

GRADUATE RECITALS

by

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ABSTRACT

The thesis for the Master of Music degree in Piano Performance consists of one solo recital and one full-length ensemble recital.

I performed the ensemble recital on February 16, 2001 and the solo recital on February 16, 2003.

Friday, February 16, 2001, 8:00 pm
UBC School of Music Recital Hall

A CHAMBER RECITAL

Sarah Bowker, piano

Andrea Ciona, *clarinet*
Brooke Day, *violin*
Diederik van Dijk, *cello*

Dory Hayley, *soprano*
Gillian Mott, *violin*
Beth Schaufele, *viola*

Grand Duo Concertant for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 48

Allegro con fuoco
Andante con moto
Allegro

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

Quatre Chansons de Jeunesse

Pantomime
Clair de lune
Pierrot
Apparition

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

"The Dinner Party" for Soprano, Clarinet and Piano (1973)

Fish
Game
Drawing Room
Coffee
Talk
Eleven O'Clock

Ronald Hannah
(1945-)

- INTERMISSION -

Quintet for Piano and Strings, Op. 84

Moderato
Adagio
Andante - Allegro

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

TEXTS AND PROGRAMME NOTES

Weber: Grand Duo Concertant, Op. 48

This virtuosic showpiece for both the clarinet and the piano is one of Weber's many works showcasing the clarinet--others include the two concertos and the Concertino, Op. 26. Weber intended to create and use a more strictly German style in his operas and in his other music--he was most successful in his opera *Der Freischutz*. Even in this comparatively lighter chamber work, we can see Weber's combination of the traditional style of the Viennese classicists with a very personal style involving some increased chromaticism and some very flamboyant, operatic expression.

Debussy: Quatre Chansons de Jeunesse

Pantomime (Paul Verlaine)

Pierrot, qui n'a rien d'un Clitandre
Vide un flacon sans plus attendre
Et, pratique, entame un pâté.

Cassandre, au fond de l'avenue,
Verse une larme méconnue
Sur son neveu déshérité.

Ce faquin d'Arlequin combine
L'enlèvement de Columbine
Et pirouette quatre fois.

Columbine rêve, surprise
De sentir un coeur dans la brise
Et d'entendre dans son coeur des voix.

Clair de lune (Paul Verlaine)

Vôtre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et
bergamasques
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements
fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire a leur
bonheur,
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune.

Pantomime

Pierrot, who is no Clitandre
Empties a bottle without further ado
And, practical, starts on a pie.

Cassandra, at the end of the avenue,
Sheds a misunderstood tear
For her disinherited nephew.

That rascal Harlequin plans
The abduction of Columbine
And pirouettes four times.

Columbine dreams, surprised
To sense a heart in the breeze
And to hear voices in her heart.

Moonlight

Your soul is a chosen landscape
Where spell-binding masqueraders
and dancers
Play the lute and dance, almost
Sad under their fantastic disguises.

Even as they sing, in the minor mode
Of love, the conqueror, and opportune life,
They do not seem to believe in their
happiness,
And their song mingles with the moonlight.

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres,
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau
Les grands jets d'eaux sveltes parmi
les marbres.

Pierrot (T. de Banville)

Le bon Pierrot, que la foule contemple
Ayant fini les noces d'Arlequin,
Suit en songeant le boulevard du temple,
Une fillette au souple casaquin
En vain l'agace de son oeil coquin;
Et cependant mystérieuse et lisse
Faisant de lui sa plus chère délice,
La blanche lune aux cornes de taureau
Jette un regard de son oeil en coulisse
A son ami Jean Gaspard Debureau.

Apparition (Stephane Mallarme)

La lune s'attristait. Des seraphins en pleurs
Rêvant, l'archet aux doigts, dans le calme
des fleurs

Vapoureuses, tiraient de mourantes violes
De blancs sanglots glissant sur l'azur
des corolles.

--C'était le jour béni de ton premier baiser.
Ma songerie aimant à me martyriser
S'enivrait savamment du parfum de tristesse

Que même sans regret et sans déboire laisse

La cueillaison d'un rêve au coeur qui
l'a cueilli.

J'errais donc, l'oeil rivé sur le pavé vieilli.

Quand avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans
la rue

Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue

In the calm moonlight, sad and beautiful,
That makes the birds dream in the trees,
And the fountain weep with ecstasy,
The tall, slim streams amid the statues.

Pierrot

The good Pierrot, whom the crowd watches
Being through with Harlequin's wedding,
Follows dreamily the boulevard of the temple
A girl in a flowing blouse
Vainly entices him with her naughty eyes;
And mysterious and sleek
Makes him her dearest delight,
The white moon with her bull's horns
Throws a sidelong glance
On her friend Jean Gaspard Debureau.

Apparition

The moon became sad. Tearful Seraphims
Dreaming, bow in hand, in the calm of

Hazy flowers, pulled from dying violets
White sobs, gliding on the azure of the
corollas.

--It was the blessed day of your first kiss.
My musings, loving to make me a martyr
Knowingly became drunk with the perfume
of sadness

Which even without regret and without
aftertaste leaves

The harvest of a dream in the heart that
plucked it.

I wandered off, my eye riveted to the
aged pavement.

When, with the sun in your hair, in the
street

And in the evening, you appeared to me,
laughing,

Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté
 Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils
 d'enfant gâté
 Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains
 mal fermés,
 Neiger de blancs bouquets,
 D'étoiles parfumées.

And I believed I saw the fairy with her
 cap of light
 Who, long ago, passed through my sweet
 slumbers of a spoiled child
 Always, from her half-closed hands,
 Allowing white bouquets of perfumed
 Stars to fall like snow.

Ronald Hannah: The Dinner Party

Written for soprano or tenor, clarinet and piano, this song cycle is on poetry of Amy Lowell (1874-1925). Lowell was rich and socially well-connected, but unfortunately extremely obese due to a glandular condition. This caused her to be extremely cynical and to write scathing poetry about the spoiled and selfish people around her, replete with extremely strong and visual images. Ronald Hannah's music is written in a modern style, which is to say that tonal and metrical dissonance are used to good effect, but a pleasing, singable melody is also of great importance. In this work, the clarinet and the voice parts exchange the melodic material and interact with each other, sometimes at very difficult intervals, creating a complex and challenging work for all parts.

Fish

"So," they said, with their wine glasses
 delicately poised,
 mocking at the thing they cannot understand.
 "So," they said again, amused and insolent.
 The silver on the table glittered,
 And the red wine in the glasses
 Seemed the blood I had wasted
 In a foolish cause.

Game

The gentleman with the grey and black
 whiskers,
 sneered languidly over his quail.
 Then my heart flew up and laboured,
 and I burst from my own holding
 and hurled myself forward:
 With straight blows I beat upon him
 Furiously, with red hot anger I thrust
 against him.
 But my weapon slithered over his polished
 surface
 And I recoiled upon myself, panting.

Drawing Room

In a dress all softness and half tones,
 indolent and half reclined,
 she lay upon a couch,
 with the firelight reflected in her jewels.
 But her eyes had no reflection,
 they swam in a grey smoke,
 the smoke of smoldering ashes,
 the smoke of her cindered heart.

Coffee

They sat in a circle with their coffee cups,
 one dropped in a lump of sugar,
 one stirred with a spoon.
 I saw them as a circle of ghosts sipping
 blackness out of beautiful china,
 and mildly protesting my coarseness
 in being alive.

Talk

They took dead men's souls
and pinned them on their breasts
for ornament: their cufflinks and tiaras
were gems dug from a grave;
They were ghouls battenning on
 exhumed thoughts;
and I took a green liqueur from a servant
so that he might come near me
and give me the comfort of a living thing.

Eleven O'Clock

The front door was hard and heavy,
It shut behind me on the house of ghosts.
I flattened my feet on the pavement
to feel it solid under me; I ran my hand
along the railings and shook them,
and pressed their pointed bars into my palms.
The hurt of it reassured me, and I did it
again and again, until they were bruised.
When I woke in the night, I laughed
to find them aching, for only living flesh
 can suffer.

Elgar: Piano Quintet, Op. 84

Elgar's Quintet, one of his three chamber works (the others being the Violin Sonata, Op. 82, and the String Quartet, Op. 83), was written during the period of Elgar's convalescence from war-related fatigue and depression at the Sussex cottage "Brinkwells," where he resided during 1917 and 1918. Although he experienced some brief revival of spirits at Brinkwells, he wrote in the fall of 1917 that "everything good and nice and clean and fresh and sweet is far away--never to return." This autumnal depression with current circumstances and nostalgic longing for a bygone time is especially evident in the first movement of the Quintet, where a theme reminiscent of a Victorian parlour tune is evident. All three movements express some degree of nostalgia and desire for something "good and nice," and the third movement comes close to this with its folky, peasant-style dance-like theme. There is also a partly programmatic element pervading the work, related to a "reminiscence of sinister trees" related to the "ghostly music" in the first and third movements. The "sinister trees" on a hill above Brinkwells had been struck by lightning and a local story had arisen around them that they represented the dead forms of a settlement of Spanish monks who had been blasted for their impiety. The introduction to the first movement contains an almost plainsong-like melody, and both the second subject (first heard in the violins) as well as the emphasis on the minor second of the Phrygian mode throughout suggest a Moorish influence, related to Spanish monks. The second movement contains a beautiful viola solo, whose melody is later shared by the other instruments--this movement occupied a special place in Elgar's estimation. The cyclical nature of the work is made evident through the return of the occult, "ghostly music" from the first movement in the third movement, where it is banished by the sunnier A major conclusion.

SARAH BOWKER

Piano

Musica Ricercata (1951-1953)

G. Ligeti
(1923-)

Sostenuto – Misurato
Mesto, rigido e ceremoniale
Allegro con spirito
Tempo di valse (poco vivace—“à l’orgue de Barbarie”)
Rubato. Lamentoso
Allegro molto capriccioso
Cantabile, molto legato
Vivace. Energico
Adagio. Mesto (Béla Bartók in memoriam)
Vivace. Capriccioso
Andante misurato e tranquillo (Omaggio a Girolamo Frescobaldi)

Sonata #1 in F minor, Op. 6

A. Scriabin
(1872-1915)

Allegro con fuoco
(Largo)
Presto
Funebre

INTERMISSION

English Suite in A major, BWV 806

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Prélude
Allemande
Courante I
Courante II with 2 Doubles
Sarabande
Bourrée I
Bourrée II
Gigue

Sonata in F minor, Op. 57

L. van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Allegro assai
Andante con moto
Allegro ma non troppo—Presto

Please join us for a reception after the recital

PROGRAMME NOTES

Hungarian composer György Ligeti was born in 1923 and attended various conservatories in Hungary, including the Ferenc Liszt Academy. His education was interrupted in 1943 when he was sent to a concentration camp. After the war, he returned to the Academy first as a student and then as a teacher, taking a year off to do field research into Romanian and Hungarian folk music; he remained there until he fled Hungary in the revolution of 1956. His music prior to 1956 was often affected by government censorship which discouraged experimentation and limited most of his music to folk-like renditions. *Musica Ricercata*, written between 1951 and 1953, contains many of these folk-like elements and limits use of extended techniques to extended tonality and harmonics. However, it is also a highly organized work. The piece consists of eleven short pieces: the first uses only two pitches, the second three, the third four, and so on until the eleventh piece, which uses all twelve tones stated as a tone row and used as a fugue subject in a work in the polyphonic style of early Baroque composer Frescobaldi. The limits placed on the early pieces because of the small pool of available notes places the musical interest solely on the rhythmic patterns, which are quite intricate. The title refers to the *ricercare*, an instrumental composition of the 16th and 17th centuries which was usually designed to introduce another piece by "seeking out" the mode or key of the ensuing piece. In many cases the term also referred to "searching out" permutations and combinations of thematic materials. In this case, it seems that Ligeti adopts the latter procedure by combining and recombining rhythmic motives in each piece.

Alexander Scriabin is an enigmatic figure who is sometimes considered the first of the modern composers. However, his early works are romantic in style and in scope and he was heavily influenced by Chopin in the style of his early works and in the form of all his works. His *oeuvre* for piano includes sonatas, etudes, preludes and mazurkas much in the style of Chopin's keyboard writing. In Scriabin's first sonata, Chopin's strong influence is evident in the romantic sweep and structure of the whole and in the funeral march of the last movement. This work was written when Scriabin was only 20 years old and had just suffered an injury to his hand which the doctors told him was insuperable. He was devastated at what he feared was the end of his pianistic career. In severe depression, he spent much time praying in churches, hoping that the diagnosis was incorrect. This was his first real period of introspection and deliberation and the sonata combines the impact of his devastation with the effects of his soul-searching and his attempts to discover himself and explore his own psyche. One can hear the passionate sweep of his romantic side and his devotion to Chopin and other Romantic Russian virtuosic composers, as well as his inner pain and introspection including some sections reminiscent of hymns and church music.

J.S. Bach's six English Suites for keyboard were so known because they were "made for an Englishman of rank." They are fuller, broader and more temperamental, and they possess a greater virtuoso flow, than the French Suites. Because the original autographs are lost, we do not know the exact date of conception of these pieces, but they are characteristic of the musical language of the young Bach and are thought to have been composed before 1722. Consisting of standard dance movements, these pieces are meant to be performed "quickly and gracefully," as composed by a man described as giving "rhythm in all his members." The first suite contains a surprisingly short but energetic *prélude*, a calm and elegant *allemande*, two contrasting *courantes* (the second having two *doubles* or simple variations), a stately *sarabande*, two contrasting *bourrées* (played in *da capo* style with the second being sandwiched between iterations of the first), and a rolling, folk-like *gigue*.

Ludwig van Beethoven's piano sonatas are known as the pianist's "New Testament" (the Old Testament being the 48 preludes and fugues of J.S. Bach). Each one presents a wide variety of technical and artistic joys and challenges within the classical sonata's framework. Like Shakespeare's sonnets, these sonatas are governed by rules of form that dictate their structure but in no way inhibit the incredible artistic expression within. Written in 1804, Beethoven's twenty-third sonata was dubbed the "Appassionata" by its publisher without Beethoven's knowledge or consent. However, it is an apt title in the sense that there is tremendous drama in the nervous figurations and sudden changes of mood that surprise us at every turn in the outer movements. The middle movement is a set of variations on a calm, chorale-like theme—a serene nymph placed between two clashing titans. When Schindler asked Beethoven for the meaning of the "Appassionata," Beethoven said: "read Shakespeare's *Tempest*."