Sponsored by Cal Poly's Music Department and College of Liberal Arts
Program
Senior Recital
Shaina Levin, lyric soprano
Paul Woodring, piano

Cantata No. 68 ......................... Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Mein gläubiges Herze

Deux Chansons ........................ Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Nuit d’étoiles
Romance

Die Entführung aus dem Serail ........ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Welche Wonne, welche Lust

Villanelle ............................. Eva Dell’acqua (1856-1930)

Paganini ............................. Franz Lehár (1870-1948)
Liebe, du Himmel auf Erden

La rondine ............................. Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
Chi il bel sogno di Doretta

— Intermission —

Zwei Lieder ............................ Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Rastlose Liebe
Seligkeit

Tre Liriche ............................ Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)
Notte
Nebbie
Pioggia

Acht Lieder, Op. 6 ..................... Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)
7. Lockung
3. Madchenlied

Susannah ............................... Carlisle Floyd (b. 1926)
Trees on the Mountain
Mein gläubiges Herze
Mein gläubiges Herze,
Frohlocke, sing, scherze,
Dein Jesus ist da!
Weg Jammer, weg Klagen,
Ich will euch nur sagen:
Dein Jesus ist nah.

My Heart Ever Faithful
My faithful heart,
delight, sing, play,
your Jesus is here!
Away with sorrow, away with lamenting,
I will only say to you:
my Jesus is near.

Nuit d’étoiles
Nuit d’étoiles, sous tes voiles,
sous ta brise et tes parfums,
Triste lyre qui soupire,
je rêve aux amours défunts.

Night of Stars
Night of stars, beneath your veils,
Beneath your breezes and your scents,
A sad lyre that sighs,
I dream of dead loves.

Romance
La sereine mélancolie vient éclore
au fond de mon coeur,
Et j’entends l’âme de ma mie
Tressaillir dans le bois rêveur.

Night of Stars
Night of stars, beneath your veils,
Beneath your breezes and your scents,
A sad lyre that sighs,
I dream of dead loves.

Welche Wonne, welche Lust
Welche Wonne, welche Lust
Regt sich nun in meiner Brust!
Voller Freuden will ich springen,
Ihr die frohe Nachricht bringen;
Und mit lachen und mit Scherzen
Ihrem schwachen, kranken Herzen
Freud und Jubel prophezeihtn.

Oh the Happy, Happy, Day
What bliss, what rapture
now reigns in my breast!
I could jump for joy
as I bring the good news,
and with laugh and jest
prophesy and rejoicing
for her poor despairing heart.
Villanelle
J' ai vu passer l'hirondelle
Dans le ciel pur du matin:
Elle allait, à tire-d'aile,
Vers le pays où l'appelle
Le soleil et le jasmin.
J'ai vu passer l’hirondelle!
J'ai longtemps suivi des yeux
Le vol de la voyageuse...
Depuis, mon âme rêveuse
L’accompagne par les cieux.
Ah! ah! au pays mystérieux!
Et jaurais voulu comme elle
Suivre le même chemin...
J'ai vu passer l’hirondelle, etc.

The Swallow
I saw the swift swallow flying
Down to the southland she goes
Seeking a summer undying
Where the soft breezes are sighing
Mid blooming jasmin and rose
I saw the swift swallow flying
Soon she will vanish from my sight
But in fancy I will follow
And my soul goes with the swallow
Through the heavens in its flight
Ah! ah! to the land of sun and light
But in vain my soul was crying
For the land the swallow knows
I saw the swift flying, etc.

Lieber du Himmel auf Erden
Ich kann es nicht fassen, nicht glauben,
daß grausam mein Traum ist zerstört,
man will dem Geliebten mir rauben,
dem ganz mein Herz gehört!
Das Glück will ich halten, das launenhaft,
das Schicksal gestalten mit eig’ner Kraft,
und ständig ich auch gegen die Welt allein,
er sei mein, er sei mein!

Love, O heaven on earth, may you last forever!
I can’t understand it, I can’t believe
that my dream has been cruelly destroyed.
They want to rob me of the sweetheart
to whom my heart belongs completely.
I mean to hold on to fickle happiness
and shape my destiny as best I can,
and even if I were to face the whole world alone,
he shall be mine!

Chi il bel sogno di Doretta
Chi il bel sogno di Doretta
Poté indovinar?
Il suo mister come mai
Come mai fini

Ahimè! un giorno uno studente
In bocca la baciò
E fu quel bacio
Rivelazione:
Fu la passione!
Folle amore!
Folle ebbrezza!
Chi la sottil carezza
D’un bacio così ardente
Mai ridir potrà?

Dorretta's Beautiful Dream
Who could bring to light
Doretta's glorious dream?
Why has its secret
been disclosed?

Ah! mio soggio!
Ah! mia vita!

Che importa la ricchezza
Se alfine è rifiorita
La felicità!
O sogno d’or
Poter amar così!
Rastlose Liebe
Dem Schnee, dem Regen,
Im Dampf der Klüfte
Durch Nebeldüfte,
Immer zu! Immer zu!
Ohne Rast und Ruh!

Lieber durch Leiden
Möcht ich mich schlagen,
Als so viel Freuden
Des Lebens ertragen.

Alle das Neigen
Von Herzen zu Herzen,
Ach, wie so eigen
Schaffet das Schmerzen!

Wo soll ich fliehen
Wälderwärts ziehen
All in vain!
Krone des Lebens,
Glück ohne Ruh,
Liebe, bist du!

Seligkeit
Freuden sonder Zahl
Blühn im Himmelssaal
Engeln und
Verklärten,
Wie die Väter lehrten.
O da möcht ich sein,
Und mich freun, mich freun!

Jedem lächelt traut
Eine Himmelsbraut;
Harf und Psalter klinget,
Und man tanzt und singet.
O da möcht’ ich sein,
Und mich ewig freun!

Lieber bleib’ ich hier,
Lächelt Laura mir
Einen Blick, der saget,
Daß ich angeklaget.
Seid dann mit ihr,
Bleib’ ich ewig hier!

Restless Love
To the snow, to the rain
To the wind opposed,
In the mist of the ravines
Through the scent of fog,
Always on! Always on!
Without rest and peace!

I would rather through suffering
Fight myself,
Than so many joys
Of life endure.

All the inclining
Of heart to heart,
Ah, how curiously
That creates pain!

Where shall I flee?
To the forest move?
All in vain!
Crown of life,
Happiness without peace,
Love, are you!

Bliss
Joys without number
Bloom in heaven’s hall
Of angels and transfigured beings,
Just as our fathers taught us.
O, there I would like to be
And rejoice forever!

Upon everyone dearly smiles
A heavenly bride;
Harp and psalter resound,
And everyone dances and sings.
O, there I would like to be
And rejoice forever!

But I’d rather remain here
If Laura would smile at me
With one glance that said
I should end my lamenting.
Blissfully then with her,
I would stay here forever!

Notte
Sul giardino fantastico
Profumato di rosa
La carezza de l’ombra
Posa.

Pure ha un pensiero e un
pulito
La quiete suprema,
L’aria come per brivido
Tremata.

Su le fugaci gioie
Che il disinganno infrange
La notte le sue lacrime
Piange.

Nebbie
Soffro, lontan lontano
Le nebbie sonnolente
Salgono dal tacente
Piano.

Alto gracchiando, i corvi,
Fidati all’ ali nere,
Traversan le brughiere
Torvi.

Dell’aere ai morsi crudi
Gli addolorati tronchi
Offron, pregando, i
Brochi nudi.

Come ho freddo! Son sola;
Pel grigio ciel sospinto
Un gemito destinto Vola;

E mi ripete: Vieni;
È buia la vallata.
O triste, o disamata
Vieni! Vieni!

Night
In the fantastic garden
Perfumed with roses
The caress of shadows
descends.

With both thought and
Pulse
The supreme stillness
Shakes the air like a
Shiver.

Does the mournful darkness
Tell a story of death
To the pale gardenias?

Perhaps, because a shower
Of gentle dew falls
Into the half-closed petals.

For rising miseries
And for lost passions,
For mute dreams and
Mute anxieties,

For fleeting joys
Shattered by disillusion,
The night weeps her
Tears.

Fog
I suffer. Far, far away
The sleeping fog
Rises from the quiet plain.

Shrilly, cawing, the crows,
Trusting their black wings,
Traverse the moors, grimly.

To the raw bites of air
The sorrowful tree trunks
Offer, praying, their
Bare branches.

How cold I am! I am alone;
Driven through the gray sky
A groan of the dead soars.

And repeats to me: come;
The valley is dark.
O sad one, o unloved one,
Come! Come!
Pioggia
Piovea: per le finestre spalancate
A quella tregua di ostinati odori
Saliano dal giardin fresche folate
D'erbe risorte e di risorti fiori.

S'acchettava il tumulto dei colori
Sotto il vel delle gocciole implorate;
E intorno ai pioppi ai frassini agli allori
Beveano ingorde le zolle assetate.

Essere pianta, esser foglia, esser stelo
E nell'angoscia dell'ardor (pensavo)
Così largo ristoro aver dal cielo!
Sul davanzal protesa io gli arboscelli,
I fiori, l'erbe guardavo guardavo
E mi battea la pioggia sui capelli.

Rain
It's raining: from the windows, opened wide
To the respite of the persistent fragrance
From the garden, climb the fresh gusts
Of revived grass and flowers.

It calms the tumult of colors
Under its veil of imploring drops;
And around the poplars, the ash trees, the laurels
The thirsty sod drinks greedily.

Oh, to be a plant, to be a leaf, to be a stem
And in the anguish of ardor (I think)
To be restored slowly by the sky like that!
Leaning out from the sill, I watch
The saplings, the flowers, the grass
And the rain beats down on my hair.

Lockung
Komm, komm mit nur einen Schritt!
Hab schon gegessen, Will dich nicht fressen,
Komm, komm mit nur einen Schritt!
Komm, komm mit nur einen Schritt!

Kaum zwei Zehen weit noch zu gehen
Bis zu dem Häuschen,
Komm, mein Mäuschen,
Ei sieh da, da sind wir ja!

Hier in dem Eckchen,
(Pst) nur kein Schreckchen,
Wie glüh'n deine Bäckchen,
Jetzt hilft kein Schrein,
Mein bist du, mein!

Temptation
Come, come along, just a step!
I've already eaten, I won't gobble you up,
come, come along, just a step!
come, come along, one more step!

There is barely two toes' length still to go
to reach the little house,
come, my little mouse,
oh, just look, we're there!

Here in the little comer,
pst (halt), don't be afraid,
how your little cheeks are burning,
now no screaming will help,
you are mine, mine!

Mädchenlied
Ach, wenn es nun die Mutter wüßt,
Wie du so wild mich hast geküßt,
Sie würde beten ohne Ende,
Daß Gott der Herr das Unglück 1wende.

Und wenn das mein Herr Bruder wüßt,
Wie du so wild mich hast geküßt,
Er ertöne wohl mit Windesschnelle
Und schläge dich tot auf der Stelle.

Doch wenn es meine Schwester wüßt,
Wie du so wild mich hast geküßt,
Auch ihr Herz würde in Sehnsucht schlagen
Und Glück und Sünde gerne tragen.

The Maiden's Song
If only my mother knew,
How you wildly you kissed me,
She would pray without end,
That the lord, God, lift up the disaster.

And if only my brother knew,
How wildly you kissed me,
He would run with the speed of wind
And smite you dead on the spot.

But if I told my sister,
How wildly you kissed me,
Her heart would beat with longing,
Happiness, and sin, for such a kiss.
“Mein gläubiges Herze” from Cantata No. 68, by Johann Sebastian Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach was born into a family of renowned professional musicians, so it was no surprise that he followed the same path. During his lifetime, he was a well-respected organist—not many people realized the genius behind his compositions until a revival of interest of his music in the nineteenth century. Bach retained one of his most successful jobs in Leipzig, where he served as the cantor at St. Thomas Church. This job required him to write cantatas for church services on Sundays and additional cantatas for church holidays. Subsequently, he wrote over 200 sacred cantatas.

The aria “Mein gläubiges Herze” (My Heart Ever Faithful) is from Bach’s sacred cantata BWV 68. The aria is a response to the chorale movement, which states that one who is loved by God is free from all sorrow. In response, the aria proclaims “Frohlocke, sing, scherze, Dein Jesus ist da! Weg Jammer, weg Klagen…” (Rejoice, sing, jest. Your Jesus is here! Away with misery, away with lamentation…). This text is set to a dance-like melody and piano accompaniment representing the happiness one feels when loved by Jesus. As noted by Mark Peters, the powerful statement “Mein Jesus ist nah” is introduced by a melody declaimed in eighth notes (in contrast to the regular use of sixteenth notes found in the A section [first notable section in the aria]), making this proclamation stand out in comparison, showing its importance. Bach concludes this aria with a solely instrumental ending, reflecting the overall joyful tone of this aria.

Deux Chansons—“Nuit d’étoiles” and “Romance” by Claude Debussy

Debussy was introduced to the world of music when he began taking piano lessons at the age of 7. By the age of 10 he was enrolled at the Paris Conservatoire, his first and only official form of education, where he spent the next 11 years. Although he was recognized as talented, he was argumentative and experimental in his stylistic choices pertaining to his music, often challenging his teachers. Debussy’s music falls under the style of impressionism, in which his music usually evokes a mood, a feeling, or an atmosphere by creating musical images through harmony, motives, and other musical elements. Many letters written by Debussy explain his struggle to develop his own style, which could better express more personal human emotion. During the years 1880-85, while attending the Conservatoire, he was primarily a composer of song. In those five years he composed nearly 40 songs—he wrote 87 total in his lifetime.

Among these songs was “Nuit d’étoiles,” Debussy’s first song to be published. The year the piece was written is heavily debated. However, most recent research suggests that it was written in 1880 when Debussy switched his focus from piano to composition and started taking composition lessons. The music is set to poetry written by Theodore Banville, one of Debussy’s main literary inspirations at the time. It was said that one would see the 16-year-old Debussy carrying a book of Banville poems under his arm at the Conservatoire. The poem itself was based on a popular waltz, and it was taken full circle when Debussy set Banville’s poetry to music. The text paints a beautiful yet melancholy picture of the remembrance of lost love, expressed by Debussy through music by the use of simple harmonies and melodic flowing vocal lines. He often spoke of a score as if it were a picture. In this case, the melodic contour of the vocal lines paints the text. An example of this word painting is seen through his use of a descending line as well as utilizing the lowest note of the piece in the text “Au fond de mon coeur” (The depths of my heart). As one of Debussy’s earliest songs, many of the characteristics demonstrated in his later works are not utilized in this piece.

Among Debussy’s other literary inspirations was Paul Bourget. In 1883, Debussy discovered Bourget’s collection Les Aveux, from which he extracted the poem “Romance” and set it to music around 1886. At that time young Debussy was infatuated with a married woman by the name of Marie Vasnier. In 1885, the two stayed in France for two months without her husband knowing. The young, passionate, and jealous Debussy returned to Rome and wrote to Madame Vasnier about setting some of Bourget’s poems to music. “Romance” is thought to be one of them. His choice of this poem may very well be a representation of how he felt about Vasnier at the time, as the texts speak of a beautiful soul he wishes would envelope him once again. “Romance” has been said to “create an atmosphere and mood as distinctive and effective as many a full length aria.” The piano has its own melody, introduced as the introduction at the beginning of the song, creating a ravishing duet between the piano and the vocalist. As in many of Debussy’s songs, he sets the mood within the opening lines. However, the beginning of the vocal line contradicts the charming piano introduction, creating a much more somber mood than one might foresee. The two melodies only coincide at the climax of the piece when the vocalist sings “Faîte d’espoir, d’amour fidèle” (Made of hope, of faithful love).
Mozart, one of the most prominent and influential composers of the Classical Era, was born into a musical family and from a young age showed immense musical talent. At age 17, he accepted his first musical job as a court musician. A few years later he moved to Vienna where he became very well known and was often sought out to compose and perform. He primarily devoted himself to the art of composition and crafted over 600 pieces of music in his short 35 years of life. His works include operas, symphonies, concertos, and solo piano pieces. On occasion, Mozart borrowed an idea that he had used in a previous work and recycled it into another piece of music. A splendid example of this is his use of the primary musical theme in the final movement of his Oboe Concerto in D Major as the main reoccurring theme in his aria “Welche Wonne, welche Lust.”

“Welche Wonne, welche Lust” is from the second act of one of Mozart’s most famed operas, Die Entführung aus dem Serail (The Abduction from the Seraglio). Early in the opera we learn that the primary characters (Konstanze, Blonde, and Pedrillo) have been abducted by pirates and sold to the Pasha Selim in Turkey. Before this aria is sung, Konstanze tells Blonde the horrifying news that Pasha Selim demands her love and has threatened to use force if she does not give it willingly. Meanwhile Belmonte, Konstanze’s true love, has come to rescue Konstanze and their friends. He meets Pedrillo in Pasha Selim’s garden where they devise an escape plan. Pedrillo then seeks out Blonde, his sweetheart, and tells her that they are to escape that very night. Ecstatic, Blonde sings “Welche Wonne, welche Lust” (Oh, the Happy, Happy, Day) as she rushes to tell Konstanze the good news. Mozart brilliantly embodies Blonde’s crazed joy through the use of fast-moving vocal and instrumental lines. The text repeats itself many times with such excitement that it barely leaves the vocalist with a chance to catch her breath.

Villanelle by Eva Dell’Acqua

Little is known about the composer Eva Dell’Acqua and even less is known about the poet Frédéric van der Elst, who wrote the poetic text that Dell’Acqua used as the text for her song Villanelle (The Swallow). All we truly know about her are the musical works that she put forth into the world within her lifetime, which consisted of orchestral works, songs, and operas.

Dell’Acqua’s most widely performed and recorded piece of music remains Villanelle. The song begins with fluid, harp-like, rolling arpeggios and a floating, gentle, vocal melody perfectly describing the swallow in flight. After the first line of the text is repeated, this time with elaborate embellishments, the vocalist begins to tell a story of remembrance: “J’ai longtemps suivi des yeux le vol de la voyageuse; depuis, mon âme rêvée” (For a long time, I have followed the flight of the traveler with my eyes; since then, my dreaming soul accompanies her through the skies). As explained by Gene Tyranny, “The first leg of the journey is not described in narrative detail but in a magnificent, supremely virtuosic vocalise.” The vocalise, a piece of music that consists of a melody sung using a vowel or a nonsense syllable, gives us a sense that she is imitating the song of the swallow as it explores the skies and land. The first two lines of the piece are repeated once again, but as the vocalist sings the phrase “Elle allait, à tire d’aile” (She was flying by wing) we hear another spectacular display of virtuosity and vocal flexibility. As the breathtaking journey Dell’Acqua has so magnificently illustrated comes to a close, the vocalist sings another astoundingly intricate vocalise, singing the song of the swallow for the last time.

“Liebe, du Himmel auf Erden” from Paganini by Franz Lehár

Franz Lehár was the oldest child of his family, born to his father, Franz Lehár, Sr., an Austrian bandmaster in the Austro-Hungarian Army. While his younger brother attended school to become an officer in the army, Franz studied violin at the Prague Conservatory. While at the conservatory he was advised to focus on composition. However, at the time, the conservatory did not allow students to have more than one focus—thus, Franz was mostly a self-taught composer. Despite the lack of professional composition lessons, he was still extraordinarily successful in the realm of composition and is most famous for his operettas.

The aria “Liebe du Himmel auf Erden” (Love, You Heaven on Earth) comes from his operetta Paganini, a work that is what some would call a “biographical operetta” because it focuses on the lives of real people. This operetta focuses on the violinist Niccolò Paganini and his love affair with Napoleon’s sister, Princess Anna Elisa. Anna sings this aria after Paganini succumbs to the charms of another woman, Bella, and gives her the song he had originally composed for Anna. Anna, furious, tries to have Paganini arrested during one of his concerts out of bitter spite, but he plays his violin so beautifully that she forgets how angry she is, declares her love for Paganini in front of the entire court, and leaves the hall with him. At the beginning of
this aria much of the anger and bitterness shown by Anna can be heard in the minor melodic line. However, this line quickly and seamlessly flows from the bitterness of the minor key to the excitement and joyfulness of a major key. When we arrive at the second section of the aria, it is apparent that Anna has let go of all anger and has fallen madly back in love with Paganini through the use of the charming, affectionate, nature of the melodic line, dance-like accompaniment, and the confident proclamations of love in the text.

“Chi il bel sogno di Doretta” from La rondine by Giacomo Puccini

Giacomo Puccini was born into an extremely musical family. It was expected that he would follow in his father’s footsteps and become a musician himself. When his father died, Puccini actually inherited his position as choirmaster and organist at the age of six years old—however, he was obviously too young to take the position. As an adult, he had the privilege of seeing a live performance of Verdi’s opera Aida. He was infatuated by the performance, and it was then that he decided he wanted to compose operas. By the success of his operas today, one would never know that most of Puccini’s operas were initially failures. Even La bohème, one Puccini’s most admired and performed operas, did not achieve instant success.

La rondine, Puccini’s eighth opera, has often been considered a sequel to La bohème. However, this opera has not gained the same roaring success La bohème has earned today. La rondine, like La bohème, was an initial failure and took on extreme criticism when first written and performed. Few numbers have become popular from this opera, with the exception of “Chi il bel sogno di Doretta” (Doretta’s Beautiful Dream). This gorgeous, soaring, aria is performed by many sopranos in the United States and abroad today. The opera opens with a wealthy man, Rambaldo, and his mistress, Magda, entertaining their theatrical and literary guests. A poet, Prunier, is in attendance and declares that romantic love is back in fashion. No one takes him seriously except Magda. He begins to sing a song that he has started writing about a girl who rejects the love of a king, but he does not know how to finish the story. Magda jumps in and finishes the song, singing her aria “Chi il bel sogno di Doretta,” making up another verse that tells how the same girl ends up falling madly in love with a student. The aria begins with dramatic, rolling arpeggios, creating a dream-like atmosphere before the vocalist begins the narrative describing the beautiful dream of Doretta. Long, soaring, legato passages entrance the listener in the second half of the aria, as Magda loses herself in a daydream, completely infatuated with her imaginary love story.

Zwei Lieder by Franz Schubert

Franz Schubert is seen by many as the last composer of the Classical Era and the first of the Romantic Era. Although he only lived 31 years, he was an extremely generative composer. He composed over six hundred songs, seven complete symphonies, incidental music, sacred music, operas, and a vast amount of chamber and piano works. During his lifetime, his music was appreciated by only a small group of admirers.

Much of Schubert’s inventiveness and virtuosity can be seen in his song “Rastlose Liebe” (Restless Love). As stated by Graham Johnson, “In a time-frame of less than a minute-and-a-half Schubert summons up a storm of raw energy and power…. ” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote the poem during a snowstorm, which took place in May 1776. The poem outlines Goethe’s mixed emotions towards his blossoming relationship with Charlotte von Stein, a married woman, and relates it to the May snowstorm. Schubert reflects the fury of the storm, as well as the restless nature of the pain and pleasure of Goethe’s love for Charlotte, through the relentless, perpetually moving piano line united with a bold, brave, and equally anxious melodic vocal line. Despite the feeling of torment illustrated in the poem and reflected throughout most of the song, the last few moments of the song leave us with the final impression that in the end, love is worth the risk, and the struggles that accompany it are adventures to be treasured.

“Seligkeit” (Bliss) displays a much simpler side of Schubert. Instead of the complex restlessness depicted in “Rastlose Liebe,” Schubert writes a delicate waltz with a charming, joyful, repeated melody. Throughout the first two verses of this song the vocalist is pondering the joys of heaven as a place where everyone sings and dances, but as we arrive at the last verse, the poet declares that as long as he has his beloved, Laura, smiling at him, he would choose to stay on earth forever. The poet, Ludwig Heinrich Christoph Hölt, titled this poem “Minnelied” (Love Song) before Schubert adopted its text as the lyrics for “Seligkeit.” A group of musicians called Minnesingers, who lived between the twelfth and fourteenth
centuries, often wrote and sang songs about women they loved from a distance. Petrarch, a poet who also lived around this time period, adored a woman named Laura from afar. This has become an iconic image for poets throughout the centuries, where “Laura” has become the name used by many when speaking of the woman they love, rather than publishing their real name. At the time Hölty wrote this poem he was in love with Anna Julianne Hagemann. However, his enthusiastic love for Anna was left unfulfilled, and she has since become his “Laura,” his elusive gem.

*Tre Liriche* by Ottorino Respighi

Ottorino Respighi received international popularity while he was alive due to the creative approach he took with many of his works. In fact, it has been said in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* that “Respighi’s popularity was unmatched by any other Italian composer since Puccini.” Puccini himself stated that he admired Respighi’s works immensely and arranged to receive the first copy of every one of his scores as soon as it was printed. Respighi came from a musical family and began his journey in music as a child through the violin and piano. He was primarily employed as an orchestral player early in his musical career and eventually began to gain slight recognition as a composer between 1903 and 1908. Between the years 1906 and 1912, Respighi composed the songs “Notte,” “Nebbie,” and “Pioggia” as separate works. In 1913, these three songs were orchestrated together as a song cycle titled *Tre Liriche*.

Respighi used his song “Notte” many times throughout his life. He originally composed it as a duet for mezzo-soprano and baritone with piano accompaniment in 1905. It wasn’t until 1912 that he arranged it for a single mezzo-soprano and piano, which he used in his collection *Sei Liriche, seconda serie*. The next year it was orchestrated and placed in *Tre Liriche*.

The text, written by Ada Negri, illustrates night as it descends upon a garden. Respighi evokes a feeling of endless possibility in the first section of this song through the use of smooth, floating, vocal lines, as well as continuous movement and use of the upper register in the piano line. Suddenly, the mood drastically changes to a feeling of restless angst as the vocalist sings, “La luttuosa tenebra una storia di morte racconta alle cardenie smorte?” (Does the mournful darkness tell a story of death to the pale gardenias?) This text is also set to a descending piano line simulating death or being lowered into a grave. This brief interlude of torment does not last long. In the closing section of this piece we are brought back to the charming feeling of endless possibilities Respighi created at the beginning of the piece, as night begins to lift and morning is soon to come.

At the time “Nebbie” was composed in 1906, Respighi was going through a long period of depression and could not find happiness in anything or anyone for days. One day a shockingly unexpected event occurred. Respighi woke up with a desire to work and consequently wrote four pages of music within an hour of sitting down at the piano. Later that same day a friend came by with a gift—a book of poems written by Ada Negri. He was drawn to the title “Nebbie” and as he began to read through it, he realized the text was a precise match to the music he had written earlier that morning. He stated in an explanation to his wife, “It was as if they were written for each other, I had no need to alter a single note.” Both the music and poem resembled Respighi’s despondent state of mind. The music begins with stagnant minor chords, slowly ascending and descending throughout most of the piece. The vocalist begins with the statement, “Soffro” or “I suffer.” The text goes on to portray a dark and lonely landscape. The most prominent feature of this piece is the gradual ascent and descent of the dynamics, which add extreme intensity and resemble the full spectrum of despairing human emotions, sending chills running up one’s spine.

Respighi composed “Pioggia,” the last song in the cycle, in 1912. Instead of expressing an extensive realm of human emotions as in “Nebbie,” he constructs “Pioggia” in a way that simply paints a charming illustration of a rainstorm. In the song, the vocalist acts as the observer while the piano mimics rainfall. In the first few measures of this song we hear a brief introduction from the piano presenting the first droplets of the storm. The opening lines of the vocalist paint a beautiful image of the rain outside of her window. The piano begins to race and pulse as it portrays the gusts of rain depicted in the text. As the vocalist sings “S’acchettava,” or “It calms,” the racing piano line immediately slows down, much like the lull in the storm that the text so beautifully portrays. The piano and vocalist only come together at a single point in the song when the text presents the vocalist’s inner thoughts of the intricacy of nature, instead of the scenery around her. The storm has one last bit of momentum as the vocalist leans out of her windowsill and the rain brushes through her hair. Just as the storm had swiftly developed, it quickly comes to a close as the piano imitates the last few droplets of the storm.
“Lockung” and “Mädchenlied” from Acht Lieder, Op. 6 by Arnold Schoenberg

Schoenberg was an Austrian composer whose extremely innovative compositional approach was a major turning point in twentieth-century musical thought. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, composers such as Wagner and Mahler began stretching tonality to its limits. In 1909, Schoenberg latched on to this idea and took it a step further, writing the first entirely atonal piece of music, *Three Pieces for Piano*, Op. 11. His music is loved by few and hated by many. During the rise of the Nazi party in Austria, his music was labeled as degenerate art and therefore undesirable. The negativity circling Schoenberg’s diverse, experimental music did not stop him from creating it, and he is now one of the most prominent and controversial composers of the twentieth century. Although he is well known for his atonality, some tonality can still be heard in his earlier works, such as *Acht Lieder*, Op. 6, written for voice and piano. *Acht Lieder* is a collection of eight songs, composed between the years of 1903 and 1905, with text written by eight different contemporary poets.

“Lockung” (Temptation), composed in October 1905, is seventh in the set. Schoenberg uses this piece as an example of what he calls fluctuating tonality. He argues “that the sways around the E-flat triad and the lack of its clear presentation be regarded as a pure tonic,” and many theorists have noted that motivically “Lockung” seems to fluctuate and have more than one key area—however, harmonically the piece emphasizes the key of E-flat major, making it hard for the listener to establish a tonal center. The text of this song, written by Kurt Aram, is often interpreted as a story of seduction. Ethan Hiamo proposes that the text “depicts a cat who is trying to catch a mouse by tricking it into believing there is no danger (undoubtedly a metaphor for sexual seduction).” Another scholar, Alan Street, puts the song in context with the rest of the songs in the set and suggests that *Acht Lieder*, as a single entity, may articulate, “a clandestine form of erotic emplotment … one that is determined by the experience of initiation to sexual love. Thus, ‘Lockung’ becomes the primary seduction to which ‘Mädchenlied’ is the callow response.”

“Mädchenlied” (Maiden’s Song) although placed third in the set, was written two days after the completion of “Lockung.” A maiden narrates the text, written by Paul Remer. She speaks of how someone has just wildly kissed her and explains how she envisions her family members would react if they found out. She imagines both her mother and her brother having severe reactions, in which they do not approve of the kiss and subsequently threaten the lover, stating the mother would pray to the lord to turn away the misfortune and her brother would smite him dead on the spot. However, in the last stanza the maiden tells of how her sister has quite the opposite reaction. She states she believes her sister’s heart would be longing and poor reactions to the kiss. Whereas the sister’s reaction is represented by a much smoother, calm, and flowing vocal line, it later gains speed as the maiden speaks of the sister’s heart, which would beat enviously for such a kiss. The piano concludes the piece with a firmly held tonic chord, which has not previously been played, giving the listener a sense of relief.

“The Trees on the Mountains” from Susannah by Carlisle Floyd

Carlisle Floyd has established himself as one of the most prominent composers of opera in the United States still alive today. He was born in 1926 in Latta, South Carolina, where he grew up as the son of a Methodist minister. As a child he was very interested in both music and art. At one point it was thought that Floyd would become a painter, but instead he followed his music teacher to Syracuse University where he earned both his BM and MM in piano and composition. In 1951 he began teaching at Florida State University where he remained until 1976. While teaching at the university, Floyd began to compose operas, some of which are still commonly performed in the United States and Europe.

“The Trees on the Mountain” is from the second act of Floyd's third opera, *Susannah*, which he wrote while teaching at Florida State University. The opera’s libretto is a modernized version of the biblical story of Susannah and the Elders, taking place in a small town in Tennessee. The opera tells the heartbreaking story of a young southern girl wrongly accused of sinful behavior, who is subsequently shunned by her community, forced to spend her life alone. Susannah sings the aria “The Trees on the Mountain” after running home from a church meeting where the townspeople have tried to get her to confess to sinful actions she did not commit. The song itself is a folk song Susannah’s deceased mother taught her when she was young. She begins to recall and sing the song to comfort herself. The text speaks of many circumstances in which something is deserted and left to die, such as the trees left to face a desolate winter, coals no longer aflame, and a fox abandoned by its mother to freeze. These scenarios very much resemble the struggles faced by Susannah, who has lost both of her parents, as well as the respect and friendship of the townspeople. As said by Shannon Cole, “‘The Trees On The Mountains’ is a haunting piece of music, starkly simple in declamation yet filled with layers of meaning.”
To my mom, dad, and sister: thank you for all of the love and support you have given me throughout my life. Without your encouragement, I wouldn’t be here today. I love you all so much!

To all my friends and family: it means the world to me that you could attend my senior recital! Thank you for supporting my dreams and aspirations.

To Jacalyn Kreitzer: you are such a wonderful teacher and have made singing at Cal Poly such a lovely and memorable experience. Thank you for always believing in me and pushing me to achieve my dreams and goals.

To Dr. Tom: singing in your choirs has left me some of my most cherished memories I’ve created at Cal Poly, largely because you were a part of them. Thank you for being such a kind, inspiring, and excellent professor.

To Dr. Russell: thank you for being such a kindhearted, thoughtful, and influential professor. Your words of wisdom and love have brightened many of my days at Cal Poly. I am so thankful to have had the privilege of being your student.

To Dr. McLamore: thank you for showing me what hard work really means. After taking your classes, I know I can accomplish anything I set my mind to.

To Paul Woodring: thank you so much for accompanying me throughout my years at Cal Poly and especially this recital. Your hard work and talent never cease to amaze me. It has been a pleasure performing with you.

To Druci and Michele: thank you for being such kind and organized people. You have made my life, and everyone else’s lives in the Music Department, so much easier.

To Alexis: thank you for being such a phenomenal friend. I am so lucky to have been able to experience my journey in San Luis Obispo, from Cuesta to Cal Poly, with you.

To the rest of the music majors and faculty: you truly make the music building something special. It has been a blessing to have you all in my life!