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### Senior Recital: Eric Piasecki, bass-baritone

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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**The University of Richmond**  
**Department of Music**

Presents in Concert

**Eric Piasecki, *baritone***

**Senior Recital**

Assisted By:

Dr. Joanne Kong, *piano*

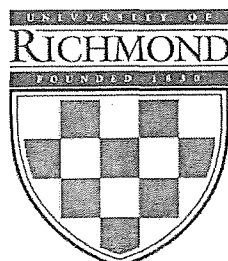
Matthew Jordan, *trumpet*

Douglas Kellner, *cello*

**Saturday, April 16, 2011**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Perkinson Recital Hall**



## *Program Notes*

A skilled composer of oratorio, **George Frideric Handel** produced many of the works that classical music enthusiasts and various Christian congregations revel in to this day. Perhaps his most popular composition, Handel's *Messiah* continually regales listeners with the story of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection. Unlike his largely christological oratorios, Handel's opera, *Berenice Regina d'Egitto*, features a complex plot filled with political satire and "unholy" romantic affairs.

Often hailed as the most virtuosic of late the Romantic pianists, **Sergei Rachmaninoff** weaves together his profound knowledge of idiomatic piano writing with his innate gift for melody to create the songs of opus 4. In true Russian Romantic style, these works utilize minor sonorities and deeply moving texts to sonically depict the pain and suffering of the land that once lay at the heart of the Iron Curtain. As we listen, we hear the vocalist and pianist not as divo and accompanist, but as two equals who enter into a sonic dialog of grief and heartache, each singing their sorrows to one another. Indeed the genius of Rachmaninoff's compositional idiom lies in his ability to redefine the relationship between the two performers such that voice and piano sing to one another as well as the audience.

**Frederic Chopin**, not unlike Rachmaninoff, preserves the melodies of his homeland within his folk-like vocal works. Living as an expatriate in France, his pride for the Polish culture was made clear in his use of Polish dance rhythms, marches, and folk melodies throughout his career as a composer. Following the German occupation, the Poles feared that their cultures and traditions faced extinction. It comes as no surprise that Chopin's role in the sonic immortalization

of Polish culture and language earned him the title of “national hero,” following the country’s emancipation from the German oppression.

Known for his skillful use of melody and his lighthearted musical interplay, **Maurice Ravel** quickly established himself as one of the great French composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps his most recognizable vocal works, the “Greek Songs,” sonically depict the many aspects of Grecian culture and daily life. Each of the short melodies touches on everything from the Greek groom’s joy de vivre to the older woman’s daily excursion to Orthodox Mass.

Born in Italy and raised in West Chester Pennsylvania, **Gian Carlo Menotti** is highly regarded for his uncanny ability to create melody. Educated at the Curtis institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he spent much of his time collaborating with his colleagues Lenard Bernstein and Samuel Barber. In his tenure at Curtis, Mennotti crafted many well known operatic works, among them *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and *Amelia Goes to the Ball*. A son of both the Italian and American cultural traditions, Menotti composed many American art songs in addition to his Italian operatic works. Having found a strong collaborator in his long time life partner Samuel Barber, the two worked closely to create much of the works that now characterize 20<sup>th</sup> century American music.

# Translations

G.F. Handel, "Si tra i ceppi/ Yes even in Chains"

Si, tra i ceppi e le ritorte  
La mia fe risplenderà.  
Nò, nè pur la stessa morte  
Il mio foco estinguerà.

Yes, even in chains and bonds  
My faith will be resplendent.  
No, not even Death itself  
will put out my fire.

G.F. Handel, "The Trumpet Shall Sound"

The trumpet shall sound,  
and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,  
and we shall be changed.  
For this corruptible must put on incorruption and  
this mortal must put on immortality.

F. Chopin, "Precz Z Moich Oczu" Op. 74 No. 6

Precz z moich oczu! Posłucham odrazu!  
Precz z mego serca! I serce posłucha.  
Precz z mej pamięci! Nie! Tego rozkazu  
Moja i twoja pamięć nie posłucha.

Out of my sight! Leave me I beg you!  
Out of my heart! I cannot go against you.  
Out of my thoughts! No, that ultimate surrender  
Our memories could ever render.

Jak cień tym dłuższy gdy padnie z daleka,  
Tym szerzej koło żałobne roztoczy,  
Tak moja postać, im dalej ucieka,  
Tym grubszym kirem twą pamięć pomroczy.

As evening shadows lengthen  
And stretch their sad imploring arms,  
My face will shine brighter in your mind  
The further you are from me.

F. Chopin, "Hulanka" Op. 74 No. 4

Szynkareczko, szafareczko, bój się Boga,  
stój! Tam się śmiejesz, A tu lejesz miód na  
kaftan mój!

Take care, pretty girl; be careful! You are  
laughing so much You're spilling wine all  
down my coat!

Nie daruję, wyciąuję! Jakie oczko,  
brew! Nóżki małe, ząbki białe, Hej! spali  
mnie krew!

I'll not forgive you! I'll make you pay; I'll  
kiss you till I'm exhausted! Ah, those shining  
eyes, and those divine lips set my blood  
afire!

Cóż tak bracie wciąż dumacie? Bierz tam  
smutki czart! Pełno nędzy Ot, pij prędzej,  
świat tendiablą wart!

Set my drink down or feel my fist. Hey,  
lass, over here! Just serve us. Don't entice  
us. Pour us some beer

S. Rachmaninoff, "Oh Never Sing to Me Again" Op4. No.4

Ne poy, krasavitsa, pri mneTï pesen Gruzii  
pechalnoy:Napominayut mne oneDruguyu  
zhizn' i bereg dalnïy.

Uvi ! napominayut mneTvoi zhestokiye napevïl  
step, i noch' – i pri luneChertï dalyokoy,  
bednoy devï.

Ya prizrak milïy, rokovoy,Tebya uvidev,  
zabïvayu;No tï poyosh – i predo mnoyEvo ya  
vnov, vobrazhayu.

Ne poy, krasavitsa , pri mneTï pesen Gruzli  
pechalnoy: Napominayut mne one Druguyu  
zhizn' i bereg dalnïy.

Oh, never sing to me again, fair maiden Those  
sad songs from Georgia ;They recall to  
meAnother life and distant shores.

Alas ! your ardent singingStirs up all my  
memoriesOf the steppes, of night, of  
moonlightShining on a humble girl.

Seeing you, I can forget this beautiful and fateful  
image; But when you sing She rises up  
again before me.

Oh, never sing to me again, fair maiden,those  
sad songs from Georgia;They recall for me  
another life and distant shores.

S. Rachmaninoff, "Oh No, I Pray Do Not Depart" Op4. No.1

Oh, no I am begging don't leave!  
All pain is nothing compared to separation,  
I am too happy with this torture,  
Grip me ever closer and say "I love you."  
I've come anew, sick, exhausted and pale.  
Look, how I am weak and pale. Oh how  
I need your love.  
New tortures I await, like the need to be  
caressed, like the need of your kiss,  
And about one thing I am begging in anguish  
: Oh, be with me, don't leave

M. Ravel, "Chanson de la mariée"

Réveille-toi, réveille-toi, perdrix mignonne,  
Ouvre au matin tes ailes.  
Trois grains de beauté, mon coeur en est brûlé!  
Vois le ruban d'or que je t'apporte,  
Pour le nouer autour de tes cheveux.  
Si tu veux, ma belle, viens nous marier!  
Dans nos deux familles, tous sont alliés!

Awake, awake, my darling partridge,  
Open to the morning your wings.  
Three beauty marks; my heart is on fire!  
See the ribbon of gold that I bring  
To tie round your hair.  
If you want, my beauty, we shall marry!  
In our two families, everyone is related!

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kaftan mój!

Take care, pretty girl; be careful! You are  
laughing so much You're spilling wine all  
down my coat!

Nie daruję, wycaluję! Jakie oczko,  
brew! Nóżki małe, ząbki białe, Hej! spali  
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I'll not forgive you! I'll make you pay; I'll  
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afire!

Cóż tak bracie wciąż dumacie? Bierz tam  
smutki czart! Pełno nędzy Ot, pij prędzej,  
świat tendiably wart!

Set my drink down or feel my fist. Hey,  
lass, over here! Just serve us. Don't entice  
us. Pour us some beer

M. Ravel, "Là-bas, vers l'église"

Là-bas, vers l'église,  
Vers l'église Ayio Sidéro,  
L'église, ô Vierge sainte,  
L'église Ayio Costanndino,  
Se sont réunis,  
Rassemblés en nombre infini,  
Du monde, ô Vierge sainte,  
Du monde tous les plus braves!

Yonder, by the church,  
By the church of Ayio Sidero,  
The church, o blessed Virgin,  
The church of Ayio Costanndino,  
There are gathered,  
Assembled in numbers infinite,  
The world's, o blessed Virgin,  
All the world's most decent folk!

M. Ravel "Quel gallant m'est comparable"

Quel galant m'est comparable,  
D'entre ceux qu'on voit passer?  
Dis, dame Vassiliki?

Vois, pendus à ma ceinture,  
pistolets et sabre aigu...  
Et c'est toi que j'aime!

What gallant compares with me,  
Among those one sees passing by?  
Tell me, lady Vassiliki!

See, hanging on my belt,  
My pistols and my curved sword:  
And it is you whom I love!

M. Ravel, "Tout gai!"

Tout gai! gai, Ha, tout gai!  
Belle jambe, tireli, qui danse;  
Belle jambe, la vaisselle danse,  
Tra la la la la...

Everyone is joyous, joyous!  
Beautiful legs, tireli, which dance,  
Beautiful legs; even the dishes are dancing!  
Tra la la, la la la!

G.C. Menotti, "When the Air Sings of Summer"

When the air sings of summer,  
I must wander again.  
Sweet landlord is the sky,  
rich house is the plain,  
and to live is to wander through the sun and the rain.  
When the air sings of summer I must wander again.

First you wander in youth and joy,  
then you'll wander to still the fears in an old heart.  
First you wander to find your love,  
Then you'll wander to hide your tears,  
For a wanderer must depart.

When a man owns a house he is a bird in a cage  
Whose captivity pain is sweet end with age.



Ah! the sharp joy of freedom is my loss and my gain.  
When the air sings of summer I must wander again.

G.C. Menotti, "Amelia cara/Dearest Amelia"

Ah, No!?! Ebbene, ascolta:

Amelia cara, gioia adorata,  
Ochi di luna, Senno di fatta,  
Ti a spetto al l'una presso l'entrata.

Sotto la lunca ritroveremo l'ombre gentili  
che amor supremo per noi, febrili amanti, aduna.

Affreti il tempo l'ora segreta dei giochi audaci e  
languidetti.  
Sali alla meta,  
Complice luna,  
Rendimi i baci che il sol mi vieta

Ah! no!?! Then I'll begin it:

Dearest Amelia, let me behold you  
radiant with moonlight,  
Let me enfold you,  
Meet me at midnight just as I told you.

Where darkness hovers let us recapture  
Deep in the shadows, love's silent rapture.  
Night will conceal us unhappy lovers.

Hasten O moonlight, where love confesses.  
Languid caresses sunlight defies me.  
Oh night have pity,  
As love's accomplice,  
give me those kisses that day denies me

**Thank you!** I feel truly blessed to have befriended so many wonderful people in my career at the University at Richmond. I owe immeasurable gratitude to my family, friends, and professors. Without your friendship, guidance, and love, I would not be able to stand before you today. Thank you for attending.