

In Recital

Esther Chu, piano

with

Kathleen Neudorf, soprano

Friday, April 21, 1995 at 8:00 pm

Convocation Hall, Arts Building



**Department of Music
University of Alberta**

Program

Ariettes oubliées (1888)

(poems by Paul Verlaine)

C'est l'extase
Il pleure dans mon cœur
L'ombre des arbres
Chevaux de bois
Green
Spleen

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

Fiançailles pour rire (1939)

(poems by Louise de Vilmorin)

La dame d'André
Dans l'herbe
Il vole
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Violon
Fleurs

Francis Poulenc

(1899-1963)

Intermission

On poems by Eduard Mörike

Verborgtheit (1888)
Der Gärtner (1888)
Das verlassene Mägdlein (1888)
Elfenlied (1888)
Er ist's (1888)

Hugo Wolf

(1860-1903)

On poems by Joseph von Eichendorff

Verschwiegene Liebe (1888)
Das Ständchen (1888)

Hugo Wolf

From Italienisches Liederbuch

Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken (1891)
Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen (1891)
Wie viele Zeit verlor ich (1896)
Mein Liebster ist so klein (1891)
Ich hab' in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen (1896)

Hugo Wolf

This recital is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Music degree for Ms Chu.

Translations

C'est l'extase/It is ecstasy

It is languorous ecstasy,
it is loving lassitude,
it is all the tremors of the woods
in the embrace of the breezes,
it is, in the grey branches,
the choir of tiny voices.

O, the frail, fresh murmuring!
That twittering and whispering
is like the sweet cry
breathed out by the ruffled grass....
You would say, beneath the swirling waters,
the muted rolling of the pebbles.

This soul which mourns
in subdued lamentation,
it is ours, is it not?
Mine, say, and yours,
breathing a humble anthem
in the warm evening, very softly?

Il pleure dans mon cœur/Tears fall in my heart

Tears fall in my heart
like rain upon the town,
what is this languor
that pervades my heart?

O gentle sound of the rain
on the ground and on the roofs!
For listless heart,
O the sound of the rain!

Tears fall without reason
in this sickened heart.
What! no perfidy?
This sorrow has no cause.

Indeed it is the worst pain
not to know why,
without love and without hate,
my heart feels so much pain!

L'ombre des arbres/The shadow of the trees

The shadow of the trees in the misty river
dies away like smoke,
while on high, among the real branches,
the doves sing their plaint.

How much, O traveller, this wan landscape
wanly reflected yourself,
and in the high foliage how sadly wept
your drowned hopes.

Chevaux de bois/Merry-go-round

Turn, turn, fine merry-go-round,

turn a hundred times, turn a thousand times,
turn often and go on turning,

turn to the sound of the oboes.

The rubicund child and the pale mother,
the lad in black and the girl in pink,
the one down to earth, the other showing off,
each one has his Sunday pennyworth.

Turn, turn, merry-go-round of their hearts,
while around all your whirling
squints the eye of the crafty pickpocket,
turn to the sound of the triumphant cornet.

It is astonishing how intoxicating it is
to ride thus in this stupid circle,
with a sinking stomach and an aching head,
heaps of discomfort and plenty of fun.

Turn, gee-gees, without any need
ever to use spurs
to keep you at the gallop,
turn, turn, without hope of hay.

And hurry, horses of their souls,
already the supper bell is ringing,
night falls and chases away the troop
of gay drinkers famished by their thirst.

Turn, turn! The velvet sky
is slowly pricked with golden stars.
The church bell tols a mournful knell,
turn to merry beating of the drums.

Green/Green

Here are the fruits, flowers, leaves and branches,
and here too is my heart that beats only for you.
do not destroy it with your two white hands,
and to your lovely eyes may the humble gift
seem sweet.

I come still covered with dew
that the morning breeze has chilled on my brow.
Let my weariness, resting at your feet,

dream of dear moments which will bring repose.

On your young breast let me rest my head
still ringing with your last kisses;

let it be appeased after the good tempest,
that I may sleep a little as you rest.

Spleen/Spleen

The roses were all red,
and the ivy quite black.
Dearest, if you so much as move
all my despair returns.

The sky was too blue, too tender,
the sea too green and the air too soft.
Always I fear, such is the consequence of waiting!
some pitiless abandonment by you.
Of the holly with its glossy leaves
and of the shining box tree, I am weary,
and of the boundless countryside,
and of everything but you, alas!

La dame d'André/André's woman friend

André does not know the woman
whom he took by the hand today.
Has she a heart for the tomorrows,
and for the evening has she a soul?

On returning from a country ball
did she go in her flowing dress
to seek in the hay stacks the ring
for the random betrothal?

Was she afraid, when night fell,
haunted by the ghosts of the past,
in her garden, when winter
entered by the wide avenue?

He loved her for her colour,
for her Sunday good humour,
Will she fade on the white leaves
of his album of better days?

Dans l'herbe/In the grass

I can say nothing more
nor do anything for him.
He died for his beautiful one
he died a beautiful death* outside
under the tree of the Law
in deep silence
in open countryside
in the grass.
He died unnoticed
crying out in his passing
calling
calling me.
but as I was far from him
and because his voice no longer carried
he died alone in the woods
beneath the tree of his childhood.
And I can say nothing more
nor do anything for him.

Il vole/He flies

As the sun is setting
it is reflected in the polished surface of my table
it is the round cheese of the fable
in the beak of my silver scissors.

But where is the crow? It flies.

I should like to sew but a magnet
attracts all my needles.
On the square the skittle players
pass the time with game after game.

But where is my lover? He flies.

I have a thief for a lover,
the crow flies and my lover steals,
the thief of my heart breaks his word
and the thief of the cheese is not here.

*He died a natural death

Il vole/He flies (continued)

but where is happiness? It flies.

I weep under the weeping willow
I mingle my tears with its leaves.
I weep because I want to be desired
and I am not pleasing to my thief.

But where then is love? It flies.

Find the rhyme for my lack of reason
and by the roads of the countryside
bring me back my flighty lover
who takes hearts and drives me mad.

I wish that my thief would steal me.

Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant/My corpse is as limp as a glove

My corpse is as limp as a glove

limp as a glove of glacé kid
and my two hidden pupils
make two white pebbles of my eyes.

Two white pebbles in my face
two mutes in the silence
still shadowed by a secret
and heavy with the burden of things seen.

My fingers so often straying
are joined in a saintly pose
resting on the hollow of my groans
at the centre of my arrested heart.

And two feet are the mountains
the last two hills I saw
at the moment when I lost
the race that the years win.

I still resemble myself
children bear away the memory quickly,
go, go, my life is done.
My corpse is as limp as a glove.

Violon/Violin

Enamoured couple with the misprized accents
the violin and its player please me.

Ah! I love these wailings long drawn out
on the cord of uneasiness.

In chords on the cords of the hanged

at the hour when the Laws are silent
the heart, formed like a strawberry,
offers itself to love like an unknown fruit.

Fleurs/Flowers

Promised flowers, flowers held in your arms,
flowers sprung from the parenthesis* of a step,
who brought you these flowers in winter
powdered with the sand of the seas?
Sand of your kisses, flowers of faded loves
the beautiful eyes are ashes and in the fireplace
a heart beribboned with sighs
burns with its treasured pictures.

Verborgenheit/Seclusion

Let me be, O world, let me be! tempt not with gifts
of love, leave this heart to know alone its own bliss,
its own pain. I cannot tell why I grieve; it is
unknown sorrow. Through tears I still see the sun's
dear light.

Often, when I am lost in thoughts, a bright joy
flashes, through the heaviness that oppresses me,
blissfully in my breast.

Let me be, O world, let me be! tempt not with gifts
of love, leave this heart to know alone its own bliss,
its own pain.

Der Gärtner/The gardener

On her favourite mount, as white as snow, the
loveliest of princesses rides down the avenue.

Upon the path that her steed prances so delicately
down, the sand I have strown glitters like gold.

You rose-coloured bonnet bobbing up and down,
throw me a feather on the sly! And if you would
like a bloom from me in return, take a thousand for
one, take them all! [Take a thousand for one, take
them all!]

*The shape made by a footprint in the sand

Das verlassene Mägdlein/The forsaken servant-girl
Early at cockcrow, before the faint stars fade, I must
stand at the hearth, must kindle fire.

The flames shine beautifully, the sparks fly; I gaze at
them sunk in sorrow.

Suddenly it comes to me, faithless boy, that I have
been dreaming of you all night.

Then tear on tear pours down. So my day
dawns—would it were over.

Elfenlied/Elf-song

At night in the village the watchman cried 'Eleven'.* A
very small elf was asleep in the wood, just at eleven.

And he thinks that the nightingale must have called him
by name from the valley, or Silpelit might have sent
for him. So the elf rubs his eyes, comes out of his
snail-shell house, and is like a drunken man, his nap
was not finished; and he hobbles down tip tap through
the hazelwood into the valley, slips right up to the
wall; there sits the glow-worm, light on light.

'What are those bright windows? There must be a
wedding inside; the little people are sitting at the feast,
and dancing about in the ballroom. So I'll just take a
peep in!'

Shame! he hits his head on hard stone! Well, elf, had
enough, have you? Cuckoo! [Well, elf, had enough,
have you?] Cuckoo! [Cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!]

Er ist's/Spring is here

Once again Spring sends his blue ribbon fluttering
through the breezes; sweet well-known scents drift
propitiously over the countryside.

Violets are already dreaming, and want to come soon.

Listen! from far off, the soft sound of a harp. That
must be you, Spring [that must be you, Spring]; it is
you I have heard [it must be you].

Verschwiegene Liebe/Silent love

Over the treetops and the standing corn, away
into the brightness—who can guess their secrets,
who could overtake them?—thoughts go floating;
the night is silent, thoughts fly free. If only she
could guess who has thought of her amid the
rustling of the groves when no one else is awake
but the flying clouds; my love is as silent and
beautiful as the night.

Das Ständchen/The serenade

Over the rooftops between pale clouds the moon
shines out; there on the street a student is singing
at his beloved's door. And the springs plash
again through the silent solitude, and the wood
rustles down from the hillside, just as in the
lovely times of long ago. So in my young days
on many a summer night I have played the lute
here, and composed many a glad song.

But from the quiet threshold they carried my love
to rest. Pray you, my blithe friend, sing, just sing
on and on [just sing on and on].

**Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken/Even
small things can delight us**

Even small things can delight us, even small
things can be precious. Consider how we love to
adorn ourselves with pearls; they are costly, and
are only small. Consider how small the olive is,
yet it is sought after for its goodness. Just think
of the rose, how small it is, yet it smells so
sweet, as you know.

**Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu
fangen/You think to catch me with a thread**

You think to catch me with a thread, to enthrall
me with a glance. But I've already caught others
who flew higher than you, so don't trust me,
when you see me laughing. I've already caught
others, never doubt it. And I am in love—but not
with you. [I am in love, but not with you.]

*Elf = Eleven

Wie viele Zeit verlor ich/How much time I lost in loving you!

How much time I lost in loving you! If only I had loved God in all that time, I should have had a place allotted to me in Paradise by now, where a saint would sit at my side. And because I have loved you, and your sweet fresh face, I have forfeited the light of Paradise; and because I have loved you, my sweet violet, I shall never now gain Paradise.

Mein Liebster ist so klein/My sweetheart is so small

My sweetheart is so small that without bending down he can sweep my room with his curls. When he went into the garden to pick jasmine, he was terrified by a snail. Then when he sat down indoors to get his breath back, a fly knocked him spinning; and when he came to my window a bluebottle smashed his head in.

A curse on all flies, gnats and bluebottles, and whoever has a sweetheart from Maremma! A curse on all flies, gnats and midges, and on all who have to stoop as low for a kiss!

Ich hab' in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen/I have a lover who lives in Penna

I have a lover who lives in Penna, another in the plain of Maremma, one in the beautiful port of Ancona, for the fourth I must travel to Viterbo; another lives yonder in Casentino, the next with me in my own town, and I have yet another in Maggione, and four in La Fratta, and ten in Castiglione!