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Junior Recital: Rhiannon Nolt, mezzo-soprano

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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JUNIOR RECITAL

Rhiannon Nolt, mezzo-soprano

Assisted by

Joanne Kong, *piano*
Robert Cole, *piano*
Heather Stebbins, *cello*

MARCH 25, 2006, 3:00 PM
PERKINSON RECITAL HALL

PROGRAM

Deh più a me non v'ascondete Giovanni Maria Bononcini
(1642-1678)

Affanni del pensier
from *Ottone* Georg Frederic Handel
(1638-1751)

Ah! mio cor
from *Alcina*

~Pause~

Two Gesänge Op. 91 Johannes Brahms
Gestillte Sehnsucht (1833-1897)
Geistliches Wiegenlied
Heather Stebbins, *cello*
Robert Cole, *piano*

~Pause~

Since from my dear, Z. 697 Henry Purcell
from *Dioclesian* (1659-1695)

More Love or more Disdain, Z. 397

If music be the food of love (First Version), Z. 379

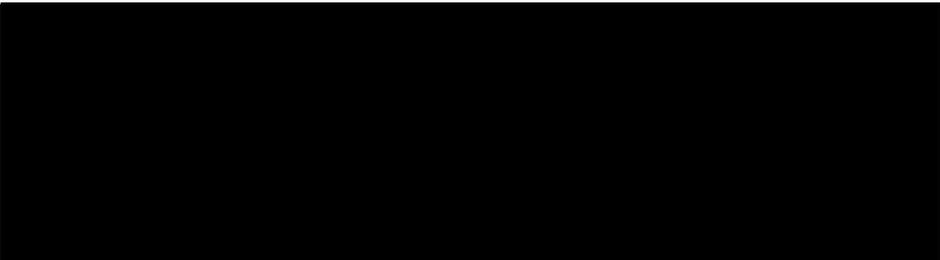
Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind Thomas Arne
(1710-1778)

When Daisies Pied

TRANSLATIONS, TEXTS, NOTES

Giovanni Maria Bononcini
(1642-1678)

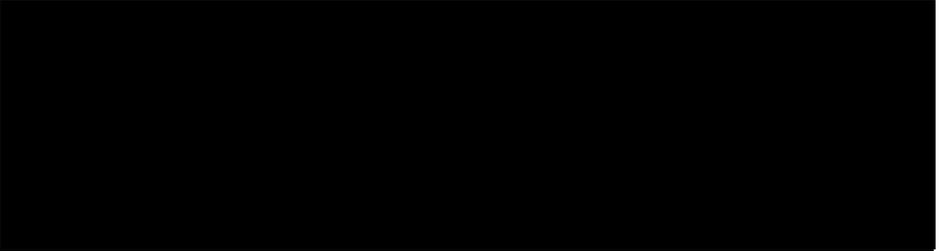
Deh più a me non v'ascondete



Giovanni Maria Bononcini was an Italian composer and patriarch of a family of musicians that included Giovanni, Antonia Maria, and Giovanni Maria Bononcini. After publishing three books of sonatas, Bononcini received a dual appointment in 1671 as chamber musician and violinist at the cathedral of the Dowager Duchess Laura d'Este. In 1673, the year he gained the post of *maestro di cappella* of Modena Cathedral, he published a treatise on music called *Musico pratico*. While he is primarily lauded for his sonatas, Bononcini turned to vocal genres in his last years. Bononcini's son Giovanni, a cellist and composer, was a contemporary (and rival) of Georg Frederic Handel. —Bennett, Lawrence E. and Lowell Lindgren: 'Bononcini,' *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [25 February 2006]), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

Georg Frederic Handel
(1638-1751)

Affanni del pensier and Ah! mio cor



Ah! mio cor

Ah! mio cor, schernito sei,
Stelle, Dei, Nume d'amore!
Traditore, t'amo tanto,
Puoi lasciarmi sola in pianto?
Oh Dei! puoi lasciarmi,
Oh Dei, perché?

Ah, my heart

Ah! My heart, you mock me
Stars, gods of love!
Betrayed, I love you so much
Can you leave me alone in tears?
Oh gods! You abandon me
Oh gods, why?

—Rhiannon Nolt
and Linda Fairtile

Handel is consistently acknowledged as one of the greatest composers of his age. Over the course of his life, he contributed to every musical genre that was current in his time, both vocal and instrumental. The composition of operas, mainly on Italian librettos, dominated the earlier part of his career, while the composition of oratorios filled his later years.

Affanni del pensier is from Handel's *Ottone, Rè di Germania*, which was produced at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket on January 12, 1723. After his first opera for the Royal Academy of Music, *Radamisto* (1720), Handel composed three works on a less ambitious scale before resuming large-scale pieces with *Giulio Cesare* (1724). *Ottone*, an opera in three acts, was one of Handel's biggest operatic successes. The arietta *Affanni del pensier* is the second aria sung by Teofane, who has fallen in love with Ottone's portrait. *Affanni* is a "superb example of that profoundly soul-searching mood, built on intricate part-writing, dissonant suspensions and bold modulations, that Handel shares with Bach."¹

Ah! mio cor is an arietta from *Alcina*, an opera in three acts to an anonymous libretto. It was premiered at the Covent Garden Theatre in London on April 16, 1735. *Alcina* is one of the most popular of Handel's operas, and possibly one of the greatest, due to the emotional range and power demanded of the two leads and the depth of the music.² *Ah! mio cor* is sung by Alcina, a sorceress in love with Ruggiero, whom she has put under a spell and trapped on her enchanted island. When her lovers tire of her, Alcina turns them into animals, trees, or streams. *Ah! mio cor*, in the context of the opera, is

a da capo aria, meaning that it is set in a ternary form with a contrasting middle section. The third section is a repeat of the first section, usually with embellishments. Da capo arias were a prominent feature of the Italian *opera seria* tradition.

—Hicks, Anthony: 'Alcina,' *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [25 February 2006]), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

—Hicks, Anthony. "Handel, George Frideric." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Volume Ten. Second Edition. Edited by Stanley Sadie. Oxford; Macmillan Publishers Limited. 2001. 747-813.

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
Zwei Gesänge, Op. 91

Zwei Gesänge Op. 91 – Johannes Brahms





Op. 91 is a unique work in Brahms' output, as the set of *Zwei Gesänge* are Brahms' only example of solo vocal chamber music. Written for alto voice, viola, and piano, the timbre of the viola is exploited for its similarity with the alto voice, and has prominence equal to that of the vocal line.

The first movement, *Gestillte Sehnsucht*, is a "nature meditation." Rückert's poem combines imagery of sunset, evening birdsong, onset of sleep, all foreshadowing the inevitable movement toward death. The viola takes on an elaborate role, providing the principle theme in the instrumental prelude. It also dominates the interludes and in the last bars.

The second movement, *Geistliches Weigenleid*, was written in honor of the birth Brahms' friend's child. It quotes a German folksong text, "Joseph, lieber Joseph mein." Twenty years later, Brahms revised the song and composed *Gestillte Sehnsucht* as a companion piece. The viola provides the *cantus firmus* and also performs free counterpoint on the German carol, from which many of the song's motifs and rondo theme are derived.

—MacDonald, Malcolm. *Brahms*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1990.

Henry Purcell

(1659-1695)

*Since from my dear, More love or more disdain, and If music be
the food of love*

Since from my dear, Z. 697

Since from my dear Astraea's sight
I was so rudely torn,
My soul has never known delight,
Unless it were to mourn.

But oh! alas, with weeping eyes
And bleeding heart I lie;
Thinking on her, whose absence 'tis,
That makes me wish to die.

More love or more disdain, Z. 397

More love or more disdain I crave,
Sweet, be not still indifferent,
Oh, send me quickly to my grave,
Or else afford me more content.
Or love or hate me more or less,
For love abhors all lukewarmness.

Give me a tempest, if 'twill drive
Me to the place where I would be,
Or if you'll have me still alive,
Confess you will be kind to me.
Give hopes of bliss, or dig my grave,
More love or more disdain I crave.

If music be the food of love, Z. 379

If music be the food of love,
Sing on till I am fill'd with joy;
For then my list'ning soul you move
To pleasures that can never cloy.
Your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare
That you are music ev'rywhere.
Pleasures invade both eye and ear,
So fierce the transports are, they wound,
And all my senses feasted are,
Tho' yet the treat is only sound,
Sure I must perish by your charms,
Unless you save me in your arms.

In 1680, Purcell began composing official choral pieces for Westminster Abbey, as well as incidental music for the London theatre. His first and only opera was *Dido and Aeneas*, which is often considered the first great English opera.³ Purcell's compositional strength is his sensitivity to words and word-rhythms in setting texts to music.

Since from my Dear is from *The Prophetess or The History of Dioclesian*, a semi-opera in five acts. According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, a semi-opera is a type of English Restoration drama with four or more separate episodes or masques that includes singing, dancing, and instrumental music. It was premiered at the Queen's Theatre in Dorset Garden in London in late May of 1690 and set to words adapted by Thomas Betterton from the play of John Fletcher and Philip Massinger. *Dioclesian* is concerned with a struggle for political power in ancient Rome. While the plot is somewhat disjoint, a unified score that contains both the heroic and pastoral modes emerges.⁴

More love or more disdain is a song written in 1678. A version of it was found in *New Ayres and Dialogues*. Three versions of the text for *If music be the food of love* were set. The first version is from 1692, the second from 1693, and the third from 1695. The third version has proved to be the most popular. The first line of the text quotes Act I, Scene i of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. It is the first line of the play, spoken by Orsino.

———"Purcell, Henry." *The Concise Dictionary of Music*. Ed. Michael Kennedy. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press, 1996. (Accessed University of Richmond [26 February 2006]) <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t77.e7320>>

——Price, Curtis. 'Dioclesian,' *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [25 February 2006]), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

Thomas Arne
(1710-1778)

Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind and When Daisies Pied

Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind (1740)

Text from *As You Like It*, William Shakespeare

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.

When Daisies Pied

Text from *Love's Labour Lost*, William Shakespeare

When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!
When shepherds pipe on oaten straws
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

Thomas Arne, born in London in 1710, was one of the most prolific composers of his day. Arne was one of the founding members of the Society of Musicians, along with Handel, Boyce, and Pepusch. By 1738, he was one of the leaders of musical life in London. Arne was essentially a theatre composer for most of his life, and his works dominated various genres of English theatre music.

In 1734 Arne's sister Susanna married actor and playwright Thomas Cibber, whose company was in residence at Drury Lane. Following this event, Arne soon became the house composer at Drury Lane. He composed works for several seasons, including that of 1740-41, which billed a series of Shakespeare plays, including *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Tempest*.

The text for *Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind* is taken from *As You Like It*. In the play, the text occurs in Act II, scene vii: the same scene in which Jaques has delivered his infamous "All the World's a Stage" soliloquy. The song is sung by Amiens and compares Nature to Man, the latter of whom is unkind. Nature may produce freezing weather, but no sting is as sharp as forgotten friends. Although the text is bitter, Arne sets it as a lighthearted song, complete with Scottish snaps at the end of each verse, a common 18th-century ornamentation.

The text for *When Daisies Pied* is taken from Act V, Scene ii of *Love's Labour Lost*. The text includes the first two sections of a four part song at the end of *Love's Labour Lost* comparing Spring to Winter. The first half of the text describes Spring, which is maintained by the cuckoo. The cuckoo mocks the married men whose wives are cheating on them. Arne imitates a bird call in the vocal line on the text "cuckoo." The second two parts of the text describe Winter, which is maintained by the owl. Arne also set this text in "When icicles hang."

——Holman, Peter and Todd Gilman. "Arne, Thomas Augustine," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy. [Online] available from <http://www.grovemusic.com>; accessed 20 February 2006; Internet.

——"William Shakespeare." *eNotes: William Shakespeare*. Ed. Penny Satoris. Seattle: Enotes.com LLC, October 2002. [Online] available from <http://www.enotes.com/shakespeare-masters/>; accessed 18 February 2006; Internet.

¹ Winton Dean, "Handel's Ottone," *The Musical Times* 112 (October 1971): 958.

² Anthony Hicks, "Alicina," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [25 February 2006]), <http://www.grovemusic.com>

³ "Purcell, Henry," in *The Concise Dictionary of Music*, ed. Michael Kennedy, *Oxford Reference Online*, Oxford University Press, 1996, (Accessed University of Richmond [26 February 2006]).

⁴ Curtis Price, 'Dioclesian,' *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, (Accessed [25 February 2006]), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>