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Gore Recital Hall

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*Please hold your applause until the end of each set
Giacomo Puccini was an Italian composer in the Romantic period, known mainly for his operas. Puccini studied at the Milan Conservatory where his talent for writing music, specifically operas were discovered. He went on to compose La bohème, whose modern adaptation has been turned into the musical Rent, and Madama Butterfly, whose modern adaptation has been turned into the musical Miss Saigon, along with several others. In addition to his operas, he wrote a few art songs, songs written without an association to a show or opera, which is what is being presented today.

**Terra e mare**

Translated into “Land and sea”, this song was written in 1902 towards the later half of Puccini’s career. This song differs from many of Puccini’s; instead of spanning many high and lush notes, he chooses to keep this song just to the span of an octave. Each phrase concentrates on an insistent rhythmic pattern in the vocal line, which creates an effect in painting the specific images in the mind.

I pioppi, curvati dal vento  
The poplars, bent by the wind  
rimuggghiano in lungo filare.  
roar again in long rows.  
Dal buio, tra il sonno, li sento  
In the dark, half asleep I hear them  
e sogno la voce del mare.  
and dream of the voice of the sea.

E sogno la voce profonda  
And I dream of the deep voice  
dai placidi ritmi possenti;  
with its calm and mighty rhythms,  
mi guardan, specchiate dall’onda,  
the stars in the sparkling firmament,  
le stelle del cielo fulgenti.  
gaze at me reflected in the waves.

Ma il vento piú’ forte tempesta  
But the wind rages louder  
de’ pioppi nel lungo filare.  
through the long row of poplars  
Dal sonno giocondo mi desta.  
and wakes me from my joyful sleep…  
Lontana è la voce del mare!  
Distant now is the voice of the sea!
Sole e amore

Sole e amore, translated to “Sun and love”, composed in 1888, tells the story of sun and love as they intertwine their messages and whisper to the narrator. The sun is associated with warmth and light, while love is meant to grow an awakening of emotions and desires. The song is meant to convey the message of the transformative message of the power of love and beauty of life, and he has dedicated this piece to Niccolò Paganini.

Il sole allegramente                  The sun cheerfully
Batte ai tuoi ventri. Amor            Beats at your window. Love
Pain batte al tuo cuore,               Softly beats at your heart,
E l’uno e l’altro chiama.             And both of them call out.

Il sole dice: O dormente,             The sun says: O sleeping one,
Mostrati che sei bella.               Show yourself for you are beautiful.
Dice l’amor: Sorella,                 Love says: Sister,
Col tuo primo pensier pensa a chi t’ama! With your first thought think of the one who loves you!

Al Paganini, G. Puccini              To Paganini, from Puccini

Avanti Urania

Avanti Urania, translated to “Rise Urania”, was written in 1896. The vocal line follows the typical flow of a typical Puccini setting, with the melody being primarily outlining the chord in long, lyrical phrases. The setting of the text mimics his usual compositional style and the piano includes a strong bassline that often doubles the melody.

Io non ho l’ali, eppur quando dal molo I have no wings, but when I launch my
lancio la prora al mar,                  prow into the sea from the wharf,
fermi gli alcioni sul potente volo       the kingfishers, stopping their powerful flight,
si librano a guardar.                   swoop down to watch.

Io non ho pinne, eppur quando i marosi I have no fins, but when no vessel
niun legno osa affrontar,  
trepidando, gli squali ardimentosi  
mi guardano passar.  

Simile al mio signor,  
mite d’aspetto  
quanto è forte in cuor,  
le fiamme ho anch’io nel petto,  
anch’io di spazio, anch’io di gloria ho smania…  
Avanti, Urania!

dares to defy the billows,  
the bold sharks fearfully  
watch me pass.  

Just like my master,  
gentle in appearance  
and yet strong of heart,  
I, too, have flames in my chest,  
I, too, am mad for space, for glory…  
Forward, Urania!
Richard Strauss, a German composer and conductor, was best known for his tone poems and operas. He composed in the late Romantic and early modern era and is known to be the successor of Liszt and Wagner. His advanced harmonic styles, paired with full orchestration are the staples that make up his style, embodying the ideals of German Romanticism.

Im Abendrot, translated to “In the Glow of the Evening” is part of the final compositions of Strauss, titled *Four Last Songs*. Strauss had come across the poem by Joseph von Eichendorff, and feeling a special connection, he set its text and created the composition in 1948. The song, as well as the three others in the set, discuss death and were written very shortly before Strauss’ own death. The approach is that though death is approaching, the narrator is calm and has a sense of acceptance, with the last lines of the piece being, “Is this perhaps death?”.

O wie schön ist deine Welt, O how lovely is your world,
Vater, wenn sie golden strahlet! Father, when she shines with golden beams!
Wenn dein Glanz herniederfällt, When your gaze descends
Und den Staub mit Schimmer malet; And paints the dust with a shimmering glowing,
Wenn das Rot, das in der Wolke blinkt, When the red, which flashes in the clouds,
In mein stilles Fenster sinkt! Sinks into my quiet window!

Könnt’ ich klagen, könnt’ ich zagen? How could I complain, how could I be afraid?
Irre seyn an dir und mir? How could anything ever be amiss between you and me?
Nein, ich will im Busen tragen No, I will carry in my breast
Deinen Himmel schon allhier. Your Heaven for all times.
Und dies Herz, eh’ es zusammenbricht, And this heart, before it breaks down,
Trinkt noch Gluth und schlürft noch Licht. Shall drink in the glow and the light.
Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Gabriel Fauré, argued to be one of the greatest composers of his time, was also a skilled pianist, organist, and teacher. Fauré is known to have influenced many twentieth century composers and to be the bridge between the end of Romanticism and modernism. His complex harmonic and melodic style are evident and a clear connection between his works. Through the three pieces, there are few small motivic sections that connect between the three, but the main underlying feature is the single narrator. The narrator tells of “Poème d’un jour” or “Poems of a day”, telling a story through a single day to capture an entire relationship.

Charles Grandmougin was the poet that wrote the text that is paired in this set. Born in 1850, he was a very successful librettist for oratorio and opera. He was a French poet and playwright, in addition to often writing poetry specifically for mélodie. He was heavily influenced by Wagner and his works were often set to music by composers such as Boulanger, Bizet, and Fauré.

“Rencontre”

The first piece of this set is filled with naivety and youthfulness, displaying themes of excitement in a childlike love. The lyrics themselves are full of questions, and while the narrator is clear to shout their newfound love, they are still questioning if it could be true. The melodic line provides a sense of forward motion, using a flowing motion to create arcs in the phrasing and shape. Additionally, Fauré uses continually changing tonal centers to create a sense of uncertainty, mirroring the lyrics and emotions, until the conclusion of the piece, when the tonality finally settles.

J’étais triste et pensif quand je t’ai rencontrée, I was so sad and wistful when you and I first met,
Je sens moins aujourd’hui mon obstiné tourment; Today, I feel lessor that unyielding torment;
Ô dis-moi, serais-tu la femme inespérée, O tell me, could you be that unexpected woman,
Et le rêve idéal poursuivi vainement? The lovely chimera that I have sought in vain?
Ô, passante aux doux yeux, serais-tu donc l’aime O, wayfarer of such gentle eye, are you that friend
Qui rendrait le bonheur au poète isolé, Who will the return happiness to this lonely poet,
Et vas-tu rayonner sur mon âme affermee, And will you shine on my reawakening soul,
Comme le ciel natal sur un cœur d’exilé? Like the skies of home upon an exile’s heart?
Ta tristesse sauvage, à la mienne pareille,
Aime à voir le soleil décliner sur la mer!
Devant l’immensité ton extase s’éveille,
Et le charme des soirs à ta belle âme est cher;
Une mystérieuse et douce sympathie
Dénia m’enchaîne à toi comme un vivant lien,
And your untamed sorrow, like my own,
Is fond of watching the sun set over the sea!
Its magnitude evokes rapture within you,
And the evening’s allure is dear to your beautiful soul;
A curious and sweet affinity
Already links me to you with a living connection,
My soul shudders, suffused with passion,
And my heart, not fully knowing you, yet cherishes you!

“Toujours”

This piece starts with a pleading motion as the narrator tries to convince their lover to stay with them, resulting in a desperate and angry plea. Using octave leaps, which are rare in Fauré’s compositional style, he reflects the declaration for love and passion that follows it. The piano creates a fast paced and creates contrasting harmonies to the melody, pushing towards a resolution that is found in the closing. The lack of complexity in the conclusion reflects the narrator’s content, as they begin to accept the ending of the relationship, lacking in passion and desire that we had seen previously.

Vous me demandez de me taire,
De fuir loin de vous pour jamais,
Et de m’en aller, solitaire,
Sans me rappeler qui j’aimais!
Demandez plutôt aux étoiles
De tomber dans l’immensité,
À la nuit de perdre ses voiles,
Au jour de perdre sa clarté!
Demandez à la mer immense
De dessécher ses vastes flots,
Et, quand les vents sont en démence,
D’apaiser ses sombres sanglots!
You ask me to be quiet,
To flee from you forever to a distant place,
And to depart alone,
Without thinking of the one who I love!
You might more easily ask the stars
To fall from the sky,
Or the night to lift its veils,
Or the day to rid itself of its brightness!
Ask the immense ocean
To dry up its vast waters,
And, when the winds are raging dementedly,
Ask them to calm their dismal sobbing!
Mais n'espérez pas que mon âme
S'arrache à ses âpres douleurs
Et se dépouille de sa flamme
Comme le printemps de ses fleurs!

But do not hope that my soul
Can uproot its sorrow
And douse its flame
As the spring-time can shed its flowers!

“Adieu”

This piece stays in one tonal center, as opposed to the changing and modulations that occurred in the first two works. As opposed to the narrator's declaration of great passion that we have seen before, this piece is far more tranquil and at peace with the situation at hand. The text, along with the simplistic melody, results in an acceptance, after a relationship filled with declarations and passion, to close without dramatics or tears and just live with the result of the situation. There is little dissonance between the piano and voice and the piece simply flows, just as it is a part of life that they cannot change and can only learn to accept.

Comme tout meurt vite, la rose
Déclose,
Et les frais manteaux diaprés
Des prés;
Les longs soupirs, les bienaimées,
Fumées!

Everything dies so quickly, the rose
Abloom,
And the freshly dappled cloaks
Of the meadows;
Deep sights, those we love well,
Wisps of smoke!

On voit dans ce monde léger
Changer,
Plus vite que les flots des grèves,
Nos rêves,
Plus vite que le givre en fleurs,
Nos coeurs!

One can see, in this insubstantial world
Everything changing,
More rapidly than waves upon the sand,
Our dreams,
More suddenly than the branching frost,
Our hearts!

À vous l'on se croyait fidèle,
I may have believed myself faithful to you,
Cruelle,
Mais hélas! Le plus longs amours
Sont courts!
Et je dis en quittant vos charmes,
San larmes,
Presqu’au moment de mon aveu,
Adieu!

Cruel one,
But, als! The most abiding loves
Are brief!
And I say, upon abandoning your charms,
Without tears,
Just at the moment of my confession,
Farewell!
Franz Lehár was an Austro-Hungarian composer, most famous for this operetta, but also composed sonatas, marches, waltzes, and symphonic poems. He was a trained violinist and often worked alongside tenor Richard Tauber, who sang many of his pieces. He also formed his own publishing house to maximize control over the rights to his works. Lehár’s musical style was defined by his gift to fashion a memorable melody, as well as his love of waltz in his works.

*The Merry Widow*, the show from which this song is from, is focused around a widow named Hanna, who is very wealthy and needs to marry a man from her country, as her money represents the entire capital of her nation and if she does not, the country will go bankrupt. Hanna is being pressured to marry Danilo, a man from her country who will keep the wealth contained, but is also her ex-boyfriend who rejected her when she was poor. This song is sung when Hanna chooses to sing a light tune to entertain her guests at a dinner party.

There once was a Vilia, a witch of the wood,
A hunter beheld her alone as she stood.
The spell of her beauty upon him was laid;
He look’d and he long’d for the magical maid!
For a sudden tremor ran, right thro’ the lovebewilder’d man,
And he sighed as a hapless lover can.

“Vilia, O Vilia! The witch of the wood!
Would I not die for you, dear, if I could!
Vilia, O Vilia, my love and my bride!”
Softly and sadly he sighed.

The woodmaiden smiled, and no answer she gave,
But beckon’d him into the shade of the cave;
He never had known such a rapturous bliss,
No maiden of mortals so sweetly can kiss!
As before her feet he lay, she vanished in the wood away,
And he called vainly till his dying day!
Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Amy Beach was an American composer, and one of the first American women to achieve widespread professional success as a composer of art songs. Beach composed many works, including orchestral, choral, and chamber music, but is best known for her 117 songs for solo voice and piano. Beach’s specialty was creating restless melodic lines with lyrical intensity to create explosive phrasing.

Robert Browning is the poet for this set, hence why the collection is titled 3 Browning Songs. They are from his Bells and Pomegranates, published in 1841. The Browning Society of Boston commissioned Beach to compose a piece for Browning’s birthday based on a section from one of his more works.

“The Year’s at the Spring”

The first piece of this set, this song discusses the narrator as they bubble over in excitement at the change of seasons. This is physically represented through the triplets in the piano flowing over each other, and the piece builds to its conclusion, flowing in excitement on its famous ending line: “God’s in his heaven, all’s right with the world!”

The year’s at the spring
And day’s at the morn;
Morning’s at seven;
The hill-side’s dew-pearled;
The lark’s on the wing;
The snail’s on the thorn;
God’s in His heaven –
All’s right with the world!

“Ah, Love, but a day”

This song takes a very different tone than the first, as a wife deals with the distress of her husband losing interest in their marriage. The song delves into the soul, evoking an internal monologue into reality vs imagined. The second half of the piece turns minor to major, where hope is found in the wife as she muses over the possibility of things turning out peacefully; the final lines, “The world has changed, look in my eyes, wilt thou change, too?”, perfectly captures this.
Ah, Love, but a day,
And the world has changed!
The sun’s away,
And the bird estranged;
The wind has dropped,
And the sky’s deranged;
Summer has stopped.

Look in my eyes!
Wilt thou change too?
Should I fear surprise?
Shall I find aught new
In the old and dear,
In the good and true,
With the changing year?

“I Send My Heart Up To Thee”

The final piece in the set, the rapture of love has overcome the narrator in this piece. The piano’s surging line captures the engulfing feelings of the singer and the waves of the sea that capture the rush that love brings them.

I send my heart up to thee, all my heart
In this my singing,
For the stars help me, and the sea, and the sea bears part;
The very night is clinging
Closer to Venice’ streets to leave one space
Above me, whence thy face
May light my joyous heart to thee, to thee its dwelling place.
The Flower Duet

Léo Delibes (1836-1891)

Léo Delibes was a French composer, having written in the Romantic era and is best known for his ballets and operas. He was both into a musical family and enrolled in the Conservatoire de Paris when he was only twelve. His ballets, Coppélia and Sylvia are still performed today and his opera, Lakmé, is also revived from time to time.

The Flower Duet is set for a soprano and mezzo-soprano and is in the first act of the opera Lakmé, premiered in 1883. The characters are Lakmé and Mallika, as they go collect flowers by the edge of a river. When the two women’s voices come together, they are meant to represent the different flowers on the riverbend, flowing and coming together. The piece is still regularly performed today and is often used in popular media.

LAKME:
(gaient)
Viens, Mallika, les lianes en fleurs
Jettent déjà leur ombre
Sur le ruisseau sacré qui coule, calme et sombre,
Eveillé par le chant des oiseaux tapageurs!

(cheerful)
Come, Mallika, the vines in bloom
Already cast their shadow
On the sacred stream flowing, calm and dark,
Awakened by the song of the boisterous birds!

MALLIKA:
Oh! maîtresse,
C’est l’heure ou je te vois sourire,
L’heure bénie où je puis lire

dans le cœur toujours fermé de Lakmé!

Oh! mistress,
It’s time I see you smile,
The blessed hour where I can read
in the still closed heart of Lakmé!

LAKME:
Dôme épais le jasmin,
A la rose s’assemble,
Rive en fleurs frais matin,
Nous appelons ensemble.

Thick dome jasmine,
At the rose assembles,
Fresh flowering shore in the morning,
We call together.

Ah! glissons en suivant
Ah! slide next

Le courant fuyant:
The current running away:
Dans l'on de frémissante,
D'une main nonchalante,
Gagnons le bord,
Où l'oiseau chante, l'oiseau, l'oiseau chante.
Dôme épais, blanc jasmin,
Nous appellet ensemble!

In the quivering one,
With a nonchalant hand,
Let’s win the edge,
Where the bird sings, the bird, the bird sings.
Thick dome, jasmine white,
Call us together!

MILLIKA:
Sous le dôme épais, où le blanc jasmin
A la rose s'assemble,
Sur la rive en fleurs riant au matin,
Viens, descendons ensemble.
Doucement glissons
De son flot charmant
Suivons le courant fuyant:
Dans l’on de frémissante,
D'une main nonchalante,
Viens, gagnons le bord,
Où la source dort
Et l’oiseau, l’oiseau chante.
Sous le dôme épais,
Sous le blanc jasmin,
Ah! descendons ensemble!

MILLIKA:
Under the thick dome, where the white jasmine
At the rose assembles,
On the band in blooming laughing in the morning,
Come, let’s go down together.
Gently gliding
From its charming flow
Let’s follow the current running away:
In the quivering one,
With a nonchalant hand,
Come, win the edge,
Where the source is sleeping
And the bird, the bird sings
Under a dome,
Under the white jasmine,
Ah! let’s go down together!

LAKME:
Mais, je ne sais quelle crainte subite,
S’empare de moi,
Quand mon père va seul à leur ville maudite;
Je tremble, je tremble d’effroi!

LAKME:
But, I do not know what sudden fear,
Take hold of me,
When my father goes alone to their cursed city;
I tremble, I tremble with terror!

MALLIKA:
Pourquoi le Dieu Ganeça le protège,

MALLIKA:
Why the God Ganeça protects him,
Jusqu’à l’étang où s’ébattent joyeux
Les cygnes aux ailes de neige,
Allons cueillir les lotus bleus.

Up to the pond where frolic
Swans with snow wings,
Let’s go pick the blue lotus.

**LAKME:**
Oui, près des cygnes aux ailes de meige,
Allons cueillir les lotus bleus.
Ensemble

**LAKME:**
Yes, near the swans to the eves of meige,
Let’s go pick the blue lotus.
Together

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**Pluto**  
**Jake Wesley Rogers (1996-present)**

Jake Wesley Rogers is an up and coming pop/alternate artist located in LA. Two of his singles in 2019 landed him a performance at BBC Radio 4 and he only grew in popularity from there. He has appeared as the openers for Ben Platt and Panic! At the Disco’s tours, as well as currently opening for Kesha on tour. Pluto is the title track off of Roger’s third EP, which was released in 2021. The message of both the song and album conveys a sense of belonging and appreciation in the support system around you; learning to find strength in the negative and focusing on the things that make you happy. This rendition of Pluto has been arranged by myself and performed alongside CresHENdo Acappella, a group which I have had the privilege to be a part of for the last three years.
A note from Rebecca:

I would just like to say thank you for joining me on such a special day. I could not be more appreciative for the guidance I have received along the way and the way it has allowed me to grow as both a person and performer. I would like to especially acknowledge Brian Carter, Lydia Bak, Sara Seglem-Hocking, and Claudia Calloway for supporting me in my musical career and pushing me to my best. Additionally, I cannot be more grateful for my family and friends, who have unconditionally supported me in my musical endeavors and have been my cheerleaders through it all. My parents have been my biggest supporters and have allowed me to continue taking chances in pursuing what I love. I also cannot begin to express my gratitude towards Zoe and Daniel, as well as CresHENdo, for showing me the joy in friendship and love through music; I am so grateful to perform alongside such genuine and talented friends. Finally, I would like to thank Meghan for capturing these moments today and making me smile, on and off the stage. I am so thankful to everyone who took time to be here in person or on the livestream today and I am so grateful to have been able to share this alongside you.

Citations:

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