

Setnor School of Music presents  
***Micah Patt, Soprano***  
***Inelda Caushaj, Piano***

Performed as a part of completion of the M.M. Vocal Pedagogy degree  
2:00PM, April 15th, 2023

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Dominick Argento did not begin studying piano until he was sixteen years old and was self-taught in music theory and orchestration. Throughout his career he wrote a swath of chamber music, operas, and seven complete song cycles, leading to his distinction as one of the leading contemporary American composers.<sup>1</sup> Both “Winter” and “Dirge” were some of his first compositions, written for a university assignment. Argento says in his 1987 NATS convention lecture that “The poems themselves are very pretty, but I did not choose them because the texts were particularly inspiring. I selected them quite coolly and dispassionately because I had to have some songs ready for my next lesson.”<sup>2</sup> Despite their nonchalant origin, *Six Elizabethan Songs* is Argento’s most-performed song cycle. “Winter” is a flexible and bright juxtaposition of the chill and warmth of wintertime. The piano plays the role of the swiftly whistling winter wind. Argento successfully uses Shakespeare’s iambic rhythm in the descending passages, contrasting diction intensive moments with the line “while greasy Joan doth keel the pot”, which both brings a moment of stillness for the singer and highlights the sense of community that occurs when everyone is inside together in the cold months.

The text of “Winter” is one of Shakespeare’s sonnets, and the text for “Dirge” is from his comedy *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*. In Act II, Scene iv, Duke Orsino requests a song from the clown, Feste. The text laments of a man who is so in love that he dies, mocking Orsino for his love-stricken behavior and desperation for Olivia. Argento does not take to the humorous context, rather sets the text like a funeral march, with sparse piano and a flowing repeated melody. After his performance, Orsino attempts to tip Feste, saying, “there’s for thy pains,” and Feste responds that singing is pleasurable, not painful to him.<sup>3</sup> Listen through the melancholic setting for the comedy within the text.

***Winter***

Dominick Argento  
(1927-2019)

When icicles hang by the wall

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<sup>1</sup> Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> William David Stephens, “Dominick Argento’s ‘Six Elizabethan Songs,’ PhD diss., The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, 1994, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

<sup>3</sup> William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, Shakespeare MIT, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

And Dick the shepherd blows his nail  
And Tom bears logs into the hall  
And milk comes frozen home in pail;  
When blood is nipt and ways be foul  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
Tu-who!  
Tu-whit! Tu-who! -- A merry note!  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot

When all aloud the wind doth blow  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw  
And birds sit brooding in the snow  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw;  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
Tu-who!  
Tu-whit! Tu-who! -- A merry note!  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

*Dirge*

Dominick Argento  
(1927-2019)

Come away, come away, death,  
    And in sad cypress let me be laid.  
Fly away, fly away, breath;  
    I am slain by a fair cruel maid.  
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
    O, prepare it!  
My part of death, no one so true  
    Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,  
    On my black coffin let there be strown.  
Not a friend, not a friend greet  
    My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown.  
A thousand thousand sighs to save,  
    Lay me, O, where  
Sad true lover never find my grave,  
    To weep there!

Lola Williams was born in North Carolina, where she received a degree in English from Duke University in 1934, and spent most of her life teaching music and English at high schools in Durham.<sup>4</sup> Her compositional career did not jump start until she retired at age 60, when she became enthralled with the works of Shakespeare. She traveled to London to enhance her studies, and wrote several essays and original verse based on his works. She was almost entirely self-taught, and only took several composition lessons from opera composer Michael Ching. Her music was performed publicly in her community, but was not published until her son found his mother's compositions after her death and made it his mission to publish and record her work. The text for this song is adapted from Act I, Scene ii of William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Williams plays with the original text, repeating some lines multiple times and reorganizing different lines from later in the scene, as well as including some original verse she created for the song. In this scene, Celia cheers Rosalind with a philosophical discussion about love, fortune, and nature.<sup>5</sup> Williams's texturally dense piano line flutters around the voice, requiring the singer to "catch" certain moments, which reflects Celia and Rosalind's complex and close relationship, and how they are able to match each other's wit.

***Be Merry***

Lola Williams  
(1913-2013)

Be merry, be merry, my Rosaline,  
Oh sweet, my coz, be merry  
Dame Fortune's a housewife,  
She's spinning her wheel round and round  
Dance a derrydown derry,  
While the up turns to down and  
The down turns to up,  
Just as sure as a pit's in a cherry  
Right full of its thorns is this working day world,  
But under some briar is a berry,  
And some boney prizer will pluck it  
In his sweet time.  
So cozen your heart my dearie, my weary,  
My teary sweet sister, my Rosie, my love.  
This life's so full of its pain,  
Be merry!

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<sup>4</sup> "Shakespeare Songs of Lola Williams: Volume II," Classical Vocal Reprints, Fayetteville, AR 2022.

<sup>5</sup> William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

Born into a musical family, Erich Korngold is most well known for his contributions to film score composition. While living in Germany, Korngold's compositions were heard by Mahler, Strauss, and Puccini, all of whom loved his work.<sup>6</sup> He drew inspiration from German romantic lieder, specifically from Wolf, Strauss, and Mahler.<sup>7</sup> Korngold used Wagner's idea of a leitmotif to demonstrate character in his film compositions. "It Was a Lover and His Lass" is a part of Korngold's *Four Shakespeare Songs*. The text is pulled from Act IV, Scene iii of *As You Like It*, and is an example of Shakespeare's use of music within his plays. Unlike Lola Williams's addition of a new song to the scene, this song is written into the script and is left up to interpretation for productions. This text, and other texts that are "built in" songs, are some of Shakespeare's most popular for composers to set. In the scene, Touchstone and Audrey (the clown and his dim-witted lover), request that two page boys sing for them to celebrate their soon-to-be marriage. After the performance, Touchstone harshly critiques the performers' rhythm and the tune itself, calling it a "foolish song."<sup>8</sup> Korngold's use of rhythm in his setting is unnatural, perhaps nodding to Touchstone's criticism.

### ***When Birds Do Sing***

Erich Korngold  
(1897-1957)

It was a lover and his lass,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
That o'er the green corn-field did pass  
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding:  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino  
These pretty country folks would lie,  
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding:  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
How that a life was but a flower  
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding:  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

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<sup>6</sup> Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act IV, Scene iii, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

And therefore take the present time,  
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino;  
For love is crowned with the prime  
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding:  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

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Jaclyn Breeze is a contemporary American composer and graduate composition student at Syracuse University. Her music balances both modern influences and classical jazz harmony.<sup>9</sup> This piece was commissioned in the Fall of 2022 for this lecture recital, and the text is from William Shakespeare's original comedy, *Much Ado About Nothing*. The speech closes Act III, Scene i of the play, and it is the first time Beatrice sheds her witty exterior to reveal her willingness to love Benedick.<sup>10</sup> After hearing her sister, Hero, and Ursula gossiping about Benedick's true feelings for Beatrice, she realizes that their witty banter and disparaging remarks only reinforce their passion for one another. The piece will be completed in January, 2023.

***What Fire is in Mine Ears?***

Jaclyn Breeze  
(b. 1999)

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?  
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?  
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!  
No glory lives behind the back of such.  
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,  
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:  
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee  
To bind our loves up in a holy band;  
For others say thou dost deserve, and I  
Believe it better than reportedly.

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<sup>9</sup> Jaclyn Breeze, "About," [www.jaclynbreeze.com](http://www.jaclynbreeze.com), accessed Dec 4, 2022.

<sup>10</sup> William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act III, Scene i, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

Franz Schubert is a defining figure in the development of German lieder for his inventive use of text painting and romantic poetry. Although his life was short, he produced an immense output of songs that explored harmony and form. The text is from Act II, Scene iii of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and is sung by the buffoon, Cloten. Cloten arrives at Imogen's window to call her down. Shakespeare demonstrates the character's lack of intelligence with several irregularities in his song such as "on chalice'd flowers that lies" and the almost rhyme of "begin" and "is". Schubert takes Cloten's spoiled nature out of context for this setting, although the beginning piano motive is as grand as the character. He employs text painting in the final phrases with the large ascending leap but with decreasing interval distance, which could imply Cloten losing hope to woo Imogen.

### *Ständchen*

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

Horch, horch, die Lerch' im Ätherblau,  
und Phöbus, neu erweckt,  
tränkt seine Rosse mit dem Tau,  
der Blumenkelche deckt.  
Der Ringelblume Knospe schleusst  
die goldnen Äuglein auf;  
mit allem, was da reizend ist;  
du, süsse Maid, steh auf!  
Steh auf, steh auf.

*Hark, hark, the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
And Phoebus 'gins arise,  
His steeds to water at those springs  
On chalic'd flowers that lies:  
And winking Mary-buds begin  
To ope their golden eyes  
With everything that pretty is  
My lady sweet arise!  
Arise, arise.*

Translated by August Wilhelm von Schlegel

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Elizabeth Maconchy is an English composer taught by Charles Wood and Ralph Vaughn Williams.<sup>11</sup> She dealt with many barriers in her composition career including sexism, fighting tuberculosis, and living in England during World War II. While her earlier vocal music has been critiqued as folk-like, her later music has a more mystical and dramatic energy. She has been compared to Bartok and Britten.<sup>12</sup> Maconchy has said about her own work: "for me, the best music is an impassioned argument".<sup>13</sup> "Ophelia's Song" was composed while she was a student in 1924. The text is from Act V, Scene v of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In the scene, Ophelia is driven mad after learning that her lover, Hamlet, has murdered her father, Polonius. She sings her lamentation as she wanders around Hamlet's mother,

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<sup>11</sup> Natasha Loges, "Elizabeth Maconchy," *Oxford Lieder*, 2022. Accessed Dec 4, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Heather Fetrow, "Women's Mental Health: Ophelia's Song," 2018, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

Queen Gertrude, Hamlet's best friend, Horatio, and gentlemen of the castle. Shortly after this scene, she drowns in a nearby river, and her death is the final straw for Hamlet in his own journey of madness. Maconchy alternates major and minor chords, highlighting Ophelia's instability.

### *Ophelia's Song*

Elizabeth Maconchy  
(1907-1994)

How should I your true love know  
from another one? –  
By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon.

He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone.  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone.

White as his shroud as the mountain snow –  
Larded with sweet flowers ,  
Which bewept to the grave did not go  
With true-love showers.

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Hector Berlioz was enthralled by the works of William Shakespeare and created multiple compositions inspired by his texts including *Roméo et Juliette*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. He first saw *Hamlet* in 1827 when a troupe of actors performed in his community.<sup>14</sup> He was infatuated with the actress who played Ophelia. He then married her and this song was inspired by her. The text is not directly pulled from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but was written by Ernest Legouvé. Legouvé was a poet, playwright, and advocate for women's rights.<sup>15</sup> The character speaking this text is Hamlet's mother, Gertrude, as she informs her son about Ophelia's death. Ophelia represents "purity" of young women, with no agency in her arc. She is in love with and obedient to Hamlet, obeys her father, and ultimately goes mad after Hamlet kills her father, Polonius, under the belief that he was murdering his uncle, Claudius, who he suspects of having killed Hamlet's father. The cycle of violence in *Hamlet* is fully perpetuated by the male characters, with the women, Ophelia and Gertrude, representing three archetypes of womanhood: the virgin, the mother, and the whore. Hamlet sees his mother as a whore for remarrying after the death of her husband. This song illustrates Ophelia's descent into madness, and also reflects

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<sup>14</sup> Stephen M. Klugewicz, "Berlioz and Shakespeare," *The Imaginative Conservative*, Aug 2019, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> "Legouvé, Gabriel Jean Baptiste Ernest Wilfrid," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 16, 1911, accessed Dec 4, 2022.

Gertrude's own loss of innocence after losing her husband and witnessing consistent violence at the hand of her son, brother-in-law turned fiancee, and court. It also foreshadows her own death. Ophelia's death is a popular image representing tragic loss of innocence in art and literature.

*La Mort d'Ophélie*

Hector Berlioz  
(1803-1869)

Après d'un torrent, Ophélie  
Cueillait tout en suivant le bord,  
Dans sa douce et tendre folie,  
Des pervenches, des boutons d'or,  
Des iris aux couleurs d'opale,  
Et de ces fleurs d'un rose pâle,  
Qu'on appelle des doigts de mort.

Puis élevant sur ses mains blanches  
Les riants trésors du matin,  
Elle les suspendait aux branches,  
Aux branches d'un saule voisin;  
Mais, trop faible, le rameau plie,  
Se brise, et la pauvre Ophélie  
Tombe, sa guirlande à la main.

Quelques instants, sa robe enflée  
La tint encor sur le courant,  
Et comme une voile gonflée,  
Elle flottait toujours, chantant,  
Chantant quelque vieille ballade,  
Chantant ainsi qu'une naïade  
Née au milieu de ce torrent.

Mais cette étrange mélodie  
Passa rapide comme un son;  
Par les flots la robe alourdie  
Bientôt dans l'abîme profond;  
Entraîna la pauvre insensée,  
Laisant à peine commencée  
Sa mélodieuse chanson.

*Beside a brook, Ophelia  
Gathered along the water's bank,  
In her sweet and gentle madness,  
Periwinkles, crow-flowers,  
Opal-tinted irises,  
And those pale purples  
Called dead men's fingers.*

*Then, raising up in her white hands  
The morning's laughing trophies,  
She hung them on the branches,  
The branches of a nearby willow.  
But the bough, too fragile, bends,  
Breaks, and poor Ophelia  
Falls, the garland in her hand.*

*Her dress, spread wide,  
Bore her on the water awhile,  
And like an outstretched sail  
She floated, still singing,  
Singing some ancient lay,  
Singing like a water-sprite  
Born amidst the waves.*

*But this strange melody died,  
Fleeting as a snatch of sound.  
Her garment, heavy with water,  
Soon into the depths  
Dragged the poor distracted girl,  
Leaving her melodious lay  
Hardly yet begun.*

Translated by Richard Stokes



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