



Events

December 1-19, 1994



Glenn Gould Studio

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programme

Thursday, December 1, 1994

8:00 p.m.

The Aldeburgh Connection presents

Linda Maguire, mezzo-soprano

with

Stephen Ralls, piano

George Frideric Handel Three Arias

(1685-1759)

Ombra mai fu

Scherza infida

Con l'ali di costanza

Richard Strauss

(1864-1949)

Four Songs

Hat gesagt - bleibt's nicht dabei

Lieses Lied

Ach was Kummer, Qual und Schmerzen

Sehnsucht

Gioacchino Rossini

(1792-1868)

Giovanna d'Arco

Intermission

Imant Raminsh

(b. 1943)

"most this amazing day"

Four Lyrics of e.e. cummings

i thank You God for most this amazing day

in Just-spring

in the rain-darkness

who are you, little i??

Arnold Schoenberg

(1874-1951)

Four Cabaret Songs

Galathea

Mahnung

Einfältiges Lied

Arie aus dem Spiegel von Arcadien

Emmanuel Chabrier

(1841-1894)

Two Songs

L'Invitation au voyage

España

Texts and Programme Notes

Please reserve your applause for the end of each group of songs.

George Frideric Handel

Three Arias

The music of the first half of this evening's recital is by what may be termed 'operatic composers': that is, those who were best known, at least in their lifetimes, for their operas. We begin with arias from two of Handel's last, and greatest, operas.

Ombra mai fù from *Serse*

Serse was produced in London in 1738. The title role is sung by Xerxes, King of Persia, and his aria – the famous 'Largo', in fact a Larghetto – opens the opera. It is an ironic love song, addressed to a plane tree.

May fate, you tender and beauteous leaves of my beloved plane, to you prove kind. May your dear peace be undisturbed by storms, by thunder's rage or by the lightning's blasts; nor may you be, by ruffling winds, profaned.

No, never vegetable made a dearer and a lovelier shade from the sun's fierce heat.

Scherza infida from *Ariodante*

Ariodante, dating from 1735, is the story of the love of Prince Ariodante for Ginevra, daughter of the King of Scotland. In this aria, from Act II, he believes her unfaithful.

Sport, faithless one, in your lover's embrace. Because of your betrayal I now go forth into the arms of death.

But to break this vile bond I will return to haunt you as a gloomy shade, a mere wraith.

Con l'ali di costanza from *Ariodante*

This aria, from Act I of the same opera, shows the Prince as yet secure in his love. It is a fine example of Handel's *bravura* style.

Love takes its flight on the wings of constancy, and causes faith and hope to triumph in the heart.

No longer need I fear the cruel course of Fate, but with my fair beloved can always rejoice.

Richard Strauss

Four Songs

Strauss composed over two hundred songs between 1870 and 1948; but by far the majority were composed before November 21, 1901. On that day, his *Feuersnot* was triumphantly produced in Dresden; henceforth, he devoted himself almost entirely to the writing of operas. *Ach was Kummer* dates from September, 1901, and thus comes at the very end of this first period of Strauss's creative life; the others were written during the preceding five years. Two of the songs are folk poems, sung by a peasant girl. They alternate with more serious expressions of ardour, perhaps sung by the girl's sweetheart?

Hat gesagt – bleibt's nicht dabei Op. 36 No. 3,
(from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*)

At what's said it never stops: My father said I'm to rock the child, and in the evening he'll coddle three eggs for me; if he coddles me three, he'll eat two for me, and I don't care to rock for one single egg.

My mother said I'm to tell on the maids, and in the evening she'll roast three fowls for me; if she roasts me three, she'll eat two for me; for one single fowl I'll no traitress be.

My sweetheart said I'm to think of him, and in the evening he will give me three kisses; if he gives me three it'll not stop at that; what'll I care for the fowl, what'll I care for the egg.

Lieses Lied, Op. 39 No. 1 (Richard Dehmel)

A quiet song: In a quiet garden by a wellspring, how I loved to wait all the grey night long! Many bright lilies grow round the mouth of the well: the golden stars swim in it, the moon bathes there.

And just as the well shines with the fair stars in it, so my heart forever gleams with the radiance of your dear eyes. But the stars in heaven stand all too far away; in your silent garden I'd gladly be standing now.

Ach was Kummer, Qual und Schmerzen, Op. 49 No. 8 (Alsatian folksong)

Oh what sadness, torment and pains, hm, hm, hm, hm; something's weighing on my heart, and I dare not tell it, or complain of it to anybody, because I ... hm, hm, hm, hm.

I must keep it shut quietly within me, may not let one word escape, must behave in front of people, as I would in utmost joy, because I ... hm, hm, hm, hm.

My joy would be to live, to devote myself to friendship, my heart wishes to be given, to be united with another heart whose feelings ... hm, hm, hm, hm.

Sehnsucht, Op. 32 No. 2 (Detlov von Liliencron)

Longing: I walked the lonely path that ever alone I walk each day. Silent the heath, deserted the field, in the hedge ahead stirs only wind.

Stretched far before me lies the road, solely for you my heart has yearned; and if you came, a miracle it would be, to you I would bow: I love you.

But a single glance, if we chanced to meet, would be my whole life's destiny. And if your eyes gaze upon me coldly, I'll defy you, maiden: I love you!

But if your fair eyes greet me, laugh, like a sun upon me in deep night, I'd draw your sweet heart quick to mine, and whisper to you softly: I love you.

Gioacchino Rossini

Giovanna d'Arco

Rossini longed to write an opera on the subject of Joan of Arc, but the opportunity never arose. Instead, he contented himself with this cantata, which dates from 1832. By that time, his operatic career was over, with the production of *Guillaume Tell*; thus, *Giovanna d'Arco* may be regarded as the summing-up of all Rossini's operatic experience in one *gran scena* for mezzo-soprano and piano. It is also an expression of his enthusiasm for things French: although written in Italian, it depicts one of France's national heroes. At the outset, Joan is keeping vigil, awaiting the call to action. In an expressive cavatina, she bids farewell to her mother. Suddenly, in a central recitative and *maestoso* section, light streams from heaven as she experiences her vision. The final *cabaletta* is an ecstatic anticipation of leading the French to victory against the English: "Corre la gioia di core in core ... Viva il Re, la vittoria è con me." Rossini dedicated the cantata to his future wife, Olympe Péliissier. The first public performance took place in 1859, when it was sung by Marietta Alboni at a soirée in Rossini's home in Paris.

Night, and the world is asleep. I alone am awake, and wait for a charger to pass by, a trumpet to ring out. I listen, and hear nothing but the sound of water and the whisper of the wind. All is silent and sorrowful as in the hours after a defeat. O my country! O my king! Some new help will come. The Almighty summoned the shepherdess from her flock. So be it. O my beloved childhood home, dear family, O fields, O woods, farewell.

O mother, you meanwhile will be seeking your daughter, will call her anxiously, and there will be no reply; but soon, from the scene of high endeavour news will come to still your weeping: every mother, all French people will envy my mother. O mother, if you meanwhile are looking for your daughter and calling her anxiously, this will be your answer.

And yet she weeps. Ah! What light is that streaming from the East? That is not the sun rising; you are my vision, I know you well. Grandeur than usual, it fills the sky like lightning, and has a message for me; Angel of death, you call me, I am coming.

Ah, the flame that issues from your eyes, now touches me, engulfs me, sets me aflame. Quick, give me a sword... we'll march and fight. Long live the King! Victory is in my hands! The virgin leads the strong men into battle, the lamb hurls herself among the lions, they have no escape... The fear of the Lord is upon them. Long live the King! Victory is in my hands!

Joy runs from heart to heart but all are wondering in amazement who the quiet, shy one is who saved the King. Ah! the victor is the virgin who had faith in God.

Intermission

Imant Raminsh

"most this amazing day" (1984) – Four Lyrics of e.e. cummings

I suppose what attracted me to e.e. cummings, beyond his incredible imagery and verbal surprises, is his intense polarity – his avoidance of the middle of the road, the humdrum and the merely ordinary, in favour of wild swings from the earthly to the spiritual, the grave to the hilarious, the ridiculous to the sublime. Throughout his poetry (at least the poetry of his that I can make any sense of) runs an unbroken tie to the child in us – the child which is often obscured and covered over by the calluses of adult experience, but which wants so desperately to be heard and understood.

One reservation (and perhaps apology) I have about setting his poetry, is that there is a completeness and an inherent music about it and within it that makes any further musical setting likely to obscure rather than enhance, I just hope that my little settings haven't diluted any of the charm of the texts.

–Imant Raminsh

I.

i thank You God for most this amazing
day:for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky;and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday;this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings:and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any-lifted from the no
of all nothing-human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

II.

in Just-
spring when the world is mud-
luscious the little
lame balloonman

whistles far and wee

and eddieandbill come
running from marbles and
piracies and it's
spring

when the world is puddle-wonderful

the queer
old balloonman whistles
far and wee
and bettyandisbel come dancing

from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

it's
spring
and
the

goat-footed
balloonMan whistles
far
and
wee

III.
in the rain-
darkness, the sunset
being sheathed i sit and
think of you

the holy
city which is your face
your little cheeks the streets
of smiles

Your eyes half-
thrush
half-angel and your drowsy
lips where float flowers of kiss

and
there is the sweet shy pirouette
your hair
and then

your dancesong
soul. rarely-beloved
a single star is
uttered, and i

think
of you

IV.
who are you, little i?
(five or six years old)
peering from some high
window; at the gold

of november sunset
(and feeling: that if day
has to become night
this is a beautiful way)

Arnold Schoenberg

Four Caberet Songs

Schoenberg's *Cabaret Songs* (or *Brettli-Lieder*) were written in 1901, the same year as Strauss's *Feuersnot* and Op.49 songs. The librettist of *Feuersnot*, Ernst von Wolzogen, founded in that year a cabaret theatre in Berlin, the Überbrettli. While the theatre's company was on tour in Vienna, Oskar Straus introduced Wolzogen to Schoenberg, who was promptly engaged as the company's conductor. The composer moved to Berlin, but the company survived for only another six months and there is no record of the performance of any of these songs, which represent a side of Schoenberg that hardly any of his other music would lead us to expect.

Galathea (Frank Wedekind)

Oh how I burn with desire, Galathea, beautiful child, to kiss your cheeks because they are so alluring.

The joy I will experience, Galathea, beautiful child, from kissing your hair, because it is so alluring!

Never prevent me, till my dying day from kissing your hands; Oh, you have no idea how I burn to kiss your knees; and what would I not do, you sweet Galathea, to kiss your feet.

But your mouth will never, girl, receive my kisses, for its charming abundance is only kissed in imagination.

Mahnung (Gustav Hochstetter)

Warning: Girl, do not act foolishly, do not catch a butterfly, look for a real man who can kiss you soundly and with his powerful hands can build you a warm little nest.

Girl, be not stupid, do not walk around as if in a dream, keep your eyes open; see if anyone comes who is suitable for a husband! When he comes, do not hesitate for long! Smack, close the trap!

Dear girl, be wise, and make use of your youth! Take good care and do not forget that without a plan, you will go aimlessly through life and become an old maid.

Einfältiges Lied (Hugo Salus)

Simple song: The king went for a walk, just like any man would go for a walk, without his sceptre and his crown, as an ordinary human being.

Then there came a strong wind, a perfectly ordinary wind, and without an inkling who it was, it fell on the king.

It tore the hat from his head, threw it over the rooftop, never to be seen again.

You see! That's it! I have told you so! Being mocked at! It is impossible for a king to go without his crown as an ordinary human being among the foolish people!

Arie aus dem Spiegel von Arcadien (Emanuel Schikaneder)

Aria from The Arcadian Mirror: Since I saw so many women my heart beats so warm inside me, there is a humming and buzzing all over, just like a swarm of bees. And when their fire matches mine, their eyes beautiful and clear, then like the stroke of a hammer my heart starts beating, boom boom boom.

I wish I had a thousand women, if it were pleasing to the gods; then I would dance around like a marmot hither and thither. That would be a wonderful life in this world, how cheerful I would be! I would hop like a hare through the field and my heart would beat madly, boom boom boom.

He who does not know how to appreciate women is neither cold nor warm, and lies like a piece of ice in the arms of a girl. But I am a very different man, I jump around them; my heart beats merrily with theirs, and goes boom, boom boom.

Emmanuel Chabrier

Two Songs

L'Invitation au voyage (Charles Baudelaire)

Chabrier wrote only about a dozen songs, of which this is an early example (dating from 1870). It exhibits his astonishing flair at combining elements of French operetta and cabaret style with poetic nuance of the utmost refinement. (Henri Duparc composed his *L'Invitation au voyage* in the same year as Chabrier, who withdrew his own setting in deference to his more renowned friend. It was not published until 1913.)

The invitation to the journey. My child, my sister, imagine the sweetness of travelling there to live together, to love at our leisure, to love and die in the land which is the reflection of you. Everything there is order and beauty, luxury, calm and delight.

See the vagabond ships sleeping on the canals – it is to gratify your slightest whim that they came from the ends of the earth. The setting sun enwraps the fields, the canals, the entire city, in hyacinth and gold, and the world falls asleep in the warm light.

España (Eugène Adenis)

Poulenc once remarked that the wrought-iron grilles and balconies of Chabrier's *España* were bought at a French department store. No matter! Much of the best Spanish music was written by French composers and this piece was its composer's greatest success. His publishers brought it out in every conceivable arrangement, including this vocal version made by Emile Louis.

To Seville, where roses bloom under the sky – oh come! everything's bright there; pleasure does not fear the light.

Oh sun, your rays invigorate us, and open vivid flowers. You fill our souls with passion, and make eyes bright with your flames!

Burning as they are, how beautiful are the nights! The star shining in the black sky laughs under the veil of the night.

Do you hear this joyful noise? The whole town is celebrating – streamers fly in the air, the sword gleams in readiness, and the bull jumps like lightning. Olé! Alza! Anda!

Come, the swallows spread their wings, the laughing town under the pure sky has a mantilla of blue, ... Ah let us live under this brilliant sky – it is intoxicating! Olé!

Linda Maguire, mezzo-soprano

Linda Maguire has appeared with the Canadian Opera Company, Opera Atelier and opera companies in Vancouver, Montreal, Dallas and Calgary in major mezzo roles such as Rosina, Cenerentola, Dorabella, Erika and Cendrillon; however, she is also known for her performances in "zwischen fach" operatic roles such as Zerlina, Giulietta, Dido, Musetta, Miss Jessel and Valencienne. Recent engagements range from Rosina in Dallas to the leading role of Sharon Falconer in the premiere of R. Aldridge's *Elmer Gantry* with the Boston Lyric Opera. In the 1994-95 season she sings Romeo in *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*, Dido in a production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* by Opera Atelier, to be heard in Toronto and at the Houston Grand Opera, Rosina with L'Opéra de Montréal. She will also début at Glyndebourne next summer in the title role in Rossini's *Ermione*. With Opera in Concert, she will repeat the title role in *Florence: the Lady with the Lamp* by Canadian composer Timothy Sullivan, a role which she premiered at the 1992 Elora Festival.

Equally in demand for concert and oratorio appearances, Ms Maguire has sung with major symphony orchestras across Canada and in the USA. This season she will appear in several recitals, including a duo recital with soprano Kathleen Brett. She has performed extensively for the CBC and has various film and recording credits to her name. Tafelmusik's recording of *Floridante* featured her in the role of Elmira. Her recent recording of music by Berlioz, Wagner, Respighi and Jean Coulthard is soon to be released by CBC Records.



Stephen Ralls, piano

Stephen Ralls began his musical career in England following a Masters degree in Music at Merton College, Oxford. He was soon involved in frequent recitals throughout England and in regular broadcasts for the BBC. His work with English Opera Group led to recital appearances with Sir Peter Pears and to Mr. Ralls's appointment to the staff of the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.

He came to Canada in 1978 to join the staff of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. He has accompanied many well-known Canadian singers, including Maureen Forrester, Rosemarie Landry, Catherine Robbin and Mark Pedrotti, in numerous concerts, festivals and broadcasts.

About The Aldeburgh Connection

The Aldeburgh Connection's Recital Series in the Glenn Gould Studio continues on Tuesday, May 9, 1995 at 8:00 p.m., with a Russian song recital by soprano Joanne Kolomyjec and baritone Mark Pedrotti. Tickets (\$19/\$14) are available from the Glenn Gould Studio Box Office (205-5555).

The next concert in our Sunday Series in Walter Hall, University of Toronto will take place on Sunday, January 15 at 2:30 p.m. This programme, entitled *Serenissima*, will paint a portrait of the city of Venice, as seen by composers and writers who were captivated by its magic. Soloists are soprano Sipiwe McKenzie, mezzo-soprano Gabrielle Prata and tenor Dan Chamandy. For information on this and the other concerts in this series, please contact our Box Office:

The Aldeburgh Connection,
56 Fulton Avenue
Toronto M4K 1X5
(416) 423-9318.

Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. Artistic Directors Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata have visited and worked there for many summers, as have a large number of the singers appearing with The Aldeburgh Connection.

Tonight's concert will be broadcast on *The Arts Tonight*, CBC Stereo (94.1 FM) at a later date. Check the *Radio Guide* for details. The producer for this broadcast is Neil Crory.

We would like to thank the Ontario Arts Council; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Cultural Affairs Division; the Toronto Arts Council; the Charles H. Ivey Foundation and our many Patrons and Friends for their support of these concerts.

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