

*Missouri Western State University  
Department of Music presents:*

*Senior Recital*



*Paula Elsner, Soprano  
Jeeyung Kim, Piano*

*Saturday January 21, 2012 – Kemper Recital Hall – 7:30 P.M.*

I

Pur dicesti, o bocca bella ..... Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)

*Beautiful mouth, at last you have spoken that gentle, lovable "yes" that makes my joy complete.  
In his own honor Love has opened you with a kiss, o sweet fountain of pleasure.*

Ombra mai fu (from *Serse*)..... George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)  
Count Nicolò Minato (1627-1698)

*Shade there never was from a plant, Dear and lovable, more gentle*

Lascia ch'io pianga (from *Rinaldo*)..... George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

*Let me weep of my cruel fate, and my longing for freedom!  
The duel infringes these images of my sufferings, I pray for mercy from my suffering.*

II

*Frauenliebe und-Leben*..... Robert Schumann (1810-1856)  
Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838)

Seit ich ihn gesehen

*Seeing him has blinded me:  
Wherever I look, it is only he;  
his image floats before me like a waking dream,  
emerging brighter and brighter out of the deepest darkness.  
Everything else around me is lightless, colorless.  
No longer drawn to the games of my sisters,  
I would rather weep quietly in my little room.  
Seeing him has blinded me.*

Er, der Herrlichste von Allen

*He the most glorious of all—so gentle, so good!  
Charming lips, bright eyes, clear of mind and strong of spirit.  
Shining and glorious, exalted and unreachable, he sits in my own heavens  
as clear and glorious as that star out there in the blue depths.  
Wander, wander your paths— only to gaze at your light,  
to gaze in humility and in blissful sadness.  
Do not hear this quiet prayer devoted only to your happiness.  
You may not know such a lowly girl, you exalted star of glory.  
Only the most worthy of all may be made happy by your choice,  
and I will bless that exalted one many thousands of times.  
I will be glad then and weep; blissful, blissful I will be.  
Even if my heart breaks— break, heart! What will it matter?  
He the most glorious of all— so gentle, so good!  
Charming lips, bright eyes, clear of mind and strong of spirit.*

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben

*I can't grasp it or believe it; A dream must have entranced me.  
How could he have raised and blessed me, this poor creature, from among them all?  
It seems as if he said, "I am forever yours."  
It seems as if I am still dreaming, for such could never be the case.  
O let me die in this dream, cradled against his breast.  
Let blessed death swallow me up in tears of endless joy.*

Du Ring an meinem Finger

*You ring on my finger, little gold ring—all mine!  
I press you devoutly to my lips and to my heart.  
I had reached the end of the peacefully beautiful dream of childhood.  
I found myself alone, lost in a barren, endless land.  
You ring on my finger, you first taught me then.  
You opened my sight to the endless, deep value of life.  
I want to serve him, live for him, belong completely to him,  
devote myself to him, and find myself transfigured in his radiance.  
You ring on my finger, little gold ring—all mine!  
I press you devoutly to my lips and to my heart.*

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern

*Help me, my sisters, kindly adorn me; serve the happy one today.  
Keep busily winding around my brow the ornament of blossoming myrtle.  
When I would lie contentedly and of happy heart in my beloved's arms,  
he would still yearn for this day impatiently, his heart full of longing.  
Help me, my sisters—help me chase away a foolish uneasiness,  
so that I may receive him with clear eyes—him the source of joy.  
My love, have you truly appeared? Sun, do you grant me your light?  
Let me in reverence, let me in humility, pay homage to my lord.  
Strew flowers, my sisters—strew flowers for him. Present him with budding roses.  
But you, my sisters, I greet with sadness even as I depart joyfully from your circle.*

Süsser Freund, du blickest mich verwundert an

*Sweet friend, you look at me in astonishment.  
Can you not comprehend how I could be crying?  
Let the unfamiliar ornament of moist pearls  
tremble with bright joy in my eyes.  
How anxious my bosom is, how blissful!  
If only I knew how to express it with words.  
Come and bury your face here at my breast.  
I want to whisper in your ear all my joy.  
Now do you understand the tears I can cry?  
Should you not see them, my beloved husband?  
Stay at my heart, feel the beat of it,  
that I may press you tighter and tighter.  
Here at my bed the cradle has space  
to quietly hide my sweet dream.  
The morning will come when the dream awakes  
and your image will smile out at me.*

An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust

*At my heart, at my breast, you my bliss, you my joy!  
Happiness is love; love, happiness. I've said it and will never take it back.  
I once considered myself extravagant but am even happier now.  
Only she who nurses, only she who loves the child whom she gives nourishment—  
only a mother alone knows what it means to love and to be happy.  
O how I pity however the man who cannot feel a mother's joy!  
You dear, dear angel, you—you look at me, and even smile.  
At my heart, at my breast, you my bliss, you my joy!*

Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan

*Now you have hurt me for the first time, but deeply.  
Harsh, merciless man, you sleep the sleep of death.  
Abandoned, I glance around: The world is empty, empty.  
I have loved and lived; no longer am I living.  
Quietly I retreat within myself; the veil descends.  
I have lost my happiness and you, you my world.*

III

Chanson d'amour..... Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)  
Armand Silvestre (1837-1901)

*I love your eyes, I love your forehead, oh my rebellious and fierce one.  
I love your eyes; I love your mouth on which my kisses will tire themselves out.  
I love your voice; I love the strange gracefulness of everything you say,  
Oh my rebellious one, my dear angel, my hell and my paradise!  
I love all that makes you beautiful, from your feet to your hair,  
You to whom my hopeful pleas ascend, oh my fierce and rebellious one!*

Adelaide's Lament (from *Guys and Dolls*)..... Frank Loesser (1910-1969)

How Can I Keep From Singing? .....arr. Jay Althouse (b. 1951)



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*Ms. Elsner's senior recital is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree of Bachelor of Music Education with an emphasis in vocal performance. Ms. Elsner is a student in the voice studio of Dr. Roger Hale.*

## **Program Notes**

### Pur dicesti, o bocca bella

Antonio Lotti wrote about thirty operas, thus resulting in his status as one of the most popular opera composers of his day. While this aria has found a place in the standard vocal repertoire, the opera which it comes from is unknown. It first surfaced in a manuscript entitled, “32 Arias by Sigr. Anto. Lotti.” *Pur dicesti* expresses the beauty of a single kiss and explores how one small action can create pure bliss.

### Ombra mai fu

Also known as Handel’s famous “Largo”, *Ombra mai fu* is one of the most beautiful arias in the world of opera. This aria comes from the opera *Serse*. The opera tells the tale of Serse, the King of Persia. He falls in love with Romilda; however, Serse’s brother, Arsamene, loves her, too. When Romilda chooses Arsamene, Serse banishes him. *Ombra mai fu* is the first aria of the opera. Serse sings the aria as he recalls his love as the most beautiful tree within his palace garden. Although it is irrelevant to the plot of *Serse*, *Ombra mai fu* is one of the most celebrated arias because of its simple, yet beautiful melodic line.

### Lascia ch’io pianga

Handel looked cautiously through his first opera masterpiece, *Almira*. He quickly found the Asian dance melody he was looking for. He had already reused this melody once to create a beautiful aria in an oratorio, *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*, but it still continued to haunt him. He needed to use it once more; this time, he would create a theatrical masterpiece. As the story of the Christian warrior Rinaldo began to fill his pages, Handel realized Rinaldo’s love, Almirena, needed a heart-wrenching, sorrowful song to explain her grief once kidnapped and imprisoned by a sorceress. The Asian dance melody would become Almirena’s lament. After the music was written, Handel quickly wrote, “Lascia ch’io pianga” at the top of the page, unknowingly creating one of the greatest soprano arias of all time.

### Frauenliebe und-leben

*Frauenliebe und-leben*, a cycle of nine poems by Adelbert von Chamisso, enticed several of the great composers of the German Lied, most notably Robert Schumann. Since its completion in 1840, Schumann’s musical interpretation of the poems has become a member of the standard repertoire. Literally meaning, “A Women’s Life and Love,” the cycle chronicles a woman’s journey through a relationship from beginning to end. Close your eyes and imagine a young woman as she is struck by love at first sight. Follow her blooming love from a simple friendship to a marriage proposal. Listen to her anxious excitement as she prepares to marry her true love. Now, feel the delicate emotions of beginning a family. Watch as she spends many happy years with her family, but is left all too shortly by the love of her life. The last line of the cycle, “you are my world,” shows the strength of true love, even long after the death of the ones we love most.

### Chanson d’amour

Through the composition of almost 100 songs, Gabriel Faure became the master of the French art song. Although he is well known today, Faure only became famous in his native country, France, toward the end of his life. At the time of his death, he was practically unknown to the world outside of France. He composed mostly for his friends and patrons in an intimate, salon setting. This resulted in the dedication of many of his songs to specific people. *Chanson d’amour* is dedicated to soprano Jane Hure.

### Adelaide’s Lament

Miss Adelaide, the star performer at the Hot Box nightclub, has been engaged to Nathan Detroit for the last fourteen years. After yet another argument on the subject of getting married, Nathan quickly escapes the wrath of a legally single Adelaide. By the recommendation of her therapist, Adelaide turns to the help of a psychology book to understand her frustration. While reading through the book, she determines that her chronic cold symptoms are the result of her prolonged engagement.

### How Can I Keep from Singing?

One of my very first memories in Jr. High choir was singing a choral arrangement of this folk song. I would later sing this as an audition song for high school choir. Now, I am singing this to end my very own senior recital. The words and melody are simple, yet full of strength. This song deeply resonates through my soul, exemplifying both the great and sad moments that life has thrown my way. When I sing this song, I know that music gets us through the worst days, even if it is hard.