



The Music Department at
Gonzaga University
Presents

Fengyue Zhang

Baritone

with

Annie Flood

Piano

from the studio of
Dr. Amy Porter

Wednesday, April 14, 2021
7:00pm

Livestreamed from Recital Hall
Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

**This senior recital is given in partial fulfillment of a
Bachelor of Arts degree in Music, Performance Concentration.**

Program

Ständchen	Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
Auf dem Wasser zu singen	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Die Beschwörung	Pauline Viardot (1821-1910)
Nachtviole	Franz Schubert
Heimkehr	Richard Strauss

<i>Three Dream Portraits</i>	Margaret Bonds
Minstrel Man	(1913-1972)
Dream Variation	
I, Too	

花非花 (Flower, But Not Flower)	Huang Tzu
踏雪寻梅 (Searching for Plum Blossoms in Snow)	(1904-1938)

(Brief Pause)

Hai già vinta la causa <i>from "Le nozze di Figaro"</i>	W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
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Spleen	Gabriel Fauré
C'est l'extase	(1845-1924)
Prison	
Mandoline	

Dear Future Roommate	Lori Laitman
The Apple Orchard	(b. 1955)

Texts and Translations

Ständchen

Text by A. F. von Schack (1815-1894)

Mach auf, mach auf, doch leise mein Kind,
Um keinen vom Schlummer zu wecken.
Kaum murmelt der Bach,
Kaum zittert im Wind
Ein Blatt an den Büschen und Hecken.
Drum leise, mein Mädchen,
Daß nichts sich regt,
Nur leise die Hand auf die Klinke gelegt.

Mit Tritten, wie Tritte der Elfen so sacht,
Um über die Blumen zu hüpfen,
Flieg leicht hinaus in die Mondscheinnacht,
Zu mir in den Garten zu schlüpfen.
Rings schlummern die Blüten
Am rieselnden Bach
Und duften im Schlaf, nur die Liebe ist wach.

Sitz nieder, hier dämmert's geheimnisvoll
Unter den Lindenbäumen,
Die Nachtigall uns zu Häupten soll
Von unseren Küssen träumen,
Und die Rose, wenn sie am Morgen erwacht,
Hoch glühn von den Wonnenschauern der Nacht.

Serenade

Trans. Richard Stokes¹

Open up, open up! But softly, my child,
So that no one's roused from slumber!
The brook hardly murmurs,
The breeze hardly moves
A leaf on the bushes and hedges;
Gently, my love,
So nothing shall stir,
Gently with your hand as you lift the latch!

With steps as light as the steps of elves,
As they hop their way over flowers,
Flit out into the moonlit night,
Slip out to me in the garden!
The flowers are fragrant in sleep
By the rippling brook,
Only love is awake.

Sit down! Dusk falls mysteriously here
Beneath the linden trees.
The nightingale above us
Shall dream of our kisses
And the rose, when it wakes at dawn,
Shall glow from our night's rapture.

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Auf dem Wasser zu singen

Text by Fr. L. Grafen zu Stolberg (1750-1819)

Mitten im Schimmer der spiegelnden Wellen
Gleitet, wie Schwäne, der wankende Kahn;
Ach, auf der Freude sanftschimmernden, Wellen
Gleitet die Seele dahin wie der Kahn;
Denn von dem Himmel herab auf die Wellen
Tanzet das Abendroth rund um den Kahn.

Ueber den Wipfeln des westlichen Haines
Winket uns freundlich der röthliche Schein;
Unter den Zweigen des östlichen Haines
Säuselt der Kalmus im röthlichen Schein;
Freude des Himmels und Ruhe des Haines
Athmet die Seel' im erröthenden Schein.

Ach, es entschwindet mit thauigem Flügel
Mir auf den wiegenden Wellen die Zeit.
Morgen entschwinde mit schimmerndem Flügel
Wieder wie gestern und heute die Zeit,
Bis ich auf höherem strahlenden Flügel
Selber entschwinde der wechselnden Zeit.

To Be Sung On the Water

Trans. Richard Wigmore²

Amid the shimmer of the mirroring waves
The rocking boat glides, swan-like,
On gently shimmering waves of joy.
The soul, too, glides like a boat.
For from the sky the setting sun
Dances upon the waves around the boat.

Above the tree-tops of the western grove
The red glow beckons kindly to us;
Beneath the branches of the eastern grove
The reeds whisper in the red glow.
The soul breathes the joy of heaven,
The peace of the grove, in the reddening glow.

Alas, with dewy wings
Time vanishes from me on the rocking waves.
Tomorrow let time vanish with shimmering wings
As it did yesterday and today,
Until, on higher, more radiant wings,
I myself vanish from the flux of time.

² Copyright information for translations by Richard Wigmore: Translation © Richard Wigmore, author of Schubert: The Complete Song Texts, published by Schirmer Books, provided courtesy of Oxford Lieder (www.oxfordlieder.co.uk)

Die Beschvörung

Russian Text by Alexandre Pushkin (1799-1837)

German Trans. F. M. von Bodenstedt (1819-1892)

O wenn es wahr ist, dass zur Nacht,
Die in den Schlaf lullt alles Leben
Und nur des Mondlichts bleiche Pracht
Lässt um die Grabessteine weben,
O wenn es wahr ist, dass dann leer
Die Gräber stehn die Todten lassen,
Erwart' ich Dich zu umfassen.
Hör' Leila, mich! Komm her! Komm her!

Erschein' aus deinem Schattenreich,
Ganz wie du warst vor unserm Scheiden,
Dem kalten Wintertage gleich,
Das Angesicht entstellt von Leiden.
O komm, ein ferner Stern, daher,
O komm, ein Hauch, ein leis Getöne,
Oder in schreckenvoller Schöne,
Mir ist es gleich,
Komm her! Komm her!

Ich rief Leila darum nie,
Des Grabs Geheimniss zu erfahren,
Auch nicht zum Vorwurf gegen die,
Die meiner Liebe Mörder waren,
Auch darum nicht, weil oft noch schwer
Mich Zweifel quälen...
Nein, zu sagen,
Dass treu, wie stets mein Herz geschlagen,
Es jetzt noch schlägt.....
Komm her! Komm her!

Entreaty

Trans. Adapted from Austin B. Caswell

O, if it is true that when night
Lulls all life to sleep,
And when only moonlight's pallid gleam
Weaves among the tombstones;
O, if it is truly then
That graves yield up their dead,
It is then that I wait to embrace you
Hear me Leila! Come here! Come here!

Emerge from your realm of shadows,
Just as you were before our parting,
Cold as a winter day,
Your face distorted with pain.
O come back, as a distant star,
As a breath, as a delicate sound,
Or in some more terrifying beauty,
It makes no difference:
Come here! Come here!

I cry to Leila not
To plumb the secrets of the grave,
Nor to rebuke those
Who killed my love,
Nor even because of the bitter despair
Which tortures me.
No, only to tell her
That my stricken heart is still true;
Is still breathing . . .
Come here! Come here!

Nachtviole

Text by Johann Mayrhofer (1787-1836)

Nachtviole, Nachtviole,
Dunkle Augen, seelenvolle,
Selig ist es, sich versenken
In dem samtigen Blau.

Grüne Blätter streben freudig,
Euch zu hellen, euch zu schmücken;
Doch ihr blicket ernst und schweigend
In die laue Frühlingsluft.

Mit erhabnen Wehmutsstrahlen
Trafet ihr mein treues Herz,
Und nun blüht in stummen Nächten,
Fort die heilige Verbindung.

Heimkehr

*Text by Adolf Friedrich von Schack
(1815-1894)*

Leiser schwanken die Äste,
Der Kahn fliegt uferwärts,
Heim kehrt die Taube zum Neste,
Zu dir kehrt heim mein Herz.

Genug am schimmernden Tage,
Wenn rings das Leben lärmt,
Mit irrem Flügelschlage
Ist es ins Weite geschwärmt.

Doch nun die Sonne geschieden,
Und Stille sich senkt auf den Hain,
Fühlt es: bei dir ist der Frieden,
Die Ruhe bei dir allein.

Dame's Violets

Trans. Richard Wigmore

Dame's violets,
Dark, soulful eyes,
It is blissful to immerse myself
In your velvety blue.

Green leaves strive joyously
To brighten you, to adorn you;
But you gaze, solemn and silent,
Into the mild spring air.

With sublime shafts of melancholy
You have pierced my faithful heart,
And now, in silent nights,
Our sacred union blossoms.

Homecoming

*Trans. George Bird and
Richard Stokes*

The branches wave more gently,
Shorewards flies the boat,
Home to its nest the dove goes,
Home to you comes my heart.

Enough, by shimmering day,
Amidst the clamour of life,
On errant wing-beats
Has it ranged afar.

But now the sun has departed,
And silence descends on the wood,
My heart feels: with you is peace,
With you alone is rest.

Three Dream Portraits

Text by Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Minstrel Man

Because my mouth
Is wide with laughter
And my throat
Is deep with song,
You do not think
I suffer after
I have held my pain
So long.

Because my mouth
Is wide with laughter,
You do not hear
My inner cry?
Because my feet
Are gay with dancing,
You do not know
I die.

Dream Variation

To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me—
That is my dream!

To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening...
A tall, slim tree...
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.

I, Too

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

[I, too, am America]³

³ The composer omitted this line in this setting.

花 Hua 非 Fei 花 Hua⁴

Text by Bai Juyi (772-846)

花 Hua 非 fei 花 hua,
雾 Wu 非 fei 雾 wu;
夜 Ye 半 ban 来 lai,
天 Tian 明 ming 去 qu.

来 Lai 如 ru 春 chun 梦 meng
不 Bu 多 duo 时 shi,
去 Qu 似 si 朝 zhao 云 yu
无 Wu 觅 mi 处 chu.

踏 Ta 雪 Xue 寻 Xun 梅 Mei

Text by Liu Xue'an (1905-1985)

雪 Xue 霁 ji 天 tian 晴 qing 朗 lang,
腊 La 梅 mei 处 chu 处 chu 香 xiang,
骑 Qi 驴 lü 灞 ba 桥 qiao 过 guo,
铃 Ling 儿 er 响 xiang 叮 ding 当 dang.

响 Xiang 叮 ding 当 dang...

好 Hao 花 hua 采 cai 得 de
瓶 ping 供 gong 养 yang,
伴 Ban 我 wo 书 shu 声 sheng 琴 qin 韵 yun,
共 Gong 度 du 好 hao 时 shi 光 guang.

Flower, But not Flower

Trans. Fengyue Zhang

Flower, but not flower,
Mist, but not mist;
Comes in the middle of the night,
Leaves at daybreak.

Comes like an amorous dream
Lasting only briefly,
Leaves like the morning cloud
Nowhere to be found.

Searching for Plum Blossoms in Snow

Trans. Shiah Mann and Fengyue Zhang

After snow, sunny day,
Plum blossoms scent the air everywhere,
Ride my donkey past the bridge,
His bell rings ding dong.

Rings ding dong...

Lovely flowers picked
To nourish in the vase,
Accompany my reading and music playing,
Spend wonderful time together.

⁴ Phonetics, for convenience of following

Hai già vinta la causa!

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte 1749-1838)

“Hai già vinta la causa!”

Cosa sento!

In qual laccio io cadea?

Perfidi!

Io voglio Di tal modo punirvi;

a piacer mio la sentenza sarà.

Ma s'ei pagasse la vecchia pretendente?

Pagarla! In qual maniera?

E poi v'è Antonio,

che a un incognito Figaro

ricusa di dare una nipote in matrimonio.

Coltivando l'orgoglio di questo mentecatto,

Tutto giova a un raggirio.

Il colpo è fatto.

Vedrò mentre io sospiro,

felice un servo mio?

E un ben ch'invan desio

ei posseder dovrà?

Vedrò per man d'amore

unita a un vile oggetto

chi in me destò un affetto,

che per me poi non ha?

Ah no, lasciarti in pace

non vo' questo contento,

Tu non nascesti, audace,

per dare a me tormento,

e forse ancor per ridere di mia infelicità.

Già la speranza sola delle vendette mie

quest'anima consola, e giubilar mi fa.

You have already won the case!

Trans. Martha Gerhart

"You have already won the case!"

What do I hear!

Into what trap did I fall?

Traitors!

I want to punish you badly;

The verdict will be as I please.

But if he should pay the old pretender?

Pay her! In what way?

And then there's Antonio,

Who to the insignificant Figaro

Refuses to give a niece in marriage.

Cultivating the pride of this fool,

Everything is useful for a deception.

The die is cast.

Shall I see one of my servants happy,

while I languish?

And must he possess a treasure

which I desire in vain?

Shall I see the one who aroused

in me a desire which she, then,

doesn't have for me, united by the hand

of love to a miserable creature?

Ah, no, I don't wish you this satisfaction

of being left in peace.

You were not born, audacious one,

To give me torment

And, furthermore, to laugh at my unhappiness.

Already the lone hope of my vindications

Comforts this soul and makes me rejoice.

Spleen

Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

Il pleure dans mon cœur
Comme il pleut sur la ville.
Quelle est cette langueur
Qui pénètre mon cœur?

Ô bruit doux de la pluie,
Par terre et sur les toits!
Pour un cœur qui s'ennuie,
Ô le chant de la pluie!

Il pleure sans raison
Dans mon cœur qui s'écœure.
Quoi! nulle trahison?
Mon deuil est sans raison.

C'est bien la pire peine,
De ne savoir pourquoi,
Sans amour et sans haine,
Mon cœur a tant de peine

Spleen

Trans. Richard Stokes

Tears fall in my heart
As rain falls on the town;
What is this torpor
Pervading my heart?

Ah, the soft sound of rain
On the ground and roofs!
For a listless heart,
Ah, the song of the rain!

Tears fall without reason
In this disheartened heart.
What! Was there no treason? ...
This grief's without reason.

And the worst pain of all
Must be not to know why
Without love and without hate
My heart has so much pain.

C'est l'extase

Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

C'est l'extase langoureuse,
C'est la fatigue amoureuse,
C'est tous les frissons des bois
Parmi l'étreinte des brises,
C'est vers les ramures grises
Le chœur des petites voix.

O le frêle et frais murmure!
Cela gazouille et susurre,
Cela ressemble au bruit doux
Que l'herbe agitée expire...
Tu dirais, sous l'eau qui vire,
Le rouslis sourd des cailloux.

Cette âme qui se lamente
Et cette plainte dormante
C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas?
La mienne, dis, et la tienne,
Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne
Par ce tiède soir, tout bas?

It Is Ecstasy

Trans. Richard Stokes

It is languorous rapture,
It is amorous fatigue,
It is all the tremors of the forest
In the breezes' embrace,
It is, around the grey branches,
The choir of tiny voices.

O the delicate, fresh murmuring!
The warbling and whispering,
It is like the soft cry
The ruffled grass gives out ...
You might take it for the muffled sound
Of pebbles in the swirling stream.

This soul which grieves
In this subdued lament,
It is ours, is it not?
Mine, and yours too,
Breathing out our humble hymn
On this warm evening, soft and low?

Prison

Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme!
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,
Douxement tinte.
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là
Simple et tranquille.
Cette paisible rumeur-là
Vient de la ville.

Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

Prison

Trans. Richard Stokes

The sky above the roof –
So blue, so calm!
A tree, above the roof,
Waves its crown.

The bell, in the sky that you see,
Gently rings.
A bird, on the tree that you see,
Plaintively sings.

My God, my God, life is there,
Simple and serene.
That peaceful murmur there
Comes from the town.

O you, what have you done,
Weeping without end,
Say, what have you done
With your young life?

Mandoline

Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

Mandolin

Trans. Richard Stokes

The gallant serenaders
And their fair listeners
Exchange sweet nothings
Beneath singing boughs.

Tircis is there, Aminte is there,
And tedious Clitandre too,
And Damis who for many a cruel maid
Writes many a tender song.

Their short silken doublets,
Their long trailing gowns,
Their elegance, their joy,
And their soft blue shadows

Whirl madly in the rapture
Of a grey and roseate moon,
And the mandolin jangles on
In the shivering breeze.

Dear Future Roommate
Letter by Mike Gioia (b. 1993)

Dear Roommate,

Don't worry about us getting along. I've lived with crazy people all my life. My father is a poet, and his artsy friends—eccentric writers, boisterous musicians, and neurotic painters—could populate a whole season of bad sitcoms. And my good-hearted mother continually invites these people to stay with us.

Just last month a visiting Oxford professor was brewing tea on our kitchen stove. “Oh, my!” I heard him say oh-so politely. Turning around, I expected to see spilled Earl Grey and soggy crumpets, I instead found him holding a washcloth in full flame. I hurriedly extinguished it just in time to see the quaint professor calmly walk away unfazed and unscathed.

Last summer we had a young singer from Harvard living with us, but it sounded as if we had put up a barbershop quartet. He loved to march around the house—day and night—singing Broadway hits while keeping the beat with steady stomping. My folks hardly noticed. Most of their friends act this way.

I won't even mention the first time they took me to Macbeth. It wasn't until the lights dimmed I learned the entire play was in Tlingit, a native Alaskan tongue.

What I am trying to say is that I look forward to living with a sane person for a change. No odd habits or quirks of yours will bother me. I will have seen much worse, from academic kitchen arsonists to human jukeboxes. I think we'll get along just fine.

Sincerely, Mike Gioia.

The Apple Orchard

Text by Dana Gioia (b. 1950)

You won't remember it—the apple orchard
We wandered through one April afternoon,
Climbing the hill behind the empty farm.

A city boy, I'd never seen a grove
Burst in full flower or breathed the bittersweet
Perfume of blossoms mingled with the dust.

A quarter mile of trees in fragrant rows
Arching above us. We walked the aisle,
Alone in spring's ephemeral cathedral.

We had the luck, if you can call it that,
Of having been in love but never lovers—
The bright flame burning, fed by pure desire.

Nothing consumed, such secrets brought to light!
There was a moment when I stood behind you,
Reached out to spin you toward me . . . but I stopped.

What more could I have wanted from that day?
Everything, of course. Perhaps that was the point—
To learn that what we will not grasp is lost.

Program Notes

Richard Strauss was a late Romantic German composer well-known for his operas, orchestral poems, and songs. Influenced by his orchestral compositions, his songs are richly textured and colored.⁵ Although significantly contributing to the emerging genre of orchestral songs, Strauss did not orchestrate *Ständchen* himself.⁶ Scholar Carol Kimball elegantly describes the arpeggiating “feathery” accompaniment of *Ständchen* to be “[wafting] the serenade to the beloved’s window.”⁷ *Heimkehr*, his more soothing piece which ends the set, closely knits music and poetry together. A tender-hearted, major-keyed melody over an arpeggiated piano part moves into a passionate minored-keyed melody with a more rhythmic accompaniment, which eventually brings us back home, only with greater subtlety and sublimity especially in the piano.⁸

Franz Schubert was an early Romantic German composer celebrated for his foundational role in the art song tradition⁹, among his contributions in chamber music, piano sonatas, and other forms. His more than six hundred art songs include through-composed pieces like *Erlkönig* in which the piano plays its own character.¹⁰ They also include structurally simpler strophic pieces like *Auf dem Wasser zu singen* and *Nachtviolen*. Scholar Maureen Schafer interprets the vacillation between major and minor keys as “[accentuating] the aimless drifting of the boat,”¹¹ I personally interpret it as representing the occurrence of the melancholy thought of the character. In the meantime, *Nachtviolen* simplistically yet profoundly evokes the faithfulness and modesty which the sweet-scented violet symbolizes.¹²

Pauline Viardot was a late Romantic French composer, and a well-known dramatic operatic mezzo-soprano.¹³ Her piano teacher Franz Liszt’s comment “The world has finally found a woman composer of genius”¹⁴ was prejudiced yet reflective of Viardot’s talent. Her compositions include five salon operas, two of which were to her own libretti, and over fifty art songs. The constantly shifting tonalities of this eerie yet passionate song represents the character’s turbulent inner world of grief. And the declamatory tone signifies their persistent faith towards the murdered lover.

⁵ Carol Kimball, *Song: a Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2006), 132.

⁶ Ibid., 134.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ James Leonard, “Heimkehr,” *AllMusic*, <https://www.allmusic.com/composition/heimkehr-leiser-schwanken-die-%C3ste-song-for-voice-piano-op-15-5-trv-148-5-mc0002480916>, (accessed March 12, 2021).

⁹ Leon Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York; London: W.W. Norton), 117.

¹⁰ Joseph Machlis and Kristine Forney, *The Enjoyment of Music: An Introduction to Perceptive Listening* (New York: W. W. Norton).

¹¹ Maureen Schafer, “Illuminating Text: A Macro Analysis of Franz Schubert’s ‘Auf dem Wasser zu singen,’” *Musical Insights* (Macromusic.org, 2002), 97.

¹² Graham Johnson, “Nachtviolen, D752,” *Hyperion Records*, https://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/dw.asp?dc=W2059_GBAJY9301901, (accessed March 12, 2021).

¹³ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Pauline Viardot,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pauline-Viardot>, (accessed March 12, 2021)

¹⁴ Hélène Lindqvist and Philipp Vogler, “Pauline Viardot,” *The Art Song Project*, <https://theartsongproject.com/pauline-viardot/>, (accessed March 12, 2021).

Margaret Bonds was a 20th century African-American pianist and composer. She studied composition with Florence Price and William Dawson. She won the prestigious Wanamaker award for her song "Sea Ghost" three years into her study, and as a pianist became the first African American to perform with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Her encounter with Langston Hughes' poem *The Negro Speaks of Rivers* provided her "feelings of security"¹⁵ during her years at Northwestern University, where she was allowed to study but not to live or use the facilities.¹⁶ Later her close friendship with Langston Hughes involved regular letter exchanges and collaborations, including the well-known *Ballad of the Brown King*. As an emerging artist, I profess to amplify voices which are of utmost importance to the progress of humanity. Aware of the historic and systematic oppression of African American people, I feel the need to proactively learn about African American experiences and encourage other young artists to do so. One hope is to help combat marks left by Minstrelsy which perpetuated harmful stereotypes about African American people and lied about the institution of slavery. As a non-Black singer, when I sing words such as "dark like me," "black like me," or "I am the darker brother," I am not claiming to know the Black experience, but only serving as a vessel for this collaborative representation of the Black experience by Margaret Bonds and Langston Hughes.

Huang Tzu was an early 20th century Chinese composer, and music educator. Receiving education in Tsinghua College, Oberlin College, and Yale University, he composed the first large-scale Western orchestral work by a Chinese composer, *In Memoriam*.¹⁷ He was also the composer of the National Flag Anthem of the Republic of China. Since art song is inherently a Western form, these two pieces do not seek to represent Chinese music. However, the selection of *Hua Fei Hua* exemplifies the substantial focus on ancient literature in Chinese culture. Even the language and conveyed lifestyle in *Searching for Plum Blossoms in Snow*, a modern text, can be traced back to antiquity.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a composer of the Classical period fundamental in Western music. He producing 600 symphonies, concertos, chamber, operatic, and choral pieces, some of the most masterful in each genre. In terms of opera, Scholar Julian Rushton states that "[his] comprehensive mastery of three genres, opera seria, opera buffa and Singspiel, is unmatched in operatic history."¹⁸ The political controversies of *Le nozze di Figaro*, which displayed contemporary social tensions in a libertarian fashion, might have been overstated.¹⁹ However, the opera's progressive commentary on gender and society should not be overlooked.²⁰ As context for *Hai già vinto la causa*, "Count Almaviva thinks that he has succeeded in making arrangements for a tryst with Susanna, maid to the Countess, in the garden of the castle on the very night of her marriage to his valet, Figaro. A legal problem, exaggerated and encouraged by the Count and his supporters, could yet prevent the couple's marriage. But when the Count overhears Susanna and Figaro gloating that they will win the case, he launches into a tirade of anger and frustration."²¹

¹⁵ Margaret Bonds, Interview by James Hatch, Los Angeles, December 28, 1971. Quoted in Helen Walker-Hill, *From Spirituals to Symphonies: African-American Women Composers and Their Music* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 156.

¹⁶ Randy Jones, "Margaret Bonds Biography," *Afrocentric Voices in Classical Music*, <https://afrovoices.com/margaret-bonds-biography/>, (accessed March 12, 2021).

¹⁷ The Editors of Sogou Baike, "黄自," *Sogou Baike*, <https://baike.sogou.com/v7611899.htm>, (accessed March 12, 2021).

¹⁸ Julian Rushton, "Mozart, (Johann Chrysostom) Wolfgang Amadeus (opera)," *Grove Music Online*, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000007498#omo-9781561592630-e-5000007498-div1-5000984701>, (accessed March 26, 2021).

¹⁹ Cliff Eisen and Stanley Sadie, "Mozart, (Johann Chrysostom) Wolfgang Amadeus," *Grove Music Online*, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-6002278233#omo-9781561592630-e-6002278233-div1-6002278233.3.11>, (accessed March 26, 2021).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Robert Larson, *Arias for Baritone*, (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1992), 6.

Gabriel Fauré was a French composer of the late Romantic era. Scholar Tunley and Noske emphasized the “great originality and passionate beauty”²² in his 105 songs, in which he transformed the Romantic qualities of Gounod and Massenet into *mélodie*.²³ Scholar Kimball describes Fauré’s songs as distinctly French for their elegance and rationality, “[dealing] with sentiments rather than literal sensation.”²⁴ Kimball also arranges Fauré’s songs into three periods by style, all four songs in this set falls in the middle period marked by “increased use of modality,” “subtler harmonic touches” and “use of motives as linking elements.”²⁵ The accompaniment evokes the falling of the rain in *Spleen*, the tremors of the forest in *C’est l’extase*, and the plucking of mandolin strings in *Mandoline*.²⁶ Textually, *Prison* perhaps reflected poet Verlaine’s own experience during his eighteen-month incarceration.²⁷

Lori Laitman is a contemporary American composer of multiple operas, choral works, and hundreds of songs setting texts by classical and contemporary poets. Besides receiving commissions from the BBC, the Royal Philharmonic Society, Opera America, Opera Colorado, Seattle Opera, etc., she is praised as possessing “exceptional gifts for embracing a poetic text and giving it new and deeper life through music” as an art song composer.²⁸ *Dear Future Roommate* sets an actual letter. The poet father mentioned in it is none other than the one who provided the text for *The Apple Orchard*. I chose these two songs unaware of this connection, yet well aware of the zest for life overflowing in both texts. Laitman reveals a musical code in her composition of *The Apple Orchard*: “The melodic cell of ‘Nothing’ repeats under the word ‘Everything,’ linking the two concepts musically.”²⁹

²² David Tunley and Frits Noske, “Mélodie,” *Grove Music Online*, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000042953>, (accessed March 12, 2021).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Kimball, 180.

²⁵ Ibid., 182-183.

²⁶ Gorge Johnson and Richard Stokes, *A French Song Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 165-167.

²⁷ The Editors of Poets.org, “Paul Verlaine,” *Poets.org*, <https://poets.org/poet/paul-verlaine>, (accessed March 24, 2021).

²⁸ Lori Laitman, “Lori Laitman,” *Artsongs.com*, <http://artsongs.com/biography/>, (accessed March 25, 2021).

²⁹ Lori Laitman, “The Apple Orchard: Composer’s Note” Songs of America, <https://songofamerica.net/song/apple-orchard/>, (accessed March 25, 2021).

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Fengyue Zhang has earned multiple golds at MusicFest Northwest in both classical and musical theatre divisions, won the Maddy Summer Artist Award at Interlochen Arts Camp (2017), and has worked with well-known professionals like Nathan Gunn and Thomas Hampson in masterclasses. Zhang played three major musical theater roles in high school and performed *comprimario* (supporting) and ensemble roles in operas, including *Le nozze di Figaro* (Prague), *Don Giovanni* (Prague), and *Madama Butterfly* (Spokane). Having come to the United States from China five years ago, he hopes to establish himself in a professional career in opera and musical theater.

