

THE PROGRAM NOTES OF A SONG RECITAL

by

SHUN-MEI TSAI

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. THE OPENING GROUP	4
"Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete"	
"Un certo non so che"	
"Music for a While"	
"If Guiltless Blood be Your Intent"	
II. EMILY DICKINSON SONGS	10
Vincent Persichetti	
Emily Dickinson	
"Out of the Morning"	
"When the Hills Do"	
"The Grass"	
III. THE OPERATIC ARIA	15
Giuseppe Verdi	
<u>La Forza del Destino</u>	
"Pace, pace, mio Dio"	
IV. SONGS BY HUGO WOLF	18
Hugo Wolf	
"Nun Wandre, Maria"	
"In dem Schatten meiner Locken"	
"Verschwiegene Liebe"	
"Mausfallen Sprüchlein"	
V. THREE POEMS FROM ANCIENT JAPAN	24
Hiroaki Minami	
<u>The Manyoshu</u>	
"Imo ni Koi"	
"Aimite Wa"	
"Asa ni Yuku"	
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	28
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	31

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INTRODUCTION

The paper is a study of the background of musical selections in a graduate song recital. The purpose of the work is to discuss the composers' biography, poets and the sources of poems, the literary concept of each poem and the vocal line, the accompaniment patterns, and the review of historical remarks.

The program is divided into five parts: the first section is selected from the vocal repertoire of the Baroque period; the second is chosen from American Art-song literature of the twentieth century; the third is an operatic aria from the nineteenth century Italian opera; the fourth is selected from German lieder; and the last section is a group of Japanese Art-songs.

The first group in the program includes two Italian songs, an English song, and an aria from the English oratorio, Susanna. The two Italian songs are "Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete," which is a love song with some passages written by G. M. Bononcini, and "Un certo non so che," written by Antonio Vivaldi. The latter is an example of the Baroque characteristic of affections in which music is subordinated to the words. The affection of the music is made to correspond to that of the text.

The next selection of the group is "Music for a While," written by Henry Purcell. The song is a typical example of basso ostinato writing for solo voice and continuo.

Handel was a well-known oratorio composer, both for solo voice and for chorus. After the success of the Messiah, he became a master of oratorio composition. The aria, "If Guiltless Blood be your Intent," is taken from the

English oratorio, Susanna, Act II.

The four songs were selected to achieve a good balance in which each song represents a significant point in the Baroque period. "Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete" is an example of early Italian song style. "Un certo non so che" is a typical example of the Baroque characteristic of affections. "Music for a While" is the representative of Purcell's basso ostinato writing. "If Guiltless Blood be your Intent" is in da-capo aria form.

The American Art-song is represented by the Emily Dickinson Songs and consists of four songs: "Out of the Morning," "I'm Nobody," "When the Hills Do," and "The Grass." The songs are relatively short and are characterized by their clarity and simplicity.

Opera was born at the turn of the seventeenth century as the central innovation of Italian Nuove Musiche. The first opera was Euridice by Caccini and Peri written in 1600. The development of opera arrived at its golden age in the nineteenth century. The traditions of Italian opera were notably maintained and furthered during the nineteenth century by Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini and Verdi. Verdi was as significant in his country as Wagner was in Germany. Without being influenced by Wagner, he led Italian opera to its apex. Although he did not enlarge the orchestra as Wagner did, Verdi amplified dramatic characterization in his operas by musical means.

La Forza del Destino is the transition work between La Traviata and Aida. The aria, "Pace, pace, mio Dio" is sung in Act IV by Leonora. The aria is one of the loveliest Verdi ever wrote, from its gentle opening to its brief, violent coda.

German lieder form the fourth group of the program. The history of the piano-accompaniment solo songs as an independent artistic genre developed rapidly in the nineteenth century with Franz Schubert; thus it falls within

the Romantic period. German lieder have won international recognition and significance. Their greatest representatives after Schubert are Schumann, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf.

Hugo Wolf concentrated on one poet at a time, and placed the name of the poet above that of the composer in the titles of his collections. The four songs of the group are taken from the Spanish Song-book, the Eichendorff Song-book and the Mörike Song-book.

The last group of songs was written by Hiroaki Minami. The three Japanese songs were written between 1966-1969 to poems from ancient Japan.

CHAPTER I

THE OPENING GROUP

By 1600 an impressive literature of solo songs with lute accompaniment already existed in Spain and England. However, from 1600, the rise of Italian monody brought with it fresh impetus for song composition. From then, monody ushered in Italian songs of the Baroque period. The first two songs of the group are chosen from Italian composers.

"Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete"

Giovanni Maria Bononcini (1643-1678) was the father of Giovanni Battista and Antonio Maria Bononcini. As he is known today, he was a composer of instrumental works and as a theorist. As a very young man he entered the service of Duke Francesco II. From 1671 he was a violinist in the court orchestra in Bologna. In his short lifetime, he published eleven sets of instrumental works, Cantate da Camara for solo voice and two violins, Madrigali for five voices, and a treatise, Musico Practico.¹

"Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete" is a lovely song with some flexible passages. It is a love poem. Musically, it is not overcomplex. The dynamic marking piano, used throughout the song, reflects the literary meaning of the poem. The English translation of the poem is as follows:

¹Nicolas Slonimsky, ed., Bakers Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (5th ed.; New York: G. Schirmer, 1958), p. 179.

Ah, from me no more hide yourself
 Lovely light of my sun.
 With revealing yourselves,
 As you are
 You can make this soul outside of sorrow.

"Un certo non so che"

Antonio Vivaldi was a highly individual and prolific composer of the Italian late Baroque period. Born in Venice in 1678, Vivaldi studied with his father and the Venetian operatic composer, Legrenzi. In 1703 he taught violin and conducted the orchestra at the music school of the Pietá for girls in Venice. In 1709 he was made maestro de concerti there. He held the position until 1740, but he traveled much in the interim in Italy, Germany, and France. In 1735 he resumed his position at the Pietá in Venice. In 1740 he went to Vienna, attracted by the opportunities presented to performers and composers at the court of Charles VI. However, he failed to prosper there, and died destitute in 1741.²

In his early career, Vivaldi developed the solo concerto for violin or flute and a new type of concerto grosso with two, three, or four independent instruments. He established the three movement form (fast-slow-fast, sometimes with a slow introduction).³ Known today as a composer of instrumental music, Vivaldi was highly successful in his day as an operatic writer. During the years in which he was writing operas (1713-1738), the theatres of Venice staged more works of his than of any other composer.⁴ "Un certo non so che" is an arietta. The English translation follows.

² Ibid., p. 1717.

³ Harold Gleason, Music Literature Outlines, Series II (Rochester, New York: Levis Music Stores, 1970), p. 74.

⁴ Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1960), p. 370.

A certain person who I do not know
 Who comes and passes through my heart,
 And yet there is no sorrow.
 Could this be love?
 In his voracious ardour
 Already setting down foot incautiously.

The song, although based on the diatonic scale, is highly chromatic. Its form is A B A; and the last section is a literal repetition of the first section. Each line of the poem is repeated twice with the same melodic pattern. The accompaniment originally was played by harpsicord, viola da gamba, and strings. The bass line is as important as the vocal line. The song represents an example of the Baroque characteristic of affections: music was subordinated to the words with the emotion of the music being made to correspond to that of the text. The tempo is marked riten, piu sostenuto, animato, lento, and a tempo. The middle section is more dramatic than the first, and the song ends with an affetuoso espressione coda.

"Music for a While"

The third song of the group is selected from the English Baroque period. The earliest English solo songs were found in two collections: Amphion Anglicus by John Blow, and Orpheus Britannicus by Henry Purcell. Purcell was one of the greatest composers in the entire history of English music. Born in 1659, he lived during the middle Baroque period and spent most of his short life in the service of the court. Purcell was a church musician, first as singer in the Chapel Royal, and later as an organist, choirmaster, and court composer. He died in 1695.⁵

Purcell studied with Cooke, Humphrey, and Blow. His musical style was influenced by Italian and French music, but he developed a style peculiarly

⁵Ibid., p. 319.

his own. Purcell wrote in a remarkably individual manner, and his songs and arias are perhaps among the most striking examples of his style of writing. "Musically, Purcell's songs and airs are so extraordinarily powerful that the limitations of his poetic materials seem to vanish during the actual performance."⁶

"Music for a While" is a great favorite among all Purcell's songs. It is originally written for male alto or counter tenor and continuo. Purcell was very fond of the basso ostinato and the song with that style of accompaniment for voice. The ground bass figure is used throughout the song. The bass line and voice part are in two-part counterpoint in which the melodic function of the bass part is as important as the voice part. The song is in A B A form. The B section has a new color figuration with florid passages. Another significant characteristic of the song is the using of word-painting, such as the word "drop" in which the descending interval of a third is repeated nine times. The text of the song is as follows:

Music for a while
 Shall all your cares beguile:
 Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd--
 And disdaining to be pleas'd,
 Till Alecto free the dead
 From their eternal bands,
 Till the snakes drop from her head
 And the whip from out her hands.

"If Guiltless Blood be your Intent"

The last song of the group was written by George Frederic Handel for the English oratorio, Susanna. Handel was born in 1685 at Halle, Germany. He traveled through many European countries, but he spent most of his life in England. Handel studied keyboard instruments, oboe, violin, and counterpoint

⁶Sergius Kagen, Music for the Voice (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 32.

with Zachow. He learned composition by copying music of South German and Italian composers. His creative career might be divided into three periods: the first was the German apprentice period, ending in 1706; the second was the Italian journeyman period, ending in 1710; and the third was the English master period, extending from 1711 to 1759. After the big success of the Messiah in 1741, he became a master of oratorio composition and wrote two oratorios for every season, including Susanna and Solomon in 1748. Handel wrote operas, oratorios, suites, concerti, harpsichord and orchestral works. The most famous of his works are Water Music, Fireworks Music, and Messiah.⁷

Handel was the master of Italian Bel-canto style. He developed his lyric and dramatic powers in chamber cantatas, oratorios, and operas. He developed the Italian opera seria with recitatives, ariosos, arias, duets, and ensembles for soloists. Handel's manner of writing for the voice is extraordinarily considerate of the singer. His melody is largely diatonic in character and is, thus, extremely well-suited to the human voice.⁸

Susanna is a Biblical drama with five individual characters: two elderly men, Susanna, her husband Joachim, and Daniel. The first performance of the oratorio was presented on February 10, 1749. The complete tale is told in 64 verses in three acts. The oratorio is a little masterpiece of dramatic story-telling, perfectly suited to musical treatment. Percy Young writes that Susanna possesses a plot which may be worked out in reality on any day of the week. Handel, like Shakespeare, took the symbolic titles of antiquity for convenience and proceeded to portray the persons of his own environment. The oratorio of Susanna is then placed in England much as is A Midsummer Night's

⁷Manfred F. Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1947), p. 315.

⁸Kagen, p. 178.

Dream, and behind the human action lies the perpetual beauty and terror of landscape.⁹ The aria is sung in the second act by Susanna. She summons courage to deal with the situation: "If guiltless blood be your intent."

The text is as follows:

If guiltless blood be your intent,
I here resign it all;
Fearless of death as innocent,
I triumph in my fall.

And if to fate my days must run,
O righteous heaven, thy will be done!

Paul Lang remarks:

The flower-like melody, rising and falling, is tender, and though Handel unfolds it effortlessly, a certain tension is maintained by an insistent rhythmic pattern in the accompaniment. Remember dramatic use is made of the da-capo principle as in the middle section Susanna falters, only to regain her resolve in the reprise. . . . The aria is distinguished by smooth counterpoint freely exchanged between the voice and the instruments.¹⁰

⁹Percy M. Young, The Oratorios of Handel (London: Dennis Dobson Ltd.), p. 175.

¹⁰Paul Henry Lang, George Frederic Handel (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1966), p. 479.

CHAPTER II

EMILY DICKINSON SONGS

Vincent Persichetti

Vincent Persichetti, born June 6, 1915, in Philadelphia, is one of the major contemporary American composers. His instruction in music began when he was five and included not only piano and organ but, by the time he was nine, counterpoint, score reading, transposition, and the actual writing of music. Persichetti studied piano with Alberto Jónas and Olga Samaroff and received his M. M. and Mus. Doc. from the Philadelphia Conservatory. Persichetti was head of composition at Philadelphia Conservatory from 1942 until 1948, when he became head of composition at Juilliard School of Music. In 1952 he began work as director of publication at Elkan Vogel Company, and in 1964 he became an adviser to the Ford Foundation.¹ At present he is an editor of the serious music department of the Theodore Presser Company.

Persichetti is a virtuoso pianist and organist and this might be the reason he has contributed so much music to the literature of the piano. Aside from ten sonatas, he has produced numerous shorter works for piano. He has composed large chamber music works, choruses, music for band, serenades for instrumental ensembles, and seven symphonies. He has written extended works for solo instruments and song cycles on texts of Wallace Stevens, Sara Teasdale, Carl Sandburg, James Joyce, Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, and Hilaire Belloc.

¹Virgil Thomson, American Music Since 1910 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 165.

His most ambitious song cycle to date is The Harmonium cycle. He has contributed to liturgical music with his recently completed Mass, Magnificat, and Hymns and Responses for the Church Year.² Persichetti is also the author of William Schuman and Twentieth-Century Harmony.

Persichetti is an intensely tonal composer, and his melody is more frequently diatonic than chromatic or atonal. Robert Evett remarks:

The special significance of Persichetti's music lies in its attempt to re-establish the basis for a common practice primarily in that he conceives of form, harmony, and the uses of tonality in broader terms than they do. He differs from the expressionists and other experimental schools of twentieth century primarily in that he finds much of value in simple, traditional technical means.³

Emily Dickinson

The four songs are taken from poems by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), written in different periods of her life, and expressing different themes. "Out of the Morning" and "The Grass" are poems about nature. "I'm Nobody" is about life. "When the Hills Do" is a love poem. Emily Dickinson, an American poet, is one of the greatest poets of nineteenth century America. She was educated at Amherst Academy and for one year at Mount Holyoke College, under Mary Lyon. Dickinson's life was outwardly eventless. She wrote in secret and guarded her poems even from her family. Occasionally she showed a few of her poems to T. W. Higginson, who was a literary critic.⁴ Over a thousand poems were discovered in Emily Dickinson's bureau after her death on the 15th of May, 1886. In all, she wrote nearly 1800 poems on themes taken from religion, love,

²William Schuman, "Vincent Persichetti and Twentieth-Century Harmony," Musical Quarterly, July, 1961, p. 380.

³Robert Evett, "The Music of Vincent Persichetti," Juilliard Review, Spring, 1955, p. 24.

⁴Hyatt Waggoner, "Emily Dickinson," Encyclopedia of Americana, International ed., IX, p. 81.

nature, and life. She sometimes anticipated the freedom characteristic of poetry in the twentieth century.⁵ The lyrics Persichetti uses follow with a discussion of each song.

"Out of the Morning"

Will there really be a morning?
Is there such a thing as day?
Could I see it from the mountains
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water-lilies?
Has it feathers like a bird?
Is it brought from famous countries
Of which I have never heard?

Oh, some scholar! Oh, some sailor!
Oh, some wise man from the skies!
Please do tell a little pilgrim
Where the place called morning lies?

The poem is written in a regular pattern of three quatrain with strong rhyme of the second and fourth lines and regular rhythm. It is in quadruple rhythm and has three-bar phrases. The song is in A B A form. The music is repeated at the third stanza. The accompaniment is monophonic in texture. The accompaniment part is only a rhythmic support of the vocal line.

"I'm Nobody"

I'm nobody! Who are you!
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us--don't tell!
They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog--
To tell your name the live-long day
To an admiring bog!

"I'm Nobody" is a contrast to "Out of the Morning" in rhythm and melodic

⁵James D. Hart, The Oxford Companion to American Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 194.

style. The rhythmic figure is the most significant point in the song. Persichetti sets it as a jazz-like rhythmic pattern. Robert Evett states that "Persichetti's rhythmic element is always strong and emphatic."⁶ The characteristically strong rhythm is evident in the song. The generating motive of the song is in the piano accompaniment rather than in the vocal line. The first three bars of the piano part contain the motive which is repeated through the song. The vocal line is in a declamatory style rather than in a melodic style.

"When the Hills Do"

Alter? When the hills do.
Falter? When the sun
Questions if his glory
Be the perfect one.

Surfeit? When the daffodil
Doth of the dew;
Even as herself, O friend!
I will of you!

The sustaining love of the poem is reflected in the music. The simplicity of accompaniment helps make it an effective combination of poetry and music.

"The Grass"

The grass so little has to do,
A sphere of simple green,
With only butterflies brood,
And bees to entertain.

And stir all day to pretty tunes
The breeze fetch along,
And hold the sunshine in its lap
And bow--to every thing;

⁶Evett, p. 17.

And thread the dews all night like pearls,
And make itself so fine,
A duchess were too common
For such a noticing.

And even when it dies, to pass
In odors so divine,
As lowly spices gone to sleep,
Or amulets of pine.

Lyric and gentle, the poem describes the natural beauty of the grass. Appropriate to the sense of the words, "andante affectuoso" is marked at the beginning of the song. The first two bars of the vocal line contain the motive of the song. The music is set in regular two-bar phrases and sentences. The melodic line constantly follows one phrase with another. The piano accompaniment is not extremely important in the piece, but the interlude is significant. The motive is replayed in the interlude. The piano part and vocal line interchange the motive, and the song ends with a brief coda.

CHAPTER III

THE OPERATIC ARIA

Giuseppe Verdi

Verdi, who was born in 1813, was one of the major Italian operatic composers in the nineteenth century. He came from a family of farmers and small merchants who had lived in Le Roncole for some two hundred years. He was a pupil of Ferdinando Provesi in Busseto and at sixteen was already a well-trained musician. In Milan from 1832 to 1834 he was further encouraged by the conductor Vincenzo Lavigna to pursue contrapuntal and literary studies of classical and late Baroque works. In 1836 he was maestro di musica in Busseto. During that same year he completed his first opera, Oberto. Verdi's career as a composer spanned more than fifty years.¹

Verdi's career may be divided into three periods: the first culminated with Il Trovatore and La Traviata, the second reached its apex with Aida, and the last consisted of Otello and Falstaff. Most of Verdi's operas are tragic. Verdi's main requirements of a libretto are strong emotional situations, contrasts, and speed of action. Most of his operas contain four main acts or three acts with a prologue. The second and third act have important ensemble finales. There is usually a big duet in the third act, and fourth act commonly opens with an accompanied chorus.²

¹ Eric Blom, ed., Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (5th ed.; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1954), Vol. VIII, p. 728.

² Grout, p. 555.

Verdi understood the purpose and function of music in the theatre, and developed a superb draft of dramatic and lyric writing. His melodic gift was one of great inventiveness. In his best operas, he created arias and ensembles of extraordinarily effective appeal. Verdi wrote about twenty-four operas, a Requiem and a string quartet.

La Forza del Destino

La Forza del Destino, which was completed in 1862 and revised in 1869, was commissioned for production in the winter of 1861-62 by the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg. Shortly before this time Verdi had been urged to stand for election to the first Parliament, because of the prestige his name would bring the new state of Busseto. The task of being in Parliament conformed neither to his talents nor inclinations, but he accepted and sat in the Chamber of Deputies for a few years. Before he ended his brief political life, he signed the contract for writing La Forza del Destino. The libretto of the opera was written by Francesco Maria Piave, but it was based on Don Alvaro o La Fuera del Sino by Angel Saavedra, Duke of Rivas.³ The opera was scheduled to be performed in early 1862 in St. Petersburg. However, owing to the illness of one of the singers, it was postponed until November of that year. The opera as we know it today is the revised version which was made by Verdi with the libretto altered by Antonio Ghislanzoni for the first production of the revamped opera at La Scala in 1869.

"Pace, pace, mio Dio"

The aria "Pace, pace, mio Dio" is sung in the fourth act by Leonora, a daughter of the Marquis of Calatrava. Leonora has left her ill-fated love.

³Charles Osborne, The Complete Operas of Verdi (London: Victor Gollanca, 1969), p. 331.

"Peace, peace, Oh my God!" she implores to a melody of haunting sadness and loveliness that rises as thoughts of Alvaro, her lover, come crowding into her mind. In despair, she finally exclaims that her longing for peace is in vain. Suddenly the sound of fighting can be heard, and calling down a curse on whoever dares to profane her solitude, she returns to her cavern.⁴ The English translation of the libretto of the aria is as follows:

Peace, peace, my God. Cruel misfortune constrains me, alas,
to languish; from so many years my deep suffering continues as the
first day. Peace, peace, my God.

I love him, it is true, but with beauty and courage so long,
God adore him that I love him still, nor will I be able to remove
his image from my heart. Fate! fate! fate!

A crime has separated us down here. Alvaro, I love you.
Above in the sky, it is written: I will never see you any more!
Oh God make me die, because only death can give me calmness. In
vain, the peace which this soul hoped for at the mercy of so
much sorrow, in the midst so much sorrow.

Miserable bread, you come to prolong my disconsolate life,
but who comes? Who dares to profane the sacred place? curse,
curse, curse . . .

At the opening of the aria, before Leonora's andante prayer for peace, we hear in the orchestra the agitated melody first played at the opening of the Overture. In the middle of the aria, the tempo grows a little more urgent as part of the agitato theme of the Overture returns. Leonora cries that her longing for peace is in vain. However, the agitato theme never occurs in the voice part. The aria is one of the loveliest Verdi ever wrote, from its gentle opening to its brief, violent coda. Charles Osborne says:

. . . it is Mozartian, not only in its simplicity of means, but
also in its testing of the soprano's technique. The sudden leap
to a pianissimo B flat at "Invan la pace" is a locus classicus;
the effect, if brought off, is stunning. . . .⁵

⁴ Spike Aughes, Famous Verdi Operas (London: Robert Hale, 1968), p. 381.

⁵ Osborne, p. 346.

CHAPTER IV

SONGS BY HUGO WOLF

Hugo Wolf

Hugo Wolf was born on March 13, 1860, in Windischgratz, Austria. He was given violin and piano lessons by his father at a very early age. He studied at the conservatory in Vienna, and by 1881-82 he was a conductor in Salzburg. From 1884 to 1887 Wolf was music critic in Vienna. In early 1886 he found himself as a composer, and composed in that year alone nearly one hundred songs in rapid succession. From 1888 to 1891 he wrote over two hundred songs to poems by Mörike, Eichendorff, Goethe, Griebel, Keller, Heyse, and Michelangelo. This was the most prolific time of his lieder writing. After a few years of silence he wrote his only complete opera, Der Corregidor, in 1896. After 1897, because of madness, he was no longer creative, and he died in a Viennese mental hospital in 1903.¹

Wolf had studied the lieder of his predecessors, particularly Schubert, Schumann, and Loewe. His musical gifts and his original approach to melody, rhythm, and harmony enabled him to compose in a unique fashion. He developed a new turn under the influence of Wagnerian declamatory style. Wolf conceived the song as a poem for voice and piano. The piano largely supplies the color, sketching, tone-painting, and the extensive passage of prelude, interlude, and postlude. Most of his songs are musically not overcomplex. They are in duple

¹Eric Sams, The Songs of Hugo Wolf (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 2.

or quadruple rhythm, set out in regular two-bar phrases and four-bar sentences.² Because most of his songs are dominated by their texts, the singer who interprets Wolf's songs must be very conscious of the relationship between the poem and the vocal melody.

"Nun Wandre, Maria"

"Nun Wandre, Maria" is from the Spanisches Liederbuch. It was completed on the fourth of November, 1889. The Spanish Song-book contains songs for ten religious and thirty-four secular Spanish poems. These poems, from sixteenth century and seventeenth century Spanish poetry, were translated into German by Paul Heyse and Emanuel Geibel.³ Wolf began to write the song-book on October 28, 1889, after returning to Vienna from Germany. The Spanish Song-book contains some of his masterpieces.

"Nun Wandre, Maria" is a religious song in which Joseph encourages the weary Maria along the road to Bethlehem. The text of the English translation is as follows:

You must journey on, Mary; it will soon be morning, and there is not much further to go now. Come along, my darling, my precious; we shall soon reach Bethlehem.

Then you can get your proper rest and sleep; it will soon be morning, and there is not much further to go now.

Yes, Lady, I can see that your strength is failing, and that you are in pain. I wish I could help you more.

But take comfort; we shall surely find some lodging there. It will soon be morning, and there is not much further to go now.

If only your time were come, Mary, I'd give a good reward for the good tidings. I'd even give away our little donkey. It will soon be morning; come along then, there is not much further to go now.

²Ibid. p. 1

³Frank Walker, Hugo Wolf (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 252.

The poem is in a long Christian tradition of devout imaginative embroidery on the Gospels. The voice part lies mainly within the span of a fourth, B to E, with which the notes B, C sharp, D and E are heard repeatedly. The dynamics in voice and piano are equally restrained. The song rarely rises above mezzo-forte, and that for only two half-bars; all the rest is marked piano and pianissimo.⁵ The journey-portraying figures of the prelude continue throughout the song. Eric Sams says:

. . . companionable thirds in the right hand sound their steady equal quavers over a trudging bass, with a processional effect as the quavers rise from the lower to the middle register, suggesting an uphill journey. As they level out, the quiet comfort of the voice part begins.⁶

At the end, the piano part moves downhill and away. The voice is heard as if in the distance, singing "Comme! nah ist der Ort." As the little procession moves out of earshot, the piano postlude, in its lower register, finds and holds for the first time in the song the tonic major key with moving warmth and assurance of rest and sleep soon.

"In dem Schatten meiner Locken"

"In dem Schatten meiner Locken," which was completed on the seventeenth of November, 1889, is a secular song. It was incorporated by Hugo Wolf into his opera, Der Corregidor. It is sung by Frasquita in Act I. The poem was translated into German by Heyse. The English translation is as follows:

In the shade of my long tresses my sweetheart has gone to sleep. Shall I wake him? Ah, no. Early each morning I comb out my flowing hair; in vain, for the wind blows it about.

Shadowing tresses, sighing breezes have sent my sweetheart to sleep. Shall I wake him? Ah, no. I shall be told how I have tormented him by refusing him for so long, and how his whole life depends on the touch of my sunbrowned cheek.

⁵Sams, p. 166.

⁶Ibid., p. 167.

He calls me his tormentor, and yet he has gone to sleep by my side. Shall I wake him? Ah, no.⁷

The song ranks among the finest products of Wolf's genius in a lighter vein. It is more concentrated in style. Wolf uses the key-changes to indicate the changing thoughts of the singer. The question-and-answer refrain, "Weck' ich ihn nun auf? Ach nein," is delightfully interpreted by Wolf as finding the singer of two minds. Frank Walker remarks:

. . . as Wolf interprets the poem, this suggestion that the girl should waken her sleeping lover is a sudden idea that strikes her mind, and its onset is depicted by the abrupt entry of the new key. For a moment she plays with the idea, then abandons it, the music slips into another fresh key, G flat . . .⁸

The dancing thoughts in the piano's first bar persist through almost the whole song. The song ends with four measures of summary for the piano; two and one-half bars express the gay characteristic rhythm of the poem; one and one-half bars are the answer, "Ah, nein," this time subdued and without key change, the final answer.⁹

"Verschwiegene Liebe"

"Verschwiegene Liebe" is taken from the Eichendorff Volume. Eichendorff came from Silesia, being born at Lubowitz Palace into a family of Catholic nobility in 1788, and died in 1857. He and his brother were taught by private tutors. He was a master of the simple nature poem and the minstrel-like wandering song. His literary significance rests largely on his lyrical poems. "He has one foot in the dream-world of Romanticism, but the other is on solid practical ground. He spoke of the poet's serious responsibility as a citizen

⁷Sams, p. 176.

⁸Walker, p. 255.

⁹Sams, p. 176.

and human being."¹⁰ It is a delightful poem, and is typical of Eichendorff.

The English translation of the poem is as follows:

Over the treetops and the standing corn the clouds go drifting by,
who can guess their secrets? So my thoughts go flying free
in the silence of the night.

If only she could guess who is staying awake to think of her
when all else is asleep. My love for her is silent as flying clouds,
serene as the night.¹¹

The song is said to have been written in one sudden flash of inspiration, immediately following a reading of the poem. This is a lovely and delicately beautiful song. It is in strophic form, and the brief prelude sets the scene. A lulling theme in single notes covers a warm melody, a variant of which forms the opening vocal phrase. The music is repeated for the second verse, leading to a piano postlude in which the poignant discords are lingeringly resolved.

Eric Sams says:

The song is so easy in its rhythmic and melodic flow that the story is understandable. But the felicity with which the poet's picture is redrawn in floating melodies and lulling rhythms, and painted with all the dark and bright of the harmonic palette, makes of this little nocturne for voice and piano a memorable and moving experience.¹²

"Mausfallen Sprüchlein"

"Mausfallen Sprüchlein" is taken from the Mörike Liederbuch. It is one of six songs which were Wolf's first published work. The songs were all for woman's voice and dedicated to his mother.

Mörike was one of the most famous German poets. He was born in 1804 and died in 1875. "His poetry is expressed with Classical measure, very often

¹⁰ Elaine Broody and Robert Fowkes, The German Lied and Its Poetry (New York: New York University Press, 1971), p. 143.

¹¹ Sams, p. 100.

¹² Ibid., p. 101.

with inimitable sensual grace."¹³ The song is a characteristic of Wolf's childhood. The English translation is as follows:

Little guest, little house. Mrs. Mouse, or Mr. Mouse comes
whisking in tonight, when the moon shines bright, bright, bright.

But be sure to shut the door behind you! and do not fail
to watch your tail, mind you.

And then we'll sing and dance in a ring. Take care!
Beware, I think my cat will be dancing there.¹⁴

This is a little song, to be sung while walking three times around a mouse-trap. Eric Sams says that "The tiny piece scurries by with inimitable youthful grace--an authentic Wolfian masterpiece in miniature. The charm of Mörike's is real."¹⁵ The song gives a very life-like re-creation of mouse-charming. The piano has series of tiny phrases that keep popping up in the treble, "like the emergence of a tentative whisker, and are tempted out very slightly further each time by the alluring vocal melody."¹⁶

¹³Brody and Fowkes, p. 261.

¹⁴Sams, p. 27.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 29.

CHAPTER V

THREE POEMS FROM ANCIENT JAPAN

Three Poems from Ancient Japan was written by Hiroaki Minami, a contemporary Japanese composer. Since the drastic reforms of Emperor Meiji (1868-1912) included the adoption of European music into the Japanese education system, European music became a part of Japanese life. Moreover, since the end of the World War II, Japan has shown an affinity for Western music. Japanese musicians have adopted Western style, and Tokyo and other big cities have built large symphonic orchestras, opera production companies and ballet groups. Japan has produced some important performing artists, conductors and composers in the Western style.

Hiroaki Minami

Minami was born in Korea in 1934. He was graduated from Tokyo College of Fine Arts in composition. In 1963 he went to West Germany to study composition for three years. Now he is a professor of composition and theory at the Tokyo College of Music. Minami has written string quartets, orchestral works, a choral work for double mixed chorus and orchestra, and songs to the poems of ancient Japanese poets. His song cycle, Banka, includes three songs for soprano and orchestra to poems by ancient Japanese poets. It was first performed at the 42nd Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in Warsaw in 1968.¹

¹Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 1266.

Minami emphasizes that fundamental theory is important, but he attempts to establish a new tone color in his music. He said, "The style of music reflects its era. The big difference in modern music is the treatment of its tone color and the resolution of harmony."² He uses strong dynamic markings, ranging from pianissimo to triple forte in a song. His melodic line is highly chromatic.

The Manyoshu

The poems of the three songs are taken from The Manyoshu, Books IV, X, and XI. The Manyoshu is the oldest of the early Japanese anthologies, assembled by Manyo. The poetry collection consists of twenty books and contains more than four thousand poems. They were written for the most part by the poets who flourished in Fujiwara and Nara periods, the last half of the eighth century. The periods coincide with the Golden Age of Chinese poetry, the era of the Tang dynasty when Li-Po and Tu-Fu lived and sang.³

Manyo lived in a world peopled by multitudes of gods and spirits. "It is noteworthy that despite the wide acceptance of Confucianism and Buddhism, almost all the gods who fed the wellspring of his lyric inspiration were purely Japanese."⁴

Minami is especially fond of the Manyoshu poems. He wrote:

Each period of Japanese language has a different style in the history of Japan, but they were always pure Japanese. However, the language of The Manyoshu is highly sensuous, and is strongly attractive to me. The Manyoshu's poems are characterized by directness and frankness in their expression of life's joy, love, grief, and indignation.

²Hiroaki Minami, "The Fundamental Theory of Composition," Tokyo College of Music News, January, 1973, p. 32.

³Donald Keene, The Manyoshu (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. xxxviii.

⁴Ibid., p. xiii.

The Manyoshu reflects Japanese life and civilization of the 7th and 8th centuries, and not only does it record the indigenous thoughts and beliefs, but it also touches upon Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism imported from the continent, China. The Manyoshu represents the foundation philosophy of Japanese life in all of Japanese history.

The modern educated people live by complicated laws. Although the social situation is under control, the nature of the human being is lost. The nature of life and death were the elements of Manyo's spirits. The pure language and Manyo's spirits gave me the ideas for writing.⁵

"Imo ni Koi"

"Imo ni Koi" is taken from Book XI of The Manyoshu. The book contains anonymous poems. This poem describes a man who dreams he is in love with a girl, and his tears pass through the wooden pillow to his sleeve. The song was written on April 23, 1966. The English translation of the poem is as follows:

I am in love with her,
I cry, my tears pass through my wooden pillow.
My sleeve is wet.

The song starts with a long prelude. The prelude tells the dream about the beloved. Suddenly the mood is changed, the dynamic marking rises to forte, then the voice starts. The most significant part of the song is that the literary meaning is reflected by the strong rhythmic feeling. The meter is changed very often; the first four measures are marked 7/8, 2/4, 4/4, and 7/8. The melody is based on the diatonic scale, but highly chromatic. The piano accompaniment supplies the color, and contains extensive passages of prelude, interlude, and postlude.

⁵Ryohei Nomoto, ed., Sixty-five-year History of Tokyo College of Music (Tokyo: Tokyo College of Music Press, 1972), p. 102.

"Aimite Wa"

"Aimite Wa" was written on September 6, 1966. The poem was taken from Book IV of The Manyoshu. The English translation is as follows:

It is not been many days, since I met my lover.
The thoughts of her drive me to madness.

After the brief prelude, the voice starts without accompaniment on a descending chromatic scale for two phrases of introduction; then the piano part comes in showing the scene of madness in which the dynamic marking rises to triple forte.

"Asa ni Yuku"

"Asa ni Yuku" is taken from Book X of The Manyoshu. After a long night of dreaming, the speaker of the poem sees that morning comes and the birds' song is sad. The English translation of the poem is as follows:

The birds' song is sad this morning.
It is like my own sadness.

The song was completed on September 9, 1969. The Schubertian accompaniment figures which are used throughout the song show the influence of the German lieder style on Minami. Another significant point is the use of the tone-painting in the vocal line. After a four-measure prelude, the voice enters without accompaniment; one syllable sustains on a long line with ornamentation. This kind of treatment in the melodic line is repeated many times throughout the song.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The recital program was selected for two reasons: first, it was selected to exhibit various characteristic styles of vocal works, or a unique composer's style in the history of music; second, it was selected as aesthetically interesting vocal repertoire.

The four songs in the first group represent various characteristics of the Baroque style: "Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete" is a style of theatrical writing of the early Italian opera; "Un certo non so che" is characteristic of the affective style of writing; "Music for a While" is an example of Purcell's basso ostinato; "If Guiltless Blood be your Intent" is in da-capo aria form.

The Emily Dickinson Songs were selected to represent a major American composer. They are not representative of every trend in the twentieth century American Art-song style; however, they were a good choice for one who has not had a long exposure to singing in English.

The aria is a representative piece from the nineteenth century Italian opera. It was chosen to demonstrate the vocal technique of the bel canto period.

The German lieder were selected from various collections, written by Hugo Wolf. Each song represents the composer's style in various ways. "Mausfallen Sprüchlein" is a humorous character piece of childhood. "In dem Schatten meiner Locken" is representative of the composer's work under the influence of Wagnerian declamatory style. The warm and expressive melody and richness of harmonic expansion of the "Verschwiegene Liebe" are typical of the Romantic period.

The three Japanese songs illustrate the efforts of a contemporary Japanese composer to write in the Western idiom. His goal is the use of dissonance within traditional harmonic structures.

In assessing the aesthetic impact of the program the following points are noted.

It might be better to use the original instruments to perform the "Un certo non so che;" the basso continuo accompaniment would be heard very clearly and would be more authentic. "If Guiltless Blood be Your Intent" is a long and possibly tedious da-capo aria. It could be more successful if the repeat section could be cut some.

The Emily Dickinson Songs do not show a great amount of contrast. Only the second, "I'm Nobody" presents a contrast in tempo. However, these are significant poems with very thoughtful texts. They could be more understandable if the words were printed for the performance.

The German lieder exhibited an interesting combination of tempo contrasting, slow-fast-slow-fast. They are a good choice for one just starting to approach German lieder, because Wolf's treatment of musical setting is natural to the text.

The Japanese songs were chosen because it was felt that they would be interesting to a Western audience. They are not representative music, but they are written in Western style.

In conclusion, the author finds the following points. The study of the composers' biographies and musical style increased the knowledge of historical background of the time and the performing practice of the periods. The examination of the relationship between poem and melodic line increased the knowledge of musical expression of texts and aided in their interpretation.

The study of the source of the poems and the translations increased the understanding of the literary background, the poetic style, and underlying emotions. The study of the accompaniments increased the understanding of its relationship to the vocal line and the literary concept.

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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

P R E S E N T S

* * * * * SHUN-MEI TSAI, SOPRANO * * * * *

and

* * * * * SHIRLEY MALONE, PIANO * * * * *

In Recital

Tuesday, July 2, 1974

8:00 P.M.

Chapel Auditorium

P R O G R A M

I

Deh, più a me non váscondete G. M. Bononcini
 (1640-1678)
 Un certo non so che Antonio Vivaldi
 (1675-1741)
 Music for a While Henry Purcell
 (1659-1695)
 "If Guiltless Blood be Your Intent", Susanna George Handel
 (1685-1759)

II

Emily Dickinson Songs Vincent Persichetti
 Out of the Morning (1915-)
 I'm Nobody
 When the Hills do
 The Grass

III

"Pace, pace, mio Dio", La Forza del Destino Giuseppe Verdi
 (1813-1901)

I N T E R M I S S I O N

IV

Nun Wandre, Maria Hugo Wolf
 In dem Schatten meiner Locken (1860-1903)
 Verschwiegene Liebe
 Mausfallen-Sprüchlein

V

Three Poems from Ancient Japan Hiroaki Minami
 Imo ni Koi (1934-)
 Aimite wa
 Asa ni Yuku

THE PROGRAM NOTES OF A SONG RECITAL

by

SHUN-MEI TSAI

B. A., Tokyo College of Music, 1971

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1974

The paper is a study of the background of musical selections in a graduate song recital. The study of the paper includes composers' biographies, poets and the sources of poems, the literary concept of poem and the vocal line, the accompaniment patterns, and the review of historical remarks.

The first group of the program includes four songs from the Baroque vocal repertoire. Each song of the group represents its characteristic of the Baroque period. 'Deh, piu a me non v'ascondete' is a typical example of the early Italian song style. 'Un certo non so che' is a typical example of the Baroque characteristic of affections. 'Music for a While' is the representative of Purcell's basso ostinato writing. 'If Guiltless Blood be Your Intent' is in da-capo form.

The second group of the program is represented by the Emily Dickinson Songs, written by Vincent Persichetti. The songs are 'Out of the Morning,' 'I'm Nobody,' 'When the Hills Do,' and 'The Grass.' They are relatively short and are characterized by their clarity and simplicity. The melodic lines are based on the diatonic scale.

The third selection is an operatic aria, 'Pace, pace, mio Dio.' The aria is taken from La Forza del Destino by Verdi. It is sung by Leonora in Act IV. The aria is one of the loveliest Verdi ever wrote. At the opening of the aria, the agitated theme which was played at the opening of the Overture could be heard.

German lieder form the fourth group of the program. The four songs of the group were written by Hugo Wolf. 'Nun Wand're, Maria' is in a long Christian tradition of devout imaginative embroidery of the Gospel. The journeying figure of the prelude continues throughout the whole song. 'In dem Schatten meiner Locken,' another Wolf interpretation, is filled with melodic enchantment and harmonic subtlety to indicate the changing thoughts of the singer.

"Verschwiegene Liebe" is a delicately beautiful song. The brief prelude sets the scene. It is in strophic form. "Mausfallen Sprüchlein" is a characteristic of Wolf's childhood. The piano has series of tiny phrases representative of the mouse. They are tempted out very slightly a little further each time by the alluring vocal melody.

The last group of the program includes three Japanese songs written by Hiroaki Minami. The poems are taken from The Manyoshu, which is the oldest poetry collection by ancient Japanese poets. The melodic line of the three songs are based on the diatonic scale, but is highly chromatic.