



The Music Department Presents

Senior Voice Recital

Jessica Byers '24

Carol Ann Elze, piano

Saturday, December 2nd, 4:00PM
Arthur Zankel Music Center
Helen Filene Ladd Concert Hall

Program

Bel canto amore

“Malinconia, Ninfa gentile”
1835)

Vincenzo Bellini (1801-

“Almen se non poss’io”

“Oh! Vieni al mare”

Gaetano Donizetti (1797- 1848)

Lieder

“Ganymed”

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

“Nacht und Träume”

“Rastlose Liebe”

Songs of the Night Sky

“Nuit d'étoiles”

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

“Villanelle” from Les nuits d'été (Summer Nights)

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

“Flower Duet” from *Lakmé*

Léo Delibes (1836-1891)

with Maggie Besthoff, soprano

Intermission

“Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5”

Heitor Villa-Lobos

with Zack Barnett, cello

Bird Songs

“The Silver Swan”	Ned Rorem (1923-2022)
“The Bird”	John Duke (1899-1984)
“My Heart is Like a Singing Bird”	Hubert Parry (1848-1918)
“Underneath the abject willow”	Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

with Mary Timmons, mezzo-soprano

“O noble sir” (“Mein Herr Marquis”) from *Die Fledermaus* Johann Strauss II (1825-1899)

Translations

“Malinconia, Ninfa Gentile”

Melancholy, Gentile Nymph

Text by Ippolito Pindemonte (1753-1828)

Translation from John Glenn Paton

*At least, if I am not able
to follow my beloved,
you affections of my heart,
go with him for me.*

*Melancholy, gentile nymph
I dedicate my life to you;
He who holds your pleasures as worthless,
Is not born to true pleasures- can never
know what true pleasure is.
I will ask of the gods for fountains and hills;
They have heard me at last, I will live a
satisfied life,
And I, with my desires, neither to that
fountain
Nor to that mountain will ever go. No,
never.*

*Already near him always,
Love keeps you gathered,
and the path to him is not
an unfamiliar one for you.*

“Almen se non poss'io”

At least, if I am not able

Text by Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782)

Translation from IPA Source

“Oh! Vieni al mare”

Oh! Come to the Sea

Text by an unidentified artist

Translated by Laura Prichard

*Come, the boat is ready,
Lightly, a little breeze blows,
Everything sighs from love,
The sea, the earth, the sky.*

*See, the silvery moon
Shines on the lovers, friend,*

*And it seems like she says to you:
"Run to your faithful one!"*

*Please! Come, gentle lad,
So that I may immerse myself in your bosom,
And resemble the wave
Which kisses Heaven and dies.*

*Please! As many as the tides of the sea
[Are the] kisses I would have;
I'd like to leave with them
On your lips, [my] heart.*

"Ganymed"

Ganymede

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
(1749-1832)

Translation by Richard Wigmore

*How your glow envelops me
in the morning radiance,
spring, my beloved!
With love's thousandfold joy
the hallowed sensation
of your eternal warmth
floods my heart,
infinite beauty!
O that I might clasp you
in my arms!*

*Ah, on your breast
I lie languishing,
and your flowers, your grass
press close to my heart.
You cool the burning
thirst within my breast,
sweet morning breeze,
as the nightingale calls
tenderly to me from the misty valley.
I come, I come!*

But whither? Ah, whither?

*Upwards! Strive upwards!
The clouds drift
down, yielding
to yearning love,
to me, to me!
In your lap,
upwards,
embracing and embraced!
Upwards to your bosom,
all-loving Father!*

"Nacht und Träume"

Night and Dreams

Text by Matthäus Casimir von Collin (1779-
1824)

Translated by Richard Wigmore

*Holy night, you sink down;
dreams, too, float down,
like your moonlight through space,
through the silent hearts of men.
They listen with delight,
crying out when day awakes:
Come back, holy night!
Fair dreams, return!*

"Rastlose Liebe"

Restless Love

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
(1749-1832)

English translation by Richard Wigmore

*Into the snow, the rain,
and the wind,
through steamy ravines,
through mists,
onwards, ever onwards!
Without respite!*

*I would sooner fight my way
through suffering
than endure so much
of life's joy.
This affection
of one heart for another,
ah, how strangely
it creates pain!*

*How shall I flee?
Into the forest?
It is all in vain!
Crown of life,
happiness without peace –
this, O love, is you!*

“Nuit d'étoiles”

Night of stars
Text by Théodore de Banville (1823-1891)
Translated by Richard Stokes

*Night of stars,
Beneath your veils,
beneath your breeze and fragrance,
Sad lyre
That sighs,
I dream of bygone loves.*

*Serene melancholy
Now blooms deep in my heart,
And I hear the soul of my love
Quiver in the dreaming woods.*

Night of stars...

Once more at our fountain I see

“Flower Duet”

*Your eyes as blue as the sky;
This rose is your breath
And these stars are your eyes.*

Night of stars...

“Villanelle”

Text by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872)
Translated by Richard Stokes

*When the new season comes,
When the cold has gone,
We two will go, my sweet,
To gather lilies-of-the-valley in the woods;
Scattering as we tread the pearls of dew
We see quivering each morn,
We'll go and hear the blackbirds
Sing!*

*Spring has come, my sweet;
It is the season lovers bless,
And the birds, preening their wings,
Sing songs from the edge of their nests.
Ah! Come, then, to this mossy bank
To talk of our beautiful love,
And tell me in your gentle voice:
Forever!*

*Far, far away we'll stray from our path,
Startling the rabbit from his hiding-place
And the deer reflected in the spring,
Admiring his great lowered antlers;
Then home we'll go, serene and at ease,
And entwining our fingers basket-like,
We'll bring back home wild
Strawberries!*

Text by Edmond Gondinet (1828-1888) and Philippe Gille (1831-1901) after Pierre Loti's novel
Le mariage de Loti (1880)
Translation from IPA Source

Lakmé:

*Come, Malika, the lianas in bloom
Throw already their shadow
Over the stream sacred which runs, calm and somber,
Awakened by the song of the birds noisy!*

Malika:

*Oh, mistress, it is the hour when I you see smiling,
The hour blessed when I can read
In the heart always closed of Lakmé*

Lakmé:

*Dome thick,
The jasmine
With the rose entwines,
River bank in bloom
Fresh morning,
Us calls together.*

*Ah! We glide
While following
The current fleeting
On the waves shimmering,
With a hand uncaring,
Let us reach the bank,
Where the bird sings,
The bird, the bird sings.
Dome thick
White jasmine
Us calls together.*

Malika:

*Under the thick dome
Where the white jasmine
With the rose entwines,
On the river bank in bloom
Laughing in the morning,*

*Come, let us go down together. Gently we
glide
On its waters charming
Let us follow the current fleeting
On the waves shimmering
With a hand uncaring,
Let us reach the bank,
Where the spring sleeps
And the bird, the bird sings.
Beneath the dome thick
Beneath the white jasmine Ah! Let us go down
together.*

Lakmé:

*But, I not know what fear sudden
Takes hold of me,
As my father goes alone to their city accursed;*

I tremble, I tremble with fear!

Malika:

*So that the god Ganesha him protects,
To the pond where frolic joyously
The swans with wings of snow,
Let us go gather the lotus blue.*

Lakmé:

*Yes, nar the swans with wings of snow,
Let us go gather the lotus blue.*

(The duet repeats in its entirety)

“Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5”

Text by Ruth V. Corrêa (1887-1959)

Translated by Harvey Officer

Ah...

*Lo, at midnight clouds are slowly passing,
rosy and lustrous,
o’er the spacious heav’n with loveliness
laden.
From the boundless deep the moon arises
wondrous,
glorifying the evening like a beauteous
maiden.
Now she adorns herself in half unconscious
duty,
eager, anxious that we recognize her beauty,
while sky and earth, yea,
all nature with applause salute her.*

*All the birds have ceased their sad and
mournful complaining;
Now appears on the sea in a silver reflection
moonlight softly waking the soul
and constraining hearts to cruel tears
and bitter dejection.*

*Lo, at midnight clouds are slowly passing
rosy and lustrous
o’er the spacious heavens dreamily
wondrous. Hmm...*

English Texts

“The Silver Swan”

Poetry by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

*The silver swan who, living, had no note,
when death approached, unlocked her silent
throat.*

*Leaning her breast against the reedy shore,
thus sung her first and last, and sung no
more.*

*Farewell all joys, O death come close my
eyes.
More geese than swans now live, more fools
than wise.*

“The Bird”

Poetry by Elinor Wylie (1885-1928)

*O clear and musical
Sing again! Sing again!
Hear the rain fall
Through the long night.
Bring me your song again
O dear delight!*

*O dear and comforting
Mine again! Mine again!
Hear the rain sing
And the dark rejoice!
Shine like a spark again,
O clearest voice*

“My Heart is Like a Singing Bird” (“A birthday”)

Poetry by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

*“A birthday”
My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a purple sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.*

*Raise me a dais of purple and gold;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleur-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love, is come to me.*

“Underneath the abject willow”

Poetry by W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

*Underneath the abject willow,
Lover, sulk no more:
Act from thought should quickly follow.
What is thinking for?
Your unique and moping station
Proves you cold;
Stand up and fold
Your map of desolation.*

*Bells that toll across the meadows
From the sombre spire
Toll for these unloving shadows
Love does not require.
All that lives may love; why longer
Bow to loss
With arms across?
Strike and you shall conquer.*

*Geese in flocks above you flying.
Their direction know,
Icy brooks beneath you flowing,
To their ocean go.
Coldest love will warm to action,
Walk then, come,
No longer numb,
Into your satisfaction.*

“O noble sir” (“Mein Herr Marquis”)

English version by Lorraine Noel Finley
(1897-1972)

*Oh noble sir
how far you err
you're really not discreet.
Therefore my advice
is that you look twice
when judging those you meet.*

My little white hand oh so fine-Ahhhh

*My foot with it's contours divine-ahhhh
My speech ever disarming
My waistline slim and charming
No lady's maid could be so full of grace you
see
No lady's maid could be so full of grace you
see*

*Now you must own to your mistake
Your blunder almost takes the cake--*

*Oh how funny--ah ha ha
You amuse me--ah ha ha
If I laugh sir--Ah ha ha
Pray excuse me-- Ah hahahahaha
Dear Marquis, you are too absurd!*

*My profile's greek
and fair my cheek
where nature shows her skill.
Should this silhouette*

*not convince you yet
my figure surely will.*

*So look through your glasses and see--ahhh
My costume my air of grandee--ahhh
Your love is short-sighted
Alas you're benighted---
This maid with all her art has stolen your
poor heart
This maid with all her art has stolen your
poor heart*

*You seem to see her everywhere
it's rather droll I do declare--*

*Oh how funny--ah ha ha
You amuse me--ah ha ha
If I laugh sir--Ah ha ha
Pray excuse me-- Ah hahahahahahaha
Ha--- ha---haaaaaa!!!!*

Jessica Byers is a senior English major, music minor, honors forum member, and a Filene Scholar. She started singing at a very young age and quickly fell in love with classical singing. She recently played a principal role in the workshop world premiere of Richard Einhorn and Kathryn Walat's opera entitled "Bell," and performed in a choir in the world premiere of Grammy Award-winning composer Richard Danielpour and Pulitzer Prize winner Rita Dove's "The Unhealed Wound." Last fall, she played Flora in the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra's production of *Turn of the Screw*, and this spring, she will be performing the role of Adele in their production of *Die Fledermaus*. She also performed at a dinner party for the Supreme Court Justices of New York this fall and sang in a gospel choir with Josh Groban at SPAC last summer. She is a two time winner of the ENY NATS Art Song Festival (2023 and 2022), and she placed in the NATS Eastern region competition this past spring. She has enjoyed performing in numerous Skidmore productions through opera workshops, Vocal Chamber Ensemble, and Skidmore Chorus.

Acknowledgements

This concert was made possible by so many important people who have supported and guided me throughout my time at Skidmore. Musically, I would like to thank Dr. Sylvia Stoner-Hawkins for always believing in me, advocating for me, and pushing me to improve. I am grateful for her detailed work that inspired me to think about how I could tell a story through every piece. To Carol Ann- I am so grateful for your incredible coaching and the care that you have shown me from my first Filene Scholars concert to now. This was truly a collaboration, and every piece in this program was imbued by Carol Ann's incredible artistic vision.

Special thanks to Mary Timmons for singing with me tonight. This concert, as well as my life, would be incomplete without my talented, funny, and loving friend by my side. It would be impossible to have a bird themed set without you and your beautiful voice! And thank you to my friend Maggie Besthoff for singing our beloved Lakmé duet. I have had so much fun performing with you and singing with you in choir (best Soprano 1 team!) throughout my whole time at Skidmore, and look forward to singing together more this year. I would also like to thank the incredibly talented Zack Barnet for collaborating with me on "Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5" as well as Professor Cristiane Santos for very kindly coaching my Portuguese diction in that piece. Special thanks to Maya Ghose for photographing and designing such a beautiful poster for this concert. You are one of my biggest musical supporters and such an amazing friend.

Last, but not at all least, I would like to thank my biggest supporters on this musical journey: My family. Thank you for always encouraging me to pursue my passions and for never missing a single performance. Thank you to my parents for fostering my musical journey from the start: For sharing your love of music and inspiring me, for bringing me to every lesson and rehearsal, for helping me through the difficult times, and celebrating every performance and achievement. My wonderful family has shaped me into the musician and person who I am today, and not a day goes by when I do not think about how fortunate I am.

Thank you to everyone for coming to see my recital. I am so happy to have you here, and I hope you enjoy!

Skidmore in Concert

Concert Band
Sunday, December 3, 1:00pm

String Ensembles
Sunday, December 3, 4:00pm

Big Band
Monday, December 4, 7:00pm

Guitar Ensemble
Tuesday, December 5, 7:00pm

Global Music Showcase
Wednesday, December 6, 7:00pm