



JIN QIUYAXU JUNIOR RECITAL



Featuring Works By:
George Frideric Handel
Franz Schubert
Robert Schumann
Samuel Barber

1:10 pm

29 April 2021

Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory of Music
Concert Hall

Programme Notes



Jin Qiuyaxu, voice
Beatrice Lin, piano/harpsichord
Kim Mikang, cello

Se per fatal destino (If through fatal fortune)

As a young composer, Handel spent 1706 to 1710 in Rome, Italy, when operatic performances in Rome were banned by Pope Clement XI. He wrote around **150 cantatas** during that time and each of them shows a small drama inside -- it is believed to be his **preliminary study on opera** in which Handel explored and developed his unique ways of using expressive techniques in his music.

Handel composed ***Se per fatal destino*** in 1707, when he was twenty-two years old. This Italian solo cantata consists of two recitatives and two arias. **The first half** of cantata tells the story of a frustrated man fighting for control of his destiny, asking God to have mercy on his suffering and pain; in **the second half** of the cantata, in contrast to the intense first half, Handel uses a more lively but still dramatic Sicilian dance in the aria that follows the recitative.

1. Se per fatal destino (If through fatal fortune)

Se per fatal destino
del faretrato arcier
vuol la mia sorte
che muta sia ed amante,
troppo è crudel decreto a un cor che
adora.
Come potrò infelice occultar quelle
fiamme?
Se una lingua che tace
antidoto al suo mal sdegnà né brama
sollie o alle sue doglie,
parlar dunque dovrò?
Nò, vuò che sia taciturno penar la morte
mia.

Crude stelle, astri tiranni,
consigliatemi a morire,
o toglietemi amorose l'ostinato mio timor.
Insegnate al cor amante la ragion d'un
bell'ardire,
o narrate almen pietose,
al mio ben il mio dolor.

If through fatal fortune
the archer with his quiver
wants my fate
to be silent and loving,
then it is too cruel a decree for an adoring
heart.
How can I, unhappy, conceal those
flames?
If a tongue which is silent
neither disdains nor craves an antidote to
its suffering, or relief for its pain,
must I then speak?
No, he wants me, in silence, to suffer
death.

Merciless stars, syannical planets,
induce me to die,
or, lovingly, remove from me my persistent
fear.
Teach the fond heart the reason for fine
ardour,
or at least, in pity,
tell my sweetheart of my pain.

Ma come, incauta,
arridi, al tuo mal se tu puoi
ora che sola sei,
né alcun ti sente,
dir il bel nome (o Dio) troppo pavento,
ch'Eco il redía e poi,
l'aure che qui d'intorno spirano
vezzosette,
con lor lievi sussurri,
portin con mio rossore
altrove la cagion
dei miei martiri.

Dunque misera godi dei guardi sol;
chi sa che fatto accorto
l'Idolo tuo
del tuo penoso foco
a un reciproco amor
non presti loco.

Con voi mi lagnerò,
occhi, se non trovate rimedio a un tanto
ardor.
Un guardo ben sapete
può l'amorosa sete estinguer del mio cor.

But as, imprudent one,
you smile at your pain if you can,
now that you are alone
no-one hears you,
I am too fearful (oh God) to say the fair
name,
lest Echo should give it back, and then
the breezes which around here breathe
their charms,
with their soft whisperings
should carry off elsewhere,
with my blushes,
the cause of my suffering.

So then, wretch, enjoy my glances alone;
who knows, whether,
having made your Idol
aware of your paining fire,
you do not find a place
for a reciprocal love.

With you, I shall lament,
my eyes, if you do not find a remedy for so
much ardour.
You know well that one glance
can quench the desiring thirst in my heart.

Lied der Braut I, II (The Bride's Song, No. 1&2)

On 12th September 1840, on Schumann and Clara's wedding, Schumann dedicated his song collection -- ***Myrthen***, to his beloved as a wedding gift. These two songs depict a sentimental bride talking to her mother about her vow, and she transfigures her affection into determination to risk her uncertain future with her beloved.

In ***Lied der Braut I***, she emphasizes her adamant commitment to the beloved and her gratitude towards her mother -- since she loves him so much, she starts to understand how her mother has loved her and taken care of her through her life. While in ***Lied der Braut II***, she is pleading for her mother's blessing and declares her determination to risk her uncertain future and her everlasting love for her beloved.

2. *Lied der Braut I (The Bride's Song, No. 1)*

Mutter, Mutter! glaube nicht,
Weil ich ihn lieb' also sehr,
Daß nun Liebe mir gebricht,
Dich zu lieben wie vorher.

Mother, mother, do not believe
That because I love him so much,
I am now lack of love
With which to love you as I have in the
past.

Mutter, Mutter! seit ich ihn Liebe,
lieb' ich erst dich sehr.
Laß mich an mein Herz dich zieh'n
Und dich küssen, wie mich er.

Mother, mother, since I love him,
I now truly love you.
Let me hold you to my heart
And kiss you as he kisses me!

Mutter, Mutter! Seit ich ihn Liebe,
lieb' ich erst dich ganz,
Daß du mir das Sein verlieh'n,
Das mir ward zu solchem Glanz.

Mother, mother! Since I love him
I finally love you completely,
For giving me my life,
That has become so radiant.

3. *Lied der Brau II (The Bride's Song, No. 2)*

Laß mich ihm am Busen hangen,
Mutter, Mutter! laß das Bangen.
Frage nicht: wie soll sich's wenden?
Frage nicht: wie soll das enden?
Enden? Enden soll sich's nie,
Wenden, noch nicht weiß ich, wie!

Let me cling to his chest,
Mother, Mother! Stop worrying.
Don't ask: how shall it change?
Don't ask: how shall it end?
End? It shall never end,
Change, I still don't know how!

Gretchen am Spinnrade (Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel)

Among all of Franz Schubert's works, *Gretchen am Spinnrade* is the first Lied he set to a **Goethe** poem. However, it has undoubtedly been a great success not only at his time but also nowadays. His deployment of "**extraordinary musical**" means to "achieve, collectively, unprecedented psychological and dramatic insight into the work" that German philosopher Friedrich Schelling had described as "die innerste, reinste Essenz unseres Zeitalters" (the **inmost, purest** essence of our age) -- there is something in the **raw energy** of this music that suggests the composer is right inside the drama.

4. *Gretchen am Spinnrade (Gretchen at the spinning wheel)*

Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer;
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

My peace is gone,
My heart is heavy,
I will find it never
and never more.

Wo ich ihn nicht hab'
Ist mir das Grab,
Die ganze Welt
Ist mir vergällt.

Mein armer Kopf
Ist mir verrückt,
Mein armer Sinn
Ist mir zerstückt.

Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer;
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

Nach ihm nur schau' ich
Zum Fenster hinaus,
Nach ihm nur geh' ich
Aus dem Haus.

Sein hoher Gang,
Sein' edle Gestalt,
Seines Mundes Lächeln,
Seiner Augen Gewalt,

Und seiner Rede
Zauberfluß,
Sein Händedruck,
Und ach, sein Kuß!

Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

Mein Busen drängt
Sich nach ihm hin.
Ach dürft ich fassen
Und halten ihn!

Und küssen ihn
So wie ich wollt',
An seinen Küssen
Vergehen sollt'!

Where I do not have him,
That is the grave,
The whole world
Is bitter to me.

My poor head
Is crazy to me,
My poor mind
Is torn apart.

My peace is gone,
My heart is heavy,
I will find it never
and never more.

For him alone
I look out of the window,
For him alone
I leave the house.

His erect gait,
His noble figure,
The smile of his mouth,
The power of his gaze.

And the magic flow
Of his speech,
The pressure of his hands,
And ah, his kiss!

My peace is gone,
My heart is heavy,
I will find it never
and never more.

My bosom is driven
Towards him.
Ah, might I clasp
And hold him.

And kiss him,
As I would wish,
At his kisses
I should die!

Hermit Songs

From an early age, Irish poems and tales fascinated **Samuel Barber**, who was part Irish. In the summer of 1952, he finally traveled to Ireland, and while visiting sites connected with William Butler Yeats during a trip to Donegal, he found Yeats's grave to be surrounded by tombstones belonging to people with the name Barber. When Barber returned to the United States, his research turned up some texts in old Gaelic written during the early Middle Ages by **anonymous Irish monks and hermits**. Their **strong power** and **earthy expressiveness** captivated him.

The five selected songs from ***Hermit Songs*** are “small poems, thoughts, or observations—some very short—and speak in straightforward, droll, and often surprisingly modern terms of the simple life these men led, close to nature, animals, and to God”, quote from Barber's note of his publication of this song cycle.

At Saint Patrick's Purgatory tells the thoughts of a pilgrim on his journey. The repeated gesture in the piano part indicates the pilgrims' steady march and the appoggiatura indicates the self beatings of the pilgrims. ***St. Ita's Vision*** starts with a forceful recitative sung by a nun who lived in the sixth-century, followed by a tender lullaby which Mary sings to the baby Jesus. ***The Heavenly Banquet*** depicts a busy and lively celebration scene by a drunken monk in which saints, Jesus and peoples all share heavenly and earthly joys together with beer. ***Promiscuity*** is the most mischievous song among them all, in which a monk is spilling some secrets of his fellow monk “Edan” (which means “fire” in the Irish language). ***The Praises of God*** begins with a monk's clumsy footsteps, as he sings praises (laudations) to “Heaven's High King”.

5. At Saint Patrick's Purgatory

Pity me on my pilgrimage to Loch Derg!
O King of the churches and the bells
bewailing your sores and your wounds,
But not a tear can I squeeze from my eyes!
Not moisten an eye after so much sin!
Pity me, O King!
What shall I do with a heart that seeks only its own ease?
O only begotten Son by whom all men were made,
Who shunned not the death by three wounds,
pity me on my pilgrimage to Loch Derg
and I with a heart not softer than a stone!

6. St. Ita's Vision

“I will take nothing from my Lord,” said she,
“unless He gives me His Son from Heaven
In the form of a Baby that I may nurse Him.”
So that Christ came down to her
in the form of a Baby
and then she said:

“Infant Jesus, at my breast,
Nothing in this world is true
Save, O tiny nursling, You.
Infant Jesus, at my breast,
By my heart ev’ry night,
You I nurse are not A churl
But were begot On Mary the Jewess
By Heaven's light.
Infant Jesus, at my breast,
what King is there but You who could
Give everlasting Good?
Wherefor I give my food.
Sing to Him, maidens, sing your best!
There is none that has such right
To your song as Heaven's King
Who every night
Is Infant Jesus at my breast.”

7. The Heavenly Banquet

I would like to have the men of Heaven in my own house;
with vats of good cheer laid out for them.
I would like to have the three Marys,
their fame is so great.
I would like people from ev’ry corner of Heaven.
I would like them to be cheerful in their drinking:
I would like to have Jesus sitting here among them.
I would like a great lake of beer for the King of Kings.
I would like to be watching Heaven's family
Drinking it through all eternity.

8. Promiscuity

I do not know with whom Edan will sleep,
but I do know that fair Edan will not sleep alone.

9. The Praises of God

How foolish the man
Who does not raise His voice
and praise With joyful words,
As he alone can, Heaven’s High King.
To whom the light birds
With no soul but air,
All day, ev’rywhere,
laudation sing.