SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Dr. Nils Roemer, Interim Dean

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2022 SPRING ARTS FESTIVAL

BENJAMIN WISE: SENIOR RECITAL
MAJOR HONORS IN VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Wednesday, May 11, 2022 | 3:00 p.m. | Jonsson Performance Hall
Benjamin Wise Senior Recital
Major Honors in Visual and Performing Arts
with Jess Aikman, Piano

Wednesday, May 11, 2022
3:00 p.m. | Jonsson Performance Hall

Please hold applause until the end of each set.

If Music Be the Food of Love
Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

Music for a While from Oedipus

I’ll Sail Upon the Dog Star from A Fool’s Preferment

Sound the Trumpet from Come Ye Sons of Art
Milinda Notalapati, soprano

Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja from Die Zauberflöte
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Abendempfindung

Soave sia il vento from Così fan Tutte
Elisabeth Ann Bordelon, soprano
Abigail Muse, mezzo-soprano

American Lullaby
Gladys Rich (1892–1972)

Goodnight Moon
Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Niño Precioso
Traditional Nicaraguan
arr. Bettye Ware

La mi sola, Laureola
Fernando Obradors (1897–1945)

¿Corazon, porque pasáis?
Anonymous (17th Century)

So Pretty
Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Selections from Peter Pan
“Who Am I?”
“Who Am I?”

It Must Be So from Candide

No photography or recording devices are allowed. Please turn off all communication devices.
No food or drink is allowed in the Performance Hall or Theatre.
Now the modern critical world uses ‘adult’ as a term of approval. It is hostile to what it calls ‘nostalgia’ and contemptuous of what it calls ‘Peter Panthiasm’. When I was ten, I read fairy tales in secret and would have been ashamed if I had been found doing so. Now that I am fifty I read them openly. When I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up.

Love is also a major theme across my recital, and I wanted to explore how different styles and eras of music treat love. Whether it is an emotional ballad or a point of comic relief, love is often the motivation for great works of music. Opening the program, Henry Purcell’s "If Music Be the Food of Love" and "Music for a While" introduce love as a constant source of joy, and music as a manner of conveying and strengthening love as well as providing relief from the pains of life and the chaos of the surrounding world. Later, Mozart shows us three diverging visions of love. Papageno’s aria reveals his misguided desire of a lover simply to have as a possession. Mozart also portrays a satirical view of love as a test in Cosi fan Tutte, which (if you would believe its title’s message) tells us that all lovers secretly desire to be unfaithful. However, he also emphasizes the strength of the devotion of a friend or lover at the end of a life in the evening musing of "Abendempfändigung."

This set of lullabies shows the different ways that parents can show affection and love (or a lack thereof) for their children. Eric Whitacre’s arrangement of Goodnight Moon was specifically inspired by the routine of putting his son to sleep, while Gladys Rich’s Depression-era "American Lullaby" shows the inverse—alienation driven by the upper-class American lifestyle of the 1930s. The material focus of "American Lullaby" contrasts with the selfless love of one’s child evident in Goodnight Moon and the third lullaby of the set, "Niño Precioso." In a set of pieces taken from Spanish classical literature, love is a source of physical illness, from insomnia to deathly ailment. Leriano, a lover from the novel Carcel de Amor, dies of lovesickness after being spurned by his one true love, the princess Laureola. However, sometimes love is less certain than Leriano’s single-mindedness. In “¿Corazón, porqué pasáis?” the narrator lies awake wondering if they truly love the person in their bed. After exploring love as selflessness, comfort, possession, and devotion, we reach a view of love most consistent with my own in Bernstein’s Peter Pan: love is the defining characteristic of a home, a foundation that makes it possible to find peace, trusting, and faith as you go out into the world.

Program Notes

Henry Purcell’s "IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE" is a 1693 setting of poetry by Colonel Henry Heveningham. The title of the piece is Orsino’s opening line from William Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night, however the text diverges from its inspiration to meditate on the ties between music and love, rather than to portray love as an unwanted excess of the imagination. The piano, as is typical of the period, mimics a basso continuo accompaniment—a bass line with chords written for the continuo string section that largely improvised their part based on the piece’s chord structure.

"MUSIC FOR A WHILE" is a part of Purcell’s setting of Oedipus. The tragedy was originally conceived by Sophocles, but was reimagined by playwright John Dryden and set to music by Purcell in 1692. Oedipus, the king of Thebes, is being punished by the Furies, specifically Alecto, for unknowingly killing his father Laius and marrying his mother Jocasta. Alecto’s character represents chaos and Oedipus’ drive towards insanity, while the bass ostinato represents the soothing influence of music, which eases his pains. The piano part starts out with the calm four-note pattern and develops in complexity as the piece goes along until it returns to the measured simplicity of the original melody.

"I’LL SAIL UPON THE DOG STAR" is an excerpt from Purcell’s incidental music to A Fool’s Preferment, adapted by Thomas d’Urfey and based on a play by John Fletcher, and was first performed in 1688. This comedy is set in the court of Henry IV of England, and depicts the rise and fall of one Mr. Cocklebrain from courtly grace. "I’ll Sail Upon the Dog Star" is sung by the minor character Mr. Montfort as part of the courtly entertainment. The song’s floritura (florid ornaments meant to imitate the Italian style popular at the time) rapidly rise and fall as the speaker chases the moon and tears the rainbow from the sky as a form of text painting, matching the action of the text to the motion in the score.

"SOUND THE TRUMPET" is part of a series of odes composed for the birthday of Queen Mary in 1694. The voices mimic the two trumpets of the text, announcing themselves as a fanfare and echoing each other, as in the "rebound" of the music from the shore. "Sound the Trumpet" was also the first piece I remember struggling to learn in choir—the breath support required for the piece combined with tight harmonies and florid ornaments made it difficult for me to keep up. This was my introduction to Baroque-style music, and it was so formative to me as a young singer that I wanted to return to Purcell’s works during my undergraduate capstone.

"DER VOGELFÄNGER BIN ICH JA!" is an aria from Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte, sung by the strange birdcatcher Papageno. The part was originally written for Emanuel Schikanader, the director, principal actor, and co-author of the opera. Die Zauberflöte proved to be a massive success as the first German “Grand Opera,” and Papageno served as one of the major providers of comic relief for an otherwise serious, if fantastical, show. The up-tempo aria reflects the character’s lightheartedness and playful soul, while its repetition of both text and melody emphasizes his vapidity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja, stets lustig heißa hop-sa-sa!</td>
<td>The birdcatcher, that’s me! Always cheerful, hooray!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Vogelfänger bin bekannt</td>
<td>I’m the famous birdcatcher,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bei Alt und Jung im ganzen Land!</td>
<td>Known to young and old everywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weiß mit dem Lokken umzugehn,</td>
<td>I know how to set traps,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und mich auf’s Pfeifen zu verstehn!</td>
<td>And how to play my pipes!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum kann ich froh und lustig sein,</td>
<td>Thus can I be joyful and merry,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Den alle Vogel sind ja mein.</td>
<td>For all the birds are mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ein Netz für Mädchen möchte ich;</td>
<td>I would like a net for all the girls;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ich fing sie dutzendweis für mich!</td>
<td>I would catch myself dozens of them!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dann sperrte ich sie bei mir ein,</td>
<td>Then I’d lock them up with me,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und alle Mädchen wären mein.</td>
<td>And all the girls would be mine!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenn alle Mädchen wären mein</td>
<td>If they were mine,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So tauschte ich brav Zukker ein;</td>
<td>I’d trade the girls for sugar;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die welche mir am liebsten wär’,</td>
<td>I’d choose the one I liked most,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der gab’ ich gleich den Zukker her.</td>
<td>And give her that same sugar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und küßte sie mich zärtlich dann,</td>
<td>And she would kiss me tenderly,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War’ sie mein Weib und ich ihr Mann.</td>
<td>If she were my wife and I her husband,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie schlief an meiner Seite ein;</td>
<td>She would sleep there by my side;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ich wiegte wie ein Kind sie ein.</td>
<td>I would hold her like a child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Abendempfindung” is Mozart’s setting of a poem by educator, theologian, and farmer Joachim Heinrich Campe. The most important part of this piece is the text—the piano mirrors the rising and setting of the sun, as well as the shimmering glow of the moon and the whispering of the West Wind. The evening serves as a metaphor for the journey into the end of life, but is also often the time when one thinks unprompted about the mysteries that lay beyond one’s life.

It is evening, the sun has gone, and the moon is covered in a silverly glow. Thus life’s most beautiful hours fly away, passing as if in a dance. Soon life’s colorful scene escapes, and the curtain falls. Our play is over:

The friend’s tear already flows on our grave.
Soon, the West Wind whispers to me
A prediction out of the silence:
I will finish this life’s pilgrimmage,
And fly to the land of peace.
You will weep at my grave,
Grieving to see my ashes,
Then I will appear to you, my friends,
And you will have the breath of Heaven.
Give also to me a tear,
And pluck me a violet for my grave;
And with your soulful gaze
Look down gently upon me.
With your seelenvollen Blicke
Und mit deinem seelenvollen Blicke
Dedicate a tear to me, and ah!
Duerme tranquilo, duerme entretanto
Duerme chiquitito que hoy hace frio
Duerme chiquitito, yo velaré.

\[\text{Niño precioso, mas que el armiño,}\\ \text{Risueño niños, Dios del amor.}\\ \text{Eleva un canto, mi humilde voz.}\\ \text{Duerme tranquilo, duerme entretanto}\\ \text{Duerme chiquitito que hoy hace frio}\\ \text{Duerme chiquitito, yo velaré.}\]

Niño precioso, mas que el armiño, Child, more precious than the ermine, Riso niño, Dios del amor, Laughing child of a loving God, Eleva un canto, mi humilde voz. Sleep peacefully, sleep while my humble voice raises a song, Duerme tranquilo, duerme entretanto Sleep little baby on this day so cold, Duerme chiquitito, yo velaré. Sleep little baby, while I watch over you.

I chose to perform a set of Spanish classical songs because of my familiarity with Spanish language, history, and culture. These two pieces are both about love, but each takes a vastly different approach to the subject. “LA MI SOLA, LAUREOLA” mourns a longstanding unrequited love, while “¿CORAZÓN, PORQUÉ PASÁIS?” is an inward reflection on the uncertainty of one’s future in love—are they in love? Am I? How do I know? Both ultimately show the embodied nature of love or the lack thereof—the way it can disrupt even our routine daily functions of eating or sleeping.

“LA MI SOLA, LAUREOLA” is a villancico, or Spanish poem/song marked by the repetition of a refrain. It was written by Fernando Obradors after the tragic love of Leriano and Laureola in Diego de San Pedro’s 1492 novel Cárcel de amor. Leriano pines after his unrequited love, Laureola, even after being held prisoner and tortured by the metaphorical Desire. “El Auctor” (the narrator and author of the story) intervenes with both Desire and Laureola to produce a letter back to Leriano, but she ultimately rejects him for political reasons. Leriano shreds her letter and eats it as his final act, blaming Laureola for his death of emaciation (then thought of as a symptom of lovesickness.)

\[\text{La mi sola, Laureola}\\ \text{Yo el cautivo Leriano,}\\ \text{Amigo mio, el amor.}\\ \text{Herido de aquella mano}\\ \text{Que en el mundo es una sola.}\\ \text{La mi sola, Laureola.}\\ \text{Laureola, my one and only.}\\ \text{I am the captive Leriano,}\\ \text{Although I am quite proud}\\ \text{I’m wounded by that same hand}\\ \text{Of which in the world there is only one.}\\ \text{My one and only, Laureola.}\]

Eric Whitacre’s setting of Margaret Wise Brown’s GOODNIGHT MOON is the first time the publisher allowed the text of the classic children’s book to be set to music. The composer says “Over the first six years of his life, I must have read Goodnight Moon to my son a thousand times, maybe more. Somewhere around reading number 500 I began hearing little musical fragments as I read, and over time those fragments began to blossom into a simple, sweet lullaby.” Goodnight Moon was written for soprano Hila Plitmann—the mother of Whitacre’s son—to recall that memory of reading to their child, and I wanted to recall that feeling of tenderness in my performance of this piece.

Bettye Ware’s arrangement of NIÑO PRECioso, a traditional Nicaraguan lullaby, has a lilting, back-and-forth quality that feels almost like the rocking of a cradle. I have loosely translated this piece myself, trying to keep the poetic meaning of the text true to what a parent might say to lull their child to sleep.

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"My House" is also sung by Wendy in Peter Pan; it opens in the same recitative-aria form as "Who Am I?" The more free-form first few lines introduce the theme, then the melodic lines set in with a more standard rhythm. "My House" presents Wendy's vision of the future—a literal house of wood, stone, brick and mortar, but also the thing that differentiates a house from a home: love.

"IT MUST BE SO" is an aria from the operetta Candide, sung by the titular character. Candide and his friends have been educated in the philosophy of optimism by Dr. Pangloss, and Candide especially is deeply trusting of his teacher. At this point in the operetta, Candide has been exiled from his home of Westphalia by his uncle for professing his love to Cunegonde, and although he believes Cunegonde and his entire family dead, he still insists that this is the best of all possible worlds.

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