

Winter 12-9-2008

# Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Mitchell Spurlock, voice

Mitchell Spurlock

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

# Senior Recital

## Mitchell Spurlock, voice

accompanied by

**Dr. Leslie Petteys, piano**

also assisted by

**Dr. Reed Smith, violin**  
**Ms. Kay Wildman, harpsichord**

**Tuesday, December 9, 2008**  
**Trinity Episcopal Church**  
**8:00 p.m.**

### Program

*Es is euch gut, daß ich hingehe*, BWV 108      Johann Sebastian Bach  
"Mich kann kein Zweifel stören"      (1685-1750)  
*Gott fährt auf mit Jauchzen*, BWV 43  
"Ja tausendmal Tausend"

Dr. Reed Smith, violin  
Ms. Kay Wildman, harpsichord

### *Dichterliebe*

"Im wunderschönen Monat Mai"  
"Aus meinen Thränen spriessen"  
"Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne"  
"Wenn ich in deine Augen seh"  
"Ich will meine Seele tauchen"  
"Im Rhine, im heiligen Strome"  
"Ich grolle nicht"

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

### *Chanson triste*

*Oh! quand je dors*

Henri Duparc  
(1848-1933)  
Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

### *Don Giovanni*

"Il mio tesoro"

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

\* \* \* Intermission \* \* \*

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This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at [www.marshall.edu/cofa/music](http://www.marshall.edu/cofa/music).

- Part I – Mane floreat, et transeat
- “A Young Man’s Exhortation”
- “Ditty”
- “Budmouth Dears”
- “Her Temple”
- “Comet Over Yell’ham”

- Part II - Vespere decidat, induret, et arescat
- “Shortening Days”
- “The Sigh”
- “Former Beauties”
- “Transformations”
- “The Dance Continued”

Johann Sebastian Bach lived in a time when musicians made their living predominately by the graces of the local nobility or the church. While Bach did serve the local nobility, he earned his living and composed the vast majority of his works for the church. He spent his young life serving as a cantor, violinist, organist and Kapellmeister in churches in the German towns of Weimar, Arnstadt, Mühlhausen and Cöthen. He finally settled in Leipzig as Director of Choir and Music. Bach lived out the rest of his life in Leipzig until his death in 1750, having never left Germany.

“Mich kann kein Zweifel stören,” which appears in Bach’s church cantata *Es is euch gut, daß ich hingehe*, BWV 108 the violin enters with a disjunct melodic line with awkward, syncopated phrases that acts as the voice of doubt. The vocal line enters decisively, declaring that doubt will not hinder his faith, even though Christ has died. The harpsichord offers a steady pulse that illustrates the follower’s immovable faith.

“Ja tausendmal Tausend,” from church cantata *Gott fährt auf mit Jauchzen*, BWV 43 by comparison is an uplifting song to God. The violin immediately enters with a falling and then quickly rising line. This gives voice to the movements of the heavens and the earth, as well as to the “host of the faithful that follows the Lord’s chariot.”

Robert Schumann has been often quoted as saying that song is inferior to instrumental music. So it is strange that in 1840, a year that scholars have called “Liederjahr” or the Year of Song, Schumann wrote over 137 songs, well over half his output of songs. Schumann had previously only composed piano and symphonic works. The most important reason for Schumann’s change of heart was his wife, Clara. After briefly studying law, Schumann went to study piano with pianist, Friedrich Wieck in 1830. It was there he met Wieck’s daughter, who would become the love of his life. The two fell in love and desperately wanted to get married, but Clara’s father forbade it. After a long and bitter battle in court, Robert and Clara were finally allowed to marry in September of 1840. It was during the bitter battle for Clara that Schumann wrote his most famous song cycle, *Dichterliebe*.

The poetry for *Dichterliebe* came from a collection of poems called *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, written by poet, Heinrich Heine. The poetry is a story of unrequited love. Heine wrote the poems after his cousin, Amalie rejected him for another lover. According to musicologist Arthur Komar, Schumann did not choose Heine’s poetry for the same reason; Clara’s love was never in doubt. It was the court battle with Clara’s father and the bitterness that followed that attracted Schumann to Heine’s poetry.

Clara actually appears in the song cycle in various incarnations as a melodic motive (C-B-A-G#-A). Schumann intended for the songs in the narrative to be linked through music. Several songs have endings that are either too dissonant or the final cadence is inconclusive that they must be resolved by the opening of the following song.

Henri Duparc made the statement, “I live in regret for what I have not done, without troubling about the little I have done” around the year 1920, thirty-five years after he was stricken with a nervous disease that caused him to give up composition. During the years he composed Duparc was a perfectionist. His self-critical nature led him to constantly revise his works, many of which were either destroyed, or he refused to publish them. However, his sixteen surviving songs are some of the most beautiful in French vocal repertoire.

*Chanson triste* was Duparc’s first song and was published in 1868. It was dedicated to his brother-in-law M. Leon MacSwiney who was a very talented singer. Duparc uses smooth, undulating arpeggios to evoke the summer moonlight. He also wrote melodies for the piano part that counter the vocal line, especially in the third stanza just prior to when the poem talks about a ballad. “Et lui diras une ballade,” translated as, “And recite to it a ballad.” Although *Chanson triste* is translated “sad song,” the mood of the song is one of loving consolation and hope.

Franz Liszt was born in Hungary in 1811, but talent as a virtuoso pianist led him to a career that quickly took him all over Europe. He lived in several countries during his life, including Austria, France, Germany and Italy. During his time in Paris, Liszt spent a lot of time in salons, which were the centers of intellectual and artistic life. It was there that he was

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This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in performance. Mr. Spurlock is a student in the voice studio of Dr. Larry Stickler.

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“As surely as birds must sing, so long as words exist and man is capable of feeling, there will be song.” – Gerald Finzi

introduced to Countess Marie d'Agoult, the woman who would become his lover and the mother of three of his children. The two lovers were careful to keep their affair a secret from d'Agoult's husband, who was a nobleman and cavalry officer. Liszt's affair with d'Agoult was the inspiration for one of Liszt's most beloved French songs.

*Oh! quand je dors* was written in 1842 and was dedicated to his beloved Marie. Liszt chose a poem from Victor Hugo which references the poet Petrarch and his distant love, Laura. Laura was a woman that inspired Petrarch throughout his life. There is some evidence to prove that she was a woman that he saw at a Good Friday mass and fell in love at first sight, however her existence is still something of a mystery. Liszt repeats the phrase "Comme à Pétrarque apparaissait Laura," or in English, "as Laura appeared to Petrarch" at the end as a way to urge his lover to his bedside.

*Don Giovanni*, a comic opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart first premiered in Prague on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1787. It had originally been scheduled to premiere on October 14<sup>th</sup>, but was postponed due to the cast's poor preparation. Mozart was commissioned to compose *Don Giovanni* after the success of his opera *Le nozze di Figaro* which had been a success in Prague in 1786. Mozart was meticulous when it came to composing for his singers. He wrote his arias so that they fit the singers, "as perfectly as a well-made suit of clothes." When *Don Giovanni* premiered in Vienna, Francesco Morella, the tenor hired to sing the role of Don Ottavio found the ornate "Il mio tesoro" too challenging. Mozart wrote "Dalla sua pace," which suited Morella better.

"Il mio tesoro" appears in Act II, Scene II after Leporello, who is disguised as his master Don Giovanni is captured by Zerlina and Masetto. Donna Anna appears with Don Ottavio, who is trying to console her. Donna Elvira, who believes that Leporello is really Don Giovanni is quick to defend him. Leporello reveals his true identity, which confuses the group long enough for him to escape harm. Don Ottavio, who is convinced of Don Giovanni's treachery, swears vengeance and asks the others to console Donna Anna while he is away.

It is common for composers to exclusively use the works of certain poets for their songs. As previously stated, Robert Schuman used the poetry of Heinrich Heine to write *Dichterliebe*. For *A Young Man's Exhortation*, Gerald Finzi used the poetry of Thomas Hardy. Although the two never met, Finzi had a creative connection with Hardy and his poetry. Finzi was inspired by Hardy's dignity, compassion and rationalism, and above all his freedom from religious bigotry. Both composer and poet felt that war was futile. Both men lived quietly in the English countryside for most of their lives and loved the beauty of the natural world and its indifference to man. Although they were agnostic, they both shared an appreciation for religious poetry, as well as the Bible. *A Young Man's Exhortation* was written in two parts, each one having Latin (in English) quotations from *Psalms* 90, reading, "In the morning it flourisheth, and growth up," and "In the evening it is cut down, and withereth."

*A Young Man's Exhortation* is not a narrative song cycle like *Dichterliebe*. However, Finzi chose poems that link together through emotional contrast and the passage of time. One of the most compelling emotional connections between the two parts is love. The young man's love is introduced in "Ditty" in Part I. Then their love and her death is explained in "The Sigh" in Part II. A good demonstration of the passage of time comes when the man, now in the "November" of his life, talks about the flirtatious women that he saw on the beach as his regiment marched by in "Budmouth Dears." Then the man remembers those women in "Former Beauties" after they have aged and have forgotten their youthful ways. Finzi also uses melodic material as a connective device. A brief excerpt of "Her Temple" returns in "Transformations" as the man envisions his love returning in a rose. The cycle comes to a close as the man takes his rest under the yellowing trees.