. -- C'est donc quelqu'un des tiens;
Car vous ne m'épargnez guère,
Vous, vos bergers et vos chiens.
On me l'a dit : il faut que je me venge.
Là-dessus, au fond des forêts
Le loup l'emporte, et puis le mange,
Sans autre forme de procès.

It can in no way therefore be the case
That I am fouling your drink.'
'You foul it all the same,' the cruel beast went
on,
'And last year I know that you slandered
me.'
'How can that be, if I wasn't yet born?'
Replied the lamb, 'My mother still suckles
me.'
'If it isn't you, it's your brother then.'
'If it isn't you, it's your brother then.'
'I have no brother.' 'Then some relation:
For you are always plaguing me,
You, your dogs and shepherds too,
They tell me I should wreak revenge.'
Whereupon the world dragged him through
The forest's depths and ate him up
Without further ado.

Vier Lieder Des Abschieds

Erich Wolfgang Korngold

“Sterbelied”

*Poet: Alfred Kerr (1867-1948) and
Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)*

Laß Liebster, wenn ich tot bin,
laß du von Klagen ab.
Statt Rosen und Cypressen
wächst Gras auf meinem Grab.
Ich schlafe still im Zwielflightschein
in schwerer Dämmernis -
Und wenn du willst, gedenke mein
und wenn du willst, vergiß.

Ich fühle nicht den Regen,
ich seh' nicht, ob es tagt,
ich höre nicht die Nachtigall,
die in den Büschen klagt.
Vom Schlaf erweckt mich keiner,
die Erdenwelt verblich.
Vielleicht gedenk ich deiner,
vielleicht vergaß ich dich.

Four Songs of Farewell

“Death Song”

My dearest, when I am dead
Do not lament
Instead of roses and cypress,
Grass shall cover my grave
I shall sleep quietly in the twilight
In the heavy dusk
And if you will, remember mine
And if you will, forget.

I shall not feel the rain,
I shall not see the dawn,
I shall not hear the nightingale,
Lamenting the trees.
No one shall wake me
All the world has vanished
Perhaps I shall remember you,
Perhaps I shall not.

“Dies einne kann”

Poet: Edith Ronsperger (1880-1921)

Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen,
daß nun von mir zu dir kein Weg mehr führe,
daß du vorübergehst an meiner Türe
in ferne, stumme, ungekannte Gassen.

Wär' es mein Wunsch, daß mir dein Bild erleiche,
wie Sonnenglanz, von Nebeln aufgetrunken,
wie einer Landschaft frohes Bild, versunken
im glatten Spiegel abendstillen Teiche?

Der Regen fällt. Die müden Bäume triefen.
Wie welkes Laub verwehn viel Sonnenstunden.
Noch hab' ich in mein Los mich nicht gefunden
und seines Dunkels uferlose Tiefen.

“Mond, so gehst du wieder auf”

Poet: Ernst Lothar (1890-1974)

Mond, so gehst du wieder auf
überm dunklen Tal der ungeweinten Tränen?
Lehr, so lehr mich's doch,
mich nicht nach ihr zu sehnen
blaß zu machen Blutes Lauf,
dies Leid nicht zu erleiden
aus zweier Menschen Scheiden.

Sieh, in Nebel hüllst du dich.
Doch verfinstern kannst du nicht
den Glanz der Bilder,
die mir weher jede Nacht
erweckt und wilder.
Ach! im Tiefsten fühle ich:
das Herz, das sich muß' trennen,
wird ohne Ende brennen.

“Gefasster Abschied”

Poet: Ernst Lothar (1890-1974)

Weine nicht, daß ich jetzt gehe,
heiter lass' dich von mir küssen.
Blüht das Glück nicht aus der Nähe,
fernher wirds dich keuscher grüssen.

“This One Thing”

This one thing my longing can never grasp
That now no path leads me to you
That you walk past my door
Into distant, silent, unknown streets.

Could it be my wish that you fade away
Like the sun engulfed in mist,
Like a landscape's happy reflection,
In the smooth mirror of evening's ponds?

The rain falls, the tired trees droop.
Many hours of sun fade like withered leaves.
I shall not yet come to terms with my fate
And the boundless depths of its darkness.

“Moon, thus you rise once more”

Moon, thus you rise once more
Over the dark valley of unwept tears?
Teach, teach that
Not to yearn for her
To make my blood run pale,
Not to suffer this sorrow
Caused when two souls part

See, you shroud yourself in mist
Yet you cannot darken
The bright images
That the night arouses in me with pain
Wild and fierce.
Ah! I feel in the depths of my being;
The heart that suffered separation
Will burn eternally.

“Farewell”

Do not weep, that I am now going,
Be cheerful and let me kiss you.
If joy does not bloom when we are near,
It will greet you more chastely from afar.

Nimm die Blumen, die ich pflückte,
Monatsrosen rot und Nelken -
laß die Trauer, die dich drückte,
Herzens Blume kann nicht welken.

Lächle nicht mit bitterm Lächeln,
stosse mich nicht stumm zur Seite.
Linde Luft wird bald dich fächeln,
bald ist Liebe dein Geleite!

Gib die Hand mir ohne Zittern,
letztem Kuß gib alle Wonne.
Bang' vor Sturm nicht: aus Gewittern
strahlender geht auf die Sonne...

Schau zuletzt die schöne Linde,
drunter uns kein Aug' erspähte.
Glaub', daß ich dich wiederfinde,
ernten wird, wer Liebe säte!
Weine nicht!...

Five Songs for voice and piano

Gian Carlo Menotti

Text by composer

“The Eternal Prisoner”

How can one age the heart?
What wound, what memory
Will ever teach it wisdom?
Never again, one says;
Then deliberately unlocks the torture chamber
And smiles at the executioner.

“The Idle Gift”

Do not despise the rose
Because its beauty is manifest,
Do not decry the thistle
For its elusive grace.

I love what must be searched
As well as read'ly offered,
If joy or pain accompany the gift.

Take these flowers, that I have plucked,
Red roses and carnations
Shake off the sorrow that oppressed you,
The heart's blossom cannot wither.

Do not smile a bitter smile.
Do not push me aside in silence.
A soft breeze will soon fan you once,
Love will soon escort you!

Give me your hand without trembling,
Your rapture to this last kiss.
Be not afraid of tempest: after storms
The sun rises more resplendently...

So, take one last look at the lovely lime tree
Beneath which no eye ever saw us.
Believe, I shall find you again,
For they who sowed love!
Don't cry!...

“The Longest Wait”

No, it is not love that I desire,
But only an answer to my love;
A kiss of peace that bears no sting,
The final seal to close my days.

Still the silent question burns my lips
And I despair to ever hold
The angelic dialogues that will disclose
The yearned for answer.

I stand alone by stormy seas,
Waiting for and fearing
The aimless rescue of the deliv'ring ship.
Behind me the search is halted
In the dark'ning forest.
All calls and cries are silenced.

Your easy words and kisses
Neither burned nor stung.
You left me at Dawn
On a dreamless bed.

“My Ghost”

Oh yes, I too have a ghost in my home;
But mine is a friendly ghost.
It doesn't frighten me;
Not my cat, nor my dog.

I cannot tell what its sex it
For it wears a dirty sheet
As children do on Halloween.

Like all ghosts
It fancies creaky doors and windy nights.
Sometimes behind my bedroom door
It sounds as if it were dragging heavy chains
Sometimes it sighs.

But once it appears inside my room
It stands there not quite knowing what to do,
And stares at me rather embarrassedly.

Once I asked why it wandered so aimlessly
Between Heaven and Earth.
Well I remember its melancholic answer:
“Earth bores me
But Heaven frightens me.”

A jolly ghost indeed!
However, it never smiles.
After all
Death is a serious thing.

No, I shall not ever tread again
The tortuous path of my mistakes.
Here I stand scanning the sky
Down to the unmarked horizon.

“The Swing”

Up toward the sky
To a hesitant point of stillness
And down again to earth
And up again in ever-fresh delight
To capture short-lived joy
and then again the anxious plunge
into the waiting void.
Don't be apprehensive.
The game holds no surprise.

Have you not always known
It must come to an end?
There soon will be no waiting arms
To push you up again.
The ropes are worn;
The iron rings with rusty screeches mark the
The ever slower and lower swings.

Don't fret. Don't move.
Let it at come to the final stop.
And turn your face away
From the deceptive sky
As patient earth receives your stillness.

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