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A RECITAL

by

BARBARA ANN MILLER

B. S., Kansas State University, 1978

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A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

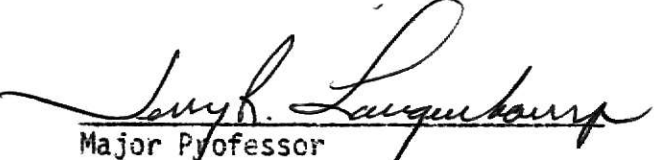
MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1980

Approved by:

  
Major Professor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM. . . . .	1
I. ROBERT BAKSA: MORE SONGS TO POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON. . . . .	2
II. LAWRENCE N. GROUPÉ: FOUR VOICES FOR AUTUMN. . . . .	7
III. HECTOR BERLIOZ: LES NUITS D'ÉTÉ . . . . .	10
IV. MANUEL DE FALLA: SIETE CANCIONES POPULARES ESPAÑOLAS. . . . .	18
V. JOHANNES BRAHMS: ALTO RHAPSODY. . . . .	26
APPENDIX . . . . .	33
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	35

STUDENT RECITAL #124

SEASON 1979-80

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

## BARBARA MILLER, Mezzo-Soprano

B.S., Kansas State University, 1978

assisted by

SUZANNE TORKELSON, PIANO

Sunday, March 2, 1980

All Faiths Chapel

3:30 p.m.

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Music

## PROGRAM

## MORE SONGS TO

POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON, OP. 40 . . . . . *Robert Baksa*  
(born c. 1940)  
No matter—now—Sweet  
There's a certain slant of light  
Poor little Heart!

FOUR VOICES FOR AUTUMN . . . . . *Lawrence N. Groupé*  
(born 1958)  
LAURIE BRENNER, SOPRANO  
KATHY HALL, VIOLA

LES NUITS D'ETE, OP. 7 . . . . . *Hector Berlioz*  
(1803-1869)  
L'Absence  
Sur les Lagunes  
Villanelle

## INTERMISSION

SEVEN SPANISH FOLK SONGS . . . . . *Manuel de Falla*  
(1876-1946)  
El Paño Moruno  
Seguidilla Murciana  
Asturiana  
Jota  
Nana  
Cancion  
Polo

RHAPSODIE "ABER ABSEITS WER IST'S?", OP. 53 . . . . . *Johannes Brahms*  
(1833-1897)  
PAUL TORKELSON, TENOR  
BRAD SHORT, TENOR  
RICHARD BRUNNER, BARITONE  
MARK MILLER, BASS

## ROBERT BAKSA: MORE SONGS TO POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON

"My feeling is that whatever I could say should be evident in the music itself, since my overall concern is for clarity... in expression, form, and texture. Naturally I'm most attracted to poetry which has a single mood or dramatic incident which can be reflected in the music."<sup>1</sup>

Born in 1938, Robert Baksa began his musical career, like many composers, with piano lessons at the age of five. When he was seven years old, his family moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he studied the violin, mainly because the family could not afford a piano. In the late 1950's, Baksa's family did purchase a piano, and he used it as a vehicle for composition rather than performance. By the time he entered the University of Arizona in 1957, Baksa had already composed over fifty pieces, many of which had been publicly performed by his high school orchestra. He had also written a long piano suite, Legend of Rome, which won him a Superior rating in the Junior Division of the National Federation of Music Club Composition Contest. A short section of this work, Meditation, was orchestrated and became his first published work.

After four years at the University, studying with Henry Johnson and Robert McBride, the young composer spent the summer at Tanglewood on scholarship and studied there with Lucas Foss.

Baksa returned to New York City in 1962, where he intended to pursue graduate work; however, this did not materialize due to lack of scholarship help. Baksa became a copyist and continued this occupation until the end of 1979.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Baksa, in a letter of March 8, 1980 to the present writer.

In 1968, the National Federation of Music Clubs honored his Aria da Capo with second place in its contest for a one-act opera. This brought the work to the attention of the Metropolitan Opera Studio who, after performing excerpts in concert, commissioned a new work, Red Carnations, to be used in school performances. In 1969 he received a grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation to cover the cost of preparing the orchestral parts for Aria da Capo, which was premiered by the Lake George Opera that August.

The major event in his career these last few years has been the establishment of Composer's Library Editions, a publishing company devoted exclusively to the release of Baksa's compositions. In a telephone conversation on March 8, 1980, Mr. Baksa said, "This company was my response to a situation which faces many composers. While my publishers had had great success with my works--especially the choral works which have sold over 100,000--they seemed reluctant to publish less commercial ventures which might better establish my reputation." An agreement was made with Alexander Broude, Inc. to distribute the work of the new company. Among the first releases were two volumes of songs to poems of Emily Dickinson which have received high praise from the National Association of Teachers of Singing.<sup>2</sup>

Many of Baksa's songs are composed to texts by American and English poets. Baksa says, "The Dickinson songs were all written in my 20's. Since that time I've written 60-70 songs on texts by . . .poets, most of whom are not well-known today. Many of these songs will be published in collections over the next few years."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>All biographical information taken from information attached to letter received by Robert Baksa, March 8, 1980.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Baksa, letter of March 8, 1980 to the present writer.