A SENIOR RECITAL

KRISTOPHER JORDAN, BARITONE

WITH

ELENA MIRAZCHIYSKA, PIANO

Sunday, 11 May 2008
2:00 P.M.
Doc Rando Recital Hall
Beam Music Center
- Program -

*Tutta Raccolta Ancor*
*from Scipione*

*Frondi tenere...Ombra mai fù*
*from Serse*

*Der arme Peter*
*Belsatzar*

*Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée*
*Le dromadaire*
*La chèvre du Thibet*
*La sauterelle*
*Le dauphin*
*L'écrevisse*
*La carpe*

- Interval -

*Blagoslovljaju vas, lesa...*
*Nam zvjozdy krotkie sijali...*
*Serenada Don-Zhuana*

*Two Stevenson Songs*
*Rain*
*Where go the boats?*

*Echo*
*The Ballad Singer*

Kristopher Jordan is a student of Dr. Serdar Ilban. This performance is offered in partial fulfillment for the Bachelor of Music Degree in Vocal Performance.
- Program Notes and Translations -

Composed at opposite ends of Händel's career, Scipione (1726) and Serse (1738) were both unsuccessful. However, both operas later gained acclaim for individual musical numbers that have garnered fame even to this day. "Ombrà mai fù," is certainly one of Händel's most well-known arias, and the opera Serse has been successfully revived in the recent times at many international venues. "Tutta raccolta ancor" carries a simple but soulful energy within its melody where the imagery of the lyrics is expertly painted by the composer.

Tutta Raccolta Ancor
(Paolo Antonio Rolli)

Tutta raccolta ancor
Nel palpitante cor,
Tremante ho l'alma;
Nel palpitante cor.

Frondi tenere...Ombra mai fù.
(Unknown - adap. from Silvio Stampiglia)

RECP.:
Frondi tenere e belle
Del mio piatto amato,
Per voi resplendia il fato.

Tuoni, lampi e procelle
Non v'oltraggino mai la cara pace.
Né giunga a profanarvi austro rapace!

ARIA:
Ombra mai fù
Di vegetabile
Cara ed amabile
Soave più.

All Remains Settled
(Heinrich Heine)

I.

Der Hans und die Grete tanzen herum
Und tauchen vor lauter Freude.
Der Peter steht so still und so stumm,
Und ist so bläß wie Kreide.

II.

"In meiner Brust, da sitzt ein Weh,
Das will die Brust zersprengen;
Und 'wo ich steh' und wo ich gohl',
Will's mich von hinnen drängen.

"Es treibt mich nach der Liebsten Näh',
Ais könnt die Grete heilen;
Doch wenn ich der ins Auge seh',
Muß ich von hinnen eilen.

"Ich steig' hinauf des Berges Höh',
Dort ist man doch alleine;
Und wenn ich still dort oben steh',
Dann steh' ich still und weine."

III.

Der arme Peter
(Hans und die Grete sind Braut'gam und Braut,
Und die Leute auf den Straßen stehn.
Die Madchen flüstern sich ins Ohr:
"Der stieg wohl aus dem Grab hervor.""

Er hat verloren seinen Schatz
Der Peter schaut betrübt auf beide:
" Ach nein, ihr lieben Jungfräulich!
Und wenn ich still dort oben steh',
Dann steh' ich still und weine."

In 1840, known as the "Liederjahre" (Year of Song), Robert Schumann composed a majority of his total song output – 136 songs in one year! Belsatzar, Op. 57 was composed in February and is one of his earliest ventures into vocal writing and helped to cement many elements of his style. The unbalanced nature of the harmonies and the constant motion of the piano create the sensation of foreboding that is realized in the eventual outcome of Belsatzar's feast. Heinrich Heine wrote the poetry for both of these compositions, though the style of each is different. In contrast to the rich couplet-ballad of Belsatzar, Der arme Peter, Op. 53 is built of three seamlessly linked songs. The simplicity of the song's style offers an evocative contrast to the deeper meaning of the text as Schumann's music depicts the various emotional conditions in Heine's lyrics. Interestingly, this composition was written later in the year though it is numbered earlier.

Der arme Peter
(P. Peter)

I.

Hans und Grete dance around
Hans and Grete are bride and groom,
And cheer with loud joy.

Peter stands so still and mute,
And is as pale as chalk.

II.

"In my breast there is a pain,
that is breaking my heart;
and wherever I stay, and wherever I go,
it is always there — pressing me.

"It drives me to my beloved's presence,
as if Grete could heal me;
but when I see my woe in her eyes,
I must hurry away from there.

"I climb to the heights of the mountain,
there one can yet be alone;
and when I stay up there in quiet,
then I stand quietly and weep."

III.

Poor Peter shuffles past,
quite slowly, deathly pale and distant.

When they see him, almost the same,
the people in the street appear.

The maidens whisper in one another's ears.
"He has surely climbed out of the grave!"

But no, dear young girls,
he has not yet climbed into his grave.

He has lost his only treasure;
therefore the grave is the best place for him.
Where he might best lie
and sleep until Judgment Day.
Jehovah! dir kiind' ich auf ewig Hohn
Von So klang es dem storrigen Konige recht.
Ich binder Mit schlotternden Knien und totenblaB.
Es klirrten die Becher, es jauchzten die Knecht;
Zu deuten die Flammenschrift an der Wand.

Belsazzar

Midnight drew nearer already;
in quiet peace lay Babylon.
Only above, in the king’s castle,
did torches flicker and the king’s horde break the silence.
And above, in the king’s hall,
Belsazzar held his kingly feast.
The knights sat in shimmering rows,
and emptied goblets of sparkling wine.
The goblets dinked, the knights rejoiced;
so was the proud king pleased by the din.
The king’s cheeks glowed;
through wine his courage grew bolder.
And blindly, his courage gave him strength,
and he lashed at God with sinful words.
And he boasted impertinently and blasphemed wildly,
the knights all roared their approval.
The king called with a proud look;
the servant hurried off and soon came back.
He carried back many golden relics on his head
that were stolen from Jehovah’s Temple.
And the king seized with his criminal hand
a holy goblet, filled to the brim.
And he drank it hastily to the bottom,
and called loudly with foaming mouth:
“Jehovah! I announce my eternal scorn -
I am the king of Babylon!”
But hardly had those gray words died away,
when the king grew secretly anxious in his breast.
The ringing laughter fell silent at once;
the hall became deadly still.
And behold! behold! at the white wall
there came forth a human-like hand;
and it wrote and wrote on the white wall
letters of fire; it wrote and disappeared.
The king sat staring at nothing,
with knocking knees, and pale as death.
The knights became cold and gray,
and sat entirely still, without a sound.
The magicians came, but none understood
the meaning of the flaming script on the wall.
But Belsazzar, that very night,
by his knights, was killed.

Le Bestiaire

(Alfaroubeira)

Avec ses quatre dromadaires
Don Pedro d’Alfaroubeira
Courut le monde et l’admira.
Il fit ce que je voudrais faire
Si j’avais quatre dromadaires.

La chèvre du Thibet

Les pois de cette chèvre et même
Ceux d’or pour qui prit tant de peine
Jason, ne valent rien au prix
Des cheveux dont je suis épîre.

La sautèrelle

Voici la fine sautèrelle,
La nourriture de saint Jean.
Puisant mes vers être comme elle,
Le rôge des meilleures gens.

Le dauphin

Dauphins, vous jouez dans la mer,
Mais le flot est toujours amer.
Parfois, ma joie éclate-t-elle?
La vie est encore cruelle.

L’écrevisse

Incertitude, ô mes délices
Vous et moi nous nous en allons
Comme s’en vont les écrevisses,
À reculos, à reculos.

La carpe

Dans vos viviers, dans vos étangs,
Carpes, que vous vivez longtemps !
Est-ce que la mort vous oublie,
Poissons de la mélancolie?
Tchaikovsky’s songs are more refined and have a distinct sense of lyricism and melody that is often lacking in the compositions of his fellows, including the so-called “Mighty Handful” - the group of five Russian composers dedicated to creating Russian “nationalistic” music Tchaikovsky regularly chose poets of his contempor­aneous, such as Alexei N. Pleshcheev and Alexei K. Tolstoy, as the basis for his romances. Pleshcheev was known for his high romantic and lyrical style of poetry and was a source of inspiration for much of Tchaikovsky’s romance literature.” Nam zvijozdy krotkije sijali was the final collaboration between the two. Tchaikovsky’s use of Tolstoy’s poetry was equally common, although the two never met. Tolstoy’s poetry is simple, yet very exciting, making it ideal for song composition. Blagoslovljaju vas, lesa has a simple, pastoral quality relative to its Biblical inspiration (the words of St. John Damascene). In Nam zvijozdy krotkije sijali, the shining stars are created in the motivic triplet, while emotional unrest is created by the interplay of the duple melody against this motive.

Enemies, friends and brothers,
Vas, vragi, druz ‘ja, i brat’ja,
Ja vas, vragi, druz ‘ja, i brat’ja,
Tchaikovsky’s songs are more refined and have a distinct sense of lyricism and melody that is often lacking in the compositions of his fellows, including the so-called “Mighty Handful” - the group of five Russian composers dedicated to creating Russian “nationalistic” music Tchaikovsky regularly chose poets of his contempor­aneous, such as Alexei N. Pleshcheev and Alexei K. Tolstoy, as the basis for his romances. Pleshcheev was known for his high romantic and lyrical style of poetry and was a source of inspiration for much of Tchaikovsky’s romance literature.” Nam zvijozdy krotkije sijali was the final collaboration between the two. Tchaikovsky’s use of Tolstoy’s poetry was equally common, although the two never met. Tolstoy’s poetry is simple, yet very exciting, making it ideal for song composition. Blagoslovljaju vas, lesa has a simple, pastoral quality relative to its Biblical inspiration (the words of St. John Damascene). In Nam zvijozdy krotkije sijali, the shining stars are created in the motivic triplet, while emotional unrest is created by the interplay of the duple melody against this motive.

I posokh moj blagoslovljaju, ’etu bednuju sumu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I posokh moj blagoslovljaju, ’etu bednuju sumu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
I step’ot kraju i do kraju,
i solnca svet, i nochi t’mu,
Known primarily for his opera composition, Carlisle Floyd is an American composer made famous by his operas, Susannah and Of Mice and Men, among others. Having studied piano with Ernst Bacon, Floyd implies that composition sort of came, more or less, by osmosis. The evident wit of his composition speaks to both the poetry and persona of Stevenson and that of his native South Carolina.

Lori Laitman is one of America's most prolific and widely performed composers of art song. “It is difficult to think of anyone before the public today who equals her exceptional gifts for embracing a poetic text and giving it new and deeper life through music.” (Journal of Singing)

Laitman has worked with many of today’s important poets — among them Mary Oliver, Thomas Lux, Paul Muldoon, Dana Gioia, Joyce Sutphen, Margaret Atwood, Toi Derricotte, Annie Finch, David Mason, John Wood, Anne Rasalinghe, and Jerzy Picowski — in addition to setting such classic poets as Emily Dickinson and William Carlos Williams. Recent U.S. performances of her music have taken place at Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall and Alice Tully Hall (New York); Shriver Hall (Maryland); Benaroya Hall (Washington); The Cleveland Institute of Art (Ohio); The Skylight Opera Theatre (Wisconsin); and The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, The Corcoran Gallery and The Kennedy Center (DC). In June 2004, The Cleveland Opera premiered Ms. Laitman’s opera, “Come to Me in Dreams.” Currently, Laitman is composing an opera based on “The Scarlet Letter” with a new libretto by David Mason — for a fall 2008 premiere at The University of Central Arkansas.

Laitman graduated from Yale College and received her M.M. in flute performance from the Yale School of Music. Initially, she focused on composing music for film and theatre, but in 1991 Laitman started composing for voice. Albany Records released her debut CD, “Mystery — The Songs of Lori Laitman” in August 2000, “Dreaming” in May 2003 and “Becoming a Redwood” in October 2006, all to critical acclaim. Laitman’s songs have been recorded on such other labels as Channel Classics, Gasparo, Capstone and Naxos.

Two Stevenson Songs
(Robert Louis Stevenson)

Rain

The rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

Where go the boats?

Dark brown is the river,
Golden is the sand.
It flows along for ever,
With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating —
Where will all come home?

On goes the river
And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore.

Echo
(Christina Rossetti)

Come to me in the silence of the night;
Come in the speaking silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream;
Come back in tears,
O memory, hope, love of finished years.

Oh dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter sweet,
Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brimfull of love abide and meet;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again though cold in death:
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago!

The Ballad Singer
(Thomas Hardy)

Sing, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune;
Make me forget that there was ever a one
I walked with in the meek light of the moon
When the day's work was done.

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country song;
Make me forget that she whom I loved well
Swore she would love me dearly, love me long,
Then - what I cannot tell!

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book;
Make me forget those heart-breaks, achings, fears;
Make me forget her name, her sweet sweet look -
Make me forget her tears.

*All translations by Kristopher Jordan