

4-6-2002

## Senior Recital: Laura Knouse, soprano

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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SENIOR RECITAL

Laura Knouse, soprano

assisted by

Joanne Kong, harpsichord and piano

Matt McCabe, cello

Mindy Christensen, clarinet

Tara Arness, flute



APRIL 6, 2002, 7:30 PM  
PERKINSON RECITAL HALL

*N/A Master it  
5/19/03 8-12*

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*Please join us for a reception following the recital  
in Booth Lobby  
next to the Marsh Gallery, Theatre Complex, Modlin Center for the Arts.*

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... PROGRAM ...

Soccorrete, luci avare 00:\_\_\_ Barbara Strozzi  
Con male nuove, non si può cantare 5:35 (1619-1759)  
Spesso per entro al petto 8:06

Waldeinsamkeit 13:18 Max Reger  
Am Brünnele 15:04 (1873-1916)  
Schlecht' Wetter 17:00  
Mit Rosen bestreut 18:31  
Warte nur! 20:28

... PAUSE ...

Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales Lester Trimble  
I. Prologe 26:20 (1923-1986)  
II. A Knyght 30:52  
III. A Yong Squier 34:32  
IV. The Wyf of Biside Bath 38:12

When I Have Sung My Songs to You 46:08 Ernest Charles  
(1895-1984)

Sing Agreeably of Love 48:16 Daniel Pinkham  
(b. 1923)  
Text by W. H. Auden

Why Do they Shut Me Out of Heaven? 51:00 Aaron Copland  
Did I Sing Too Loud? (1900-1990)  
Text by Emily Dickinson

Another New Voice Teacher 53:00 Andrew Thomas  
(b. 1939)  
Text by Gene Scheer

one set

Barbara Strozzi holds a unique place in the music of the Baroque not simply because of her gender but because she was one of the only female composers to publish her works and support herself from these publications. Her talent flourished in the rich musical environment of Venice: she was the daughter of Giulio Strozzi, an opera librettist, and a student of Cavalli. She herself was a performer and was described in print as the “virtuoissimi cantatrice” (most virtuoistic singer). Her works, all for solo voice and continuo, reveal a style based on the use of contrasting material and textually expressive lyricism that reflects her *secunda prattica* training. To the singer, Strozzi’s line is both lush and flattering to the voice—an undeniable result of the fact that she was a performer of her own works. And it is perhaps her unique status as a woman of the times that allows her music to be deeply expressive of the ironic love poetry she sets.

The compositional style of Max Reger represents a bridge between the Romantic tradition and modernism in its focus on a complex pitch language for expressive purposes. In his own words, he strived for “architectonic beauty, melodic and imitative magic” buttressed by “intellectual content”. This is evident in the excerpts from his major collection of vocal works, *Schlichte Weisen*, in the extensive use of chromaticism for purposes of dramatic expression. (This is, perhaps, ironic. He composed in a wide variety of forms but never for the theatre.) Throughout these pieces, Reger employs chromatic elements to portray both delicate serenity and tempestuous pandemonium.

*Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales* (1958) is an unusual piece in many respects. These are the same aspects that make it intriguing chamber music. The piece was composed by Lester Trimble whose style has been described as emphasizing “lyricism...intense harmonic and instrumental coloration, distinctive melodic contours and original formal structures” (A. Hughes). Listeners will note these elements in the *Canterbury Tales*. Trimble’s choice of instrumentation is particularly effective. The harpsichord serves to bring a sense of Chaucerian archaism to a piece in which compositional elements are decidedly modern. The clarinet represents the character of the Knight and the flute personifies his son, the Yong Squier. Listeners will note that the text is sung in Chaucer’s original Middle English. The language, in addition to having a delightful sound, has vowel colors and articulated final vowels that make it more singable, perhaps, than modern English. Performing *Canterbury Tales* has been a challenging and vastly rewarding musical experience.

The final set of pieces is, in some sense, “self-reflexive”. All of these songs are, in one way or another, about singing. Singing and songs are used as metaphors for love, storytelling, and ultimately self-expression of the most unfettered and personal variety. At least one song refers to the experience of singing in very concrete terms. In this particular piece, reference is made to James Levine, long-time music director for the Metropolitan Opera. I would like to dedicate this set of “songs about singing” to all of those people who have inspired, guided and supported me in my musical life. Thank you all so very much.

(Notes by Laura Knouse)

· · · TRANSLATIONS · · ·





Waldeinsamkeit (Alone in the Wood)

In the silent peace of last evening  
I saw a blackbird near me in the wood.  
As I sat there, my mind wandering,  
My sweetheart came sneaking up on me and kissed me.

There are so many leaves on the Linden tree  
And so many thousand times I kissed my love.  
Then, I must confess, no one saw it.  
And the blackbird shall be my witness—  
We were alone.

Am Brünnele (By the Fountain)  
Text by Julius Gersdorf

At the fountain, I have often listened.  
I would like to know what it is secretly babbling.  
Whether my beloved has written me a letter,  
If he thinks of me and has remained faithful.

Schlect' Wetter (Bad Weather)

Text by Richard Braungart

O how unpleasant, how disgusting is the winter!  
Only ice and snow on the fields—all is gloomy and dead.  
Nothing singing, nothing springing  
It saps the fresh blood of youth.  
Waiting must cease until garden, path and weather are well  
again.

O how unpleasant, how disgusting is the face made by my  
beloved.  
Complaining and sulking to me, she shows me no love.  
Nothing singing, nothing springing  
It saps the blood of my loving heart.  
I must rest and cease fasting until my beloved is well again.

Mit Rosen bestreut (Covered with Roses)

Text by Maximilian Bern

I have rocked my baby to sleep and have covered it with roses  
So that it will lie quite nicely and quietly until morning awakes.  
With red roses and white clover have I covered my baby.  
And so I will keep watch on its slumber beneath the flowers  
Until the day renews itself.

Warte nur! (Only Wait!)

Text by Richard Braungart

When the boys are being very bad,  
Little Gretel comes running and quickly chases them  
Into heaps near houses, on lawns and in gardens.

Mother sees and laughs:  
"You kid! Only wait a few short years  
And soon, little one, the bad boys will be hunting you!"

(Translations by Laura Knouse)

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Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales  
Text by Geoffrey Chaucer

Prologe

When April's sweet showers  
Pierce the drought of March to the root  
And bathe every vein in the sweet liquour  
That brings about the flower,  
When Zephyrus breathes his sweet breath  
Onto the tender crops in every grove and heath,  
And the young sun's run half its course in the Ram,  
And small birds make melodies  
That sleep all night with open eyes  
(So nature pricks them and engages their hearts).  
It so happened, in that season, one day  
I was in Southwark at The Tabbard,  
Ready to begin my pilgrimage to Canterbury  
With a fully devout heart.  
At night, into that hostel came  
About twenty-nine in a company of various folks  
Who had happened to fall in fellowship.  
And they were all pilgrims that intended to ride  
To Canterbury.  
And by the time the sun had set,  
I had spoken with each of them,  
So that I became one of their company.  
But before I get any further into this tale,  
I think it reasonable to tell you  
The condition of each of them.  
And I will first begin with a Knight.

## A Knyght

There was a Knight, a very worthy man,  
Who, from the first time he had set out,  
Had loved chivalry, truth, honor,  
Charity, and courtesy.  
He had done nobly in his lord's wars,  
And had ridden into battle  
More than any man  
Both in Christendom and heathen lands.  
As well as being worthy, he was wise  
And his bearing was meek as a maid.  
He had never said a vile word  
To any man in all his life,  
No matter the circumstances.  
He was a true, perfect gentle-knight.  
He wore a fustian tunic  
Dirtied by his armor,  
Since he had recently come from service  
And had gone to take on his pilgrimage.

## A Yong Squier

A young Squire. . .  
He was a lover and a lusty bachelor  
With hair curled as if it had been pressed.  
His age was twenty years, I guess.  
He was well-proportioned,  
Wonderfully agile and of great strength.  
(His garment) was embroidered like a meadow  
Full of fresh flowers of white and red.  
All day, he was either singing  
Or playing his flute.  
He was as fresh as the month of May.  
His gown was short with long, wide sleeves.  
He could sit on a horse and ride quite well.  
He was talented at writing songs and reciting,  
Jousting and dancing.  
He loved so hotly that by night's end,  
He had slept as little as a nightingale.

## The Wyf of Biside Bath (The Wife of Bath)

Experience, assuming no other source of authority on earth, gives me the right to speak of the woes that are in marriage. For, my lords, since I was twelve years of age, thank God, I have had five husbands at the church door. And all were worthy men in their way. But I was told not long ago that Christ went (to a wedding) only once, and that I should therefore be wedded but once. Beside a well, Jesus (God and Man) spoke reprovingly to the Samaritan woman: "Thou hast had five husbands", said he. "And the man that now hath thee is not thine husband". This he said most certainly. But I ask, why was the fifth man not the husband of the Samaritan? How many may she have in marriage? God commanded us to wax and multiply. I can very well understand this gentle text. He said my husband should leave father and mother and take to me. But he made no mention of any number—neither of bigamy or octogamy. Why, then, should men say it is villainy?

(Translations by Laura Knouse)