



Michael Fabiano Martin Katz

Michael Fabiano / *Tenor*
Martin Katz / *Piano*

Saturday Evening, April 1, 2017 at 8:00
Hill Auditorium
Ann Arbor

57th Performance of the 138th Annual Season
138th Annual Choral Union Series

Tonight's presenting sponsor is the Oscar Feldman Endowment Fund, supporting tonight's concert in honor of Ken Fischer.

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PROGRAM

I

Songs of Franz Liszt

Enfant, si j'étais roi

S'il est un charmant gazon

Comment, disaient-ils

Oh! Quand je dors

II

Songs of Henri Duparc

La vie antérieure

Extase

Le manoir de Rosemonde

Chanson triste

Elégie

Phidylé

Intermission

III

Giacomo Puccini

Inno a Diana

Puccini

E l'uccellino

Arturo Toscanini

Spes, ultima dea

Toscanini

Il pescatore

Puccini

Terra e mare

Toscanini

Donna, vorrei morir

Puccini

Mentia l'avviso

IV

Samuel Barber

Three Songs of James Joyce, Op. 10

Rain has fallen

Sleep now

I hear an army

Please withhold applause until the end of each set of songs throughout this evening's recital.

THIS EVENING'S PROGRAM

Tonight's program contains only a century's worth of compositions, and yet it offers enormous variety at the same time. From the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th, enormous changes occurred on the musical landscape. Schubert and Schumann were only a few years before this period, but could they have imagined how Wagner would reinvent our idea of passion and grandeur? Could the *bel canto* composers of the 1830s have had any idea of where Verdi would take opera, ultimately giving way to the very accessible scores of the veristic composers at the century's end? If one must be restricted to only 100 years of composition, this may be the century to choose.

Mr. Fabiano has submitted synopses for all the songs sung in foreign languages on this evening's recital. They are not literal translations of the texts but are intended, instead, to give audience members a brief sense of the meaning and emotion of each individual song.

I

Franz Liszt is best known for his piano pieces, but this was truly a man who wore many hats and worked in all genres. Conductor, pianist, composer, author — what did this rock star of the middle of the 19th century not accomplish? In addition to his own music, Liszt championed so many of his colleagues and secured their places on concert programs. Formally, he was never content with the traditional; the symphony gave way to the tone poem, a Liszt creation, and the sonata to the rhapsody. Liszt's influence on all things artistic was profound and permanent.

It is not possible to speak of Liszt without the name of Wagner appearing immediately in the conversation. The two giants shared almost identical birth and death dates, and it is difficult to say who had more influence on whom. There are many who claim that Liszt invented the Tristan chord years before the giant of Bayreuth did; others say that a Liszt rhapsody for piano solo is simply an act of a Wagner opera without the singing. What is certain is that the musical world would never be quite the same after these twin icons worked their magic upon it.

Liszt's song output amounts to only about six dozen examples, but unlike his linguistically limited colleagues, he was quite comfortable composing songs in German, French, Italian, Hungarian, and even one in English to a text by Alfred Lord Tennyson. His years of European travel as a virtuoso pianist would surely have given him near fluency in all these tongues. It must also be appreciated that the musical style of his songs changes according to the language.

These four songs on texts of Victor Hugo are among Liszt's most romantic and sweetest accomplishments in the genre. They are all valentines in song. Grand moments are to be found — the storm in the second stanza of "Enfant, si j'étais roi," for example — but these are simply constructed to create an even more intimate atmosphere by way of contrast when said storm has abated, and Liszt gets back to the business of wooing. One of his most celebrated songs

is the finale of this group of love songs, “Oh! Quand je dors.” This text, which idealizes Petrarch and Laura as the pinnacle of a loving couple, must have appealed particularly to Liszt, since he had composed his Petrarch sonnets only a few years earlier than these French gems.

Enfant, si j'étais roi

(Victor Hugo)

My child, were I a king, I would give
my empire, my chariot, my scepter, my
kneeling subjects, my golden crown, and
my ships for a single glance from you!
And were I a God, I would give the earth,
the air, angels and demons, chaos, the
universe, and eternity for a kiss from
you!

S'il est un charmant gazon

(Hugo)

Should there be a charming lawn
watered by heaven and where all
flowers of the season bloom, I want to
trace a path on it for your foot to tread!
Should there be a loving bosom filled
with honor and devotion beating for a
worthy cause, I want it to become the
cushion where your brows rests!
Should there be a rose-perfumed dream
of love blessed by God where souls
unite, I wish to make it the nest where
your heart settles!

Comment, disaient-ils

(Hugo)

The men asked: how can we flee from
the police in our skiffs? The women
answered: row!

The men asked: how can we forget
quarrels and dangers? The women
answered: sleep!

The men asked: how can we enchant
these gorgeous girls without a love
potion?

The women answered: love!

Oh! Quand je dors

(Hugo)

When I sleep, approach my bed, as Laura
appeared to Petrarch, and touch me
with your breast...and my lips will part!

On my glum face perturbed by a dark
dream, let your gaze lift it like a start...
and my dream will be radiant!

Then place a kiss on my God-blessed
lips, and transform from angel into
woman...

at once my soul will awaken!

II

It is possible that solo pianists and instrumentalists are totally unaware of the music of Henri Duparc; even his name may be unknown to all save singers and the pianists who partner them. The fact is, Duparc's reputation rests solely on the 17 songs he published. There are far, far more prolific composers who never achieve the consistent quality of Duparc's works in 10 times the quantity. Why such a limited songbook? It is a sad story. Duparc lived a life of 85 years, but the last 35 years saw no composing whatsoever. He believed he was becoming insane, and rather than produce “flawed” pieces, he chose not to produce anything. In reality, his mind was not deserting him at all, but he trusted nothing and nobody, and sadly lived out his days in solitude and idleness.

Unlike his contemporaries in France, Duparc was quite happy to admit he was very influenced by Wagner. In this sense, the first half of tonight's program

can be seen as all under the Wagnerian umbrella. Whereas Debussy and Massenet traveled to the shrine at Bayreuth in secret, protesting any and all affinity with Wagner, Duparc visited openly and on three occasions. The 17 jewels that Duparc left us remain rooted in Gallic charm and subtlety, but the piano parts are often orchestral in nature and never simply accompaniments, any more than is the orchestra in the pit for a Wagnerian opera.

Twenty years after the Hugo songs of Liszt, Duparc penned the sextet of songs heard tonight. They encompass exoticism “La vie antérieure,” defensive violence “Le manoir de Rosemonde,” Tristan-esque yearning “Extase,” and one of the world’s great love songs “Phidylé.” The drawer of Duparc songs may be a small one, but they have remained in the active repertoire of all singers since their premieres. His fusion of text and music, his highly developed taste in selecting poetry, and his ability to exploit and showcase both voice and piano are unsurpassed in the French repertoire.

La vie antérieure

(Charles Baudelaire)

I have lived in the most grandiose surroundings, palaces which lit by blinding sun would transform by moonlight into majestic grottos. I have travelled on many oceans and listened to the powerful sound of its rolling waves just as the hues of a setting sun would envelop me. My life has been surrounded by infinite skies and wonders of the world. And I was tended by naked servants whose task was to help me find the painful secret that made me languished.

Extase

(Jean Lahor)

My heart is sleeping on your breast a sleep as sweet as death. Exquisite death, death perfumed by the breath of my beloved. My heart is sleeping on your breast a sleep as sweet as death.

Le manoir de Rosemonde

(Robert de Bonnières)

Love has bitten me like a dog... Follow my bloodstains in order to find me. Grab a well-bred horse and follow my path if the race does not exhaust you! In passing where I passed, you will see that alone and wounded, I have wandered this sad world and have vanished without ever finding the blue manor of Rosemonde.

Chanson triste

(Henri Cazalis)

In your heart sleeps a sweet summer moonlight that I will drown myself in it to forget my woes. My pain will disappear when you gently cradle my wounded heart, and the nightmares living in my head will be soothed when you hold it on your knees and recite a poem seeming to feature us. And I will drink so much tenderness and love out of your sad glance that perhaps, I will heal.

Elégie

(Thomas Moore)

Oh, breathe not his name, let it sleep in
the shade where his corpse lays.

May our tears be sad and silent, as the
dew that falls on the grass over his
head.

It shall brighten his tomb, just as our
rolling tears shall keep his memory
fresh in our souls.

Phydlilé

(Charles-Marie René Leconte de Lisle)

Soft grass, the cool shade of poplars,
the slopes of mossy springs.

Rest Phydlilé! The midday sun shines
and invites you to sleep!

In the clover and the thyme, bees are
humming.

The air is warm, the poppies droop, and
birds seek the shade of the eglantines.

Rest Phydlilé! But at sunset, I want to
be rewarded by your loveliest smile and
most ardent kiss.

III

The second half of tonight's concert begins with surely the most rare, least frequently heard repertoire of the evening. One finds occasional performances of Puccini's songs, but in fact, in all his 50 years of partnering singers — many of whom have been Italians — this writer had never encountered songs by Toscanini until now. Mr. Fabiano quite openly states that the Italian maestro is his hero, so it is no accident that he has chosen to braid together songs by these two compatriots, born only nine years apart.

Neither Puccini nor Toscanini has gone down in history as a composer of song; in the case of the latter, few music lovers will have been aware that he composed at all. But even minor works by major musical authorities can prove interesting to us, if only biographically. In these two cases, however, it may go beyond simple scholarship, for these songs offer surprisingly clear glimpses into the taste and imagination of these iconic figures.

With regard to Toscanini, one can safely say he is generally considered the greatest conductor of his generation, some would argue of *any* generation. As a student at the conservatory in Parma, he studied composition, theory, and was also an accomplished cellist. The launch of his conducting career is a Cinderella story: when the maestro for a performance of Verdi's *Aida* was suddenly taken ill and rushed to the hospital with his score in hand, young Arturo left his seat in the cello section and conducted the four-act opera by memory...and brilliantly. In addition to his fluent baton technique and amazing ear, Toscanini's principal legacy was his faithfulness to the composer's wishes; his fabled temper permitted nothing less than perfect execution, at a time when orchestral playing — particularly in Italy — had become sloppy and haphazard. His fame grew quickly in Europe, South America, and eventually in the US, where his name became a household word, and remains so to this day.

It is not at all unusual for conductors to compose. Names such as Klemperer, Walter, Furtwängler, Bernstein, Boulez, and Previn all come to mind, and many of these as composers of song literature. Toscanini the composer is part of this tradition, but in his case, he began writing as a teenager, and by 1895, when he

was 28, he abruptly brought down the curtain on this side of his career. Many say he did not want to tarnish the amazing reputation he had acquired as a maestro; others say he was embarrassed by the juvenile sentiments he had displayed and felt them inappropriate in a world now torn by war. His choices of texts may not be the best, and his preoccupation with lost love is all too clearly evident throughout the songs, but in exchange he offers us excellent prosody, charming lyricism, and an impressive gift for melody.

Puccini claimed his talent to be exclusively for the theater, and any list of his compositions bears this out quite clearly. When not hard at work on an opera, he declared his three principal occupations to be waterfowl hunting, seeking good *libretti*, and beautiful women. If he decided to compose a song, it was inevitably for a particular occasion, or a gift for a lifelong friend, never for a celebrated singer. The four songs heard tonight have diverse histories: “Inno a Diana” was written during a hunting weekend, as he sought a respite from composing *La Bohème*; “E l’uccellino,” probably his most-performed song, was written for a newborn whose father, a Puccini family friend, had died just prior to his son’s birth; an annual magazine featuring an issue devoted to the sea-inspired “Terra e mare”; and the last song in this set — actually the first of the four to be composed — was Puccini’s graduation assignment from the Milan conservatory.

Of particular interest when one studies Puccini’s songs is his extraordinary fondness for his own melodies, so much so that anyone conversant with his operas will recognize many measures in a song that seem to be familiar. In all cases, the song was composed well in advance of the opera, and even more astounding is the fact that the two texts have exactly nothing in common! Tonight you can hear snippets of melodies from operas yet to be born: *Manon Lescaut*, *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, and *La Rondine*.

Inno a Diana

(Carlo Abeniacar)

Glory to you, O Diana, when you offer rays of love and strengthen our courage.

Watch over your faithful followers, guide them and steady them on the arduous path.

From the Alpine peaks to the Sicilian shores, may this fervent love song reach you like a joyous echo.

Spes, ultima dea

(Lorenzo Stecchetti)

I said to my heart: “Why this dejection, this languor?”

It answered: “Love is dead.”

I said to my poor heart: “Why should I hope if love is dead?”

It answered: “He who does not hope, dies!”

E l’uccellino

(Renato Fucini)

Sleep my child, for you are safe here next to your loving father.

Il pescatore*(Anonymous)*

On the bank of a river sits a fisherman
ogling the bait with confidence.

Suddenly the waters part and a blond
maiden arises.

She says to the fisherman: “You want to
draw to a cruel death my friends.

If you only knew the joy that we have
down there, you would want to come
down and never return!”

Terra e mare*(Enrico Panzacchi)*

The long rows of poplars are roaring
and as I hear them, I dream of the deep
voice of the sea. Reflecting in the wave,
the stars are looking at me. But the
wind rages louder and wakes me from
my joyous slumber... Far is now the
voice of the sea.

Donna, vorrei morir*(Stecchetti)*

Woman, I would accept death as long
as I could also feel the comfort of being
loved without shame.

I would like to give you what remains of
my youth, being able to rest my head on
your shoulder and never wake again.

Mentia l'avviso*(Felice Romani)*

Gusmano, captain in the Moorish
army, overlooks the Valley of Ausena
and stares at a particular house. He
seems to recall the voice of a woeful
woman who in the past has disturbed
his sleepless nights. Coming to his
senses, he realizes that the wind in
the night has played tricks on him,
triggering his fears, and causing him to
hear accusing words of remorse.

IV

Samuel Barber’s trio of songs on poetry of James Joyce closes the program tonight. Written in 1936, the mini-cycle clearly presents the hallmarks of Barber’s style, despite its early opus number. Unlike so many of his colleagues who sought tirelessly to create the “American sound,” whatever that may be, Barber remained quite content to be known as an international, even Eurocentric and neo-romantic composer. We never hear folksongs, work chants, or protestant hymn tunes quoted or suggested in any work of Barber’s. Many refer to him as the American Brahms, for he combines lush textures with a fairly strict adherence to traditional forms, thus looking backward as much as forward. His instrumental works are full of fugues, passacaglias, and theme/variations techniques; his vocal music — both song and opera — can easily be considered Strauss-like, with both performers equally sharing the spotlight. Apart from short-lived dalliances with the 12-tone or atonal systems of composition, Barber was supremely comfortable expanding the romantic envelope but never breaking out of it.

His friends Benjamin Britten and Francis Poulenc offered the same admission that Barber consistently made: all three stated plainly and openly that they were at their most inspired when singing and text were present. This is not to suggest that their music sounds similar — far from it! — but his European colleagues had singers as life-partners and Barber himself was a highly accomplished baritone. Barber came by this predilection for vocal music quite honestly, for his aunt,

the internationally celebrated contralto Louise Homer, had a profound influence on him already as a young child. The Barbers' version of making music at home consisted not of folk ditties or simple carols, but rather of vocal music by Wagner, Brahms, and Strauss. Clearly, the composer's long lyrical lines and sophisticated choices of texts were not an accident. Barber wrote vocal music from the age of seven to his last years, and his experience and confident hand with the fusion of text and music never deserted him.

These three songs of Op. 10 are perfect examples of all that has been said. "Rain has fallen" offers us full-blown lyricism for the voice along with dramatic pianism. The opening's vagueness of a watercolor gives way to the desperation of the final measures; Debussy gives way to Brahms as the singer pleads for honest communication with the beloved. "Sleep now" relies on the contrast of sweetness and simplicity with an angular recitative-like central section to make its point. Finally, the ultimate nightmare of being abandoned in "I hear an army" is a theme Barber had first explored three years earlier with his *Dover Beach* for baritone and string quartet. Throughout this opus, the prosody is near perfect, the voice's ability to soar is omnipresent, and the piano is given an equally challenging, theatrical role. What more could one want? Anyone who sings or loves singing is the richer for the legacy of Samuel Barber.

Program notes by Martin Katz.

ARTISTS

Of **Michael Fabiano's** debut as Lensky in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* at the Royal Opera, *The Sunday Times* in London wrote: "I can't think of a Lensky at Covent Garden who has held the audience so spellbound in 40 years of Onegin-going...a glorious debut." The recipient of the 2014 Beverly Sills Artist Award and the 2014 Richard Tucker Award, Mr. Fabiano is the first singer to win both awards in the same year, and is considered one of the greatest tenors in the world today.

Next season, he will perform his first Des Grieux in Massenet's *Manon* at San Francisco Opera, return to the Metropolitan Opera to sing Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and make his debut at the Los Angeles Opera singing the Duke in *Rigoletto*.

This season, Mr. Fabiano made his debuts with the Royal Danish Opera in Verdi's *Requiem* and Houston Grand Opera in the title role of Gounod's *Faust*, returned to the San Francisco Symphony for a program of Italian masterworks, and sang Jean in Massenet's rarely performed *Hérodiade* with Washington Concert Opera. Mr. Fabiano returned to the Metropolitan Opera for performances as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Alfredo in *La Traviata*. He was the guest soloist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Grand Finals Concert, and will perform in the Met's 50th Anniversary Gala at Lincoln Center. In addition, he sings his first Don José in *Carmen* at Festival Aix-en-Provence, will perform a recital tour that will take him to seven cities in North America, and make his Wigmore Hall recital debut in London.

Mr. Fabiano has performed at many of the world's leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Royal Opera, Opera

Australia, Teatro Real, Opéra National de Paris, Dutch National Opera, La Scala, Asociación Bilbaina de Amigos de la Ópera, Dresden Semperoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin, English National Opera, and the Teatro San Carlo. In addition, he has graced concert stages with some of the world's most acclaimed orchestras such as the Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, and the Vienna Symphony.

Mr. Fabiano can be heard on the "Prologue" to Shostakovich's *Orango*, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the direction of Esa-Pekka Salonen on Deutsche Grammophon. On DVD he performs the title role of Donizetti's *Poliuto* and Alfredo in *La Traviata*, both from the Glyndebourne Festival on Opus Arte; Cassio in *Otello* from the Metropolitan Opera on Decca; and Gennaro in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* from the San Francisco Opera on EuroArts and Naxos of America.

Mr. Fabiano is the recipient of Australia's prestigious Helpmann Award in the "Best Male Performance in an Opera" category for his portrayal of the title role in Gounod's *Faust* with Opera Australia. He is a member of the Metropolitan Opera Guild Artists' Council.

"Martin Katz must surely be considered the dean of collaborative pianists," said the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Musical America* magazine created an award expressly for him: "Accompanist of the Year." One of the world's busiest collaborators, he has been in constant demand by the world's most celebrated vocal soloists for more than four decades. In addition to Mr. Fabiano, he has appeared and recorded regularly with Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade,

David Daniels, José Carreras, Karita Mattila, Cecilia Bartoli, Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, Piotr Beczala, and Joseph Calleja. Season after season, the world's musical capitals figure prominently in his schedule.

Mr. Katz is a native of Los Angeles, where he began piano studies at the age of five. He attended the University of Southern California and studied the specialized field of accompanying with its pioneer teacher, Gwendolyn Koldofsky. While yet a student, he was given the unique opportunity of accompanying the classes and lessons of such luminaries as Lotte Lehmann, Jascha Heifetz, Pierre Bernac, and Gregor Piatigorsky. Following his formal education, he held the position of pianist for the US Army Chorus in Washington, DC for three years, before moving to New York where his international career began in earnest in 1969.

In more recent years, invitations to conduct orchestral evenings have come with increasing frequency. Mr. Katz has partnered several of his soloists on the podium for orchestras of the BBC; Houston; Washington, DC; Tokyo; New Haven; and Miami. He has also been pleased to conduct several staged productions for the University of Michigan's Opera Theatre, the Music Academy of the West, and San Francisco Opera's prestigious Merola program, where he led *Don Giovanni* in 2014.

The professional profile of Martin Katz is completed with his commitment to teaching. For three decades, the University of Michigan has been his home, where he has been happy to chair the School of Music, Theatre & Dance's program in collaborative piano, and play an active part in operatic productions. He has been a pivotal figure in the training of countless young artists, both singers and pianists, who are now working all over the world. U-M has recognized this important work,

awarding him the coveted E.V. Moore Professorship. In addition to his work at his home school, he is a regular guest teacher at Helsinki's Sibelius Academy, Songfest, Chicago College of Performing Arts, Canadian Operatic Arts Academy, and the New National Theatre of Tokyo.

Mr. Katz's comprehensive guide for accompanists, *The Complete Collaborator*, published by Oxford Press, is widely seen as the seminal work on this subject.

UMS ARCHIVES

This evening's recital marks U-M alumnus **Michael Fabiano**'s UMS debut. **Martin Katz** makes his 40th UMS appearance this evening following his UMS debut in November 1976 in recital with bass-baritone Justino Díaz in Hill Auditorium. Mr. Katz most recently appeared under UMS auspices in January 2016 at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre as pianist and curator of *What's In a Song?* and in recital with mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton as part of *UMS Song Remix: A Biennial Songfest*.

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