

A GRADUATE VOICE RECITAL

By

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A PERFORMANCE IN LIEU OF THESIS PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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Abstract of Performance in Lieu of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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Requirements for the Degree of Master of Music

A GRADUATE VOICE REICTAL

By

Michelle Fegeas

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Chair: Elizabeth Graham

Major: Vocal Performance with Secondary Concentration in Historical Musicology

On December 1, 2012, I presented a vocal recital as a requirement for the degree of Master of Music in Vocal Performance. The works performed covered several languages and musical time periods. The recital began with “With Verdure Clad,” a soprano aria from Joseph Haydn’s oratorio *The Creation*. It continued with three Italian Baroque pieces by Giovanni Bononcini, Barbara Strozzi, and Alessandro Scarlatti, followed by Robert Schumann’s trio for piano, soprano, and clarinet, *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (The Shepherd on the Rock). The first half ended with the *bel canto* aria “Una voce poco fà” from Gioachino Rossini’s opera *The Barber of Seville*. The second half consisted of two song sets: Francis Poulenc’s *Banalités* and Samuel Barber’s *Despite and Still*. Both were written in the twentieth century.

The variety of repertoire on the recital allowed me to demonstrate several aspects of vocal technique, including breathing technique, vowel formation, diction, phrasing, and agility. For example, while *Der Hirt Auf dem Felsen* contains long, flowing phrases and fewer words, “Una voce poco fà” requires much more emphasis on diction as well as coloratura technique. Studying both pieces allows me to develop a well-rounded technique.

Summary of Performance in Lieu of Thesis
Presented to the College of Fine Arts of the University of Florida
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Music

Recital Program
December 1, 2012 at 5:30 PM
Assisted by Katherine Plympton, piano and Brendon Lucas, clarinet

“With Verdure Clad”
from *The Creation* (1798)

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Amor dormiglione (1651)

Barbara Strozzi
(1619-1677)

Deh più a me non v’ascondete
from *Eraclea*(1692)
Ergiti, amor
from *Scipione nelle Spagne* (1714)

Giovanni Bononcini
(1670-1747)
Alessandro Scarlatti
(1660-1725)

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen (1828)
(The Shepherd on the Rock)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Brendon Lucas, clarinet

“Una voce poco fa”
from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816)

Gioachino Rossini
(1792-1868)

Intermission

Banalités (1940)

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

- I. Chanson d’Orkenise
- II. Hôtel
- III. Fagnes de Wallonie
- IV. Voyage à Paris
- V. Sanglots

Despite and Still (1969)

Samuel Barber
(1910-1981)

- I. A Last Song
- II. My Lizard
- III. In the Wilderness
- IV. Solitary Hotel
- V. Despite and Still

Texts and Translations

“With Verdure Clad” from *The Creation* by Joseph Haydn

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree, giving fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: and it was so.

With verdure clad the fields appear.
Delightful to the ravished sense:
By flowers sweet and gay
Enhanced is the charming sight.
Here fragrant herbs their odors shed:
Here shoots the healing plant.

With copious fruit the panded boughs are hung:
In leafy arches twine the shady groves:
O'er lofty hills majestic forests wave.

“Amor dormiglione” by Barabra Strozzi

Amor, non dormir più! Su, svegiati omai!

Che mentre dormi tu, Dormon le gioie mie
Vegliano I guai. Non esser, amor dappoco!
Strali, Foco! Strali, su! Foco, su, su!

Non dormir più, svegliati, su, Amor!
O pigro, o tardo, tu non hai senso!

Amor melenso, Amor codardo, ah, quale io resto

Ché nel mio ardore tu dorma, Amore! Mancava
questo!

Sleeping Love

Love (Cupid), do not sleep anymore? Come on—
get up now
Because while you are sleeping my joys sleep,
My troubles are awake. Do not be worthless,
Love!
Arrows, fire—arrows, come on! Fire, come on,
come on!
Do not sleep anymore; get up, come on, Love!
Oh lazy one, oh sluggish one, you have no
common sense!
Doltish Love, cowardly Love, ah, what a state
I am in
Because you sleep during my passion, Love! I
really didn't need this!

“Deh, più a me non v’ascondete” by Giovanni Bononcini; text by Silvio Stampaglia, based on text by Nicolò Minato

Deh, più a me non v’ascondete,
Luci vaghe del mio sol.
Con svelarvi, se voi siete,
Voi potete trar quest’alma fuor di duol.

“Ergiti, Amor!” by Alessandro Scarlatti
Text by Apostolo Zeno and Nicola Serino

Ergiti, Amor, sui vanni
e prendi ardito il volo
senz’abbassarti più.
Perché con nuovi inganni
tu non ricada al suolo,
lo sosterrà virtù.

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen by Franz Schubert
Text by Wilhelm Müller and Helmina von Chézy

Wenn auf dem höchsten Fels ich steh',
In's tiefe Tal hernieder seh',
Und singe.

Fern aus dem tiefen dunkeln Tal
Schwingt sich empor der Widerhall
Der Klüfte.

Je weiter meine Stimme dringt,
Je heller sie mir wieder klingt
Von unten.

Mein Liebchen wohnt so weit von mir,
Drum sehn' ich mich so heiß nach ihr
Hinüber.

In tiefem Gram verzehr ich mich,
Mir ist die Freude hin,
Auf Erden mir die Hoffnung wich,

Ah, do not hide from me any longer

Ah, do not hide from me any longer,
Lovely eyes of my sun.
By revealing yourselves,
You can take this soul away from sorrow.

Translations by Martha Gerhart. Reprinted with kind permission.

Rise up, love!

Raise up your wings, love,
And take flight boldly
Without falling anymore,
Because even with new deceit
You will not return to the ground,
Virtue will sustain you.

The Shepherd on the Rock

When on the highest rock I stand
I look down into the deep valley
And sing.

Far from the deep dark valley
The echo rings out, up from
The chasm.

The farther my voice reaches,
The clearer it sounds back to me
From below.

My sweetheart lives so far away from me,
I ardently long to be with her
Over there.

In deep sorrow I consume myself,
For me there is no joy,
On the earth hope has left me.

Ich hier so einsam bin.
So sehndend klang im Wald das Lied,
So sehndend klang es durch die Nacht,
Die Herzen es zum Himmel zieht
Mit wunderbarer Macht.

Der Frühling will kommen,
Der Frühling, meine Freud',
Nun mach' ich mich fertig
Zum Wandern bereit.

“Una voce poco fa”

From Gioachino Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*
("The Barber of Seville")
Text by Cesare Sterbini

Una voce poco fà
Qui nel cor mi risuonò
Il mio cor ferito è già,
E Lindoro fu che il piegò.
Sì, Lindoro mio sarò,
Lo guirai, la vincerò.

Il tutor ricuserà, io l'ingegno aguzzero,
Alla fin s'accheterà, e contenta io resterò.

Io sono docile, son rispettosa,
Sono obbediente, dolce, amorosa,
Mi lascio reggere, mi fò guidar.
Ma se mi toccano dov'è il mio debole,
Sarò una vipera, sarò,
E cento trappole, prima di cedere,
Faro giocare.

Banalités by Francis Poulenc
Text by Guillaume Apollinaire

Chanson d'Orkenise

Par les portes d'Orkenise
Veut entrer un charretier;
Par les portes d'Orkenise
Veut sortir un va-nu-pieds.

I am so lonely here.
So longingly the song rings in the wood,
So longingly is rings through the night,
It draws hearts towards heaven
With wonderful might.

Spring will come,
Spring, my joy,
Now I make myself ready,
Prepared to wander.

A little while ago,
A voice resounded here in my heart.
My heart is already wounded,
And it was Lindoro who weakened it.
Yes, Lindoro will be mine,
I have sworn it, I will win this fight.

The teacher will refuse, I will sharpen my wits,
At the end he will accept him, and I shall remain
content.

I am calm, I am considerate,
I am obedient, sweet, loving,
I let myself be ruled, I allow myself to be guided.
But if they touch me where I am weak,
I will be a viper, I will,
And a hundred snares I will set up
Before I yield.

Song of Orkenise

Through the gates of Orkenise
A carter wants to enter.
Through the gates of Orkenise
A tramp wants to leave.

Et les gardes de la ville
Courant sus au va-nu-pieds:
"Qu'emportes-tu de la ville?"
"J'y laisse mon Coeur entier."

Et les gardes de la ville
Courant sus au charretier:
"Q'apportes-tu dans la ville?"
"Mon Coeur pour me marier."

Que de coeurs dans Orkenise!
Les gardes riaient, riaient.
Va-nu-pieds, la route et grise,
L'amour grise, ô charretier.

Les beaux gardes de la ville
Tricotaient superbement;
Puis les portes de la ville
Se fermèrent lentement.

Hôtel

Ma chambre a la forme d'une cage
Le soleil passé son bras par la fenêtre
Mais moi qui veut fumer
Pour faire des mirages
J'allume au feu du jour ma cigarette
Je ne veux pas travailler
Je veux fumer.

Fagnes de Wallonie

Tant de tristesses plenières
Prirent mon Coeur aux fagnes désolées
Quand las j'ai reposé dans les sapinières
Le poids des kilomètres pendant que râlait
Le vent d'ouest

J'avais quitté le jolis bois
Les écureuils y sont restés
Ma pipe essayait de faire des nuages
 Au ciel
Qui restait pur obstinément

And the sentries of the town
Rush up to the tramp and ask:
"What are you taking out of the town?"
- "I'm leaving my whole heart behind."

And the sentries of the town
Rush up to the carter and ask:
"What are you bringing into the town?"
- "My heart: I'm getting married."

What a lot of hearts in Orkenise!
The sentries laughed and laughed.
Oh tramp, the road is dreary;
Oh carter, love is heady.

The handsome sentries of the town
Knitted superbly;
Then the gates of the town
Slowly swung shut.

Hotel

My room has the form of a cage.
The sun reaches its arm in through the window.
But I want to smoke and make shapes in the air,
and so I light my cigarette on the sun's fire.
I don't want to work, I want to smoke.

Walloon Moorlands

So much deep sadness
seized my heart on the desolate moors
when I sat down weary among the firs, unloading
the weight of the kilometres
while the west wind growled.

I had left the pretty woods.
The squirrels stayed there.
My pipe tried to make clouds of smoke
 in the sky
which stubbornly stayed blue.

Je n'ai confié aucun secret sinon
une chanson énigmatique
Aux toubières humides

Les bruyères fleurant le miel
Attiraient les abeilles
Et mes pieds endoloris
Foulaient les myrtilles et les airelles

Tendrement mariée

Nord

Nord

La vie s'y tord

En arbres forts

Et tors

La vie y mord

La mort

A belles dents

Quand bruit le vent

Voyage à Paris

Ah! la charmante chose

Quitter un pays morose

Pour Paris

Paris joli

Qu'un jour dut créer l'Amour

Sanglôts

Notre amour est réglé par les calmes étoiles
Or nous savons qu'en nous beaucoup
d'hommes respirent

Qui vinrent de très loin et

sont un sous nos fronts

C'est la chanson des rêveurs

Qui s'étaient arraché le Coeur

Et le portaient dans la main droite

Souviens-t'en cher orgueil de
tous ces souvenirs

Des marins qui chantaient
comme des conquérants

I murmured no secret except an enigmatic song
which I confided to the peat bog.

Smelling of honey, the heather
was attracting the bees,
and my aching feet
trod bilberries and whortleberries.

Tenderly she is married

North!

North!

There life twists
in trees that are strong
and gnarled.

There life bites
bitter death
with greedy teeth,
when the wind howls.

Going to Paris

Ah, how delightful it is

to leave a dismal place
and head for Paris!

Beautiful Paris,
which one day Love had to create!

Sobs

Human love is ruled by the calm stars.
We know that within us many
people breathe

Who came from afar and
are united behind our brows.

This is the song of that dreamer
who had torn out his heart
and was carrying it in his right hand...

Remember, oh dear pride,
all those memories:

the sailors who sang
like conquerors,

Des gouffres de Thulé des
 tendres cieux d'Ophir
 Des maladies maudits de ceux qui
 fuient leur ombre
 Et du retour joyeux des heureux émigrants
 De ce coeur il coulait du sang
 Et le rêveur allait pensant
 A sa blessure delicate
 Tu ne briseras pas la chaine de ces causes
 Et douloureuse et nous disait
 Qui sont les effets d'autres causes
 Mon pauvre coeur mon coeur brisé
 Pareil au coeur de tous les hommes
 Voici voice nos mains que la vie fit esclaves
 Est mort d'amour ou c'est tout comme
 Est mort d'amour et le voici
 Ainsi vont toutes choses
 Arrachez donc le vôtre aussi
 Et rien ne sera libre jusqu'à la fin des temps
 Laissons tout aux morts
 Et cachons nos sanglots

the chasms of Thule,
 the tender skies of Ophir,
 the accursed sick, the ones who
 flee their own shadows,
 and the joyful return of the happy emigrants.
 Blood was flowing from that heart;
 and the dreamer went on thinking
 of his wound which was delicate ...
 You will not break the chain of those causes...
 ...and painful; and he kept saying to us:
 ...which are the effects of other causes.
 "My poor heart, my heart which is broken
 like the hearts of all men...
 Look, here are our hands which life enslaved.
 "...has died of love or so it seems,
 has died of love and here it is.
 That is the way of all things.
 "So tear your hearts out too!"
 And nothing will be free until the end of time.
 Let us leave everything to the dead,
 and let us hide our sobbing.

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Despite and Still by Samuel Barber

A Last Song (Robert Graves)¹

A last song, and a very last, and yet another
 O, when can I give over?
 Must I drive the pen until blood
 bursts from my nails
 And my breath fails and I shake with fever,
 Or sit well wrapped in a many colored cloak
 Where the moon shines new through
 Castle Crystal?
 Shall I never hear her whisper softly:
 "But this is truth written by you only
 And for me only;
 Therefor, love, have done?

¹ Originally "A Last Poem," published in *The New Yorker* June 6, 1964. Copyright The Robert Graves Copyright Trust.

My Lizard (Theodore Roethke)²

My lizard, my lively writher,
May your limbs never wither,
May the eyes in your face
Survive the green ice
Of envy's mean gaze.

May you live out your life
Without hate, without grief,
And your hair ever blaze,
In the sun, in the sun,
When I am undone,
When I am no one.

In the Wilderness (Robert Graves)

He, of his gentleness,
Thirsting and hungering
Walked in the wilderness;
Soft words of grace he spoke
Unto lost desert folk
That listened, wondering.

He heard the bittern call
From ruined palace wall,
Answered him brotherly;
He held communion
With the she pelican
Of lonely piety.

Basilisk, cockatrice,
Flocked to his homilies,
With mail of dread device,
With monstrous barbed stings;
With eager dragon eyes,
Great bats of leathern wings
And old, blind broken things
Mean in their miseries.

Then ever with him went,
Of all his wanderings

² "Wish for a young wife" from Roethke: *Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke*. Copyright © 1963 by Beatrice Roethke as Administratrix of the Estate of Theodore Roethke. Published by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

Comrade, with ragged coat,
Gaunt ribs, poor innocent
Bleeding foot, burning throat,
The guileless young scapegoat.
For forty nights and days
Followed in Jesus' ways,
Sure guard behind him kept,
Tears like a lover wept.

Solitary Hotel (James Joyce)

Solitary hotel in a mountain pass.
Autumn. Twilight. Fire lit.
In dark corner young man seated.
Young woman enters.
Restless. Solitary. She sits.
She goes to window. She stands.
She sits. Twilight. She thinks.
On solitary hotel paper she writes.
She thinks. She writes. She sighs.
Wheels and hoofs. She hurries out.
He comes from his dark corner.
He seizes solitary paper.
He holds it towards fire. Twilight.
He reads. Solitary. What?
In sloping, upright and backhands:
Queen's hotel, Queen's hotel, Queen's ho...

Despite and Still (Robert Graves)³

Have you not read the words in my head,
And I made part of your own heart?
We have been such as draw the losing straw
You of your gentleness, I of my rashness,
Both in despair
Yet still might share this happy will:
To love despite and still.

Never let us deny the thing's necessity
But, o, refuse to choose
When chance may seem to give
Loves in alternative.
To love despite and still.

³ Graves, Robert. "Despite and Still." *The Poems of Robert Graves*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, (c) 1958, p. 181. Copyright The Robert Graves Copyright Trust.

First performed in 1798, *The Creation* by **Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809) is one of his best known works. The oratorio chronicles the six days of creation. The soprano recitative “And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass’” and aria “With Verdure Clad” chronicle part of the second day; here God creates plants of all kinds. The soprano soloist represents the archangel Gabriel.

The early Italian song set includes pieces by three different composers: **Barbara Strozzi** (1619-1677), **Giovanni Bononcini** (1670-1747), and **Alessandro Scarlatti** (1660-1725).

Preparation of these songs has been of particular interest to me, because I am currently taking a class on figured bass. Before the class, I already knew that it was a common practice to play an accompaniment from a figured bass and improvise given these guidelines. I learned through this class, however, that many of the editions of early songs used in schools today are realizations created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These realizations give the songs a Romantic feel to them, and would have never sounded as they do back in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I found that the modern edition of Strozzi’s “Amor dormiglione” was the worst offender, not only adding extended chromaticism and flowing arpeggios but repeating the words more than originally intended. For this piece, pianist Kathy Plympton will pare down the accompaniment slightly, and I will add ornaments and omit extraneous repetitions of the text; my hope is to restore to some extent its Baroque flavor.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) composed his chamber work *Die Hirt auf dem Felsen* (“The Shepherd on the Rock”) in October 1828, only a month before he died. Although it has not been proven, this work might have been the last piece he ever composed. Unlike most of his *lieder*, the poetry comes from several sources by two different poets. Schubert used Wilhelm Müller’s words in the first and third sections of the piece, and presents the shepherd with a

hopeful attitude. Both sections include the text that translates, “The further my voice carries, the more clearly it echoes back to me”; music theorist Frank Samarotto asserts that the echo symbolizes “a belief that separation can be bridged from within.” The middle section includes words by Helmina von Chézy, which express a deep loneliness that is nevertheless consoled by looking heavenward. According to Samarotto, “The text provides Schubert with two opposing experiences of space, one that opens gladly into a world of intimate immensity, the other that feels a keen and painful isolation.” Although no one knows exactly when the moment of death will come, is possible that these conflicting emotions represent Schubert’s own resignation to death just weeks before it happened.

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) wrote the aria “Una voce poco fa” for his famous opera *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*), which premiered in 1816. Much of the musical material derives from his *Elisabetta, regina d’Inghilterra* (*Elizabeth, Queen of England*, 1815). This sort of self-borrowing was acceptable “as long as the reused material was introduced in a town different from that which had heard it in its original context” and that Rossini usually changed the music somewhat for its new purpose, as music historian William Ashbrook points out.

The character singing this aria, Rosina, is a young ward in the care of Doctor Bartolo. The old man has designs on marrying her, but as Rosina herself proclaims in the aria, another man has stolen her heart. The Count Almaviva, disguised as a poor student named Lindoro, has serenaded her from outside her window just before the aria. “Una voce poco fa” serves as a way for Rosina to show her strong and wily character to the audience; she will go along with Doctor Bartolo’s orders, but only when she sees benefit in doing so!

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) composed his song cycle *Banalités* in 1940. The texts of the five songs in the cycle were written by Guillaume Apollinaire, whose works continued the Symbolist tradition of Paul Verlaine and others. Each of the five poems suggests its own distinct sound and brings even more meaning to supposedly “banal” topics. “Voyage à Paris,” for example, uses the cabaret style, often placing the last syllable of a word on the first beat of the measure in a waltz; on the other hand, “Chanson d’Orkenise” begins with very steady, equally emphasized beats in the left hand of the piano accompaniment, and includes frequent trills in the right hand throughout the piece. This variety exists most likely because Poulenc was insistent upon keeping the text intricately connected with the music. The song cycle as a whole paints an eclectic variety of scenes, from a guard post to a desolate moorland to a quiet, smoke filled hotel room. Ironically but beautifully, the cycle ends with “Sanglots,” a heavy philosophical musing on the inevitability of suffering.

Samuel Barber (1910-1981), probably best known today for his *Adagio for Strings*, wrote his song cycle *Despite and Still* for his friend Leontyne Price, the celebrated soprano; they premiered the work in 1969 as a duo.

Robert Graves, the author of three of the poems, began his career as a member of the Georgian school of poetry. Followers of this school believed in making their text more accessible to an audience by avoiding any archaic language that would hinder its understanding of the text; they also avoided both religious and political topics. That Graves deviated slightly from the latter rule is clear in “In the Wilderness,” which chronicles a man who suffers considerably in order to follow Jesus. Graves is also fixated on the idea of a Muse that must inspire his poetry; although his Muse is above all hypothetical, she often incarnated herself in the various women with which

he was romantically involved, (Canary 20-21). The Muse appears in both the first song of the cycle (“A Last Song”) and the last (“Despite and Still”).

“My Lizard,” written by Theodore Roethke, describes the amicable parting of lovers through the metaphor of a lizard. Barber depicts the lizard in the piano accompaniment with constant arpeggios that imitate slithering.

The text of “Solitary Hotel” comes from James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses*. The characters Bloom and Stephen tell stories that, in Joyce’s words, “deduce that originality, though producing its own reward, does not invariably conduce to success”; the text in the song is one such story. Barber enhances through a slow tango the story of a man and a woman at a hotel. The woman writes a letter and leaves quickly; the man gets up to read the letter that she has read, and is utterly shocked. Joyce gives the reader no further details.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lyric coloratura soprano Michelle Fegeas has gained substantial experience performing vocal works spanning several different genres and time periods. Her operatic roles include Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, First Spirit in *The Magic Flute*, Barbarina in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Madame Herz in *The Impresario*, and Laurentia in Dan Shore's recently composed opera *The Beautiful Bridegroom*. In the realm of concert work, she appeared in a concert series in Manassas, Virginia in 2010, performing Manuel de Falla's *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas*. She has also performed the soprano solos in several choral works by Baroque and Classical period composers from South America; these works have been studied by musicologists and were performed as part of the presentation of their research.

Miss Fegeas has participated in several well-known training programs for classical singers, including Operafestival di Roma, the Richard Crittenden Summer Opera Workshop, the Bel Cantanti Summer Opera Workshop, and SongFest. She has performed in masterclasses conducted by Maria Russo, Kathryn Cathcart, Margo Garrett, and Amy Burton.

A native of Warrenton, Virginia, Miss Fegeas holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of South Carolina, where she studied with Dr. Helen Tintes-Schuermann and Dr. Tina Milhorn Stallard. She is currently completing graduate studies at the University of Florida, pursuing a Master of Music in Vocal Performance with a Secondary Concentration in Historical Musicology. She currently studies voice with Dr. Elizabeth Graham.