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School of Music

AMANDA HORTON
soprano
Benton Hess, piano

Tuesday, January 13, 1998
5:30 p.M.
Hart Recital Hall, Brown Music Building

Písen Rusalky o Měsíčku
from *Rusalka*

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Jenůfa's Prayer from Jenůfa

Leoš Janáček
(1854-1928)

Ten lásky sen, jak krásny byl
from *The Bartered Bride*

Bedřich Smetana
(1824-1884)

Cigánské melodie

Antonín Dvořák

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

Translations and Notes

Rusalka is a lyric fairy-tale in three acts written by Antonin Dvořák. A young wood nymph, Rusalka, has fallen in love with the Prince that comes to their lake to swim. She desires to become human so that she can be with him. In act I, she calls on the moon to tell him that she is waiting for him. Written in 1900, **Rusalka** was first performed in Prague National Theatre in 1901. Achieving great success, **Rusalka** soon became a favorite for Czech opera companies as well as in other countries.

Little moon, in the deep sky, far
away I see your light.
Widely through the world you
wander, looking down in people's
homes.
Little moon, wait a while!
Tell me, where is my sweetheart?

Tell him, little silver moon, mine are
enfolding arms,

So that at least for a little while, he
remembers me in dreams.
Light him from far away, wherever
he goes.
Tell him, tell who sent you.

If about me his soul dreams,
let him awakened remember.

First offered at Prague National Theatre in 1903, **Jenůfa** is a complex opera centering not on the simple theme of unrequited love; but on the messy and painful spiritual development of Jenůfa and her cousin Laca. Laced with graphically violent scenes, it must be understood that in **Jenůfa**, Janáček was depicting the reality of learning hard lessons and growing into generous and understanding human beings; not displaying violence for the sake of having action.

In act III, Jenůfa has given birth to an illegitimate son, fathered by Laca's half-brother Steva, who has rejected her. Laca has agreed to still marry her after being told by Jenůfa's stepmother that the child died. The stepmother realises she must now prove her lie true. She takes the baby and drowns it in the mill pond while Jenůfa slumbers under the influence of a sleeping draught. Jenůfa awakens, concludes that her stepmother has taken the baby down to the mill to show the town people. She calms, and offers to the Virgin a touching setting of the *Salve regina*.

But I must pray for him in front of the Holy Mother's picture.

Hail, holy Queen,
Mother of mercy,
Our life, our sweetness,
and our hope.
Hail, hail.
To thee do we cry,
poor banished children of Eve;
to thee do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping
in this vale of tears.
Turn then, most gracious advocate,
Thine eyes of mercy towards us;
And after this our exile,
Show unto us the blessed fruit
Of thy womb, Jesus.
O sweet Virgin Mary!

The **Bartered Bride** was originally written in 1866 as an operetta. Due to the more elaborate requirements of foreign opera houses, Smetana added an aria for Mařenka and several dances. Before a performance in St. Petersburg in 1870, he divided the opera into three acts and turned the spoken dialogue into recitative. It is this final form that is most often performed.

Mařenka's aria occurs in Act III. Believing herself to have been traded by her lover to another man for mere coins, Mařenka laments her betrayal and this cruel twist of fate.

Oh, what a grief! When a heart's
deceived!
But I don't as yet believe it though it
stood there

black on white.
Don't I believe it, till I hear from him,
He does not, perhaps, know about it.
Oh, how I yearn to know the truth
in this difficult moment!
That lovely dream how fair it was,
How hopefully it blossomed,
and over my pitiful heart
it like a star was rising.

What blissful life that dream has
seemed
to promise me forever,
but fate has ordained otherwise
and all my hopes have withered.
No, such a deceit cannot be;
that would, indeed, be cruel,
and earth itself could not resist
to mourn the death of our love!

That lovely dream how fair it was,
how hopefully it blossomed,
and over my pitiful heart
it like a star was rising.

Antonin Dvorak wrote over 100 songs and duets. They range from simple, lively settings of folk poetry to ballads and songs with striking accompaniments interwoven with dance elements. *Ciganske melodie* (Gypsy melodies) were written in 1880. These seven songs offer moods and melodies ranging from declamatory to contemplative.

Ciganske melodie, op.55

1. My song again with love resounds
when the old day is dying,
and when lowly moss for its garment
secretly gathers pearls of dew.

My song so wistfully o'er the land
resounds
when through the world I wander;
only in the vastness of my native
steppe
does my voice flow freely from my
bosom.

My songs so strong with love
resounds
when storms race o'er the plains
and I give praise when, freed from
misery,
a gypsy brother breathes his last.

2. Ay! How sweetly my triangle
rings!
Like a song of a gypsy approach-
ing death.
When he approaches death, the
triangle tolls for him.
No more songs, dances, sorrows of
love.

3. And the woods are silent all
around,
only my heart disturbs the peace,
and the black smoke, hastening
down,
dries the tears on my cheeks,
dries my tears.

Still it does not have to dry them. Let it
batter other faces.
He who can sing in his sorrow
Has not perished, but is alive, is
alive!

4. When my old mother taught me,
taught me to sing,
strange that often, often, she was
crying.

And now I too am weeping,
tormenting my dark cheeks,
when I teach gypsy children to play
music and sing.

5. The strings are tuned, lad, join
the dance,
today, perhaps, today we're high up;
tomorrow, tomorrow again we're down.
day after tomorrow, by the Nile, at
the holy table;
the strings are tuned.
Lad, dancel! Lad join the dancel!
The strings are tuned, lad join the
dancel!

6. Wide sleeves and wide trousers
suit the gypsy better than a gold
encrusted dolman.

The dolman and the gold constrict
the powerful chest;
under them the free songs dies a
violent death.

And you who rejoice when your
song blossoms free,
wish all the gold in the world
would perish!

7. Offer a hawk a cage of purest
gold; he will not choose it
over his nest of thorns.

On a spirited steed charging
through the steppe,
you can seldom put reins and
stirrups.

Thus nature gave something even
to the gypsy:
to freedom, by an eternal bond,
to freedom it tied him.