

GRADUATION RECITAL

CAROLYN REID

Voice

ELLEN WELLS

Piano

The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation

Henry Purcell
(1659-1695)
arr. Britten

Ich atmet' einen linden Duft
Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen
Ablösung im Sommer
Scheiden und Meiden

Gustav Mahler
(1860-1911)

Cabaret Songs

Tell me the truth about love
Funeral Blues
Johnny
Calypso

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

INTERMISSION

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Paula King, clarinet

Les Nuits d'Été

Villanelle
Le Spectre de la Rose
L'Île inconnue

Hector Berlioz
(1803-1869)

Al Amor

El majo celoso
Del cabello más sutil
Chiquitita la Novia

Fernando Obradors
(1897-1945)

*Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for Music 455B.*

PROGRAMME NOTES

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

The English composer Henry Purcell studied with John Blow and succeeded him as organist of Westminster Abbey in 1679. Purcell was a versatile and prolific composer; he wrote for both the theatre and the church and composed over one hundred solo songs.

The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation set to a text by Nahum Tate, alternates between recitative and arioso as the music follows the train of thought expressed by the text. The twentieth-century English composer, Benjamin Britten, has realized the piano accompaniment for a number of Purcell's songs.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Although Gustav Mahler is best known for his large-scale orchestral works, he also wrote approximately forty songs. Between 1901 and 1904, Mahler composed ten songs with orchestral accompaniment to poems of Friedrich Rückert including *Ich atmet' einen linden Duft* and *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*. The former is a love song addressed to his fiancée, Alma, while the latter song paints a picture of inner peace and tranquility.

Ablösung im Sommer and *Scheiden und Meiden* are settings of verses from *Das Knaben Wunderhorn*, an anthology of folk poetry. A transcription of *Ablösung im Sommer* appears in the third movement of Mahler's Third Symphony. He skillfully integrates imitations of birdsong into the thematic material of the work. The German folk song *Scheiden und Meiden* was well-known in the nineteenth-century.

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Composer, conductor and pianist Benjamin Britten played an important role in creating a body of Modern English art song and opera.

Britten and the poet, W. H. Auden, were close friends. They collaborated on the *Cabaret Songs* over the period of 1937 to 1939. Entries in Britten's diary suggest that he composed at least two more *Cabaret Songs*, which appear to have been lost.

The four songs are written in a vernacular idiom reflecting the styles of jazz and popular song predominant in the 1920's and 1930's.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Franz Schubert composed over six hundred songs, of which *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* is the last but one. In 1825 Anna Milder-Hauptmann, a prima donna at the Vienna Court Opera, requested that Schubert write an extended piece with contrasting sections and a brilliant conclusion. She was an admirer of Schubert's songs but thought that the general public, being interested only in "treats for the ear", could not fully understand them. Schubert did not comply with her request until October 1828, just weeks before his death.

Although *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* was intended to display vocal virtuosity, the clarinet part is of equal importance with the voice. The song is in three distinct sections: the first has the shepherd singing into the valley from a high rock while thinking of his beloved. The second section expresses his grief at separation from his loved one, but in the third he is gladdened at the thought of the return of spring.

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Although Hector Berlioz composed few songs, he demonstrated much interest in the voice, composing five operas and several choral works. His medium of choice was the orchestra, instrumental colour being an essential element of his style.

Berlioz published *Les Nuits d'Été* for voice and piano in 1840-1, later orchestrating the six songs. The poems were taken from the *Poésies diverses* of Théophile Gautier. The common theme uniting the songs is separation; either a physical separation from a loved one or emotional separation from an envisioned state of happiness.

Villanelle, the first song of the cycle, is essentially a tribute to spring. One senses, however, that the expressed optimism and hopes may remain unfulfilled.

In *Le Spectre de la Rose*, the ghost of a rose addresses a young girl. The rose was separated from life to be worn on the breast of the girl at a ball. The haunting mystery of Gautier's poem is dramatically evoked in Berlioz' setting.

L'île inconnue begins in a world of hope and fantasy where everything seems possible. But when the beloved expresses her desire to go to "... the faithful shore, where one loves always", the reply is "... that shore is unknown in the land of loves".

Fernando Obradors (1897-1945)

Fernando Obradors is among the most successful of the twentieth-century Spanish song composers. His songs exhibit a wide range of Spanish song characteristics, integrating folk elements with classical form and harmony. Obradors effectively used poetry from a variety of time periods and styles for his song texts.