



Anne Elizabeth Albert
soprano
Brian Davis, piano

Graduate Recital

Saturday, September 16, 2006
5:30 pm
Recital Hall, School of Music

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Program

Fêtes galantes, série I (1891-1892)

En sourdine

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

Four Songs, Opus 13

A Nun Takes the Veil

The Secrets of the Old

Sure on this shining Night

Nocturne

Samuel Barber

(1910-1981)

Fêtes galantes, série I

Clair de lune

Claude Debussy

Clairières dans le ciel (1914)

Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie

Elle est gravement gaie

Parfois, je suis triste

Un poète disait...

Au pied de mon lit

Si tout ceci n'est qu'un pauvre rêve

Nous nous aimerons tant

Vous m'avez regardé avec toute votre âme

Les lilas qui avaient fleuri

Deux ancolies

Par ce que j'ai souffert

Je garde une médaille d'elle

Demain fera un an

Lili Boulanger

(1893-1914)

Fêtes galantes, série

Fantoche

Claude Debussy

Octaves and Sweet Sounds

Seashore Girls

Strings in the Earth and Air

Moonlight's Watermelon

Straightway Beauty on Me Waits

Richard Hundley

(b.1931)

In partial fulfillment of the degree requirements for the
Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance

The hall is equipped with a listening assistance system.
Patrons needing such assistance should contact an usher in the lobby.

Claude Debussy**Fêtes galantes I**

Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

En sourdine

Calmes dans le demi-jour
Que les branches hautes fons,
Pénétrons bien notre amour
De ce silence profond

Fondons nos âmes, nos cœurs
Et nos sens extasiés
Parmi les vagues langueurs
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,
Croise tes bra sur ton sein,
Et de ton cœur endormi
Chasse à tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader
Au soufflé berceur et doux
Qui vient à tes pieds rider
Les ondes de gazon roux.

Et quand, solennel, le soir
Des chênes noirs tombera
Voix de notre désespoir,
Le rossignol chantera.

Samuel Barber**Opus 13***A nun takes the veil*

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the haven's dumb
And out of the swing of the sea.

Muted

Calm in the half-light,
Made by the high branches,
Let us permeate our love
With this deep silence.

Let us fuse our souls, our hearts,
And our raptured senses
Into the vague languors
Of the pines and the arbutus.

Close your eyes half-way,
Cross your arms on your breast,
And from your drowsy heart
Forever banish all design.

Let ourselves be persuaded
By that lulling soft wind
That comes, at your feet, to ripple
The waves of russet lawn.

And when, solemnly, the evening
Falls from the black oaks,
The voice of our despair,
The nightingale, will sing.

The Secrets of the Old

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

I have old women's secrets now
That had those of the young;
Madge tells me what I dared not think
When my blood was strong,
And what had drowned a lover once
Sounds like an old song.

Though Marg'ry is stricken dumb
If thrown in Madge's way,
We three make up a solitude;
For none alive today
Can know the stories that we know
Or say the things we say:

How such a man pleased woman most
Of all that are gone,
How such a pair loved many years
And such a pair but one,
Stories of the bed of straw
Or the bed of down.

Sure on this Shining Night
James Agee (1909-1955)

Sure on this shining night
Of star-made shadows round,
Kindness must wait for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

Claude Debussy
Fêtes galantes I

Clair de lune

Votre 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 à leur bonheur,
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,

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'eau sveltes
Parmi les marbres.

Clairières dans le ciel
Lili Boulanger

Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie
Francis Jammes (1868-1938)

Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie
Et, comme la prairie était toute fleurie
De plantes dont la tige aime à pousser dans
l'eau,
Ces plantes inondées je les avais cueillies.
Bientôt, s'étant mouillée, elle gagna le haut
De cette prairie'-là qui était toute fleurie.
Elle riait et s'ébrouait avec la grâce
Dégingandée qu'ont les jeunes filles trop
grandes.
Elle avait le regard qu'ont les fleurs de
lavande.

Nocturne
Frederic Prokosch (b. 1908)

Close my darling both your eyes,
Let your arms lie still at last.
Calm the lake of falsehood lies
And the wind of lust has passed,
Waves across these hopeless sands
Fill my heart and end my day,
Underneath your moving hands
All my aching flows away.

Even the human pyramids
Blaze with such a longing now:
Close, my love, your trembling lids,
Let the midnight heal your brow.
Northward flames Orion's horn,
Westward the Egyptian light.
None to watch us, none to warn
But the blind eternal night.

Moonlight

Your soul is a chosen landscape
Charmed by masquers and bergamasquers,
Playing the lute and dancing and almost
Sad beneath their fantastic disguises.

While singing in the minor mode
Of victorious love and the opportunities of life,
They do not seem to believe in their happiness
And their songs blend with the moonlight.

With the calm moonlight, sad and beautiful,
That makes the birds dream in the trees
And the fountains sob with ecstasy,
The tall slender fountains among the marbles.

Clearings in the sky

She had gone to the bottom of the meadow

She had gone to the bottom of the meadow,
And because the meadow was full of flowers
That like to grow in the water,

I had gathered the drowned plants.
Soon, because she was wet, she came back to
the top of that flowery meadow.
She laughed and moved with the lanky grace
Of girls who are too tall.

She looked the way lavender flowers do.

Elle est gravement gaie

Elle est gravement gaie.
Par moments son regard se levait comme pour
surprendre ma pensée.
Elle était douce alors comme quand il est tard
le velours jaune et bleu d'une allée de
pensées.

Parfois, je suis triste

Parfois, je suis triste.
Et soudain, je pense à elle.
Alors, je suis joyeux.
Mais je redeviens triste de ce que je ne sais
pas combien elle m'aime.
Elle est la jeune fille à l'âme toute claire,
Et qui, de dans son cœur, garde avec jalousie
l'unique passion que l'on donne à un seul.
Elle est partie avant que s'ouvrent les tilleuls,
Et, comme ils ont fleuri depuis qu'elle est
partie,
Je me suis étonné de voir, ô mes amis,
Des branches de tilleuls qui n'avaient pas de
fleurs.

Un poète disait...

Un poète disait que lorsqu'il était jeune,
Il fleurissait des vers comme un rosier des
roses.
Lorsque je pense à elle, il me semble que jase
Une fontaine intarissable dans mon cœur.
Comme sur le lys Dieu pose un parfum
d'église,
Comme il met du corail aux joues de la cerise,
Je veux poser sur elle, avec dévotion,
La couleur d'un parfum, qui n'aura pas de
nom.

Au pied de mon lit

Au pied de mon lit, une Vierge négresse
Fut mise par ma mère.
Et j'aime cette Vierge d'une religion un peu
italienne.
Virgo Lauretana, debout dans un fond d'or,

Qui me faites penser à mille fruits de mer
Que l'on vend sur les quais où pas un souffle
d'air
N'émeut les pavillons qui lourdement
s'endorment,
Virgo Lauretana, vous savez qu'en ces heures
Où je ne me sens pas digne d'être aimé d'elle
C'est vous dont le parfum me rafraîchit le
cœur.

She is solemnly gay

She is solemnly gay.
Sometimes she looked up as if to see what I
was thinking.
She was as soft as the yellow and blue velvet
of a lane of pansies late at night.

Sometimes, I am sad

Sometimes I'm sad.
And then suddenly I think of her and I am
happy.
Then I'm sad again because I don't know how
much she loves me.
She is a bright-souled girl,
And in her heart she jealously protects the one
passion she will bestow on only one.
She left before the lindens opened.
They have flowered since then

And I was amazed, my friends,
To see linden branches with no flowers on
them.

A poet said...

A poet said that when he was young
He blossomed with verse, like rose-trees with
roses.
When I think of her, an endless spring seems
to babble in my heart.
As God places a church-scent on the lily

And coral on the cheeks of the cherry,
I wish to place, devotedly, on her
The color of a scent that shall have no name.

At the foot of my bed

At the foot of my bed, my mother placed a
negress Virgin.
And I love this Virgin with its faintly Italian
religion.
Virgo Lauretana, standing on a gold
background,
You make me think of a thousand fruits de mer
Sold on quaysides where no breath of air

Stirs the flags which fall listlessly asleep;

Virgo Lauretana, you know that at such hours
When I feel myself unworthy of her love,
It is your scent that refreshes my heart.

Nous nous aimons tant

Nous nous aimons tant que nous tairons nos mots,
En nous tendant la main, quand nous nous reverrons.
Vous serez ombragée par d'anciens rameaux
Sur le banc que je sais où nous assoierons.
Donc nous nous assoierons sur ce banc tous deux seuls...
D'un long moment, ô mon amie, vous n'oserez...
Que vous me serez douce et que je tremblerai...
Vous m'avez regardé avec toute votre âme

Vous m'avez regardé avec toute votre âme.
Vous m'avez regardé longtemps comme un ciel bleu.
J'ai mis votre regard à l'ombre de mes yeux...
Que ce regard était passionné et calme...

Les lilas qui avaient fleuri

Les lilas qui avaient fleuri l'année dernière
Vont fleurir de nouveau dans les tristes parterres.
Déjà le pêcher grêle a jonché le ciel bleu
De ses roses, comme un enfant la Fête-Dieu.
Mon cœur devrait mourir au milieu de ces choses
Car c'était au milieu des vergers blancs et roses
Qui j'avais espéré je ne sais quoi de vous.
Mon âme rêve sourdement sur vos genoux.
Ne la repoussez point. Ne la relevez pas de peur qu'en s'éloignant de vous elle ne voie combien vous êtes faible et troublée dans ses bras.

Deux ancolies

Deux ancolies se balançaient sur la colline
Et l'ancolie disait à sa sœur l'ancolie:
Je tremble devant toi et demeure confuse.
Et l'autre répondait: si dans la roche qu'use
L'eau, goutte, à goutte, si je me mire, je vois
Que je tremble, et je suis confuse comme toi.

Le vent de plus en plus les berçait toutes deux,
Les emplissait d'amour et mêlait leurs cœurs bleus.

We'll love each other as long as...

We'll love each other as long as, when we meet again,
We speak no words as we hold out hands.

Old branches shall shade you
On the bench where I know we'll both sit down.
We shall sit down, then, on this bench, we two alone...
For a long while, my friend, you will not dare...

How gentle you'll be and how I shall tremble...

You gazed at me with all your soul

You gazed at me with all your soul.
You gazed at me long like a blue sky.

I set your gaze in the shade of my eyes...
How passionate this gaze, and calm...

The lilacs which had flowered

The lilacs which had flowered last year
Shall flower again in melancholy beds.
Already the slender peach has strewn the blue sky
With its pinks, like a child at Corpus Christi.
My heart should die amid these things,

For it was amid the orchard's whites and pinks

That I had hoped from you I know not what.
My soul dreams secretly upon your lap.
Do not reject it. Do not raise it up,
For fear that drawing away from you it might see how frail you are and troubled in its arms.

Two columbines

Two columbines swayed on the hill
And one columbine said to its sister columbine:
I tremble before you and am abashed.
And the other replied: if in the rock, worn away
Drop by drop with water, I observe myself, I see that I tremble, and feel, like you, abashed.

The wind rocked both of them with increasing might, filled them with love and mingled their blue hearts.

Par ce que j'ai souffert

Par ce que j'ai souffert, ma mésange bénie,
Je sais ce qu'a souffert l'autre: car j'étais
deux...
Je sais vos longs réveils au milieu de la nuit
Et l'angoisse de moi qui vous gonfle le sein.
On dirait par moments qu'une tête chérie,
Confiante et pure, ô vous qui êtes la soeur des
lins
En fleurs et qui parfois fixez le ciel comme eux,
On dirait qu'une tête inclinée dans la nuit pèse
de tout son poids, à jamais, sur ma vie.

Je garde une médaille d'elle

Je garde une médaille d'elle où sont gravés
Une date et les mots: prier, croire, espérer.
Mais moi, je vois sur tout que la médaille est
sombre:
Son argent a noirci sur son col de colombe.

Demain fera un an

Demain fera un an qu'à Audaux je cueillais
les fleurs dont j'ai parlé, de la prairie mouillée.

C'est aujourd'hui le plus beau jour des jours de
Pâques.
Je me suis enfoncé dans l'azur des
campagnes,
à travers bois, à travers prés, à travers
champs.
Comment, mon coeur, n'es-tu pas mort depuis
un an?
Mon coeur, je t'ai donné encore ce calvaire
de revoir ce village où j'avais tant souffert,
ces roses qui saignaient devant les presbytère,
ces lilas qui me tuent dans les tristes parterres.
Je me suis souvenu de ma détresse ancienne,
et je ne sais comment je ne suis pas tombé
sur l'ocre du sentier, le front dans la poussière.
Plus rien. Je n'ai plus rien, plus rien qui me
soutienne.
Pourquoi fait-il si beau et pourquoi suis-je né?
J'aurais voulu poser sur vos calmes genoux
la fatigue qui rompt mon âme qui se couche
ainsi qu'une pauvre au fossé de la route.

Dormir. Pouvoir dormir. Dormir à tout jamais
sous les averses bleues, sous les tonnerres
frais.
Ne plus sentir. Ne plus savoir votre existence.

Ne plus voir cet azur engloutir ces coteaux
dans ce vertige bleu qui mêle l'air à l'eau,
ni ce vide où je cherche en vain votre
présence.

Through what I've suffered

Through what I've suffered, my blessed blue-tit
I know what another has suffered: for I was
two...
I know of your long vigils at the dead of night
And anguish that swells your breast.
It is as though at times a cherished face,
Trusting and pure – o you the sister of
flowering flax
Who at times, like the flax, stares at the sky –
As though a bowed head at night
Were bearing down with all its weight on my
life for evermore.

I keep a medal for her

I keep a medal for her on which are engraved
Three words: pray, believe, hope.
What I see most is that the medal is darkened

Its silver has blackened on her dove's neck.

Tomorrow it will be a year

Tomorrow it will be a year since I gathered
the flowers I spoke of, in the wet meadow at
Audaux.
Today is the fairest of the Easter season.

I've buried myself in the blue of the
countryside,
through woods, through meadows, through
fields.
How, my heart, did you not die a year ago?

My heart, I've given you a new Calvary,
seeing the village where I suffered so much,
these roses bleeding before the priest's house,
the lilacs killing me in their sad beds.
I remembered my old distress
and I don't know why I didn't fall
on the ochre path, my brow in the dust.
Nothing left. I have nothing left, nothing left to
hold me up.
Why is it so lovely out, and why was I born?
I would have wished to lay on your calm lap
the weariness that breaks my soul that lays
itself down, like a poor woman in the ditch
beside the road.

To sleep. To be able to sleep. To be able to
sleep forever under the blue showers and the
cool thunder.

To not feel any more. To not know you exist
any more.

To never again see this azure swallow up
these hills in the dizzying blue that mixes air
and water, nor this vacuum where I seek your
presence in vain.

Il me semble sentir pleurer au fond de moi,
d'un lourd sanglot muet, quelqu'un qui n'est
pas là.

J'écris. Et la campagne est sonore de joie.
"Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie,
et comme la prairie était toute fleurie."
Plus rien. Je n'ai plus rien, plus rien qui me
soutienne.

Fêtes galantes
Claude Debussy

Fantoches

Scaramouche et Pulcinella
Qu'un mauvais dessein rassembla
Gesticulent noirs sous la lune, la la la...

Cependant l'excellent docteur
Bologna cueille avec lenteur
Des simples parmi l'herbe brune

Lors sa fille, piquant minois
Sous la charmillie, en tapinois
Se glisse demi-nue la la la... en quête

De son beau pirate espagnol
Dont un amoureux rossignol
Clame la détresse à tue-tête.

Octaves and Sweet Sounds
Richard Hundley

Seashore Girls

maggie and millie and molly and may
went down to the beach (to play one day)
and maggie discovered a shell that sang so
sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles,
and mille befriended a stranded star
whose rays five languid fingers were
and molly was chased by a horrible thing
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles
and may came home with a smooth round
stone as small as a world and as large as
alone.

For whatever we lose (like a you or a me)
It's always ourselves we find in the sea.

It seems that I feel someone who is not there
weeping with heavy, silent sobs inside of me.

I write. And the countryside sounds with joy.
"She went down to the bottom of the meadow,
and like the meadow she was all in bloom."
Nothing left. I have nothing left to hold me up

Marionettes

Scaramouche and Pulcinella,
Whom an evil plot brought together,
Gesticulate, black shadows on the moon, la la
la...

Meanwhile the excellent doctor
From Bologna slowly picks
Simples among the dark grass.

Then his daughter, of saucy countenance,
Underneath the bower, slyly
Steals in, half-naked, la la la... in quest

Of her handsome Spanish pirate
Whose distress a lovelorn nightingale
Proclaims at the top of his voice.

Strings in the Earth and Air

Strings in the earth and air
Make music sweet;
Strings by the river where
The willows meet.

There's music along the river
[For Love wanders there,]1
Pale flowers on his mantle,
Dark leaves on his hair.

All softly playing,
With head to the music bent,
And fingers straying
Upon an instrument.

Moonlight's Watermelon

Moonlight's, watermelon, mellows, light,
Mellowly.
Water, mellows, moon, lightly.
Water, mellows, melons, brightly.

Moonlight's, mellow, to, water's, sight.
Yes, and, water, mellows, soon,
Quick, as, mellows, the, mellow, moon.

Water, mellows, as, mellows, melody,
Moon, has, its, mellow, secrecy,

Moonlight's, moon, has, the, mellow,
Secrecy, of, mellowing, water's, watermelons,
mellowly.

Moonlight's, a, mellow, Mellow, being,
moon's, mellow, daughter.

Moonlight's, melody, alone, has, secrecy,
To, make, to, make, watermelons, sweet,
sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, and, juicy, and,
juicy.

Straightway Beauty On Me Waits

Straightway beauty on me waits
rain in the morning or sunshine late
when say the wind the airs can blow
the sun came up and down fell the snow.

The wind blows wet
the sleet falls hard
love waxes great or dies or dies like the flow'r.

Straightway beauty on me waits
rain in the morning or sunshine late.

Les Fêtes galantes, is a collection of poetry inspired by the painters of the eighteenth century, such as Jean-Antoine Watteau. This work was published by symbolist poet Paul Verlaine in 1869, and was to become an inspiration to composers in the 19th century. The paintings depict scenes of elegant ladies and gentleman enjoying a leisurely afternoon or a moonlit picnic in manicured gardens, with an overall sense of grace and ease. Verlaine was also inspired to include in his poetry what would have been the familiar characters in his time from *comédie dell'arte*. Claude Debussy set many of these poems, as both individual settings and in two cycles entitled *Fêtes galantes*. *Fêtes galantes I* includes three songs of seeming unrelated texts. Each of the three depict a different mood, tied together with a thread of symbols, including the nightingale and the moonlight. This song cycle was completed in 1892.

En sourdine, opens in the dusk and is the only poem in the cycle that was not inspired by the 18th century. Coincidentally it was also the first Verlaine poem to inspire Debussy. Debussy creates a sensuous mood through the use of rich but intimate color in the harmonies and by keeping the singer low in her range. The slow sustained opening lulls the listener into a deeper more intimate place where the lovers are abandoning themselves to their passion.

En sourdine seemed a good introduction to the settings of Samuel Barber's four songs in Opus 13. The intense lyricism and romantic nature of his composition grow easily out of the sensuality of *En sourdine*. *A Nun Takes the Veil* tells the hopeful story of a young person seeking solitude and sanctuary in nature, which is likened to life in the convent. The accompaniment sets up the vocalist with a rolled chord then lets the voice go in a declamatory style as she proclaims her grand desire to go to a safe and beautiful place. The poetry is by the Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), who titled his poem Heaven Haven: A Nun Takes the Veil.

The Secrets of the Old tells the story of a much older and more experienced woman as she recalls the days of her life. She mentions her close companions and their role in her history. The constantly changing meters give this song a sense of energy and liveliness, and perhaps expresses something of the secrets that these three women share. Irish poet, William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) included this poem in his book, *The Tower*, which was first published in 1928.

Barber dedicated his beloved melody *Sure on this shining night* to his sister Sara. The text is by the American poet James Agee (1909-1955), coming from his first published collection of poems, *Permit Me Voyage* (1934). The romantic, lyrical compositional style depicts the rich and romantic images in the text. The piano and vocal line pass the melody line back and forth, creating a sense of continuity throughout the entire piece.

Nocturne, by Frederic Prokosch (1908-1989) comes from the poet's collection, *The Carnival*, published in 1938. Barber set four of the five stanzas of this poem by his friend. This poem is a love song that resembles a lullaby in both the text and in the manner that Barber set the poem. He uses triplet figures in much of the accompaniment, creating a feeling of rocking and lulling. The extreme chromaticism of the piece helps to balance the lulling nature of the piece, giving the "lullaby" a darker, somewhat unsettled quality. Long lyrical lines are abundant in this piece as well as wide leaps and chromatic melody lines. Opus 13 was written between 1937 and 1940 and premiered in 1941.

Returning to the ecstasy of *Fêtes galantes*, we have another picture of figures in the moonlight, playing upon the poet's imagination. The scene in *Clair de lune* is easily visualized in the paintings of Watteau. The song begins describing the soul as a "chosen landscape" and by painting a picture of merriment and dancing, with an underlying melancholy that lies deep inside the characters of the drama. The images of music making, dancing, fountains, and beautiful moonlight are juxtaposed with those of sobs, sadness, and despair, creating a strong sense of ambiguity within the poet's soul. Debussy uses long, continuously flowing phrases to capture the poet's swirling and conflicting emotions.

We have a similar juxtaposition of joyful young love, and forsaken melancholy in Lili Boulanger's cycle, *Clairières dans le ciel*, completed in 1914. Inspired by the poetry of the symbolist poet Francis Jammes (1868-1938), Boulanger set thirteen poems of his 24 poem cycle, *Tristesses*. Boulanger was introduced to the poetry by her close friend, Miki Piré. She related personally to the heroine of this cycle and composed this piece for the voice of David Devriés, the tenor who sang the first performance of her Prix de Rome winning composition, *Faust et Hélène*. She wrote this cycle while in Rome after winning this prestigious award in 1913.

Boulanger chose to set thirteen of the songs perhaps because of the affinity she had for the number thirteen, thus to show how personally she related to the poetry. The cycle begins with the introduction of the heroine, a tall, young woman who has captured the poet's attention. He

spends the first few songs thinking and dreaming of this young woman. As the cycle continues we sense that the poet has lost her, or perhaps has lost the hope of having her. At the end of this painful journey he declares that he has nothing left to sustain him.

The poetry is filled with images of flowers, scents, religious imagery, such as the Vierge Negresse of the fifth song, and specific colors, particularly the color blue. The sky is a frequent character in these songs as well. The young woman is on a pedestal and the poet spends all of his energy thinking of her, dreaming about their life together, battling the ambiguity of their relationship, and mourning her absence. In the sixth song of the cycle Boulanger references the famous Tristan chord from Wagner's prelude to the opera. In this song the poet wonders if his happiness is all but a dream, and if it is, how shall he recover. The next two songs then return to the tender and loving mood of the first few songs before the poet begins his descent into despair.

Boulanger pays careful attention to the flow and the rhythm of the text. Her accompaniment figures mirror the emotions and moods of the text in that they are appropriately stark when the text calls for bareness and full and tender when the character is loving. When the fountain in the poet's heart is like an inexhaustible brook, this is portrayed beautifully in the piano. In the final song, *Demain, fera un an*, the poet retraces the journey of loving this young woman. Boulanger quotes from previous songs, giving the piano melody to the singer and the vocal line to the piano. At the very end she returns to the beginning lines of the first song, bringing the audience full circle to show the impact of the journey that her character has lived through.

The charming and comic characters of *Fantoches* complete the cycle. They tell the story of Scaramuche, Pulcinella, the doctor and his daughter. Both the nightingale and the moonlight are unifying symbols in this piece, tying the cycle together. The piano accompaniment is continuous sixteenth notes, mimicking a Spanish guitar. The frolicking of the characters is seen in the melody line and in the overall mood of the piece. The characters are, after all, marionettes in Debussy's version and are meant to be full of fun and intended for our amusement.

In the same way, we have a host of characters in the songs of American composer Richard Hundley from his settings in *Octaves and Sweet Sounds*. This is a collection of five songs by twentieth century poets that was commissioned by Art Song Minnesota and premiered in 1990. The songs may be sung as a set or may be performed individually.

Seashore Girls tells the tale of four small girls at the beach and the discoveries that they each make. Hundley does an excellent job of painting the different sea creatures that the girls find in the piano accompaniment. His characterizations of the girls also relate to their findings. e. e. cummings (1894-1962), poet, playwright, and painter wrote this poem as a part of a book of children's poems.

Strings in the Earth and Air, by James Joyce (1882-1941) tells the story of music, and depicts the god of music, playing his instrument with leaves in his hair. The dance like meter of this piece indicates a gentle waltz. The texture and harmonies present suggest a cabaret feel, that is present throughout the set.

Moonlight's Watermelon by Jose Garcia Villa (1908-1997) uses only a few words, mostly restricted to the words moonlight and watermelon and variations thereof. The piece goes through a dramatic story line, including sections where the music is light and joyful, and other sections where the music is dark and mysterious. The words do little to tell the story, though the meaning is portrayed through the musical ideas present in the piece particularly in the character of the piano accompaniment.

The final song in the cycle is the setting of a text by James Purdy (b.1923). *Straightway Beauty on Me Waits* is not about a specific character, but is rather a song of hope. Several ideas are strung together in this piece that make it feel more like recitative than like a song. There is an overriding sense of peace and hope for what lies ahead for the poet.