Senior Honors Recital  
April 2020  

Elizabeth Edel, soprano  
Daniel Seyfried, piano  

Music for a while  
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)  

Take, oh take those lips away  
Amy Beach (1867-1944)  

Sweeter than roses  
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)  

Prison  
Gabriel Faure (1845-1942)  

Romance  
Claude Debussy (1862-1918)  

All the Things You Are  
Jerome Kern (1885-1945) and Oscar Hammerstein (1895-1960)  

Le sommeil  
Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)  

La reine de cœur  

La maja dolorosa No. 2  
Enrique Granados (1867-1916)  

La maja dolorosa No. 3  

El mirar de la maja  

La maja y el Ruiseñor from Goyescas  

*Click links in each set below to view the corresponding video performance.*
**Introduction**

In the past four years, I have gotten quite used to the surprise that meets me telling people that I study classical vocal music. Given the relatively small ratio of students who study classical voice to the general student body at Duke, this makes sense. It is safe to say that classical music on the whole does not have the attention of the majority of Duke students, or of popular culture as a whole.

Classical music feels far removed for the majority of Americans: in 2012, the National Endowment for the Arts released a study that found that only 8.8% of citizens had gone to a classical music performance in the past year.¹ There are dozens of other studies and statistics that show the continuing decline in the salience of classical music in the industry as a whole. But if you aren’t in that 8.8% attending classical music performances, going to one can feel alienating. There are etiquette rules that are unspoken but strictly followed, a high economic barrier to entry, and perhaps most importantly, a lack of familiarity with the music which prevents uninhibited enjoyment of the music itself.

I have fallen victim to this discomfort before. When you listen to contemporary music that seems so far outside of the classical music realm on a regular basis, shifting between genres feels like a feat that requires definitive action. But, once you brave the discomfort and find the relatability in classical music, there is a whole world of music opened up to you. Through this recital, I hope to create a connection between the audience and the music included in each of the three sections of my recital: Baroque and Romantic settings of English poetry, French song or *chansons*, and Spanish *tonadillas*.

**English Songs**

Though English art song and English pop songs share a common language, they do not share a common vocabulary, so upon first hearing, the connection may seem distant. But when looking further into the lyrical tendencies of both classical art song and popular music, one technique in songwriting marries the two genres: lyrical repetition.

Each of these English songs feature deliberate repetition of key lyrics. In "Music for a while," Henry Purcell repeats the phrases “Music for a while” and, to a larger degree, the words “shall all.” While the phrasal repetition emphasizes the subject of the song, specifically the “Music,” the numerous repetitions of “shall all” make the audience wait, wondering what it is that the music will do. This phrase is the beginning of a promise that the audience doesn’t yet know the content of. In “Take, oh take those lips away,” Amy Beach begins the song with a partial repetition of the opening phrase, creating an effect of the singer pleading to the audience for action. Lastly, in “Sweeter than roses,” Purcell again uses a similar effect with repetition of the word “all” as a kind of lead-in. It hooks the listener and drives them to question what it is that is the singer’s “all,” which turns out to be love.

The use of this kind of repetition is not foreign to people who listen to contemporary English popular music. Much research suggests that repetition of phrases is linked to commercial success of songs, and as a result, it is a very popular technique in songwriting. Scholars Nunes, Ordanini, and Valsesia write, “From earliest childhood (consider “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”) through adolescence (consider “Louie Louie” by the Kingsmen) to contemporary times (consider “It’s All About That Bass” by Meghan Trainor), for many of us the songs that stand out in our minds are those in which we can easily hear the same words repeating themselves over and over again in our heads.”² We relate to songs we can remember, and songs that repeat lyrics lend themselves well to memory, but even more importantly, they draw the audience in to the important lyrics, connecting the audience to the performer and the meaning of the song.
French Songs

For as long as I have been singing classical music, I have been trying to find the type of classical music that I really love. Not just the music that I sang because my voice teachers thought it would fit my voice, but the music that I was going to be excited to spend time with. As I have listened and experimented with more and different types of voice music, I found the genre that I always come back to -- French art song, or chanson.

Chanson is art song in the French language, the popular music of its day. Most of it is the work of highly trained musicians setting quality French poetry to music. Scholar Rachel Haworth writes that “chanson is a quality, crafted, and even artistic form of popular music; that it is a ‘literary genre, a form of poetry set to music, with claims for high-cultural status’; [it] possesses ‘educational and enlightening qualities and [is] able to improve its audience, thus making art available to the masses’; that it represents the feelings and world view of its listeners through the persona of the singer-songwriter; and that it constitutes ‘a universal cultural product, appealing to all (within France at least).’”

But this is not why I am passionate about chanson. This came out of my love for vocal jazz -- the first vocal music I ever learned. When I listen to and sing chanson, I feel close to jazz. Perhaps the clearest commonality between jazz and French music is that of harmony, specifically modal analysis. This is most frequent in early 20th century music, including most notably, many compositions of Debussy. The use of the Lydian mode in the development of jazz bebop musicians like Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker links them to the compositions of French classical musicians and pentatonic ornamentation is common in jazz.

Yet for me, when I listen to chanson, I hear warm and cool notes outside of the home key keeping the song interesting, adding variety. This comes mostly through a mirroring of the jazz tradition of blue notes -- meaning notes that are lower than expected in the harmony of a song.

In “Prison,” Faure uses a raised 6th to add color to the melody. In the minor key, this note functions as an inverted blue note. As the melody cadences the raised note gives an edge to the vocal line. In “Le sommeil” there is a whole host of accidentals throughout the song, creating a swath of moments that ring out in a melody that mimics the tonality of jazz standards.

Lastly in “La reine de cœur,” the final notes you are left with at the end of the song ring out with a Picardy third. This is to say that at the end of this minor song, the third of the chord is raised, making the last chord the audience hears a major chord. This technique is a common feature of jazz songs and mirrors the end of “All The Things You Are.”

Prison

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,  
Si bleu, si calme!  
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,  
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,  
Doucement tinte.  
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit  
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là  
Simple et tranquille.  
Cette paisible rumeur-là  
Vient de la ville.

Over the roof, the sky is  
So blue, so calm!  
Above the roof, a tree  
Waves its foliage.

In the sky one can see the bell  
Softly ringing.  
On the tree one can see a bird  
Singing its lament.

My God, my God, life is there,  
Simple and tranquil.  
This peaceful rumor there  
Comes from the town.
Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurent sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

Romance
L'âme évaporée et souffrante,
L'âme douce, l'âme odorante
Des lys divins que j'ai cueillis
Dans le jardin de ta pensée,
Où donc les vents l'ont-ils chassée,
Cette âme adorable des lys?

N'est-il plus un parfum qui reste
De la suavité céleste
Des jours où tu m'enveloppais
D'une vapeur surnaturelle,
Faite d'espoir, d'amour fidèle,
De béatitude et de paix?...

Le sommeil
Le sommeil est en voyage,
Mon Dieu! où est-il parti?
J'ai beau bercer mon petit;
Il pleure dans son litage,
Il pleure depuis midi.

Où le sommeil a-t-il mis
Son sable et ses rêves sages?
J'ai beau bercer mon petit;
Il se tourne tout en nage,
Il sanglote dans son lit.

Ah! reviens, reviens, sommeil,
Sur ton beau cheval de course!
Dans le ciel noir, la Grand Ours
A enterré le soleil
Et ralumé ses abelles.

Si l'enfant ne dort pas bien,
Il ne dira pas bonjour,
Il ne dira rien demain
A ses doigts, au lait, au pain
Qui l'accueillent dans le jour.

La reine de cœur
Mollement accoudée
A ses vitres de lune,
La reine vous salue

What have you done, o you there,
Weeping without end,
Tell me, what have you done, you there,
With your youth?

(The Lieder Net Archive)

The vanishing and suffering soul,
The sweet soul, the fragrant soul
Of divine lilies that I have picked
In the garden of your thoughts,
Where, then, have the winds chased it,
This charming soul of the lilies?

Is there no longer a perfume that remains
Of the celestial sweetness
Of the days when you enveloped me
In a supernatural haze,
Made of hope, of faithful love,
Of bliss and of peace?

(Marion Leeds Carroll)

Sleep is on vacation.
My God! Where has it gone?
I've rocked my little one in vain;
he cries in his crib,
he's been crying since noon.

Where has sleep put
its sand and its wise dreams?
I've rocked my little one in vain;
he turns, all sweaty,
he sobs in his bed.

Ah! return, return, sleep,
on your beautiful race horse!
In the black sky, the Big Bear
has buried the sun
and re-lit his bees.

If baby doesn't sleep well,
he won't say "good morning,"
he won't say anything tomorrow
to his fingers, to the milk, to the bread
that greet him with the day.

(Marion Leeds Carroll)

Softly leaning
on her window-panes of moon,
the queen gestures to you
Spanish Songs

One of the first things I learned about singing classical music is that in order to sing foreign language pieces faithfully, you must go through all levels of translation of the text. This means not just understanding how to pronounce the words, but understanding the meaning of the poetry as it was intended in its original form.

With all the resources available to singers, this process gets easier, but inherently less personalized. When there are International Phonetic Alphabet transcriptions of the foreign language and translations into English readily available, the need to transcribe and translate is lessened. But using a canned translation is less fulfilling, as you don’t truly understand word by word what you are singing – just what some other translator thought made a good poetic translation to get the sentiment of the meaning across.

As a Spanish minor, I have always had an easier time connecting more deeply to Spanish song because I know what I am singing word by word as well as phrase by phrase. To demonstrate this, I have created literal as well as poetic translations for each of these Spanish songs, to take the audience through this process of understanding the text even though there isn’t inherent attachment to the lyrics.

This in turn lowers another barrier to classical music for audiences, understanding the meaning of the poems the songs are created from, and forming a deeper emotional connection to the songs. My translations can be found below:

La maja dolorosa No. 2:

Ay majo de mi vida
No, no tú no has muerto
Acaso yo existiese si fuera eso cierto
Quiero loca besar tu boca
Quiero segura
Gozar más de tu ventura
Ay de tu ventura
Mas, ay delirio sueño
Mi majo no existe
En torno mío el mundo
Lloroso está y triste

Ah, dandy of my life
No, no, you have not died
Perhaps I existed if was that true
I want crazy to kiss your lips
I want safety
To enjoy more of your fortune
Ah, of your fortune
More, ah, delirium, sleep
My dandy does not exist
Around me the world
Crying he is, and sad
A mi duelo no hallo consuelo
Mas muerto y frío
Siempre el majo será mío
Ay siempre mío

Poetic Translation:
Oh, sweetheart of my life
No! You cannot have died
Perhaps I would be existing if that was true
I to kiss your lips like crazy
I want the assurance that I can enjoy more of your adventures
Oh your adventures…
More! Ah. Delirium… Sleep…
My sweetheart doesn’t exist
Around me the world is crying and sad
There is no comfort for my pain
Even so dead and cold, my sweetheart will always be mine
Always mine

La maja dolorosa No. 3
De aquel majo amante
Que fue mi gloria
Guardo anhelante dichosa memoria
El me adoraba vehemente y fiel
Yo mi vida entera dí a él
Y otras mil diera si él quisiera

Que en hondos amores martirios son flores
Y al recordar mi majo amado
Van resurgiendo ensueños
De un tiempo pasado
Ni en el Mentidero
Ni en la Florida
Majo más majo paseó en la vida
Bajo el chambrero sus ojos ví
Con toda el alma puestos en mí
Que a quien miraban enamoraban
Pues no hallé en el mundo
Mirar más profundo
Y al recordar mi majo amado
Van resurgiendo ensueños
De un tiempo pasado

Poetic Translation:
I save longing happy memory of that dandy lover
Who was my glory
He adored me vehemently and faithfully
I give my whole life to him
And I would give him a thousand more if he wanted
In profound loves, martyrs are flowers
And upon remember my beloved dandy
Those flowers revive dreams of a time passed
Not those in the Mentidero
Nor those in the Florida
A dandy more dandy than ever walked by me
And under his hat, I saw his eyes
With all his heart fixed on me
Anyone who looked in his eyes would fall in love
Never have I found eyes to look into so deeply
And when I remember my beloved dandy
His eyes revive my dreams, of a time gone by

El mirar de la maja
Por qué es en mis ojos
Tan hondo el mirar
Que a fin de cortar desdenes
Y enojos los suelo entornar
Qué fuego dentro llevarán
Que si acaso con calor
Los clavo en mi amor
Sonrojo me dan
Por eso el chispero
A quien mi alma dí
Al verse ante mí
Me tira el sombrero
Y dícese así
Mi maja, no me mires más
Que tus ojos rayos son
Y ardiendo en pasión
La muerte me dan

Poetic Translation:
Why is it in my eyes
As deep the look
That in order to cut disdains
And troubles the ground to half close
What fire inside they will carry
That if perhaps with heat
Them I fix on my love
Blush to me they give
For this the low class Madrileño
To whom my heart I gave
To see him before me
To me he throws his hat
He says to me like this
My dandy, don’t look at me more
That your eyes rays they are
And burning in passion
The death to me they give

The dandy to whom my heart I gave
To see him before me, and as he tipped my hat to me
He said to me, my sweetheart, don’t look at me anymore
Your eyes are rays and they give me death with their burning passion.
La maja y el Ruiseñor

¿Por qué entre sombras el ruiseñor entona su armonioso cantar?
¿Acaso al rey del día guarda rencor?
¿Y de él quiere algún agravio vengar?

Guarda quizás su pecho oculto tal dolor,
que en la sombra espera alivio hallar,
triste entonando cantos de amor. ¡Ay!
¿Y tal vez alguna flor temblorosa del pudor de amor,
es la esclava enamorada de su cantor! ...
¡Misterio es el cantar que entona envuelto en sombra el ruiseñor!
¡Ah! Son los amores como flor a merced de la mar.
¡Amor! ¡Amor!
¡Ah, no hay cantar sin amor!
¡Ah! ruiseñor: es tu cantar himno de amor.

Poetic Translation

Why in shadows the nightingale sings its harmonious song
Perhaps for the king of the day (the sun) it holds a grudge
And from him it wants some grievance avenged
The nightingale holds perhaps its chest concealed such pain
That in the shade it hopes relief to find
Sadly singing songs of love. Ah!
And perhaps another flower trembling from the power of love
Is the slave in love with its singer
Mystery is the song
That the nightingale sings enveloped in shade
Ah! Are lovers like flowers
At the mercy of the sea
Love! Love!
Ah, there is no singing without love
Ah, nightingale is your singing
Hymn of love

Why does the nightingale sing its harmonious song from the shadows?
Does it harbor hatred for the sun and want its revenge?
Or does it feel such pain that it can only find relief in the shadows?
While it sadly sings songs of love.

At the same time, a flower trembles with the power of love
Captive to the power of the one who sings
The song that the nightingale sings from the shadows is a mystery.
Oh! Love is like a flower at the mercy of the sea.
Love! Love!
Oh, there is no singing without love!
The nightingale’s song is indeed a hymn of love.
Footnotes


