Department of MUSIC
College of Fine Arts

presents a

Master's Recital
Charlie Rolison, soprano
Michelle Lee, piano

Program

Vincenzo Bellini
(1801–1835)

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

Robert Franz
(1815–1892)

John Duke
(1862–1918)

INTERMISSION

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music in Performance.

Charlie Rolison is a student of Tod Fitzpatrick.

Sunday, November 18, 2012 3:30 p.m.  Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Claude Debussy (1862–1918) first published Ariettes in 1888 then again in 1903 with a title change, Ariettes oubliees (Forgotten Airs). The cycle was set to Paul Verlaine’s (1844–1896) first section of “Romances sans paroles” (Songs without words) published in 1874. The poetry was written during Verlaine’s two-year prison sentence for shooting his lover in the wrist, poet Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891). This cycle reveals Debussy individuality as a composer. The cycle has a nostalgic tone and glides through a variety of extreme emotions. The cycle is chromatic, tonally obscure and features Debussy’s signature dominant ninth chord. Debussy preferred high poetry and was very detailed when setting it to music. He picked specific keys and markings for the singer and the pianist to express the poetry fully. Debussy’s attention to poetic detail can be heard in his song cycle is Ariettes oubliees.

John Woods Duke (1899–1984) was an American composer acclaimed for his art songs. He was a trained pianist but the majority of his compositions were for the voice and piano. Duke embraced the partnership between the pianist and vocalist allowing them to complement one another. Duke’s song cycle “From the Sea” with poetry by Sara Teasedale (1884–1993) was published in 1915. The cycle contains five songs; each song is one stanza of the poem. Duke used extreme care when placing dynamic markings as to link the poetry and music. He preferred to compose diatonically rather than chromatically. This trademark style can be heard in his song cycle “From the Sea.”

Robert Franz (1815–1892) was a German composer, conductor and organist. He wrote over 350 lieder and only one pianoforte piece. He published his first book of lieder in 1843, around the same time he began to go deaf. Franz was acclaimed for his use of prosody, patters of rhythm and sound in poetry. He favored German poet, Heinrich Heine (1797–1856) whose works composers set to music. Schubert and Schumann’s influences can be heard throughout Franz’s compositions. His lieder are usually strophic, skillful and refined. There are moments his organ background can be heard as in “In meinem Garten die Nelken”.

Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) was best known as an Italian opera composer. He had an amazing gift for writing for the voice. His compositional style blended music and text to perfection while creating an elegant vocal line that held the drama. His art songs were composed just as skillfully as his operas but with less drama. In 1935, the centenary of Bellini’s death, Composizioni da Camera was published. This is a collection of fifteen songs composed by Bellini. The collection has a folk-song feel with simple melodies. These compositions show Bellini using a more straightforward and lucid approach to his writing. The overall texture of this collection is simplistic song like melody.