



CAL POLY

Music Department
College of Liberal Arts

CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN LUIS OBISPO

Leah Ginsky
♦ mezzo-soprano ♦

A Senior Recital in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Music

Susan Azaret Davies, accompanist

May 3, 2015

Sunday at 2 p.m.

Davidson Music Center

Room 218

Program

Senior Recital

Leah Ginsky, mezzo-soprano

Susan Azaret Davies, piano

Mitrane Attributed to Francesco Rossi (c. 1600)

Ah, rendimi

Lucrezia Borgia Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)

Il segreto per esser felici

Mignon Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896)

Connais-tu le pays?

Die Fledermaus Johann Strauss II (1825-1899)

Chacun à son gout

Così fan tutte Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

È amore un ladroncello

— Intermission —

A Ti Jaime León (1921-2011)

Tonadillas al estilo antico Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

Callejeo

3 Mélodies Erik Satie (1866-1925)

La statue de bronze

Des Knaben Wunderhorn Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Lob des hohen Verstands

Ablösung in Sommer

Poems of Robert Frost Elliott Carter (1908-2012)

Dust of Snow

The Rose Family

Dream True Ricky Ian Gordon (b. 1956)

Finding Home

Texts and Translations

Ah, rendimi

Ah, rendimi quel core
Rendimi quell'amore.
A me ispirato, quello amore.

Il tuo fu il mio pensier
Il tuo sempre il mio voler
Ed or, crudele! Perchè, crudel,
tu mi hai lasciata?

Il tuo fu mio pensiero
Il tuo il mio volere,
Ed or, crudel! Perchè, crudel, crudel, perchè
Perchè mi hai lasciata,
M'abbandonata?
Perchè lasciata?
Quella felicità,
Che nell' unirmi a te
Mi hai rivelata.
Tu m'hai rivelata.

Perchè mi abbandonata?
Il tuo fu il mio pensiero,
Ed or crudel, crudel, perchè, perchè crudel?
Tu mi hai lasciata?
Abbaondonata?
Perchè lasciata?

Quella a me si cara,
Quell'a felicità
Nell' unirmi a me promessa
Ah, rendimi quel core,
Ah, rendimi quell' amore.
Rendimi la promessa felicità!

Il segreto per esser felici

Il segreto per esser felici
So per prova e l'insegno agli amici
Sia sereno, sia nubilo il cielo,
Ogni tempo, sia caldo, sia gelo,
Scherzo e bevo, e derido gl'insani
Che si dan del futuro pensier.
Non curiamo l'incerto domani,
Se quest'oggi n'è dato a goder.

Profittiamo degli'anni fiorenti,
Il piacer li fa correr più lenti;
Se vecchiezza con livida faccia
Stammi a tergo e mia vita minaccia
Scherzo e bevo, e derido gl'insani
Che si dan del futuro pensier.
Non curiamo l'incerto domani,
Se quest'oggi n'è dato a goder.

Connais-tu le pays?

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,

Ah, Return [it] to Me

Ah, return to me my heart
Return to me my love
That inspired me.

You were my every thought
You were my every desire
And now, cruel one, why cruel one,
Why did you leave me?

You were my thought,
Your were my will,
And now, cruel one! Why, cruel one,
Why did you leave me?
Abandon me?
Why did you leave me?
That the happiness
Of joining you,
You have revealed to me.

Why did you abandon me?
You were my thought.
And now cruel one, cruel one, why, why, cruel one?
Why did you leave me?
Abandon me?
Why did you leave?

It is dear to me,
That the happiness
Of joining you, you promised me.
Oh, return my heart to me.
Return to me my love,
Return to me the promise of happiness!

The Secret to Being Happy

The secret to being happy,
I know and I teach to my friends.
Whether serene or cloudy be the sky,
any weather, hot or cold.
I dance and drink and make fun of the fools,
Who think about the future.
Don't be curious about the uncertain tomorrow,
When you can take delight today.

Let's take advantage of the flowering years,
Pleasure makes them pass more slowly.
If death, with its grey face,
stands at my back and threatens my life...
I dance and drink and make fun of the fools,
Who think about the future.
Don't be curious about the uncertain tomorrow,
When you can take delight today.

Do you know the land?

Do you know the land where the orange tree blooms?
The land of gold fruits and crimson roses.
Where the breeze is very sweet, and the birds very light.
And in every season the bees gather.
Where rays smile, like a gift from God,

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 pareils 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!

Chacun à son gout

Ich lade gern mir Gäste ein,
Man lebt bei mir recht fein,
Man unterhält sich, wie man mag
Oft bis zum hellen Tag.
Zwar langweil' ich mich stets dabei,
Was man auch treibt und spricht;
Indes, was mir als Wirt steht frei,
Duld' ich bei Gästen nicht!
Und sehe ich, es ennuyiert
Sich jemand hier bei mir,
So pack' ich ihn ganz ungeniert,
Werf' ihn hinaus zur Tür.
Und fragen Sie, ich bitte
Warum ich das denn tu'?
'S ist mal bei mir so Sitte,
Chacun à son gout!

Wenn ich mit andern sitz' beim Wein
Und Flasch' um Flasche leer',
Muss jeder mit mir durstig sein,
Sonst werde grob ich sehr.
Und schenke Glas um Glas ich ein,
Duld' ich nicht Widerspruch;
Nicht leiden kann ich's wenn sie schrein:
Ich will nicht, hab' genug!
Wer mir beim Trinken nicht pariert,
Sich zieret wie ein Tropf,
Dem werfe ich ganz ungeniert,
Die Flasche an den Kopf.
Und fragen Sie, ich bitte,
Warum ich das denn tu'?
'S ist mal bei mir so Sitte
Chacun à son goût!

È amore un ladroncello

È amore un ladroncello,
Un serpentello è amor;
Ei toglie e dà la pace,
Come gli piace, ai cor.

An eternal spring, under always blue skies.
Alas, if only I could follow you
To the happy shores from which fate has exiled me.
It is there that I would like to live,
To love, and to die. Yes, it is there!

Do you know the house that is there waiting for me?
The room with gold paneling, where men of white marble
Call out to me in the night, and hold out their arms to me,
And the courtyard where they dance in the shade of a large tree.
And the transparent lake, where the waters glisten,
Thousands of boats, light like the birds.
Alas, if only I could follow you
To the distant land from which fate has exiled me.
It is there that I would like to live,
To love, and to die. Yes, it is there!

To Each His Own Taste

I like to invite my guests,
One lives with me quite fine,
We enjoy talking, as one might
Often until daylight.
Although I am always bored here,
Whatever someone does or speaks;
However, what I as host allow myself liberty
I have no patience with that in guests!
And should I see looking bored,
Someone here with me in my home,
So I pack their things shamelessly
And throw him out the door.
And you wonder, and ask me,
Why do I do this?
Because for me, this is simply my custom
To each his own taste!

When I sit with others and drink wine,
And empty one bottle after another,
Everybody with me needs to be thirsty
Otherwise I will become very offensive.
And I give glass after glass,
Patience I have not for contradiction;
I cannot stand when they scream:
I don't want it, I've had enough!
Who cannot keep up with my drinking
And refuses like a ninny,
I throw, quite unabashedly,
The bottle at his head.
And you wonder, and ask me,
Why do I do this?
Because for me, this is simply my custom
To each his own taste!

Love Is a Thief

Love is a thief,
A snake is love;
And takes away and gives peace,
As it pleases his heart.

*Per gli occhi al seno appena
Un varco aprir si fa,
Che l'anima incatena
E toglie libertà.*

*Porta dolcezza e gusto
Se tu lo lasci far,
Ma t'empie di disgusto
Se tenti di pugar.*

*Se nel tuo petto ei siede,
S'egli ti becca qui,
Fa' tutto quel ch'ei chiede,
Che anch'io farò così.*

A Tí

*Tú no lo sabes, más yo he soñado,
entre mis sueños color de armiño,
horas de dicha con tus amores,
besos ardientes, quedos suspiros.*

*Cuando la tarde tiñe de oro
esos espacios que juntos vimos,
cuando mi alma su vuelo emprende
a las regiones de lo infinito.*

Callejeo

*Dos horas ha que callejeo
pero no veo,
nerviosa ya, sin calma,
al que le di confiada
el alma.*

*No vi hombre jamás
que mintiera más que el majo
que hoy me engaña;
mas no le ha de valer
pues siempre fui mujer de maña
y, si es menester,
correré sin parar,
tras él, entera España.*

La statue de bronze

*La grenouille
Du jeu de tonneau
S'ennuie, le soir, sous la tonnelle ...
Elle en a assez!
D'être la statue
Qui va prononcer un grand mot: Le Mot!*

*Elle aimerait mieux être avec les autres
Qui font des bulles de musique
Avec le savon de la lune
Au bord du lavoir mordoré
Qu'on voit, là-bas, luire entre les branches...*

*From the eye to the breast as soon as
A path through he makes,
That binds the soul
and takes away freedom.*

*It brings sweetness and pleasure
If you let him be,
But he fills you with disgust
If you try to fight him.*

*If in your breast he settles
If he pecks you here,
Do all that he commands,
And I will do so as well.*

To You

*You do not know it, but I have showed you
Between my dreams, the color of ermine.
Hours of joy with your love,
Hot kisses, soft sighs.*

*When the evening turns to gold
The spaces that we saw together.
When my soul takes its flight
To infinite regions.*

Street Wanderer

*Two hours I have been walking the streets
But I do not see,
nervous and without calm,
Him to whom I gave my
trusting soul.*

*I have never seen a man who lies as much
As the majo
who tricked me today.
But he will see it doesn't matter,
As I always was a cunning woman.
And if necessary,
I will run without stopping
all over Spain.*

The Bronze Statue

*The frog from the barrel game
Grows bored in the evening
under the arbor ...
She has had enough!
of being a statue
Poised to pronounce a grand word: The Word!*

*She would rather be with others
Who make music bubbles
With the soap of the moon
At the edge of the bronze washtub
We see, there, shining through the branches...*

On lui lance à coeur de journée
Une pâture de pistoles
Qui la traversent sans lui profiter
Et s'en vont sonner
Dans les cabinets
De son piédestal numéroté!
Et le soir, les insectes couchent
Dans sa bouche...

Lob des hohen Verstandes

Einstmals in einem tiefen Tal
Kukuk und Nachtigall
Täten ein Wett' anschlagen:
Zu singen um das Meisterstück,
Gewinn' es Kunst, gewinn' es Glück:
Dank soll er davon tragen.

Der Kukuk sprach: "So dir's gefällt,
Hab' ich den Richter wählt",
Und tät gleich den Esel ernennen.
"Denn weil er hat zwei Ohren groß,
So kann er hören desto bos
Und, was recht ist, kennen!"

Sie flogen vor den Richter bald.
Wie dem die Sache ward erzählt,
Schuf er, sie sollten singen.
Die Nachtigall sang lieblich aus!
Der Esel sprach: "Du machst mir's kraus!
Du machst mir's kraus! I-ja! I-ja!
Ich kann's in Kopf nicht bringen!"

Der Kukuk drauf fing an geschwind
Sein Sang durch Terz und Quart und Quint.
Dem Esel g'fiel, er sprach nur
"Wart! Wart! Wart! Dein Urteil will ich sprechen,
Wohl sungen hast du, Nachtigall!
Aber Kukuk, singst gut Choral!"

Und hältst den Takt fein innen!
Das sprech' ich nach mein' hoh'n Verstand!
Und kost' es gleich ein ganzes Land,
So laß ich's dich gewinnen!"

Ablösung im Sommer

Kuckuck hat sich zu Tode gefallen
An einer grünen Weiden,
Kuckuck ist tot! Kuckuck ist tot!
Wer soll uns denn den Sommer lang
Die Zeit und Weil vertreiben?

Ei, das soll tun Frau Nachtigall,
Die sitzt auf grünem Zweige;
Die kleine, feine Nachtigall,
Die liebe, süße Nachtigall!
Sie singt und springt, ist allzeit froh,
Wenn andre Vögel schweigen.

Wir warten auf Frau Nachtigall,
Die wohnt im grünen Hage,
Und wenn der Kukuk zu Ende ist,
Dann fängt sie an zu schlagen!

At midday one hurls at her
a feast of discs
That pass through her without enjoying it
And ring
in the chambers
of her numbered pedestal!
And at night the insects sleep
in her mouth ...

In Praise of High Intellect

Once in a deep valley,
The cuckoo and the nightingale
Had a contest:
To sing the Masterpiece.
To win by art or to win by luck,
Fame would be the victor gain.

The cuckoo said: "If it pleases you,
I will nominate the judge."
And he named the donkey right away.
"Since he has two huge ears,
He can hear so much better
And will know what is correct."

They soon flew before the judge
And when the issue was explained to him,
He told them they should sing.
The nightingale sang out sweetly!
The donkey said: You make me dizzy!
You make me dizzy! Eee-yah!
I can't get it into my head!

The cuckoo then quickly started
His song through thirds and fourths and fifths;
The donkey found it pleasing, and only said
Wait! Wait! Wait! I will pronounce judgment now.
You have sung well, Nightingale!
But, Cuckoo, you sing a good chorale!

And you keep the rhythm finely and internally!
I speak this from my high intellect,
And, although it may cost an entire land,
I will let you win!

Change in Summer

The cuckoo has fallen to its death
From a green willow,
The cuckoo is dead! The cuckoo is dead!
Who should then all summer long
Help us pass the time?

Oh, that should be Mrs. Nightingale!
She sits on a green branch!
The small, fine nightingale,
The lovely, sweet nightingale!
She sings and springs, is always joyous,
When other birds are silent!

We await Mrs. Nightingale,
Who lives in a green hedge,
And when the cuckoo call is at its end,
Then does she begin to sing!

Program Notes

“Ah, rendimi,” from *Mitrane*

Not much, if anything, is known about the composer of this piece, the name of the opera, nor the story, but the best guess (and the composer most often credited with this aria) is Francesco Rossi, a successor of Scarlatti. The opera *Mitrane* takes its name from a character from the story of Semiramide, a popular libretto composers liked to set in the seventeenth century. It is questionable whether or not this opera even exists at all, as its existence is based on the testimony of a single lexicographer and musicologist named François-Joseph Fétis who claimed to have located the score. It is believed that due to a concert he was holding in 1833, Fétis may have secretly written or commissioned pieces (he was proven to have falsely attributed an aria to Alessandro Stradella), so scholars sometimes attribute this piece to an unknown anonymous composer from the nineteenth century, but it is believed that whoever wrote the counterfeit “Stradella” aria may have written this “Rossi” aria as well.

The aria, usually sung by a contralto, is in a non-standard form, but it closely resembles modified alternation (*A, B, A', B' ...*”), with a coda at the end. This aria has an additional peculiarity in that a coda also ends the first a section for dramatic emphasis. The piece is published with a steady piano accompaniment, although an orchestrated version with plenty of horns does exist. There are many dynamic markings in the piece, with extreme soft and loud sections, as well as articulation markings. It would be uncharacteristic of a composer in Rossi’s time to notate these details, so perhaps it was either the editor’s additions, or the mystery composer of the Romantic era who put the markings in himself. The lyrics of the aria are about lost love, broken promises, and stolen hearts, but the plot within the story is unknown.

“Il segreto per esser felici” from *Lucrezia Borgia*

Over his lifetime, Gaetano Donizetti composed about 75 operas in the *bel canto* style, which is dedicated to smooth, legato phrasing, evenness of tone, and a light, flexible higher register, often set in contrast with heavier, Wagnerian-style singing coming from Germany. Although *bel canto* singing eventually became a “lost art,” gradually going out of style, at the time of Donizetti’s death in 1848, over 20 of his operas were being performed on stages across Europe! There is no doubt that he left a mark on many composers, such as Verdi, who possessed many of Donizetti’s scores. Franz Liszt even composed piano fantasies from themes from *Lucrezia Borgia*, “Il segreto” included.

Premiering in 1833 at La Scala, *Lucrezia Borgia* was not well received at first. The opera was banned in Naples due to the graphic nature of the libretto. The premiere included contralto Marietta Brambilla as Maffio Orsini, who sang this rousing drinking song, which is called a *brindisi* in Italian. Coincidentally, Marietta Brambilla is also a composer who wrote one of the very first songs I learned at Cal Poly, a *brindisi* entitled “L’Allegro.” The fact that she too wrote a *brindisi* is no coincidence. *Lucrezia Borgia* is a sneaky and dangerous woman who doesn’t like it when people make orgy jokes out of her name (“Orgia” is the Italian word for “orgy”). After a series of failed punishments for defacing her name, she attends a party in which Orsini tells his friends that the secret to happiness is to drink a lot and laugh at anyone who worries about the future, not knowing that he and five of his friends are drinking from poisoned cups!

This song is in a bouncy triple meter, which makes it fun to dance to and easy to get out of control, as one usually does during drinking songs. This represents the dancing and drinking that Orsini references in the chorus. It is in verse-chorus form (*aBaB*), repeating the same melody for both stanzas of text and finishing out with a rousing chorus, making it easy for others to join in, as it is the convention of *brindisi* to have a solo and a choral response. A challenge for performing this song and other *brindisi* is appearing drunk from an acting standpoint—but also maintaining composure and posture as a singer.

“Connais-tu le pays?” from *Mignon*

Ambroise Thomas crafted the popular Romantic opera *Mignon* in 1866 with French libretto by Barbier and Carré, adapted from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, a German novel. The opera was adapted in 1870 to include another aria to appease a needy soprano and changed spoken dialogue to recitative, which is now the standard version. The role of Mignon was first adapted by light mezzo-soprano Célestine Galli-Marié, who later also created the role of Carmen as well as many other mezzo roles.

Though incestuous and abandoned, Mignon is nevertheless a delicate little gypsy girl who associates most often with flowers. Wilhelm rescues her from the band of performing gypsies that kidnapped her, and she sings this wistful aria recalling the far-away shores from which she was stolen. In the orchestral version, the flute plays an almost equal role to the singer in the musical interludes, representing the birds of her home country. Mignon sings a strophic melody, speaking in fragmented sentences, as if she is just saying the things she sees in her mind's eye as they appear.

This piece was selected for the Symphony Soloist Showcase on March 8, 2015. I had the honor to perform in the Performing Arts Center directed by Dr. Arrivée with the Cal Poly Symphony, and I shared the stage with my fellow senior singers Alexis Rubell and Shaina Levin, as well as other esteemed musicians. It was a fantastic opportunity to sing in that space and a standard-setting experience. One of the most exciting parts was hearing my friend Catherine Armstrong play the flute solo beautifully. I am so lucky to have made such talented and wonderful friends in this department!

“Chacun à son gout,” from *Die Fledermaus*

Die Fledermaus: Return of the *Brindisi*—a title and topic worthy of any George Lucas film! The aria, “Chacun à son gout” is from the Act-Two dinner ball at Prince Orlofsky's villa that the characters all attend, and antics ensue, including the ever-popular “mistaken identity” trope. Prince Orlofsky is a wealthy man, but bored because of it. However, he is so proud that he doesn't allow anyone else to be bored in his presence. Therefore, he forces all of his party guests to drink themselves silly, hence the antics. The song is categorized as a “couplet,” but like the Donizetti *brindisi*, it is also in verse-chorus form. It reflects the character's childishness; you can hear him hiccup and his voice crack. He is also literally singing about throwing bottles at his guests' heads. He teases his guests, taunting them to ask him why he is the way he is with an insistent three-note motive, playfully explaining that it's just who he is.

Though shocking to some, Johann Strauss II was not initially inclined to write operettas such as this one, though he eventually discovered it to be his niche. Son of another successful composer, many knew the younger Strauss as “King of the Waltz” during his lifetime. It took his wife a lot of convincing and a little bit of narcissism on his part for it to sink in that he should begin writing for the stage, but he liked the idea of an audience listening to only him for an entire evening. *Die Fledermaus* began its life as a completely different work, adapted by his German librettist from French, which explains the French phrase that gives the piece its title, “chacun à son gout,” meaning “to each one's own taste.” (This is ironic, however, as Orlofsky is instructing everyone to drink and insisting it is his custom while also telling everyone “to each their own.”) This operetta ended up being the perfect format for Strauss, as the central activity was a ball, providing him with plenty of opportunity to write waltzes. He was so excited that he locked himself up in his house and wrote the entire score in 43 days. Unfortunately, due to financial crisis in Vienna, the show was removed from the stage almost as quickly. Despite the short run, this operetta has been highly regarded for being lighthearted, fun, and yet still musically complex.

“E amore un ladroncello,” from *Così fan tutte*

Probably the most sexist selection of the program, Mozart's *Così fan tutte* features two sisters, soprano Fiordiligi and mezzo-soprano Dorabella, bidding farewell to their lovers and falling in love with each other's boyfriends who return in disguise, because, of course, “all women are like that (*così fan tutte*).” Mozart premiered this opera with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte in January 1790, with whom he wrote

three operas that are regarded as peaks of the genre. It is impressive how much Mozart was able to pull off essentially on his deathbed, as *La clemenza di Tito* and *Die Zauberflöte* as well as his unfinished *Requiem*, followed before his death in December 1791.

In this aria, Dorabella is trying to convince her sister to move away from her steadfast, faithful attitude, like their maid Despina has been trying to convince them all along. She argues that although love is a sneaky serpent and gives and takes away your peace, it can bring you pleasure, too. The serpent is represented with the melody line that leaps and slides up and down the scale just like a snake would. The aria is in rondo form with a coda, meaning that Dorabella keeps coming back to the refrain, just like the way love can keep pulling you back in.

“A Ti”

Nationalism, one of the most influential movements in modern history, inspired politicians, philosophers, artists, poets, and composers. Unfortunately, for some nations, it took longer than others to establish a sense of nationalism, much less achieve independence. One way musicians expressed their culture was through art songs. These songs are intended for concert performance as opposed to being a part of a larger work such as an opera or oratorio, and composers liked to incorporate poetry that represents their nation's values, as well as musical influences from their own culture. For Germans, their form of art song, the *Lied*, caught on rather quickly, but for South Americans, it wasn't until the 1900s when a real art song culture was established and the influence of the old European oppressors had disappeared. The poetry for this song was penned by Colombian poet José Asunción Silva, who is considered one of the founders of Spanish-American Modernism.

Colombian himself, Jaime León composed art songs with Colombian poetry and traditional folk rhythms, while also incorporating modern influences such as jazz. In “A Ti,” León uses very few notes and a simple accompaniment based on arpeggiation and block chords to represent the simplicity of being in love with someone. The title simply means “to you,” and he dedicates the song to his wife. The unfinished phrases enter always on upbeats, almost as if the singer is floating in a cloud and almost misses her entrance due to lovesickness, or muttering nearly incoherently. Similarly, the form is non-standard. Often, the main melody will return, only to change slightly, finish out, and return again. Overall, the effect is comforting; the repeated motive is just as comforting to the listener as León's wife is to him.

“Callejeo” from *Tonadillas al estilo antico*

Enrique Granados, a Catalan composer and pianist, founded a music school, taught, performed, and composed, but not much of his own work was published or performed during his lifetime, and he didn't gain much fame. He drew inspiration from Spanish folk dances and songs, using traditional rhythms and modes with modern poetry. This song comes from a 1910 set entitled *Tonadillas al estilo antico*, which means “Tonadillas in the Ancient Style,” with poetry by Fernando Periquet Zuaznábar. *Tonadillas* are a traditional style of Spanish theater song, usually strophic and preceding a dance and separating scenes. They originally dealt with lower-class characters and were for one singer but eventually grew more elaborate, similar to the Italian *intermezzo*. These lower-class characters are called *majos* or *majas*, people specifically from Spain or Latin America, that set themselves apart by their elaborate take on traditional Spanish fashion and cheeky attitudes. Granados' set of ten songs for voice and piano represents the earliest form of *tonadillas*.

“Callejeo,” the second of the set, is sung from the perspective of a *maja* who was tricked into sleeping with a *majo*. She wants revenge, and she has been running around looking for him for two hours but has not found him yet. Although he is the biggest liar she has ever met, she believes that her cunning nature will get the better of him and swears she will chase him all over town if she has to. This song is full of Spanish folk music, from the quick triplet motives in the piano part to the chromatic lines in the vocals. Granados also “frames” the text of the song by writing a piano introduction that returns again at the end. The strophic nature of *tonadillas* represents relentlessness, much like the *majos* themselves!

“La statue de bronze” from 3 *Méodies*

Erik Satie, not one to be confined by labels, liked to call himself a “Gymnopedist” (before his three famous *Gymnopedies* were even composed!), precisely because nobody knew what that meant. He also liked the title of “phonometrician,” meaning that he measures sound. It should come as no surprise that after a lifetime of stark individualism that Satie became a leader of the avant-garde movement in the last decade of his career. Humorous miniatures, or small storytelling pieces, were Satie’s area of expertise and fame. He wrote these for solo piano as well as voice. This song, “La statue de bronze,” which comes from a 1917 set entitled 3 *Méodies*, is categorized as both a miniature and a *mélodie*, or a French version of an art song.

This song, with poetry by Leon-Paul Fargue, tells the story of a bronze frog statue from the French game *Tonneau*, or “frog in the hole,” a popular bar game in which players throw discs at slots in or around a frog statue. The frog in this song, however, is sick of this game. She wishes to go play and blow bubbles in the moonlight, but instead she is stuck being barraged by discs all day while the insects sleep in her mouth all night. As Satie was a pianist himself, the accompaniment for this piece is quite challenging. Because of this, and his contemporary nature as a composer, the accompaniment does not necessarily help or correspond to the singer’s part in any way. Therefore, performances cannot be thrown together, and the rehearsal process is especially important.

Selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

A prominent piece of German literature that inspired many composers is *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, or “the Youth’s Wonderhorn,” in reference to the image of a boy holding a hunting horn on the cover of volume one. This set of German folk poetry was assembled by poets Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentan and published between 1805-08. Although the piece is highly regarded as a fundamental piece of German Romantic literature, much of the work was doctored or even re-written while being credited as works from the Middle Ages, so the editors are not held in high regard in the modern academic world. However, in the musical world, many composers were enthralled by the collection, and Mahler was no exception. He especially enjoyed the juxtaposition of realism and fantasy or the tragic and the humorous. After discovering the book of poetry at the von Weber house in the 1880s, Mahler composed two “batches” of *Lieder*, or German art song: the first nine for voice and pianoforte, composed between 1887-91, and the second set of twelve for voice and orchestra, composed between 1892-96.

Both of the selections being performed involve the feathered characters the Cuckoo and the Nightingale, or “Kukuck” and “Nachtigall.” Though not organized by Mahler to be performed in any specific order, these two poems seem to go hand in hand and bring the story to a full circle in just two songs. In the first, the cuckoo challenges the nightingale to a singing competition, with the donkey as the judge (because he has such big ears, of course!). In the end, the donkey chooses the cuckoo as the winner. However, in the next song, the cuckoo has suddenly fallen to his death. It is uncertain who would take his place as the timekeeper of the forest, but the nightingale swoops in, ready to take over the job as soon as the cuckoo is silent.

“Lob des hohen Verstandes” (In Praise of High Intellect) comes from the orchestrated set of *Wunderhorn Lieder*. The opening woodwind solo seems to represent the entire forest, while the tuba and trombone make their first appearance in the entire cycle to represent the pompous donkey. The flute and oboe represent the mysterious melodies of the nightingale, which the donkey finds too hard to understand. The cuckoo, however, plays a much more accessible melody for the donkey, which secures his win. Vocally, each character is represented through a different timbre: the donkey is crass, while the cuckoo is silly and the nightingale is sweet. Even if the audiences don’t understand German, the use of different vocal timbres helps to distinguish the characters. The song ends with a final, proud call from the winner and the judge.

“Ablösung in Sommer,” or “The Changing of the Summer Guard,” is from the original nine *Wunderhorn* pieces, but Mahler later used the thematic material for the scherzo section of his Third Symphony. Mahler uses coloratura in the treble line of the piano instead of the vocal line to represent the flighty characteristics of the birds; instead of the singer acting out the story, he or she is narrating it, while still reflecting the mood of the tale.

Selections from *Poems of Robert Frost*

Elliott Carter was born to a wealthy family in New York in 1908, though his family did not support him much as a musician early on. In his early adulthood he met and became friends with Charles Ives, who got him into Harvard on his recommendation. There he composed for Glee Club, much like the way I arrange for my a cappella group, That’s the Key. He went to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger, like many successful composers of the time such as Aaron Copland, but felt studying with her constrained him creatively. Compositionally, he particularly enjoyed playing with rhythmic techniques, such as polyrhythm, which can be heard in both of these songs.

This set was composed in 1943 as *Three Poems of Robert Frost* and was re-orchestrated in 1975. The two being performed today are the first two of the set, with the third song, “The Line Gang,” being omitted as Carter himself said the first and second could be performed alone. The first song, “Dust of Snow,” features a soaring, thoughtful vocal line over a syncopated, arpeggiated, almost pecking piano accompaniment that represents the crow. The piece changes as the singer contemplates the effect of the event, and the piano is more of a syncopated partner in a traditional accompaniment role, but at the very end, the bird returns.

The next piece, “The Rose Family,” is in a relentless 5/8, which is a rather challenging meter to count, especially when it switches unpredictably between emphasizing 2+3 and 3+2. The opening line is an allusion to Gertrude Stein’s “a rose is a rose is a rose,” but goes on to say that theory states that apples, pears, plums are part of “the rose family” as well. Frost argues that despite this arbitrary categorization, roses are still of significance artistically as symbols of love.

“Finding Home,” from *Dream True*

Ricky Ian Gordon is known for never sticking to one style. Inspired by his Catholic upbringing, jazz, Broadway, Elvis, and the culture of the liberal, modern world, Gordon has written many musicals, operas, and other vocal works, as well as ballets. He has adapted books into operas such as *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and most recently an opera about the life of Gertrude Stein. Born in 1956 to a musical family in Oceanside, NY, he left New York to briefly attend Carnegie-Mellon University but has lived in New York ever since, so the bustling city life is also an inspiration.

Dream True is a musical with lyrics and book by Tina Landeau. The story is inspired by George DuMaurier’s 1891 novel *Peter Ibbetson*. In the original version, two European lovers are separated but maintain a lifelong relationship through their dreams. In Landeau’s version, two childhood friends in Wyoming, Peter and Vernon, are separated when Peter’s mother sends him to live in New York. The story also has homosexual undertones, as later in life, when the boys meet, one is married with a family and one is gay, wanting more out of their relationship. “Finding Home” is a lullaby Peter’s mother sings in Act 1 intending to soothe the young boy, encouraging him that home will always be with him, which foreshadows the mystical dream connection between Peter and his childhood friend later in life.

When Gordon’s partner, Jeffrey, was dying of AIDS in the hospital in 1996, he wrote a song for him called “We Will Always Walk Together,” to comfort both of them near the end. When Tina Landeau heard this song, she proposed to Gordon to collaborate on a new work centered around that song, so *Dream True* was born. Though a bit of a strange plot and not too well liked by critics, the musical contains beautiful and heartfelt songs by Gordon dedicated to his late partner.

Acknowledgments

Thank you everyone for being here today. It has been a long journey to get to this point, and a lot has changed along the way. Whether this is your first time hearing me sing or the last performance of many here at Cal Poly, thank you for clapping every time!

I would like to thank my parents and family for helping to forge my musical path. From temple choir, to my first clarinet lesson, to marching band, musicals, opera, and everything in between, you have always supported me, no matter what instrument I brought home from school that day. Thank you to my father, for giving me the genes to be able to sing, and my mother for instilling in me her passion for opera.

I would also like to thank all of my music teachers, past and present, for always teaching me something valuable. You have each made an impression on me and made me the musician I am today, thanks to your patience and dedication to music education. I would especially like to thank my voice teacher Jacalyn Kreitzer, who has worked with me for the past four years at Cal Poly and helped prepare me for today. I can't imagine a more perfect teacher for me. Thank you for always knowing how to get my real voice to say "Helloooo!!!"

Thank you Dr. Russell for helping me with my program notes. You have helped me grow as a writer by teaching me both the rules of writing and how important it can be to break them. I am so grateful to have learned from you in class and in life. Thank you for all of your ideas when I was stumped during the research process and for helping to shape my jumbled thoughts into a scholarly document of which I can be proud.

Thank you Susan Azaret Davies for being my accompanist for this recital. When you already had a day full of rehearsals, you happily made room for our rehearsals as well. Thank you for your encouragement, mezzo tips, and technical suggestions throughout this recital process as well as throughout the years. I would also like to thank Paul Woodring, who I have been fortunate to have as a coach for the past four years. Your vast experience, meticulous advice, and occasional sass will be missed when I leave!

Thank you to Dr. Tom Davies for being my senior project advisor, my choral director extraordinaire, conducting mentor, and advisor to my a cappella group, That's the Key. It has been an immense pleasure singing under you, learning from you, and laughing with you, both inside of rehearsal and outside.

Thank you Michele Abba and Druci Reese for keeping the music department in tip-top shape. You two are the driving force to this department, and I hope nobody takes you for granted!

Thank you Ben Reveley for recording every performance we do at Cal Poly. It has been a sometimes embarrassing, sometimes humorous, always valuable resource to observe my progress throughout the years.

Thank you to my friends for always singing along with me.